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Reflections

Book Reviews

Editorial

The cover photograph, by University of Waterloo student Norman Kaethler, of an iguana perched on a rock on the Galapagos Islands, reminds me of the intransigence that has often characterized the science and religion debate. The prickly, almost-prehistoric reptile clings steadfast to his/her rock, moving only rarely and almost imperceptibly, not quite willing to fully turn its head to the playful, beckoning ocean that is so full of the unknown. The iguana does not necessarily represent one figure in the debate either: it could be at times theologian, scientist, layperson, or atheist. This special issue of *The Conrad Grebel Review* includes elements of this age-old conversation between different realms of thought, as well as essays that in other ways address the intersection of religion and science.

An image from the Galapagos Islands is relevant for a number of reasons. It was on these islands, abundant with rare and wonderful species of plants and animals, that Darwin carried out research towards his famous theory of natural selection that led towards debates still contentious today between evolutionists and creationists. Carl S. Keener, a Mennonite and a scientist, reflects on his own intellectual and theological journey through these questions, and others related to the nature of the universe.

As well, a recent oil spill near these ecologically fragile islands was just another demonstration of humanity's increasingly problematic relationship with the environment. The incident, along with many other current issues especially those related to genetics and biotechnology, once again begs the importance of raising ethical considerations as we speed down the highway of technological and scientific progress. Responding to the work of George Ellis and Nancey Murphy, mathematician/astronomer and philosopher/theologian respectively, Roland Spjuth examines the connection between ethics and science from the perspective of Radical Reformation thought. Nancey Murphy offers a response to Spjuth.

The social sciences are represented in a discussion by Mennonite pastor Lawrence Burkholder and response by psychologist Dana Keener on the theological foundations for deliverance healing. Within his own ministry, Burkholder has developed an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective on exorcising demons from individuals with mental disorders. Keener, who works within a

profession that one might expect to be somewhat suspicious of Burkholder's approach, has also found deliverance healing useful in his own clinical practice. This rather unconventional topic undoubtedly will raise provocative questions for readers.

This issue opens with an over-arching discussion by physicist Robert Mann, who teaches courses in science and religion at the University of Waterloo. Mann points out the 'traditional' focus of the dialogue on cosmology, evolution, and miracles, and then outlines the central faith questions raised by the 'subtle' and 'frontier' scientific disciplines. He suggests that if the gospel is to be relevant to an age of constant and far-reaching scientific discovery, then theology as a discipline must become more 'corrigible' and open to revision of some of its beliefs. And finally, some reflective prose by Edna Froese draws on metaphors and imagery from the field of physics to explore the Christian call to 'be the light of the world'. Her musings on the bending of light are a fitting substitution for the literary refractions section normally found in the *CGR*.

To conclude, I'd like to welcome Arthur Boers as the new book review editor for *The Conrad Grebel Review*. Arthur is a Mennonite pastor, Benedictine oblate, holds a Doctor of Ministry in spirituality and worship and is a bibliophile and author himself. Arthur's 1999 book, *Never Call them Jerks: Healthy Responses to Difficult Behaviour*, was named one of 1999's top ten books on ministry by the Academy of Parish Clergy. We look forward to seeing Arthur's mark on the book review section.

Marlene Epp, *Editor*

Cover Photo: Taken at Galapagos Islands by Norm Kaethler.

Christian Faith in a Scientific Age

Robert B. Mann

Introduction

The relationship between scientific inquiry and religious faith has been a subject of curiosity ever since the inception of science.[1] Indeed, one might date it as far back as ancient Greece, depending on one's definitions. However, in the last ten years it has attracted the broad interest of amateurs and specialists with an intensity hitherto unseen. Books are being written, conferences are taking place, public lectures are being given, debates held, research articles published, new organizations established and old ones experiencing new vitality, and the media have taken notice. Believers of all faiths and scientists from all disciplines are beginning to take part in the discussion.

What are the reasons for this veritable explosion of interest in religion and science? Certainly one significant factor has been the influence of the John Templeton Foundation, which has become quite well known for encouraging interdisciplinary work in science and theology through its prestigious Templeton prize and its Science and Religion Course Program.[2] However, other initiatives appear to be at work as well. The growth of the Internet in the past decade has given rise to a number of science/religion discussion groups, the best-known of which is the META listserver coordinated by William Grassie.[3] Post-secondary teachers have likewise been able to electronically network with one another to exchange ideas. Christian organizations of scientists interested in the relationship between their research, their profession, and their faith are now very active in Canada, the US, England, and elsewhere.[4] The creation-evolution debate in the US is ongoing, and its impact has been felt both in teaching guidelines in certain states and in the recent founding of the Discovery Institute,[5] a consortium of academics with a common interest in the possibility of empirically detecting intelligent design in living (and non-living?) things.[6,7]

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The relative significance of each of these factors could form the basis of doctoral work for a good number of sociology students, and it is not my purpose to consider this issue here. However, two background effects appear to be at work that at the least cannot be neglected and that I think would sooner or later have generated the sort of interest in the relationship between science and religion that we have now.

The first of these effects has been the persistence of religious faith worldwide. Although church attendance has been in decline in most industrialized nations (the United States being a notable exception), belief in God appears to remain important to most of the general population.[8] Furthermore, the education level of the overall population is higher than ever before in history, and more and more believers within various religious traditions are able to better articulate their faith and to appreciate the subtleties of difficult theological issues. Concurrently the roots of various faiths are under unprecedented levels of academic scrutiny, driven in part by advances in archaeology and Biblical criticism. The research on the historical Jesus provides an example of this,[9] a study that has gained media notoriety because of the Jesus Seminar.[10] Added to this mix is a growing level of religious pluralism in western nations; a near-instantaneous ability of news media to communicate internationally; and a growth of non-governmental peace, justice, and environmental groups whose concerns often dovetail with those of religious faith, especially Christianity.

The second effect has been the stunning advancement of science and technology in the twentieth century, particularly in the last decade. More than ever the results of science – whether from anthropology, physics, biochemistry, psychology, or any other subdiscipline – are raising questions about our most cherished beliefs at a dizzying rate. The pace of scientific progress is so rapid that even experts have difficulty keeping up with the latest developments. Consider just some of the new discoveries made in the past five years.[11] More than twenty new planets have been discovered outside of the solar system. Cloning moved from the realm of science fiction to science fact. Fermat's last theorem was finally proved, ending 200 years of mathematical speculation. Evidence has been collected that overwhelmingly indicates dinosaurs became extinct because of a comet that smashed into the Yucatan peninsula 65 million years ago. We have begun to unravel the mechanisms of how we age, offering

the prospect of radically extending human lifespans. Fibre optic cables now link our cities together in an information highway that will soon allow us to transmit the contents of an entire library in a matter of seconds. Genetically modified foods are now available in our supermarkets. The top quark – the last particle in the standard model of subatomic particles – was discovered. Animal intelligence has been shown to be far greater and subtler than was previously thought. Supergigantic black holes – 1,000,000 times heavier than our sun – have been found at the centers of most galaxies, and it is likely that our own galaxy has one at its core. The Human Genome project announced a preliminary blueprint of human DNA. Cosmology has provided us with a map of the detailed structure of the temperature of the night sky (the microwave background radiation, a remnant of the Big Bang) to such a high degree of precision that we can gain empirical information about the first instants of creation.

Such a rapid rate of discovery has a rather dazzling effect, both within and beyond the scientific community. We marvel not only at the technical expertise required to achieve these results but also at the very deep questions raised by the majesty and subtlety of nature. Such questions touch at the heart of religious faith. In a persistently religiously curious world it would seem inevitable that discussions of science and religion will arise.

My purpose here is to consider the broad impact of these discussions for Christian faith and theology. Such discussions typically are cast in either confrontational or conciliatory tones.[12] In the former case, the general presupposition is that the scientific and religious outlooks are two solitudes that inevitably conflict, or at best are independent of one another. In the latter case, the general approach is to articulate a theology that is integrated with a scientific worldview, or at least to open up a dialogue which attempts to find some common ground. I shall adopt an intermediate perspective between these two viewpoints, in which I shall raise some of the questions and implications for Christian theology that arise from modern scientific study. My purpose is to emphasize that the breadth and depth of scientific research is raising theological and practical concerns of relevance to the Christian community. I shall not attempt to provide specific responses to these concerns, although I will conclude with a brief proposal for a framework as to how they might be addressed. It is my hope that the Christian community will give these

issues the attention they merit, so that our faith can have integrity in a scientific age.

General Considerations

The differences between faith and science appear to be obvious. Most people regard science as being concerned with what is, whereas faith is interested in how things ought to be. Faith deals with "why" questions, whereas science deals with "how" questions. And whereas the experiences of faith are typically regarded as personal and private, science makes use of experimentation that yields a body of public data and knowledge.

The process of experimentation is at the heart of scientific inquiry and forms the framework by which its questions are addressed. Science begins with observations about something one might be interested in – the weather, the behavior of rabbits, the darkness of the sky at night. Next we make a guess – propose an explanation – about what might cause these observations. Then we carry out more observations and experiments that will test the proposed explanation or hypothesis. This process of improving hypotheses with experiments and then using the refined hypotheses to develop new experiments is repeated until we achieve genuine – albeit partial – understanding. The simpler and more elegant hypotheses are regarded as the most attractive, partly for aesthetic reasons but primarily because experience has repeatedly shown that they provide the best (i.e., maximally predictive) explanations of the phenomena. The scientific process is one that involves hard work, long hours, false starts, tedious computation, creative thinking, and psychological effort. However, most, if not all, scientists find it to be a very rewarding process – one that not only leads to the amazing results mentioned previously but also has enormous social, economic, and philosophical impact.

The process of science actually has a close relationship with the Judeo-Christian faith. Throughout the Bible we have testimony that the natural world is something that can be understood because it reflects the glory of a God who can be known. As we read in Psalm 19:

> The heavens declare the glory of God, and the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after Day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.[13]

For another example, in Proverbs 8 Wisdom (personified) was present before the creation and was intimately involved with its creation.[14] The universe is regarded neither as a place inhabited by capricious spirits, whose whims cannot be reliably known, nor as a place that God has abandoned. Rather, it is a creation reflective of its Creator's wisdom, yet distinct from its Creator. This same assumption – that the foundations of the earth, the laws of nature, reflect wisdom or reason – forms the underpinning of all scientific investigation. Simply put, if scientists didn't believe the universe could be understood with reason, they wouldn't bother to try.

John Polkinghorne has likened the relationship between Christian theology and scientific Inquiry to that between two cousins – beneath the differences there is a clear resemblance.[15] The common faith in the underlying wisdom of the universe is one example. Other examples include the common rationality, the common sense of awe at the majesty and intricacy of the natural world, the novelty present in scientific discovery and in coming to faith, and the incompleteness of understanding inherent in each discipline.

However, there is also an inherent tension between the two approaches, one that is often underappreciated by adherents on either side. Science regards the universe and its component parts as its own to be investigated. The relevant questions are objective in tone and character, with anything regarded as fair game for putting under the microscope of rational scrutiny. But faith – and especially Christian faith – views the world as an arena in which one seeks a relationship with God – the Great Other.[16] In this case the relevant questions are primarily concerned with personal involvement, whether to God, to family, to friends, to society, or to the natural environment.

The self-limiting objectivity which underlies the scientific method is chiefly responsible for its success. However, it also is at the heart of the tensions which are present in the science-faith dialogue because it raises the issue of what it means to explain something. From a faith perspective relational explanations (which include but are not restricted to the supernatural) are commonly viewed as sufficient. Explanation of a given phenomenon is in terms of either human or divine motivation: "God declared . . .," "I was called . . .," "It's enough to know God did it . . .," etc. The very nature of Christian faith encourages this relational perspective and its importance is central to

Christian theology. However, it is antithetical to a scientific approach, which seeks objective and impersonal explanations for (in principle all) phenomena. Explanation of a phenomenon through an assertion that "God did it" (effectively a supernatural explanation) is regarded as no explanation at all. To be satisfied with this kind of explanation is to effectively halt any scientific investigation into the subject. Conversely, to provide a scientific explanation for something suggests to many that no further motivational explanation is required – if earthquakes are explained by the shifting of tectonic plates, then what is meant by the assertion that God was somehow involved (or not) in the earthquake?

This is perhaps the chief question scientific research poses for theology. The more seamless the scientific description, the less relevant a theological explanation appears to be. This problem goes much deeper than the old "God in the gaps" conundrum, for it raises concerns that lie at the core of our understanding not only of God but of human freedom as well. Indeed, some scientists assert that theology has no epistemic content whatever but is at most a form of personal expression.[17] This perspective is not an acceptable one for Christianity, which claims an evidentiary basis for God's action in this world.

The challenge for modern Christian theology is to articulate the relevance of faith explanations in a culture where scientific explanations are so highly valued and effective. In sending out his disciples, Jesus advised them to be as wise as serpents and innocent as doves.[18] In proclaiming the Christian gospel in a scientific age, we likewise will find ourselves steering a careful path between skepticism and credulity.[19]

The traditional issues

The science-religion dialogue has traditionally been concerned with cosmology, evolution, and miracles.[1] This is no accident, since these subjects are rooted in some of our deepest questions of faith. Although the intellectual territory they present has been well travelled, each subject continues to raise profound questions for Christians in a scientific culture.

Cosmology is the subject devoted to addressing the question, Where did everything come from? Although born in antiquity, it remains one of the most exciting fields of science today.[20] The twentieth century revealed more about the structure and origins of the universe than humankind had learned in all the preceding centuries combined. We have learned that our universe has a

definite history, one that began about 15 billion years ago. The contents of our universe are the remnants of a gigantic explosion – the Big Bang – whose residual heat we detect in the form of the microwave background, a bath of radiation at a temperature of 3 °K. By human terms it is utterly immense, containing 100 billion galaxies, each of which has 100 billion stars. It is expanding, with the latest supernova data suggesting that (on average) all galaxies are receding from one another at ever-increasing rates of speed due to an overall expansion of space and time.

Cosmology presents us with a set of limit questions that provide fertile ground for theological reflection.[21] Did anything come before the Big Bang? If so, what? If not, what is the nature and significance of the initial instant of creation? What is the origin of the particular features of our universe? Is the physical description of the cosmos equivalent to an explanation of its existence, or is something more required? Is a Designer responsible for these features in some way, and if so, how? What level of influence (if any) is exerted by the Designer over the design? What is a theologically plausible balance between chance and necessity?

An intriguing feature of cosmological theories is that the equations of physics which underlie them depend upon physical constants that must take on very particular values in order for life as we know it to be able to exist. These constants, such as the strengths of the forces governing electromagnetism or radioactivity, the rate of the expansion of the universe, or the values of the masses of subatomic particle, are not determined by the equations themselves. There is no logical obstruction in their taking on any desired value, and so they must be determined by experiment. However, even very small adjustments in their empirically determined values yield logically possible universes that are uninhabitable (as determined from the equations). For example, if the relative mass of the neutron to the proton is adjusted by as little as one percent, stable stars would not exist, and stable molecular compounds such as water could not form. Further study of the equations indicates that of the possible universes one could obtain from the basic equations of physics by adjusting the physical constants of nature, only a very tiny fraction of them are inhabitable by carbon-based life. The numerical coincidences required for this to happen by chance are enormous.

Since we are living things, we can only live in a universe for which these numerical coincidences are satisfied, and the features of nature that we observe will at the least be constrained by this possibility. This idea is referred to as the Anthropic Principle.[22] At first sight it would appear to provide comfort to people of faith, for the many empirical coincidences required for life to exist are quite suggestive of the existence of a rational, purposeful, and intelligent creator who has an interest in life.[1,15] However, two alternate explanations are possible. One is that the constants take on the values they do because of some more fundamental physical theory of which we are currently unaware. The other is that any universe which can exist logically also exists empirically, and we happen to live in one of the very few conducive to life.[23]

Is all of existence simply the result of some grand cosmic accident? Or is it possible we are part of a creation? This is the principal theological issue that cosmology raises.

Evolutionary biology raises similar questions to that of cosmology, but in a more pointed way. It addresses the question, where did *we* come from? All religions attach significance to life, and Christianity particularly asserts that God has a special role and interest in the origin and development of life, especially human life. The relationship that humans have toward one another and their creator is central to both peace theology and salvation theology, and so whatever scientific information there is to bear on the nature of life will have at least indirect theological relevance.

As with cosmology, a great deal was learned in the twentieth century about the structure and development of life.[24] In the cells of all living things is a molecule called DNA, whose structure encodes all of the genetic information relevant to a particular organism. DNA has the property of self-replication, and this property forms the basis of evolution.[25] The basic idea of evolution is that, given a set of differing replicators, those that are most effective at reproducing in a given environment will be the ones that appear in succeeding generations. For example, if two equal-sized populations of green lizards and brown lizards are present in an environment which has predators that eat brown lizards but not green ones, then after a few generations there will be few, if any, brown lizards. The environment, by virtue of the presence of the predator, has selected out green lizards, and so has naturally selected out the

green lizard replicators. No replicating process is perfect, of course, and small errors (mutations) in the replicators will be selected (i.e., more likely to reproduce) by some environments and not by others. The evolutionary hypothesis is that this mechanism of natural selection through mutating replicators is sufficient to explain the complexity of all life: the forms of life we see today are here because their ancestors were the most efficient at reproducing in the environmental conditions they found themselves in.

So, evolution provides an answer to the origin of life question – but it is one that many of its proponents and opponents find theologically unattractive. The reason is the same: the process of natural selection through replicator mutation raises the question of God's role in at least the development of life, if not in its origins. Simply put, if the complexity of life arises from a process of environmental selection, what is left for God to do?

Much has been written about this subject, and feelings about it run intensely on both sides of the issue. I shall confine myself to a few brief remarks. The issue runs much deeper than the question of literalist interpretations of the opening chapters of Genesis. The Christian assertion of a loving God who has an interest in life faces a formidable challenge. If evolution is "God's mechanism," clarification is needed as to what this means. What exactly is it that God does that would allow someone to distinguish Him/Her from a deistic spectator? How are catastrophes (such as the comet that purportedly killed the dinosaurs) incorporated into the theological picture? If the structure of life provides evidence of intelligent design (as a growing number of researchers assert[6,7]), then by what means has the design been actualized? If evolution is wrong, then what is the mechanism underlying life's origin and development? To say "God did it" is no more adequate an answer than saying "Toyota did it" when asking about the construction of a car. Moreover, why has the evolutionary paradigm been so successful in other fields of biology if it is incorrect? An improved description would at least have to explain that.

I am not claiming that the above questions are fatal to the assertions of Christian theology, and indeed there is much ongoing work in this subject.[26] However, they present unique challenges to Christian faith that are not easily dismissed by an intellectually honest person. Unlike cosmology, whose foundations reside in equations of physics that appear to transcend the universe they describe,[21] evolution deals with extant structures within a particular system.

The challenge evolution presents is that of incorporating the logic of mutative self-replication in a changing environment with the claim of a God of love who finds humans much more valuable than the birds of the air.[27]

Miracles are the third traditional aspect of the science/religion discussion, one that is typically underappreciated.[28] Since (by definition) miracles are not repeatable under controlled conditions, this suggests to many that they are not legitimate subjects of scientific investigation. For skeptics this is sufficient reason to dismiss them, whereas for believers it is a comfort to think that there are perhaps limits to science. Miracles refer to phenomena that apparently lie outside of the (known) natural order yet are connected to it at least insofar as they are reportedly observable. In my opinion this makes them legitimate subjects for rational scientific inquiry. That the subject of investigation might limit the inquiry in some way ought not to dismiss them from consideration, for all scientific investigation encounters limits one way or another.

The foundations of Christianity are intimately connected with miracles, for the central assertion is that God was incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ. The New Testament buttresses this claim to no small extent by referring to a considerable number of miracles Jesus performed, such as walking on water,[29] healing the sick,[30] calming a storm,[31] converting water into wine,[32] and more. These miracles are described in a fairly concrete way, often noting the degree of skepticism on the part of the people who observed the phenomena. For example, Mary's first response to the announcement that she will give birth to a son[33] is to ask, How can this be, since I am a virgin? – an intriguing display of scientific curiosity in a prescientific culture. She at least knows that virgins don't have babies. Moreover, the gospel writer Luke knows this, and expects his readers to know it. Of course the most important miracle of all in Christianity is that of the resurrection of Jesus, and three gospels note the doubts held by the followers of Jesus concerning this phenomenon.[34]

In a modern scientific age the task for Christianity is to articulate the role and nature of the miracles that play such an integral part in its foundations. This is a difficult challenge. To assert that the miracles did not take place is to deny any special action of God in the manner described in the New Testament (as well as casting aspersions on the integrity of the NT writers). If miracles are simply poorly understood natural phenomena, then what special role does

God or Jesus play in their instantiation? For example, if Jesus' calming of the storm on the lake is only coincidence, what remains of the status of Jesus' authority and of the theological significance of the event? Conversely, if we affirm that miracles occur, what exactly is it that is being affirmed? Does the water change into wine instantaneously, or is there some interventionist sequential process by which it took place? If we assert a virgin birth of Jesus,[35] what is it that we are asserting? The New Testament does not provide us with sufficient data to fully answer these sorts of questions in detail. However, in my view our current levels of scientific knowledge and biblical criticism should lead to a reappraisal of the nature of miracles. At the very least we can outline what are and are not plausible scientific understandings of such events, and reassess our theological reflections of them.

Of course, an intellectually honest investigation of this sort would not stop at Christian miracles, but would go on to investigate miracles in other faiths and miracles which lie outside of sacred writings of the various religious traditions. Those miracles not judged as fabrications then present new material that must be incorporated into a Christian worldview. The task is made all the more difficult because of the widespread nature of poor reportage, false claims, and pseudoscience. Yet I believe it must be attempted if we are to maintain the integrity of the gospel message in a fresh way.

The subtle disciplines

Many scientific disciplines are not obviously connected to theology or a religious outlook on the world. These include subjects such as physics, mathematics, geology, and many of the applied sciences. However, further reflection indicates that these subjects also have a part to play in the science/religion discussion. Geology is perhaps the most obvious example. Indeed, it was Sir Charles Lyell's book *Principles of Geology*, in which the geographical features of the earth were portrayed as arising from slow-working natural process, that provided a formative influence on Darwin's ideas concerning evolution.[36] Although evolution has since tended to eclipse geology's role in the relationship between theology and science,[37] the earth sciences still have an ongoing part to play.

Geology is the only discipline outside of cosmology that provides us with an empirical window into the very distant past.[38] From it we have learned that the earth is a place in which natural processes operate gradually over very

long periods of time to yield rivers, mountains, valleys, islands, and canyons. By its methods, the earth has been determined to be about 4.5 billion years old. The earth is a dynamic object, in which the continents move on tectonic plates (occasionally giving rise to earthquakes and volcanic activity), and its interior has a multilayered structure whose details are still being understood. Catastrophism, in which the earth's observed features appeared due to a sequence of cataclysmic events, has been ruled out as the dominant formation mechanism. Nevertheless, more recent research has indicated that rare events, such as the earth's hypothesized encounter with a comet, can induce major changes over very short periods, as noted above. In the last twenty years extraterrestrial spacecraft have indicated that several of the moons of Jupiter and Saturn also have dynamic geological properties which are only just now beginning to be understood.[39]

Although geology raises challenges for theology similar to those provided by evolution in terms of the origin of the earth, it has its own distinctive set of questions. Since the earth is a place in which geological events can unexpectedly produce human disaster, in what sense can we attribute goodness to creation? Indeed, in what sense (if any) can we assert that creation has fallen from some state of pre-paradise, given what we now know about the earth's formation and its dynamic structure?[40] Seismic activity introduces a small element of randomness into everyday living in certain parts of the world that many find difficult to reconcile with a God in full control of events. The same can be said for the weather, in which lightning bolts occasionally strike. Yet we have biblical testimony that God's purported influence in the world extends to geological events, both apocalyptically[41] and historically,[42] including even the resurrection of Jesus. Geology raises the question of the degree and character of God's dominion over the planetary-sized phenomena that exert an influence over our lives that we so often take for granted.

Yet these same phenomena also induce within us a deep sense of awe and wonder, a sense which geological understanding can enhance. A trip to the Rocky Mountains or the Grand Canyon excites in people not only curiosity as to where they came from but also a sense of the finitude of existence and reverence for the natural order and what might lie beyond it. If our geological curiosity can in part be satisfied by the scientific method, perhaps our reverence

is indicative of a God who upholds the natural order. But the imprint of that God in geological processes remains obscure. Can it be clarified?

One possible means of clarifying God's role in the natural order is as the author of the laws and processes that geology – and all of science – describes. This is the domain of physics, that subject whose goal is to understand nature at its most fundamental level possible. Physics is the most exact of all the sciences. It deals with the deepest organizational levels, the most extreme of natural conditions, and uses the most exact mathematical equations, all of which seem remote from the human concerns of Christian faith.

However, physics has had a major impact on philosophy and theology,[43] and its methods are regarded as paradigmatic for the other sciences. The belief of Renaissance scientists in the existence of a Lawgiver led them to seek an interpretation of the natural world in terms of laws.[1] This conviction in an underlying wisdom of the natural order has been noted above, and it was something about which Newton was quite explicit[44]: *There exists an infinite and omnipresent spirit in which matter is moved according to mathematical laws*. Newton's conviction of the omnipresence of a God who is the ultimate causal agent led him to develop laws of physics which are taught worldwide today in high schools and universities, and on which all of the applied sciences and engineering disciplines rely.

These laws are now referred to as the classical laws of physics. They are deterministic (the future state of any system can be predicted from its present state), reductionistic (the behavior of an entire system is determined by the behavior of its constituent parts), and realistic (the laws of physics provide an objective description of the world in an absolute space and time, independent of any observer). To a high degree of numerical precision they describe the behavior of galaxies, planets, geological processes, fluids, gases, ballistics, light, heat, and sound. They naturally lead to a view of any natural system as a clockwork machine that operates according to knowable and reliable laws. The universe itself is regarded as the ultimate piece of clockwork, set in place by a deity who lets it run by itself.

The twentieth century witnessed a revolution in scientific thought in which all of these ideas were overthrown.[45] The experimental confirmation of Einstein's theories of special and general relativity indicated that space and

time were not absolute, but were instead an interconnected dynamical structure that both influences physical events and is influenced by them. For example, gravitation has the effect of slowing time down relative to distant observers for whom gravity's effects are weaker. Experiments carried out on matter at atomic and subatomic distance scales indicated that physical systems are not deterministic but instead must be described in probabilistic terms. More recent work on physical systems such as coupled pendulums indicate that very small changes in the initial state of a system lead to incalculably large changes in its subsequent development. Quantum mechanics and chaos theory respectively describe these phenomena, and they together challenge the classical notion of physical determinism. They also challenge classical reductionism, since in many circumstances it is not possible to meaningfully reduce a system to its constituent parts. All three together force considerable revision of the notion of realism, since the experimental contrivances used to explore a given system can have a non-negligible effect on its development.

Relativity, quantum mechanics, and chaos theory have indicated that the universe has a much richer structure than anyone imagined a century ago, one that provides fertile ground for theological reflection. They form reminders that our pictures of God ought not to be limited by our current understanding of the way things are. The inadequacies they point out in the clockwork universe provide some genuinely new possibilities for envisioning how God might act in a seemingly deterministic world. They raise anew the question as to what kind of God the God of modern physics is.[46]

The laws of physics describe with very high precision the natural world, by mathematical equations that go well beyond their original formulation. For example, the equations of the quantum theory of electromagnetism predict experimental outcomes to ten decimal places in accuracy, a level of empirical precision far greater than anything anticipated by the original practitioners of the theory. So effectively do the equations of physics work that Eugene Wigner commented that mathematics is an unreasonably effective gift that we neither understand nor deserve.[47] Is it indeed a reflection of the divine mind?[48]

The mathematical equations underlying physical law do not seem to need the natural world in order to exist. They have a highly transcendent character, one that seems to exist "out there" in a realm of abstract thought.[49] The ontological

status of mathematics is an intriguing question that continues to occupy the attention of philosophers. It is difficult to imagine that the truth of a mathematical theorem is dependent upon the existence of mathematicians, human life, or any other form of life for that matter.[50] Yet at the same time mathematics is constructed to serve purposes, not only for physics, but also for other fields such as finance, biostatistics, and circuit design.

The theological status of mathematics represents an avenue of study that is largely unexplored. Is mathematics discovered or invented? Did God invent it, or is it an intrinsic part of the mind of God? Why are some mathematical theories fruitful in science and others not? Is this fruitfulness somehow representative of the choice a Creator might make in designing a universe?

The frontier disciplines

Several areas of science raise concerns that are much more immediate and practical than those discussed above, and that occupy a considerable degree of public attention. They include genetics, psychology, ecology, and computer science as well as the applied sciences, whose technological character has a direct impact on our society and our lives. The territory is too vast to be covered here, so I shall confine myself to a few brief remarks.

Of all the sciences, psychology enjoys the greatest level of popularity among Christians. This is no surprise, given the relational character of religious faith noted above – psychology is the science pertaining to relationship and behavior, and so we should expect it to be of interest to people of faith. However, it is also the science for which it is most difficult to deal with effects of human bias, and underlying theological assumptions about human nature have an enormous influence on how clinical psychology is practiced. It is not my purpose to discuss these issues here.

A general theological question raised by psychology is the nature of the self.[51] What does it mean to be a conscious being? Do conscious beings have free will? If so, what are the limits to this free will? The very nature of these sorts of questions is simultaneously scientific and theological in tone. Only in recent years are neuroscience experiments being carried out to empirically determine (partial?) answers to them,[52] answers that, in my view, should have a profound impact on Christian thought. For the core of the gospel message is

to proclaim a God of love who has a special interest in humans and who calls them to right relationship with one another. It is difficult to understand how this message can be meaningful unless there exists genuine freedom of will to respond in love to actions of love.

Are we free to act? Or are we biological machines carrying out algorithmic instructions, our "sense of personal identity and free will . . . no more than the behavior of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules"?[53] It is very difficult to see how to reconcile the latter viewpoint with a faith perspective. Indeed, the judgments we make concerning human personhood and the freedom to act in a lawlike world are analogous to those we make concerning divine personhood and God's freedom to act.[54] A naturalistic view of the world that would expunge it of a freely acting Creator might also be expected to expunge it of freely acting conscious entities as well.[51] Yet to assert free will is to assert a fundamental limit to either the domain of scientific inquiry or to the completeness of its descriptive power.[21] Will experimental work in this area inevitably be laden with theological presuppositions? Alternatively, can a theology of human freedom suggest new experiments that might be performed?

The information sciences provide related theological challenges. It is estimated that within twenty years a desktop computer will have the processing capacity of a human brain.[55] Efforts are in place now to develop a computer that will simulate human consciousness. What will it mean to have a machine that thinks, with opinions, emotions, ideas, and expectations? Will it be alive or conscious in some sense? If we judge it to be so, should we make it part of our human community? Should we make it part of our faith community? Do we preach the gospel to it?[56]

Genetics provides an alternate perspective on what it means to be human.[57] Upon completion of the human genome project, the entire nucleotide sequence of human DNA will be determined and we will know the blueprint of human life. Of course, it will be a further task still to interpret the blueprint – but obtaining the plans is a necessary first step. But a first step toward what? The prospects offered by this knowledge raise new questions for Christians (and indeed everyone) to wrestle with. Following the healing ministry of Jesus, it would seem reasonable to use this information to cure genetically based diseases. Yet this same knowledge faces us with the possibility of manipulating

human genetic information to achieve desired ends. But whose ends? Those of the parents or those of the government in power? And which desires? If we find ourselves able to engineer beauty, intelligence, muscular strength, and longevity in future generations – even to a limited extent – to what extent should we act on this knowledge? Where is God calling us?

Ecology provides us with yet a different perspective, one that calls into question our relationship to all other things.[40,58] We have learned that all life forms have a degree of interconnectedness that cannot be neglected in terms of human development. Species extinction, global warming, erosion of the ozone layer, pesticides, acid rain, air pollution, and nuclear waste are all issues of public concern rooted in scientific study. If we are to take seriously the call of God to be stewards of creation, then it will be necessary to take ecology into account. The question raised is one familiar to Christians: What does it mean to be stewards of creation? However, finding the answers to this question in the last twenty-five years has been very complex, due to the enormity of the problems and the interconnectedness of the issues. The challenge faced by the church is to articulate a call to stewardship of the earth that is scientifically sound and biblically well motivated.

Conclusion

Science raises questions for Christian believers that they ought not to ignore. These questions range from the practical to the abstract, touch upon both private and public spheres of influence, and impact on our notions of both God and humanity. While each topic merits far more attention than space permits here, I would like to propose a framework for theology that might be helpful in tackling these issues.

My proposal is that Christian theology become a much more corrigible discipline than it presently appears to be, by which I mean it should be open to revision as relevant new information becomes available and which ideally is cumulative in its insights. To do this with integrity would involve a clarification of the distinctions between its main assertions and its more peripheral aspects. Christian theology is predicated on a core set of beliefs that over the ages have been encoded in things like catechisms and statements of faith. Although many Christians have an intuition as to what these things are, in the development of theological perspectives relevant to scientific concerns it is essential to distinguish

the core beliefs from the peripheral ones, and to specify to what extent these beliefs can be corroborated or refuted by further experience. One expects the core beliefs to be much more resistant to revision that the peripheral ones, as is the case in scientific research.

An example might be helpful here. Christian theology assumes the existence of a personal God having particular characteristics, among them omniscience. Taking this to be a core assumption, one could then ask how God's omniscience might be manifest in this world, and develop certain auxiliary theological proposals concerning this idea. Along these lines, Polkinghorne[19] has suggested that the challenge posed to classical determinism from quantum theory and chaotic phenomena has potential implications for understanding God's omniscience, taken to mean that God knows everything that can be known. However, if the future is genuinely unknowable (as quantum theory and chaos imply), then even an omniscient God cannot know the future. It is a revision of a traditional understanding of God's foreknowledge that strives to be faithful to scripture while taking modern science into account. It is a corrigible picture, one that could be revised and cumulatively improved in light of further scientific developments and theological reflection. It also has wider implications for theodicy and free will that merit further study.

If theology and science are going to have any meaningful form of discourse, then the verisimilitudinous character of the scientific enterprise will have to be taken into account. My goal in sketching out the issues in this paper is to encourage Christian theology to become a much more corrigible discipline.[59] A gospel relevant to a scientific age demands nothing less.

Notes

[1] For an historical overview see I. Barbour, *Religion and Science*, (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1997).

[2] Further information is available at the website www. ctns.org si

[3] See the website www.meta-list.org.

[4] In Canada the organization is the Canadian Scientific and Christian Affiliation; see www.csca.ca.

[5] See www.discovery.org.

[6] W. Dembski, *The Design Inference* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

[7] M. Behe, *Darwin's Black Box* (New York: Touchstone,1998).

[8] For a detailed exposition of the situation in Canada, see R. Bibby, *Fragmented Gods: The*

Poverty and Potential of Religion in Canada (Toronto: Irwin, 1987) and *Unknown Gods: the Ongoing Story of Religion in Canada* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1997).

[9] M. A. Powell, *Jesus as a Figure in History* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998).

[10] R.W. Funk, R.W. Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (New York: MacMillan, 1993).

[11] For an overview of contemporary science and the upcoming challenges it faces, see J. Maddox, *What Remains to be Discovered* (New York: Touchstone, 1998).

[12] See I. Barbour, *Religion and Science*, for a detailed consideration of the different ways of relating science and religion.

[13] Psalm 19:1,2

[14] Proverbs 8:22-31

[15] J. Polkinghorne, *Serious Talk* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1995).

[16] *The Writings of Martin Buber*, ed. W. Herberg (New York: Meridian Books, 1956).

[17] The best known proponent of this view is Richard Dawkins, who contends, for example, that "faith is the great cop-out, the great excuse to evade the need to think and evaluate evidence. Faith is belief in spite of, even perhaps because of, the lack of evidence." (From a lecture extracted from the Nullifidian, 1994.)

[18] Matt. 10:16

[19] J. Polkinghorne, *The Faith of a Physicist* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 31.

[20] For a review of modern cosmology see J. Maddox, *What Remains to be Discovered*, ch. 1.

[21] For a discussion of cosmological issues from a theological perspective, see G.F.R. Ellis, *Cosmology Explained* (Boyers/Bowerdean, 1994)

[22] B.J. Carr and M.J. Rees, Nature 278 (1979): 605.

[23] For a detailed exposition on this point, see J. Leslie, *Universes* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989).

[24] For a review of current research in evolutionary biology see Maddox, *What Remains to be Discovered*, chapters 4-7.

[25] R. Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, 2nd. ed.(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

[26] P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Christianity and Evolution* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971); A. Peacocke, *God and the New Biology* (London: Dent, 1986); J. Templeton and R. Herrmann, *The God Who Would Be Known* (Templeton Foundation Press, 1998); J. Haught, *God after Darwin: A Theology of Evolution* (Boulder: Westview, 1999).

[27] Matt. 6:26

[28] A classic text on this subject is C.S. Lewis, *Miracles* (New York: Macmillan,1947).

[29] Mark 6:47-51

[30] Matt. 8:1-4

[31] Luke 8:22-25

[32] John 2:1-11

[33] Luke 1:34

[34] Matt. 28:17; Luke 24:38; John 20:25

[35] For a recent discussion of this subject, see R.J. Berry, *Science and Christian Belief* 8 (1996):101.

[36] C. Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (New York: Modern Library Paperback, 1998; first published

1859).

[37] An early attempt at reflecting on the relationship between geology and theology was made by W. Buckland, *Geology and Mineralogy Considered with reference to Natural Theology* (London: William Pickering, 1837).

[38] For an overview of modern geology and its relationship to Christian faith and to the other sciences, see Howard J. Van Till, Robert E. Snow, John H. Stek, and Davis A. Young, *Portraits of Creation: Biblical and Scientific Perspectives on the World's Formation.* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1990).

[39] A. McEwen et al. "Dynamic geophysics of Io," in *Time-Variable Phenomenon in the Jovian System*, NASA Special Publication 494 (1989): 11-46; P. Schenk et al. *Geophys. Res. Lett.* 24, (1997): 2467.

[40] A recent discussion of this issue is given by R.J. Berry, *Science and Christian Belief*, 11 (1999): 29.

[41] Rev. 6:12

[42] Matt. 28:2

[43] A recent treatise on work in this area is in *Physics, Philosophy and Theology*, eds. R.J. Russell, W.R. Stoeger, and G.V. Coyne (Vatican Press, 1988).

[44] J. Brooke, in *Let Newton Be!*, ed. J. Fauvel et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988),169.

[45] For more detailed discussion of these issues see, I. Barbour, *Religion and Science*, ch. 7; J. Maddox, *What Remains to be Discovered,* ch. 2,3.

[46] For a detailed discussion of Christian theology from the perspective of a physicist, see J. Polkinghorne, *The Faith of a Physicist.*

[47] E. Wigner, *Comm. Pure & App. Math.* 13 (1960): 1.

[48] W. Pollard, *Am. J. Physics* 52 (1984): 877.

[49] For a discussion of this and other views of mathematics, see R. Penrose, *The Emperor's New Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), ch. 3.

[50] P.C.W. Davies, *New Scientist*, 15 October 1988, 58.

[51] For a discussion of the various views of the self, see S. Blackmore, *The Meme Machine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), ch. 17.

[52] For a recent overview see T. Beardsley, *Scientific American*, October 1997 issue; see also the section on Cognitive Neuroscience in *Science*, 275, (March 15, 1997): 1580-1610.

[53] F. Crick, *The Astonishing Hypothesis: The Scientific Search for the Soul* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1994), 3.

[54] For further discussion on this point see P. Clayton, *God and Contemporary Science* (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1997), ch. 6.

[55] Ray Kurzweil, *The Age of Spiritual Machines* (New York: Viking, 1999).

[56] A. Foerst, *"Cog, a Humanoid Robot, And the Question of the Image of God,"* in *Zygon, Journal for Religion and Science* 33 (1998): 91.

[57] See T. Peters, *Playing God?* (New York: Routledge, 1997) for a thoughtful exposition on the promises and perils of genetic engineering.

[58] R.J. Berry, *Science and Christian Belief* 7 (1995): 21.

[59] See N. Murphy and G.F.R. Ellis, *On the Moral Nature of the Universe* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996) for a proposal to integrate scientific, ethical, and theological ideas in one framework.

Is Ethics Also Among the Sciences? An Evaluation of Nancey Murphy and George Ellis's Theological Proposals

Roland Spjuth

For a long time it has been a common assumption that ethics and science belong to entirely different categories of knowledge. In the modern scientific conception of the world everything happened according to physically determined laws, and thus it became increasingly difficult to anchor morality to an objective order in the universe. Consequently, it has been customary to hold that moral judgments are nothing but expressions of preference (values) that cannot be derived from statements of "facts." Even when morality was defended as a rational enterprise, it was seen as another kind of rationality than the one used to explain "facts" within the natural sciences. Otherwise, the dominance of determined laws would make impossible a realm of human freedom and responsibility.[1] If this is the true picture, then moral disputes can hardly be *rationally* settled within a scientific discourse.

There is today a growing dissatisfaction with such a moral vacuum. Important ethical questions are raised within natural, political, and economic sciences, and therefore an increasing number of scientists find it unacceptable to leave this decisive aspect out of scientific discourse. For many, it is just such a refusal of public and scientific evaluation of morality which bears partial responsibility for the (post)modern crises of fragmentation and relativism. Thus, some would argue, it is necessary to overcome the modern bifurcation between fact and value in favor of a more integrative and unified understanding of knowledge and ethics.

This article seeks to examine whether an ethical presence among the sciences is only an occasional rupture of normality – as a king Saul among the prophets – or whether it is indeed possible to overcome current bifurcations.

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From the tradition of the Radical Reformation, a connection between ethics and science is not unproblematic. Such a position has often implied trust in a generally accessible morality, a standpoint which in practice has only served to justify dominant moral views as "natural." Is not science the imperialistic power which subjugates everything that is other? And is not morality (to change the metaphor) rather to be pursued at a prophetic distance from the empire, as a transgression and a rupture of "scientific normality?"

Nancey Murphy and George F. R. Ellis in their recent book *On the Moral Nature of the Universe*[2] make a brave attempt to pursue the scientific nature of ethics from within an Anabaptist (or Radical reformation) heritage, especially as it has been formulated by John H. Yoder. Murphy is a philosopher and an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren in the US, and Ellis is professor of Mathematics and Astronomy and a Quaker activist from South Africa. Such an attempt is a promising point of departure for an evaluation of the possibilities and limitations of the claim that ethics is among the sciences. Is it possible to argue for the rationality of ethics, without subjugating the Anabaptist heritage to the dominating powers of society and science?

On the moral nature of the universe

Murphy and Ellis are convinced that any wall of separation between science and faith is most unfortunate. Their book is a powerful challenge to modern assumptions that have pushed ethics, metaphysics, and theology away from the public arena that for too long has been controlled by so-called value-free science and political pragmatism. Instead of separation, they seek to maximize the overlaps between reason and ethics. Ethics must again be a scientific study. However, such an attempt presumes that ethical statements refer not just to personal taste but somehow to structures in our common universe. Ethics must have an objective base in the moral nature of the universe. And if one rejects the idea that all ethics can be reduced to "facts" in the material realm, then this assumes a transcendent goodness and beauty that is beyond natural explanation but still present in the world as a claim on us to seek the ultimate good. Thus, a claim that ethics is among the sciences must first clarify how one ought to understand the presence of a transcendent and final purpose (*telos*). Further, metaphysical and theological perspectives must be interrelated with the structures of the universe and, consequently, within the

scientific domain (the question of ontology). Second, such an undertaking must show how ethical reasoning can be evaluated in a scientific manner (the question of epistemology).

Murphy and Ellis's ontological presuppositions imply that the universe is seen as a unified whole. Of course, they do not want to reduce every phenomena of reality to the same level. Instead, they regard the universe as a multi-levelled complex order where different systems hierarchically co-ordinate with one another (19-22).[3] The total hierarchical system must then be seen as an open and incomplete system that needs a transcendent reference. Thus, theology and morality can be placed at the top of the hierarchy.[4] Ethics (and theology) becomes a science without being subordinated to the categories of natural science.

However, in order to integrate ethics into this stratified world-view, Murphy and Ellis must split the hierarchy into two branches above the level of physics, chemistry and biology. The reason for this split is that they distinguish between top-down *effects* and top-down *actions*. The first branch includes the sciences dealing with non-human realities. In this material realm, they accept that the hierarchical system is rigorously determined by a set of laws that cannot be altered. In order to distinguish this branch from the one guided by intentional actions, they differentiate a branch consisting of ecology, geology, astrophysics and cosmology from another including psychology and social and applied sciences (see 86). This split gives a specific location for ethics. Moreover, they regard this as their central contribution to the dialogue between theology and science and to the notion of the hierarchical order (see xvi and 18). This location of ethics depends on the assertion that every system which includes intentions is driven by goals. But goals presuppose an implicit or explicit vision of the good quality of life. Thus, "the hierarchy of the human sciences calls for a top layer . . . . [I]t is necessary to have an answer to the question of the ultimate meaning of human life, or to use a less ambiguous term, of the final purpose or *telos* of human life. This has traditionally been understood as the province of ethics" (87). The suggestion that ethics should be at the top of the human-sciences branch does not imply that they contend the *telos* of human morality can be derived as a bottom-up distillation from the social sciences. The ethical core can surely be supported from below by the social sciences. But Murphy and Ellis clearly acknowledge that it can only

be grounded and confirmed from the top down in a metaphysical or theological interpretation of the nature of ultimate reality (173). There is no claim that ethics (and the goal of social sciences) can be founded on a referential relation with the objective orders of creation.

In relation to the tendency of science to subjugate everything that is other, Murphy and Ellis propose an ethical core that seemingly challenges normal explanations of the moral character of the universe: "Self-renunciation for the sake of the other is humankind's highest goal" (118). Their claim is that the core of a scientific interpretation of the universe ought to be the notion of the self-emptying of God – a core they summarize with the Greek concept of *kenosis* used in Phil 2:7. Though they argue for the ecumenical significance of this view, their presentation is largely shaped by the Anabaptist tradition and more specifically by Mennonite theologian John H. Yoder (see 173-201).[5] From Yoder's kenotic doctrine of God and from his non-coercive understanding of the relationship between God and the universe, ethical pacifism logically follows. But ethical pacifism is not just an individual program for some heroic Christians. It is rather the clue for interpreting the universe (*cosmos*) and for social-scientific programs (*polis*). So instead of viewing biological evolution as confirming the survival of the fittest, they propose a kenotic reading of evolution as a recycling of life through giving of one's life; that is, a cruciform cosmos (211-13).[6] And instead of accepting the inevitability of violence in all societies, they argue for the social possibility of a less violent society.[7] The kenotic core also suggests a doctrine of divine self-limitation and vulnerability: the relation between God and creation is noncoercive (209). Thus, their scientific program provides the rationale for a non-interventionist divine activity within physical reality, as well as God's respect for the freedom of others even to the point of evil and suffering. This does not just make space for freedom, it also explains why the ultimate goal of nature is hidden: God does not force us to believe.

When Murphy and Ellis formulate such an ethical core, they obviously move beyond the observation of present realities. And they underscore this by citing Yoder's rejection of the view that the Incarnation ratifies the assumed nature as revelation. "The point is just the opposite; that God broke through the borders of our standard definitions of what is human, and gave a new, formative definition in Jesus" (183).[8] In some of the most challenging parts of the book, the authors then explicate the social embodiment of their ethic in

contrast to most current social opinions. In the realm of jurisprudence, they reject the present penal system based on retribution and state monopoly in favor of a system that aims at restoration to the community (122-26). They discuss alternative economic strategies that do not presuppose selfishness (126-31) and argue for consensus decision-making in the political realm (131-35). Finally, they attempt to produce empirical confirmations for non-violent strategies (141-72). In the current situation, with pressing problems to face, the only ethical science of interest is one that can stimulate a social embodiment that goes beyond present arrangements. As such, it surely takes us far beyond conventional views of scientific normality.

From such a critical and transcendental stance, is it possible for Murphy and Ellis to argue that ethics is among the sciences (the question of epistemology)? First, ethical convictions about goals and intentions are, as a matter of fact, presupposed in the social sciences. And since to a great extent they structure and direct these sciences, it becomes mandatory to evaluate even this higher level. For only when the end of human existence is explicated can one make scientific studies about the means for proper social transformations (see 142). To argue for a pure science that ignores the need to apply the results of scientific research in social management is, for Murphy and Ellis, a form of "academic snobbery" (79). In order to make useful contributions to the running of society, social scientists must be clear about worthy goals for a society. Thus the authors argue the practical necessity of the ethical belonging among the sciences.

Secondly, as seen above, Murphy and Ellis divide their hierarchy in order to make space for intentional actions. Yet this split is not the traditional hermeneutical distinction between natural sciences and human sciences that would question the scientific character of ethics. The scientific character of ethics, and of the social sciences, does not rest on a qualitative distinction among different branches of science. Of course, it is obvious that ethical concepts and judgments are not amenable to scientific testing as we ordinarily understand it – namely, through an assessment of their correspondence with facts. The scientific evaluation of ethics must rather take the form of implanting, testing, and refining a transcendentally grounded vision, something which can be done only in retrospect. However, Murphy and Ellis claim that this does not make ethics radically different from other sciences.

Their book presupposes a methodology that Murphy has formulated in dependence on the research program of Imre Lakatos,[9] for whom no scientific theory is derived simply from observed facts. It always includes a core theory that unifies the program by providing an overall view of the nature of the investigated object. This hard core is itself not possible to derive from facts or to falsify directly. It is rather the inferred theories of the lower levels – the auxiliary hypothesis – that are amenable to testing and that then confirm, refine, or discard the whole theory. According to Lakatos, scientists are justified in sticking to a research program as long as it is progressive in predicting new facts and solving anomalies. Thus he can construe the history of science as an evolutionary history progressively moving upward to universality.

Murphy and Ellis are confident that ethics can be presupposed as a research program which makes a central core immune to direct falsification. It is the auxiliary hypothesis that can be examined scientifically. They give several examples. It must be shown that an ethical program can be applied in a realistic form of life (the possibility of social embodiment) and can give a consistent account of the wealth of information and data provided by the social sciences. The ethical vision is confirmed only if it is somehow in harmony with the character of reality as it is expounded, for example, in the natural sciences (205-18). Furthermore, according to Lakatos, it is crucial that a research program be progressive through content-increasing stages by a capacity to predict future confirmations. Finally, Murphy and Ellis add, in reference to Alasdair MacIntyre, that an ethical research program must be able to reinterpret and incorporate its rival alternatives. As a cumulative argument, such work can provide a good test as to whether an ethical theory is a "true" reflection of the moral nature of the universe. It is no surprise that this Lakatos-Murphy methodology has attracted philosophers of science in the theological camp (e.g., Ian G. Barbour, Phillip Clayton, Philip Hefner, and Robert John Russell).

In relation to the hermeneutical division, it is crucial to notice that Murphy and Ellis emphatically counter a dualistic separation between nature and social being. The natural order and the social realm must be synthesised within one cosmological view. Thus, they are not content to end up with two differentiated branches. These branches must be integrated not just at the bottom of physical and biological entities, but also at the topmost level that discloses an idea of an ultimate reality explaining the character of both branches (204). "The link

between the two," they say, "is provided by an account of the moral character of God and of God's purposes in creating both the Cosmos and the Polis" (3).

Ethics without methodologism and Constantinianism

Murphy and Ellis make an exciting attempt to combine Yoder's non-conformist theology with Imre Lakatos's philosophy of science. And they surely eliminate many of the traditional shortcomings found in arguments for the ethical belonging among the sciences. Yet, while their attempt is promising, I argue that their proposals crumble due to their effort to integrate Yoder's theology within Lakatos's research program. It is difficult to see how they can escape two of Yoder's objection to modern ethics: (1) that conflicts in science can be solved by methodological procedures (methodologism), and (2) that ethics cannot be formulated from the perspective of a minority (the symbol of this idea is, for Yoder, the change when "Christendom becomes the Empire" in the time of Constantine).

First, the scientific character of Murphy and Ellis's program depends on the possibility of being able "to isolate a core theory – a central thesis from which all the rest of the theoretical structure . . . follows" (178). According to Yoder, the essence of methodologism in academic moral reasoning is the domination of a search for a first principle which is "beyond" or "beneath" considerations of the moral practice.[10] There are obvious differences between "a first principle" and "a hard core." A hard core is not prior to, or foundational for, the morality of a community but follows from such practice. Yet, when academic moral reasoning condenses practical morality into a hard core, it inevitably turns into an epistemological debate and an endless discussion concerning which hard core to accept. To use Murphy's own example, it becomes a question of whether Schleiermacher's, Bultmann's, or Yoder's hard core best express "what Christianity is basically all about."[11]

In Yoder's conception of the Anabaptist moral tradition, Christianity is not about something basic that can be condensed into a theoretical core, but it is rather the life of Jesus and the social embodiment of discipleship within the church. That is, at its heart there is a *"practical moral reasoning."*[12] Such practical moral reasoning functions differently than a research program. It is not a deduction from some central core or value within a coherent system (or an application of universally valid rules; neither is it simply doing "what the

scripture says"). For Yoder, practical moral reasoning is rather the skill of binding and loosing described in Matt. 18:15-18.[13] A particular moral choice is made in communal conversation (where two or three are present), in a context of forgiveness, reconciliation, and listening to witnesses. To explain this communal hermeneutics, Yoder asserts that "we need to ask not how an idea works but how the community works";[14] that is, how prophecy, memory, teaching, and supervision function together within a community whose members seek to be true followers of Jesus. Instead of a general epistemological rationality, Yoder contends that "communion works as an epistemology." The community's reasoning therefore does not follow strict epistemological rules: "Pluralism as to epistemological method is not a counsel of despair but part of the Good News."[15] Thus, Yoder's position seems opposed to a confident trust in methods with unifying ambitions. Rather than putting a methodological construction at the center of moral academic reasoning, it seems more appropriate to focus on practical moral reasoning and scientific practice.

Instead of connecting Yoder with Lakatos's philosophy of science, we should see him as standing closer to scientific practice as it has been described by Paul K. Feyerabend.[16] In a famous debate between these two philosophers of science, Lakatos put forward the rationalist case that there is an identifiable set of rules of scientific method which make all good science, science. Feyerabend attacked this rationalism and developed an "epistemological anarchist" conclusion (see his *Against Method*) that there are no useful and exceptionless methodological rules governing the progress of science or the growth of knowledge. Great scientists are methodological opportunists who use any move that comes to hand. The history of science is so complex that if we insist on a general methodology which will not inhibit progress, the only "rule" he could accept would be the useless suggestion: "anything goes." Without accepting all of Feyerabend's criticism, I find his view closer to Yoder's practical moral reasoning that also uses every possible argument that suits the situation.

It is also difficult to see how one can compare competing moral and theological programs in order to determine their relative progress and degeneration. Murphy refers in other contexts to MacIntyre's description of how the Augustinianism of Thomas was rationally superior to its major rivals since it succeeded in incorporating Aristotelian philosophy. Yet it remains to be shown that the notion of "hard core" illuminates this process in any significant

manner. To take another example, how could Murphy and Ellis's idea of "progress and degeneration" clarify conflicts in the time of the Reformation? Ought one to continue within the catholic program? Or has that program been counter-productive, so that one ought to switch to Luther's, Calvin's, or the Anabaptists' program? And how can one evaluate which program has been more fruitful in explaining results and predicting advances in knowledge? The procedure is so well-defined but so wide that it can support anything. From the history of the Radical Reformation, one should be suspicious of arguments based on the historical success of a moral tradition. Thus, it seems better to accept that the moral realm consists of a practical activity with such diverse and conflicting ingredients that it can hardly be systematized in the manner of Lakatos.

A practical moral reasoning implies a more humble position. Murphy and Ellis affirm that a core feature of kenotic ethics is "to empty ourselves of pride daily, to walk humbly with God" (195). Yet, as scientists working with Lakatos's scientific methodology, they argue that "the time has come to attempt the reconstruction of a unified worldview" (1) and thus they aim at rebutting the charge that a kenotic worldview would be conceivable for only a minority group (173). Surely, they can appeal to Yoder's statement that the ministry of Jesus has cosmic significance (201). But it is a bigger step to create a systematic analogy between the cross of Christ and phenomena such as the interpretation of evolution, the penal system in the modern state, and transactions within a market economy. Yoder's practical moral reasoning is stretched beyond its limits when transformed into such a unified worldview.

Can Murphy and Ellis's proposal really be reconciled with the Anabaptist renunciation of Constantinianism? Can the idea of a unified worldview be separated from coercive strategies? Isn't such a hierarchical structure all too reminiscent of a time when the church was at the head of society? An Anabaptist position would better reject the position of dominance that belongs to a science claiming to integrate all knowledge within its domain. Certainly Yoder agrees that the kingdom of God has a claim on all life – but not as a vision of a harmonious solution within a unified worldview. The main target of his criticism remains ecclesial involvement with the great powers of empire and state (Constantinianism). These dominating powers will not take a critical stance toward the present order and its moral views. Over against them, it is imperative

that someone brings an awareness of transcendence that shatters conformity. Thus, Yoder maintains: "Nonconformity is the warrant for the promise of another world" and "it is the function of minority communities to remember and to create utopian visions."[17] The task is not to provide an entire worldview but rather to keep science humble by deconstructing present structures of dominance, giving hints of other possible social constructions of morality, and confronting rigid systems with surprises and questions. A non-conformist morality must adopt a minority position. As such it can make the wider scientific community a little more hesitant in its pronouncements. Murphy and Ellis provide many suggestions for such a task which are much more fruitful than their epistemological theory.

Several passages of their book disclose a more limited ambition. Since they maintain that the transcendental level provides the foundation for an ethical hard core, it follows that the interpretation of social data and the rational standards for evaluating it partly depend on the chosen *telos*. So if their hierarchical order is correct, then we have no possibility of determining the moral nature of the universe without knowledge of the ultimate goal. The scientific attempt to determine that nature thus shows that what nature is is a highly contested question, depending on the *telos* one has selected. It is therefore no surprise that proponents of different positions regarding jurisprudence, economics, and politics can all appeal to "nature" for confirmation. For example, even though Murphy and Ellis's idea of a "cruciform nature" is exciting, it is equally possible to argue that the evolutionary process confirms the necessity of violence and struggle. The contribution that a reference to nature can offer in such a conflict, which seems typical of most ethical debates, is nothing more than "a desk-thumping, foot-stamping shout of 'Reality.'"[18] Thus, the scientific analogy leads Murphy and Ellis to overstate the possibilities of testing theories with scientific observations of "nature."

Murphy and Ellis also accept the limitations of their scientific approach when turning to the reality of freedom. A choice of *telos* affects not only the human interpretation of reality, but also the manner in which we construct social relations and, if we accept the partial social construction of a person, the construction of human nature. Consequently, they counter Reinhold Niebuhr's account of a "fixed human nature" by claiming that changes in the social environment (preferable in a less coercive direction) also make possible the

development of human nature (150-51). Thus, the contrast between different ethical research programs concerns not just different interpretations but also diverse social realities, from the level of different constructions of empirical experiments up to the formation of institutional organizations. Of course, such freedom is not unlimited (even though it is difficult to determine the limitations for social interrelation). But the more one accentuates freedom and consequently its possible misuse, the more difficult it will become to instill a universal law-like character in social organizations. And if one follows the logic of a kenotic theology, it would even seem part of the divine strategy to renounce coercive interference in social life in order to uphold *the* One rational order. In analogy with a vulnerable God, a non-Constantinian and non-coercive morality (as well as ontology) must focus on self-limitation and vulnerability and, thus, on contingency and openness.

In the final stage, Murphy and Ellis also recognize the rather restricted result of their scientific argumentation: "Note that this same account of divine action, including the emphasis on human freedom, makes it entirely reasonable to expect that there should be a variety of accounts of ultimate reality, many in conflict with our own" (250). This is surely a reasonable prophecy about the future of ethical discourse. With such prospects, it seems incontestable that all social and ethical theories include not only strict scientific arguments. Ethics is also a matter of persuasion (of faith) stirred by fascination with the intrinsic beauty and goodness of the final purpose one has chosen. Such an aesthetic judgment is not at all subjectivism, but neither can it be formalized in "normal" scientific categories and rational epistemologies.

Is there then any reason to count ethics among the sciences? Like Murphy and Ellis, I think it is mandatory that ethics participates in the crucial debate about management, goals and ontological convictions within scientific discourse. Yet, for the voice of a minority the most important task is perhaps to explicate the moral practice of science and to show that things taken to be "natural" are not always as self-evident as supposed. Thus it is essential that ethics, even in its non-conformist position, not accept being relegated to a well-defined ghetto without relevance for the realm of natural and social studies. To some extent Murphy and Ellis provide reasonable arguments for the ethical being among the sciences. Yet, an ethical position focused on the cross will probably assure that the presence of the ethical among the sciences never

becomes comfortable. More than these authors acknowledge, it seems reasonable to predict that the moral constructions of a cross-marked community will remain at the margins of the wider stories told in our present society (like a prophet at the margins of a great empire). Still, it is as urgent as ever to participate in the common quest and struggle for the true "social embodiment" even among the sciences.

Notes

[1] Cf. well-known distinctions such as Kant's between Pure and Practical Reason, and Dilthey's between Explanation and Understanding.

[2] *On the Moral Nature of the Universe: Theology, Cosmology, and Ethics* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996).

[3] See also Murphy's interpretation of the hierarchy of the sciences in *Beyond Liberalism and Fundamentalism: How Modern and Post-modern Philosophy Set the Theological Agenda* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press, 1996), 135-53.

[4] Murphy and Ellis refer especially to Arthur Peacocke for this notion. See his *Theology for a Scientific Age: Being and Becoming Natural, Divine, and Human* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993). An another example is the Reformed theologian T. F. Torrance. He also uses the notion in order to argue for the scientific nature of morality. For a critical discussion of Torrance, see my *Creation, Contingency and Divine Presence in the Theologies of Thomas F. Torrance and Eberhard Jüngel* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1995).

[5] Murphy and Ellis claim that similar views are put forward by theologians such as Walter Wink, Stanley Hauerwas, James Wm. McClendon, Paul Fiddes, Jürgen Moltmann, and Martin Luther King. See p. 174.

[6] The idea of a "cruciform evolution" follows suggestions made by Holmes Rolston, "Does Nature Need to Be Redeemed?", *Zygon* 29.2 (June, 1994): 205-29.

[7] For a remarkable explication of the extent to which modern social thought presupposes "an ontology of violence," see John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990).

[8] See John H. Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus: Vicit Agnus Noster* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 101.

[9] See especially *Theology in the Age of Scientific Reasoning* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990).

[10] John H. Yoder, "Walk and Word: The Alternatives to Methodologism," in Stanley Hauerwas, Nancey Murphy and Mark Nation eds., *Theology without Foundations: Religious Practice and the Future of Theological Truth* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 77-90.

[11] See *Beyond Liberalism and Fundamentalism*, 103.

[12] *The Priestly Kingdom: Social Ethics as Gospel* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 17.

[13] See *ibid.*, 26-34.
[14] *Ibid.*, 28.
[15] "Walk and Word," 83.
[16] Compare "philosophy of science versus scientific practice" as it has been described by Paul K. Feyerabend in *Problems of Empiricism: Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 80-88.
[17] *The Priestly Kingdom*, 94.
[18] Arthur Fine, *The Shaky Game: Einstein, Realism and the Quantum Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 129.

The Theological Foundations of Deliverance Healing

Lawrence Burkholder

In early December of 1994, I discovered that a parishioner in my congregation was suffering from demonic oppressions. This person had received Jesus Christ as Savior and I had baptized her the previous Easter. Now, after three ambulance trips in two days to the local hospital, she was in the psychiatric ward suffering from seizures, exhaustion, and the awareness of a presence in her that was threatening, malicious, and dangerous. Little did she know that this signalled the beginning of inner healing and the expulsion of many evil spirits. Much less did I know that it also launched a personal odyssey which would take me into three symbiotic experiences: the hands-on pastoral practice of what is usually called 'deliverance ministry';[1] a major theological research project inquiring into the demonization and exorcism of persons from an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective;[2] and an intense and life-threatening battle with evil spirits in my own life.

These varied influences have deeply shaped my present understanding of the spiritual, theological, and pastoral foundations which undergird the Christian practice of deliverance (exorcistic) healing. Though evil spirits – demons – and their expulsion are widely rooted in scripture, church tradition, anthropology, and even political history,[3] exorcism's profile in Mennonite circles is peripheral at best. It's true that there are several acknowledged pioneers in deliverance ministry amongst Anabaptist-Mennonites,[4] but candor still forces us to admit that exorcism is rarely even on the margins of congregational and institutional life.

Consequently, my purpose in this article is to demystify exorcism by demonstrating its coherence with the center line of God's universal saving and cleansing work in creation which is being accomplished through Jesus Christ.

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In the light of scripture's assertion that evil is rooted in the rebellion of Satan and his fallen angels, the expulsion of demonic spirits from people is analogous to God's cleansing of evil from the whole of creation. This cleansing and restorational work is a direct outcome of Jesus' death and resurrection, and is a ministry which Jesus mandates us to continue today. I believe it is extremely important that Mennonites – who wish to proclaim their congregations as "Communities of Healing and Hope"[5] – include deliverance healing as part of the ministry package.

I will develop this healing theme under three headings. In part one, I examine various Mennonite understandings of demonic evil, focusing especially upon the personalistic view which is prerequisite to deliverance healing. Part two is a biblical-clinical analysis of the entry points by which evil spirits gain access to the human personality. In part three, I outline how God's provision for deliverance healing is rooted explicitly in Jesus' atonement.

Mennonite interpretations of the demonic

Contemporary Anabaptist-Mennonite assessment of the biblical demonic data has generated three major lines of interpretation. The first and most predominant follows the work of John Howard Yoder and his translation of Hendrik Berkhof's book *Christ and the Powers*. In a translator's epilogue, Yoder calls his own book, *The Politics of Jesus*, "little more than an expansion of Berkhof's analysis."[6] Berkhof interpreted nine New Testament epistolary 'powers' texts to be a description of the subjection of humans to social structures when these systems are in active opposition to their God-given creational mandate of nourishing human community.[7] He denied both the powers' supernatural and intrinsically evil character: "The Powers belong to human experience, within which God works to preserve, reconcile, and fulfill."[8] This structuralist view has taken over mainstream Mennonite demonology, as witness the 1995 *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*. Article 7, 'Sin,' states that "By our sin, we open ourselves to the bondage of demonic powers."[9] The article then defines these powers in strictly structural terms.

We may make two observations about this understanding of the demonic. To begin with, it clearly echoes the classical Greek definition of the demonic as a force which might be either evil or good.[10] Though the Greeks believed in real personal demons, and Walter Wink, following Berkhof, holds that the

demonic is a *zeitgeist*, an impersonal driving force that impels the system,[11] the crucial point is that each sees the demonic as ethically, morally, and spiritually variable. In this specific sense, it is fair to say that demons-as-structures applies a pre-Christian definition to a postmodern world. What is especially intriguing about this is that the demons-as-structures approach is based on the assumption that the personalistic view of demons in scripture must be demythologized to fit a modern scientific worldview.[12] So the 'Berkhof School' selectively and inconsistently demythologizes. On the one hand, it denies the Greek and biblical view of demons' real personal existence. On the other hand, it accepts the Greek view of demons' moral variability, and in so doing it rejects the emerging biblical view, which by the New Testament period perceived demons as completely evil.

In addition, and very significantly, the reinterpretation of demons-as-structures has arisen out of the historical context of twentieth-century political and social violence. The Berkhof School is rooted in an earlier book by Heinrich Schlier, *Principalities and Powers in the New Testament*. Schlier's original essay wrestled with the Russian Revolution and Hitler's rise between the two world wars.[13] In turn, Berkhof's work was an effort to understand WW II; Yoder wrote during the Vietnam War; and Wink was struggling to explain institutionalized Latin American violence in the 1980s.

Now, there can be no doubt that twentieth-century systemic evil demands a theological interpretive grid. But does this require us to dispense with demons-as-personal-beings in favor of demons-as-structures? No. The sounder approach is to do good social systems analysis out of a profound regard for the degree to which Satan's hierarchies of personal demons operate *behind* and *within* the people in structures (Eph. 6:12). This positions the data more clearly into its anthropological, sociological, and theological strata. Apart from such a correction, we are left with a thorough-going structuralist reinterpretation of the biblical materials which cannot withstand the biblical, theological, and clinical evidence supporting the demonic oppressions of persons.[14]

The second Anabaptist-Mennonite understanding of the demonic is found in the theoretical constructs of modern depth psychology. Demons in psychoanalytic terms are "bad ego introjects," that is, objects created internally by the psyche which represent real-life negative experiences. Since these psychic complexes – or objects – are self-created by the person, the goal of

psychoanalytic 'exorcism' is to re-integrate all the objects, whether good or bad, into the person's core conscious identity.

When this model is transferred to the Mennonite context, the result is an analysis like Paul Miller's *The Devil Did Not Make Me Do It.* In that book, in a section called "Pastoral Care of Demonized Persons," Miller lists fifteen caveats which, by placing restrictions on Christian exorcism, effectively serve to label it as unreal and thus ensure its non-practice. The real exorcist is the psychiatrist:

> Any competent psychiatrist can diagnose many weird phenomena in personality . . . . If in addition to being thoroughly trained psychiatrists they are also committed Christians, they probably will combine fervent prayers with their therapeutic care, even though they know the psychiatric diagnostic terms for all the phenomena, which exorcists insist are purely demonic.[15]

Miller's denial of the reality of demonic spirits reflects another strand of 1970s Anabaptist theology. For example, Mennonite missionary-anthropologist Don Jacobs wrote of his East African ministry that "in my experience, the general feeling among missionaries is that even if there should be an exorcism ritual, it would simply be a farce because that which it seeks to exorcise doesn't exist."[16] And Paul Hiebert, referring to his time as a missionary in India, acknowledged that he had excluded the middle level of supernatural but this-worldly beings and forces from his worldview.[17]

The net theoretical result of the secular psychoanalytic approach is to define out of existence true Christian exorcism of real supranormal evil spirits. Even more to the point, the net therapeutic result is that persons troubled by these real demons are left to suffer when the genuine solution – the power of Jesus Christ to break demonic bondages – is available.

The third Mennonite interpretation of demons is that they are evil spirits. In their study of five North American Anabaptist-Mennonite denominations (published in1991), J. Howard Kauffman and Leo Driedger found that 90 percent of respondents agreed with the statement that "Satan is an active, personal devil."[18] This is impressive, if for no other reason than that a marginally *lower* number of Mennonites believed in God, and in Jesus' humanity and divinity, (88 percent each) than in Satan! If, though, we also place it alongside

the earlier comments about the 1970s-era Anabaptist-Mennonite dismissal of evil spirits, we are left with questions such as these: Do Mennonites believe in a Satan who has no demon followers? Has Mennonite opinion changed during the course of one generation? Is there a disjunction between missionaries of the '70s and pew-sitters of the '90s?

Part of the solution to this anomaly lies in acknowledging the influence of fundamentalism on Mennonite theology. Rodney Sawatsky writes that "between 1908 and 1944, Fundamentalism became the decisive theological force within the 'Old' Mennonite Church . . . ."[19] The significance of fundamentalism's influence on Mennonites' doctrine of evil spirits is that fundamentalism leaves no room for demonization of Christians. This is the case, whether on dispensational grounds (the age of exorcism is past), or because conversion by definition exorcizes the demonic, or – as a corollary – because the Holy Spirit cannot co-exist with demons in a person. So it is theologically possible within this system for a person to believe in Satan and in demons who have a true ontological reality, but to still deny the role of deliverance healing.

The situation is more complex than this, however. I noted earlier the unsympathetic reception that exorcism received from Mennonites during the 1970s; but during the same period, one segment within the Anabaptist-Mennonite community acknowledged the truth of evil spirit possession. In a section titled "Deliverance and Exorcism," the 1975 Mennonite Church Study Guide for *The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church* said, "Sometimes people are suspected of being possessed by an evil spirit. . . . When this occurs, exorcism is called for . . . ."[20]

Thus, contemporary Mennonites are actually confronted by four theologies of the demonic. Demons-as-structures and demons-as-ego-introjects are well-differentiated beliefs with deep roots in rationalistic worldviews; but we must split the category of demons-as-personal-beings into two. The first option, "demons can't inhabit us because we're Christians," was inherited from fundamentalism. The second alternative, "demons can inhabit us and need expulsion," comes at least partially through the charismatic renewal stream.

In summing up Mennonite understandings of the demonic, we turn to Jesus Christ himself as the final arbiter. Though the Old Testament has many references to demons,[21] and though it was largely in the inter-testamental

period that a full-fledged demonology arose,[22] Mennonites hold Jesus to be normative. When we turn to his testimony, we find compelling reasons to take evil spirits seriously. The gospel of John four times (7:20; 8:48; 8:52; 10:20) cites the crowds' decision that Jesus is himself demonized. There are seven exorcisms attributed to Jesus, plus some eight parallels in the synoptic gospels.[23] However, on other occasions, the text states that Jesus exorcised "many," as in Matt. 8:16 and Luke 6:18. Luke 8:2 refers to several unnamed women whom Jesus had exorcised and who had become part of his entourage. In addition, the exorcism of Mary Magdalene is not described but is mentioned twice. Then we add the deliverance missions on which Jesus sent the disciples. Along with all of these data, we note that Mark, the author of the earliest gospel, devotes about one-third of his material to exorcistic emphasis.[24]

Jesus' convictions about the demonic are given direct expression in the proto-commission of Luke 9:1-2 (cf. Matt. 10:1; Mark 6:7) in which the very definition of the kingdom of God is couched in exorcistic language. "Then Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal." It may make us flinch, but Jesus clearly put deliverance healing on his followers' agenda as a central sign of the kingdom's reality. From all this, we can fairly say that not only did Jesus believe in evil spirits and treat them as real creatures complete with names, emotions, social organization, and the capacity to afflict people. We must also acknowledge that he intends that his disciples of every age take up this healing ministry.

Hence, evil spirits are not relics of a magical, superstitious, pre-modern worldview, but real, evil, supernatural germs which need to be cleansed from their human carriers by the loving, restoring, powerful healing of the Lord Jesus Christ. So, while deliverance and exorcism are often characterized by the language of spiritual warfare, they are simply the healing prayer and counselling means by which evil spirits are expelled from the individual so plagued. Deliverance healing is a wholesome ministry which is a part of the broader aspects of the healing of our spiritual, emotional, and physical traumas.

Demonic entry points into the human personality

During the latter part of the nineteenth century, a major focus of the nascent discipline of psychoanalysis was to develop a theoretical explanation for the

phenomenon of the possessive states syndrome. William James, in commenting on the possibility that demonic possession might really occur, said in his Lowell Lectures of 1896, "If there are devils, if there are supernatural powers, it is through the cracked self that they enter."[25]

In the intervening decades, Christian pastoral theology has continued to gather insight into these cracks. Virtually all healer/exorcists propose composite lists of entry points ranging from four to six such portals per analyst,[26] but I suggest that a more systematic approach begins by distinguishing volitional from non-volitional doorways. Volitional entry points depend on the fact that in some way the invaded person has made choices which give permission for demonic ingress. Non-volitional doorways are defined as afflictions in which the sufferer is victimized in some sense by demonic attachments over which (s)he has had little if any control. In the following discussion, I analyze each of these two categories in terms of their components.

According to its prevalence and negative spiritual powers, the first volitional doorway is personal involvement in, or exposure to, occult practices. The Latin verb *occultare* means 'to hide from sight' and in its noun form *occultus* stands for that which is not easily understood, revealed, or apprehended. It typically deals with super-rational phenomena: "the appearances which reach over into the metaphysics and the metaphysical sphere, [and] the relationships between the visible and the supersensible realm."[27] Magic is closely related and is the "attempt to know and rule the spirit world, human, animal and plant world as well as dead matter in an extrasensory way with the help of secret means and ceremonies."[28] A partial alphabetical listing of magical and occultic phenomena includes astral travel, astrology, automatic writing, clairvoyance, clairsentience, divination,[29] levitation, materialization, ouija boards, psychic healing, and spiritism.

North American Anabaptists in several streams – Amish, Old Order, Old Mennonite, Brethren in Christ – have histories of explicit occult activities. These include psychic healing of humans and animals, fire letters, white magic charming and black magic hexing, water divination, crop fertility animal sacrifices, and wide-ranging fetishism.[30] Divination and the ouija board are still part of modern Mennonite occultism, and have been joined by such contemporary practices as therapeutic touch, acupuncture, reflexology, iridology, psychic diagnoses, and magnetic and copper bracelet amulets

(fetishes). All modern alternative therapies with New Age roots claim to realign the body's inner energies and/or balance them with the universe's life force. Depending on the occult system and its cultural roots, there are some ninety psychic energy terms which purport to unlock these alleged energies.[31] A few examples are *prana* (Hinduism), *chi* (Taoism), *mana* (Hawaiian shamanism), *animal magnetism* (Franz Anton Mesmer), *orgone* (psychologist Wilhelm Reich), *kundalini* (Indian yogic), *bio-energy* (a term preferred by westerners who want to downplay Eastern mysticism),[32] and *electricity* (Anabaptist-Mennonite charming).

Why is occultism prohibited in scripture? Research has shown that people engage in occultic activities for three reasons: to gain power or knowledge,[33] to increase self esteem,[34] or to feed their narcissistic urges.[35] In New Testament terms, these stand in direct opposition to the outcomes of being filled with the Holy Spirit: psychological fulfillment (righteousness, peace, and joy, Rom. 14:17); power endowment (miracles, healing, discernment of spirits, 1 Cor. 12:9-10); and God's actual presence within (Rom. 7:9-11,14) which leads to loving service to others. In Old Testament terms, occultism is the direct breaking of the first two commandments, "You shall have no other gods before me . . . . you shall not make for yourself an idol." Thus at one and the same time, occultism accepts the false as a substitute for the genuine and is a direct rebellion against God and becomes subject to God's judgment.[36]

In Jamesian language of the cracked self, one aspect of this judgment is that God permits the demonic to enter persons whose God-ordained psychic boundaries have been compromised by occultism. At the most fundamental level, as soon as one turns away from God to occult idolatry, the psyche is perforated and emotional and mental difficulties will result. When does occult exposure result in demonic habitation? We might as well ask, When does sexual intercourse result in pregnancy? This is not mere flippancy, for in either case the act invites the result. Contrary to sexual intercourse, though, which may never produce pregnancy, occult intercourse always produces its demonic progeny in the end. For, as Charles Kraft says, "Invite a demon, whether consciously or unconsciously, and you get a demon . . . ."[37]

The second cause of volitional demonic entry is serious or besetting sin. A prime biblical example is that of King Saul, whose vendetta against David was driven by the sin of envy of David's popularity (1 Sam. 18:6-10).

Saul's life was akin to a Greek tragedy, as he tumbled from the pinnacle of being anointed Israel's first king to the abyss of probable demonization which we observe in his fits of anger, murder, fear, witchcraft, and suicide. Though the potential scope of triggering sins may seem endless, sins such as unforgiveness, pride, rebellion, murder, hatred of others, self-hatred, substance abuse, lust, and illicit sexual practices are especially likely to be attaching points for the demonic.[38] It is significant that each of these is prominent in scripture: not generally as identified entry points for the demonic – though 2 Cor. 2:10-11 links unforgiveness to Satan's wiles and Eph. 4:25-27 warns that festering anger gives Satan entry – but as sins which are major offences against God and people.

How does sin create a crack in the self which the demonic can use to gain entry into a person? Francis MacNutt thinks that "it is as if the person's sinning has, over a period of time, built a kind of home that the spirit can enter and feel welcome in while it tempts or aggravates any natural weakness to which the person has already surrendered."[39] When we examine this in more detail, we observe a continuum which moves from the thought of committing a sinful act, to choice, to habit, to loss of control, then to bondage and finally almost total control by the demonic. Ed Murphy, whose schema this is, locates evil supernaturalistic influence at the points of the original temptational thought and then after demonic entry when the evil spirits produce bondage and near-total control in severe cases.[40] The key is that sin, whether repetitive and venial or one-time and mortal,[41] provides a potential demonic entry-point if it remains unconfessed and unforgiven.

The third volitional demonic entry point may be labelled circumstantial entry, an umbrella label which describes several types of access. It can involve transferral from spouse to spouse[42] or parent to child;[43] as well as unguarded exposure to infested locations or objects,[44] involvement with false religions,[45] severe non-ritual abuse,[46] and some other lesser kinds. While we may wish to argue that at least some of these are cases of victimization and hence not volitional at all, upon investigation each of them reveals some chosen act of the will which opened a permission-granting fissure in the self.

I turn now to non-volitional doorways as the second general category of demonic entry points. Of the two channels in this stream, the first is multi-generational

occultism and sin; the second is sadistic or satanic ritual abuse. Each of these is controversial – in fact, the very existence of aspects of each is denied – but they are nonetheless the sources of some of the heaviest demonic oppressions that exist.

The theological roots for multi-generational demonic transmission are found in an interlocking set of Old Testament citations. These creedo-formula[47] texts are Ex. 20:5-6 (cf. Deut. 5:9-10); Ex. 34:6-7; Deut. 7:9-10; Num. 14:18; and Jer. 32:18. Their common affirmations are that God blesses those obedient to his covenant to the thousandth generation but that disobedience produces guilt to the third and fourth generations. Though there are a few textual variations within these scriptures,[48] Jože Krašovec concludes that "in the end, one has to admit that the interpretation in the sense of inherited guilt is unavoidable. . . . Interpretations to the contrary are too partial and one-sided to be convincing. They have insufficient linguistic and theological support . . . ."[49] And again, "We have a more or less fixed retribution formula."[50]

In light of the fact that other Old Testament texts teach the doctrine of personal accountability (Gen. 18:23; the Mosaic Holiness codes; Job 21:19-30; Jer. 31:29-30; Ezek. 18:1-4), various interpretations have been devised in response to this paradox. Some hold that guilt in Israel began as collective and trans-generational but developed over time into personal accountability.[51]

This, however, is not tenable, since the doctrines of both multi-generational guilt and personal accountability are present from Israel's earliest history.[52] Other critics suggest that the issue is one of theodicy and that, in Jer. 31:28-31, Lam. 5:7, and Ezek. 18, the exiles are alleging that God is unjust for unfairly punishing them for the sins of their ancestors.[53] However, in 32:18, Jeremiah himself repeats the decalogual formula, "You show love to thousands, but bring the punishment for the fathers' sins into the laps of the children after them." For his part, Ezekiel also knew that ancestral sin really had played a huge role in bringing Israel to its current state of divine judgment (cf. Ezek. 16; 20; 23). Finally, some propose that the exilic prophets taught personal accountability as an antidote to an ethical passivity where people threw up their hands and said, If it all depends on our ancestors, how can our decisions change anything? This cynicism is captured by the proverb, "the fathers eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge" (Ezek. 18:2 and Jer. 31:29).[54]

As we look at the broader scriptural context, we observe that the multi-generational guilt formula was well known within Israel across many centuries of its history, and was the stated basis by which God exercised punitive justice.[55] A pre-exilic example is Josiah, who asked Huldah the prophetess if the Mosaic covenant principles of blessings and curses still pertained. God's answer came through Huldah in 2 Chron. 34:24-25,

> Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: "Tell the man who sent you to me . . . I will indeed bring disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants, all the curses that are written in the book. . . . Because they have forsaken me and have made offerings to other gods, so that they have provoked me to anger with all the works of their hands, my wrath will be poured out on this place and will not be quenched."

God's intention to bring the covenant curses to pass upon Israel is stated again in Isa. 65:7, "I will indeed repay into their laps their iniquities [personal accountability] and their ancestors' iniquities [ancestral guilt] together, says the Lord." Similarly, Ezekiel, after pronouncing oracles against Israel's blatant idolatry and the false prophets and prophetesses who promised deliverance, gave the word of the Lord in 16:1-4 that Jerusalem's abominations were deeply rooted in her Amorite and Hittite 'parental lineage.' Using the images of umbilical cord and afterbirth, Ezekiel continues, "On the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water to cleanse you . . . ." Israel suffered from a congenital birth defect inherited from the pollution of the former inhabitants of the land; it harbored a spiritual contaminant which had never been cleansed. The irony, of course, is that Israel's claim to the land was predicated exactly on the principle that the previous peoples had been evicted when their cup of guilt overflowed.[56]

Awareness of multi-generational guilt is visible also in several prominent instances of actual acknowledgement of ancestral sins. Nehemiah (1:6-7), Jeremiah (3:25; 14:20), and Daniel (9:4-19) each explicitly confesses Israel's sin of covenant-breaking and organically links present offenses (personal accountability) with those of their foreparents (ancestral guilt). These confessional prayers reflect the theology of Lev. 26:40-42, where, God promises, "If they confess their iniquity [personal accountability] and the iniquity

of their ancestors [ancestral guilt]. . . if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity, then will I remember my covenant with Jacob . . . ."

The theology of multi-generational guilt and retributive punishment was well-known to Jesus. When the disciples question the cause of illness of the man born blind (John. 9:1-7) – whether his own sin or his parents'[57] – Jesus replied "neither" or, as Leon Morris adds, "in this case."[58] For Jesus does not deny the principle of multi-generational guilt; he simply gives a third option which is operative in this instance, "to reveal the glory of God." However, if J. D. M. Derrett is right, in Mark 3:1-6 Jesus directly employs the doctrine of multi-generational guilt and God's retribution in his healing of the man with the withered hand. Derrett argues persuasively that this healing is directly connected to the blessing-curse theology of Deut. 28:22, where wasting disease is stated as an outcome of covenant disobedience.[59] Jesus, says Derrett, uses the man's withered hand as a midrash (commentary) on the Deut. text, which reads, "The Lord will strike you with wasting disease . . . ." (NIV).[60] Thus for Jesus, while the Jews' presenting issue is sabbath observance, the real problem is the synagogue's collective accumulated guilt for disloyalty to Yahweh by refusing to heal and do good on every day, a guilt physically evident in the man's withered hand.

However, Jesus' most explicit word on multi-generational guilt is found in Matt. 23:35 (cf. Luke 11:50-51). He categorically tells the Pharisees and teachers of the law that upon them will come "all the righteous blood" spilled from Abel to Zechariah,[61] a Genesis-to-Revelation prophecy we take to be fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 66 C.E. The actual phrase in Matt. 23:32, "Fill up, then, the measure of your ancestors," implies that God's toleration is self-limited, after which both ancestral and present sin overflow together in divine judgment. Even if we allow for rhetorical flourish, Jesus' words carry a grave warning about multi-generational guilt which must not be disregarded.

The whole question may be summarized by granting that personal accountability and trans-generational guilt, rather than being mutually exclusive categories, are continually present in dynamic interaction in the larger biblical witness. Consequently, each plays a crucial role in deliverance healing. On the one hand, unconfessed and unforgiven cross-generational guilt derived from

ancestral sins like occultism, gross idolatry, dedications to Satan, murder, illicit sexuality, and emotion-complexes such as rage/hatred/anger gives evil spirits access to persons. Conversely, a personal decision to take the spiritual steps needed will end this transmissional process. Termination is made possible by the new covenant of Holy Spirit heart-indwelling ushered in by Jesus' death and resurrection. But contrary to orthodoxy's assumption that multi-generational guilt termination took effect *in toto* at Calvary – here especially citing Gal. 3:10,13[62] – discharge of deeply rooted cross-generational guilt awaits action by the living in every generation. Even as conversion is a choice, so too is the cutting of ancestral guilt. Both are dependent on the new covenant of Jesus Christ, but neither happens involuntarily. In other words, the termination of ancestral guilt is not a function of conversion but of sanctification. It fits naturally within the framework of the Christian's growth in holiness.[63]

At this stage, we have identified what Krašovec calls the creedo-formula of multi-generational guilt, observed some prominent confessions of ancestral sins and noted several instances in both Testaments where this theology is visible. How, though, does this data account for the deliverance healing claim that multi-generational guilt is directly implicated in demonic entry into the human personality? The answer is to be found in biblical curse theology.

Curses are first spoken (by God) in Gen. 3 upon the serpent and the ground, although we may legitimately refer to human death as the original curse. A biblical curse is not just a colorful, metaphorical way of describing God's judgment against sin; it is an imprecation with the inherent power of carrying itself into effect.[64] When spoken against Israel – and bear in mind that God or God's servants pronounce the curse in 143 of 202 biblical citations[65] – curses have the express purpose of activating retribution in the believing community after persistent covenant disobedience.[66] This is the pattern in Deut. 27:15-26, where we find a dodecalogue of curses which are activated by specific sins. The blessings and curses were spoken by the twelve tribes as evidence of their acceptance of God's covenant renewal terms. To reinforce the need for Israel to keep these moral and spiritual promises, Deut. 28 promises the rewards in rather general terms but dwells on the penalties in excruciating detail.

The two following scriptural illustrations show curse theology in action. The first involves the tribes of Levi and Simeon, who were cursed by Jacob

for their violence and bloodshed against Shechem the Hivite. In the subsequent exodus and occupation histories, Simeon slowly sank into oblivion,[67] lost its population, and had its land territory absorbed by Ephraim and Manasseh. The tribe is mentioned only once in scripture after the Exile. By comparison, in the first census the Levite males, who were counted above the age of one month,[68] totalled a mere 22,000 (Num. 3:39) but by the next had increased slightly (Num. 26:62). In addition, while Simeon lost all its land, Levi was allocated forty-eight villages, although six of these were cities of refuge (Num. 35:6-7). Later Jewish history saw the Levites in faithful temple service; Josephus puts the number of first-century A.D. Levite priests at 20,000.[69] Modern chromosomal tests show that the continuity of the Aaronic line through Levi has continued until today.[70]

Why the different outcomes in the curse against these two tribes? Because when Israel fashioned the Golden Calf at Sinai, and incited Moses' angry challenge, "Whoever is for the Lord, come to me," we read, "all the Levites rallied to him" (Ex. 32:26). Deut. 33:9-10 goes further, recording Moses' praise of the Levites for having watched over God's word, guarded his covenant (both past tense), and teaching (present tense) his precepts to Israel. Levi repented and reversed (cut) the curse; Simeon did not and was no more.

The second case involves just one family. In Josh. 6:26, Joshua, in God's name, cursed any rebuilder of Jericho by specifying that the life of that man's firstborn son be forfeited: "Cursed before the Lord be anyone who tries to build this city – this Jericho! At the cost of his firstborn he shall lay its foundation . . . ." The fulfillment came 550 years later in 1 Kings 16:34, "In his days, Hiel of Bethel built Jericho; he laid its foundation at the cost of Abiram his firstborn and set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke by Joshua son of Nun."[71]

The preceding discussion shows how the Old Testament frequently explains God's judgment in terms of curses. In emphasizing God's use of curses to enforce moral and spiritual order, Allan P. Ross writes that a "curse was a means of seeing that the will of Yahweh was executed in divine judgment on anyone profaning what was sacred." Further, he says, God personally "would place the ban on the individual, thus bringing about a paralysis of movement or capabilities normally associated with a blessing.[72] Ross's "paralysis

of movement" phrase is highly suggestive, and entertains more than one interpretation. It may perhaps be seen as God withholding some of the possible actualities which might otherwise emerge,[73] characterized as a "long evil arm stretched out from the past" which "may trip you as you walk,"[74] or visualized more literally as the angel of the Lord who executes God's cursive command, as in the divine response to King David's census in 2 Sam. 24:16.

Various mechanisms may help to account for the functioning of this paralysis across the generations: engrams (imprints) carried by a Jungian-style clan unconscious,[75] genetics,[76] false religion,[77] attachment of evil spirits to objects and land locations,[78] and direct transfer from one person to another down the family line. Family systems theory which focuses on dysfunctional learned repetitive behaviors[79] can be helpful in understanding direct demonic transfers which occur because of cross-generational emotional wounding. In such cases, genograms (schematical family trees) can help identify recurring spiritual, behavioral, medical, emotional, and psychological patterns which may be havens for evil spirits. The intermixing of causations is both subtle and profound, as, for instance, between psychological scripting and spiritual curses. Larry Constantine writes of scripting which "may describe and seem to program entire life stories."[80] It is not difficult to reframe this as the outworking of biblical curses which have been set in motion by the sorts of multi-generational sin triggers which I discussed earlier.

One caveat in family systems theory is its foundational dependence on analogical evolutionary bio-modelling. A case in point is Edwin Friedman, who interprets a striking case study of three generations of female infertility, early male death, and emotionally starved relationships in purely 'protoplasmic' terms. By this he means that the phenomena are deeper than even the subconscious and, based on "emotional process," the observed psychic and behavioral patterns "have an uncanny way of reappearing."[81] The term 'protoplasmic' reflects the Murray Bowen theory that visualizes family systems in terms of such basic physical structures of creation as the atom with its constellation of nucleus and orbiting particles.[82] Such a protoplasmic explanation seems to imply a determinism in relationality, which conflicts with the biblical worldview that humankind has been created in the relational image of freely-shared and received love modelled in God's triune personhood.

Whatever the transference agency in specific cases, retributive justice curses are set in motion by the types of severe ancestral sins I mentioned

earlier. Curses track the appropriate social path – family, clan, nation – and give the demonic access to the living. While initiator sins may be fairly wide ranging, the biblical and counselling evidence indicates that explicit idolatry and occultism are particularly implicated as curse triggers. This reflects the first two commandments in Ex. 20:3-4, whose thrust is that God is a jealous God who will brook no competitors. God's jealous love is repeated in Isa. 42:8, "My glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols."

Explanations for multi-generational demonic oppressions in individuals employ a category of demons called "familiar spirits," whose entry point(s) depend on curses attached to the family line.[83] Several biblical translations use this term in conjunction with the strong prohibitions against wizardry in Lev. 20:27, Deut. 18:11, and 1 Sam. 28:3.[84] Familiar spirits re-appear in various translations of Isa. 8:19, where they function as nether spirits who use the human host to speak in chirping and muttering voices. Isa. 29:4 also focuses on the whispering and chirping speech heard from "the dead," that is, demons impersonating departed people.

In the New Testament, Paul's troubles in Philippi (Acts 16:16) began when he cast a fortune-telling spirit from a slave girl. The Greek word used here is linked with the term for ventriloquist, rendered by the Septuagint version of the Old Testament as "familiar spirit."[85] And in light of the several accusations reported in the gospels that Jesus was in league with the demonic, we note Carl Kraeling's argument that the real allegation is that Jesus practiced necromancy, that is, calling on the dead for supernormal knowledge and power over unclean spirits.[86] Kraeling shows that both Herod's and the crowds' speculation that Jesus was John the Baptist returned is most logically read not as Jesus is John resuscitated, but as Jesus' mighty works relied for their power and authority on the departed spirit of John the Baptist (Mark 6:14-16; 8:28). With the knowledge gained in deliverance healing, we would rephrase this to say that Jesus was accused of doing his mighty works by the power of a familar spirit impersonating John the Baptist.

Deliverance healing literature is replete with cases of multi-generational familiar spirit entry, but the following illustration typifies the genre:

> [A] woman who wanted prayer [wanted it] for a relatively ordinary problem: she had trouble being patient and was easily angered – a common human failing. She was a regular church-goer; in fact,

> she taught Sunday School. But once we started to pray, her face changed into a snarling mask of rage. Worse yet, this ordinarily meek woman started speaking in an altered voice and insulted us. Fortunately someone in our group had a gift of discernment and said, "This all started in a black mass said in England hundreds of years ago, when her family was consecrated to Satan." As soon as he said this, the spirit responded indignantly, "Who told you that?"[87]

Finally, we consider the second non-volitional entry-point for the demonic: satanic (sadistic) ritual abuse (SRA).[88] Major controversies swirl around ritual abuse. These include allegations that false memories are implanted by incompetent therapists and charges that the 'therapy industry' has a vested interest in perpetuating an illness which is culturally defined and created. The very existence of Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) is under challenge in some quarters. Against all of this stands the testimony of many counsellors that people – Christians and non-Christians alike – do have psychic lacunae which, when uncovered, contain both human and demonic darkness.[89]

Sadistic abuse begins in infancy and early childhood,[90] and usually results in the disintegration of the self. The outcomes will virtually always be forced dissociation, the emergence of alters – classic Jamesian cracks – and the arrival of evil spirits. Demons enter because the completely powerless victim pleads for help 'from anything out there' as their psyche fractures; or when victims make desperation deals with the deceiving spirits who appear and promise protection when God seems not to have answered; or when dominator persons with occult powers send them into their prey.[91]

When we encounter demonic entry by abuse, whether the abuse is ritual or not, we recoil at the way in which evil's horrors are perpetrated upon innocent victims. In the language of theodicy, where is God's providence and justice to be found in the face of the evil demonization of innocent abuse victims? Scripture itself acknowledges evil's voracious appetite for the innocent Hebrew children sacrificed to the god Moloch, cannibalized during seige warfare, or immolated by Herodian paranoia. For its part, western church history from the Fathers onward contains gross accounts of child exposure, abandonment, and outright paid murder.[92] SRA's combination of forced dissociation and evil spirit implantation is one truly diabolical modern spawn of these earlier atrocities.

God's solution to demonic oppressions

All cultures without exception have attempted to manage demonic oppressions in people. This statement is equally true of tribal societies[93] and world religions.[94] In the case of the post-Christian west, since psychiatry generally repudiates the objective reality of demons,[95] it must diagnose psychic disorders instead of alien-ego interference or even control.[96] However, from the perspective of Christian healing, our task is not to manage evil spirits but to expel them.

There can be no doubt that during the three years of his ministry, Jesus took personal authority over demons, teaching and practicing the principle of binding the strong man (Satan) and of plundering his house (people in bondage). His numerous exorcisms forced the Pharisees to concede that Jesus exercised power over evil spirits, although they slandered him by attributing this power to his ability to 'channel' Beelzebub (Matt. 12:22-32). On the other hand, when Jesus sent the Twelve and then the Seventy-Two on preaching and healing missions, their disbelieving and joyful debriefing was, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name!" (Luke 10:17). Nonetheless, any attempt to root modern deliverance healing solely in Jesus' life ministry falls fatally short of the mark. To claim that Jesus' saving work was not manifest in his death but in his life and ministry, and that "we [don't] need folks hanging on crosses and blood dripping and weird stuff"[97] is to ignore the center line of biblical theology which I stated at the outset. This center line is that evil in the fallen creation, including demonic infestation in persons, can only be cleansed through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The biblical revelation of Jesus' atonement transcends our urges to reduce this doctrine into one favorite interpretation. In fact, there are supportive connections between each major atonement view – Christus Victor, Legal Satisfaction, and Moral Influence – and deliverance healing. In the following discussion, I suggest some areas in which these three models can help us understand the grounds on which evil spirits may be expelled from a sufferer.

The early church Fathers held strongly that Eden's sin gave Satan moral and legal rights which transferred the human race into his jurisdiction.[98] This bondage was broken by Jesus' death, and the victory won by Jesus over Satan is expressed in various texts: "Now is the judgment of this world; now

the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up, will draw all people to myself" (John 12:31-32); "He [Jesus] shared the same things [flesh and blood], so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14); "[Jesus] gave himself to deliver us from the present evil age" (Gal. 1:3); and Jesus "disarmed the rulers and authorities" on the cross (Col. 2:15).[99] Because Jesus' victory over Satan was accomplished in the totality of his ministry, death, and resurrection, God exalted Jesus and gave him the name at which every knee in existence shall bow (Phil. 2:9). Heb. 2:9 adds that by his death Jesus was crowned with glory and honor; and both Rom. 8:34 and Heb. 1:3 say that this has placed Jesus at God's right hand, that is, the place promised the Messiah in Psalm 110:5.

The Legal Satisfaction aspect of Jesus' atonement focuses on the unbridgeable chasm between God as the holy Other and sinful people which truly exists, quite independent of any human feelings. Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) gave the theory its medieval shape in his short two-part work *Cur Deus Homo* (Why God Became Man). In an insightful perspective on the Legal Satisfaction view, John Driver links the Suffering Servant of Isa. 53 with the Son of Man in the gospels. The suffering servant motif can be traced through Jesus' whole ministry:[100] baptism (Matt. 3:17); Nazareth mission proclamation (Luke 4:18-22); healings and exorcisms (Matt. 8:16-17); suffering and death (Mark 10:45, 14:24); and Lamb of God (gospel of John). The Servant's substitutionary suffering as a covering for human sin in Isa. 53:10, "When you make his life an offering for sin," is a clause whose essence Jesus rephrases in Mark 10:45, "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." We may sum up the forensic nature of the atonement with the statement that Jesus, though innocent of sin, died an unjust and undeserved physical death, so that we, though guilty of sin, will not die a just and deserved spiritual death.[101]

Pierre Abelard (1079-1142) articulated the Moral Influence understanding of Jesus' atonement. The classic formulation stresses that Jesus' example of love motivates our reciprocal love for God and leads to our ethical and moral improvement. In his exposition of Rom. 3:19-26, Abelard wrote this:

> Now it seems to us that we have been justified through the blood of Christ and reconciled to God in this way: through this unique act of grace manifested to us . . . he has more fully bound us to

> himself by love; with the result that our hearts should be enkindled by such a gift of divine grace, and true charity should not now shrink from enduring anything for him.[102]

New Testament texts which speak of God's love as expressed in Jesus' atonement include: "God shows his love for us in that Christ died for us while we were yet sinners" (Rom. 5:8); "We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us – and we ought to lay down our lives for one another" 1 John 3:16-17); and pre-eminently, "In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another" (1 John 4:10-11).

Though this synopsis of atonement texts does not convey the full truth of Jesus' atonement, it fairly summarizes some key biblical elements of the classic historical perspectives. I will build on their themes to show how they undergird deliverance healing in three areas.

To begin with, Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and glorification broke Satan's claim on humanity. The early church Father Origen said that Jesus' death constituted the "first blow in the conflict which is to overthrow the power of that evil spirit, the devil."[103] We may expand this by saying that Jesus, as the last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45), is the first and only human to resist every temptation to evil; to completely do God's will on earth as in heaven; and to offer this obedience even to the cross. Since Satan's claim on humanity was predicated on the first Adam's choice to sin, this claim was annulled by Jesus' free choice to fully obey the Father. Jesus' victory of obedience would be incomplete without the cross of Calvary. Post-Easter, we who have the Holy Spirit participate in Jesus' victory through transferral into the kingdom of God where we sit with Christ "in the heavenlies" above Satan (Eph. 2:6). This means that demons flee when abjured in Jesus' name because he, and now we also in him, have been given position and authority above Satan. This is not a blank check to abuse our spiritual vocations through exorcistic malpractice, but it is God's guarantee that when we pray with Holy Spirit leading, Jesus' power will be manifest for deliverance healing.

Second, Jesus' atonement has cut every curse which operates against humanity, including those which evil spirits use to gain access to persons. Though this appears to clash with my earlier statement that curses still function

post-Calvary, we shall see that this contradiction is only perceptual. The theological principle is that Jesus' ministry of curse termination happens across a continuum of time and eternity. The initial curse to be cut is the curse of the law, which so exercises Paul in Gal. 3:10-13. It may startle us to recall that Paul actually kept the whole law: "as to righteousness under the law, [I was] blameless" (Phil. 3:6). However, the curse's power is such that even if the Mosaic law is kept in its entirety, justification is still not obtained.[104] This is a sobering truth indeed for any who would root soteriology in an ethic of 'following Jesus' but not in his death and resurrection. As the fulfillment of the Old Testament typologies of spotless lamb and suffering servant, Jesus' perfect sacrifice cuts Christians free from the law's curse on the basis of faith and not of works.

However, though regeneration is completed the moment the Holy Spirit comes to tabernacle with our spirit (Rom. 8:9-11) and cuts the legal curse, the old nature remains hostile to God. In anthropological terms, the soul – the will, emotions, and mind, and their interconnections with the body – remains sin's residence and hence the battleground where the Christian is called to grow in the grace-gift of holiness (Rom. 7:14-23). As by the power of Christ and one's co-operative will the believer progressively puts to death the urges of the lower nature, the soul-rooms which evil spirits prefer are rendered inhospitable. Along with this, any curses, whether multi-generational or not, may be cut and any resident demons present on these grounds may be expelled. Because the 'carnal' or otherwise wounded soul is where demons live when they gain access to the personality,[105] growth in godliness therefore goes hand in hand with deliverance healing. And, as I have said previously, this process is called sanctification. Finally, we note that full termination of the curse of death awaits the general resurrection (1 Cor. 15:23) at Jesus' parousia when time and eternity will intersect. This curse Jesus cut for himself at his death and resurrection; and for each Christian it becomes effectual at the end of the age.

A third linkage between Jesus' atonement and deliverance healing consists of God's immense love for humankind. Though the Enlightenment reduced Abelard's theology to a mere shell of its former self,[106] its original principle remains profound. The God who loves us enough to send his Son to die for our justification is the God who continues to love us enough to provide

for our deliverance healing. This reassurance is crucial for the spiritually-oppressed, who often will approach such healing with many mixed emotions and inner resistances prompted by Satan. These negative feelings may run the gamut, e.g.,: You will look foolish, you are insane, this is ridiculous and/or won't work, you are not a real Christian (or we, the helpers, are not real Christians), you shouldn't trust this counselling and prayer process, I/we are going to hurt you, Satan is more powerful than Jesus, I/we don't have the authority to deal with Satan through Jesus' name.[107]

Charles Kraft illustrates the resistance facet of deliverance work with the case of a woman suffering from Dissociative Identity Disorder. An alter personality with the maturity level of a six-year-old was controlled by a demon named Owner; Kraft's basic challenge was to convince the alter – in the face of Owner's forceful denials – that Jesus was more loving and more powerful than Owner.[108] The cross of Jesus is the ultimate historical evidence that the claims made about God's love are true. In the shadowy world of demonic infestation, the cross is the tangible, true, and powerful statement that God truly is love.

Conclusion

In this essay I have described the foundational features of a theology of deliverance healing. What is the sum of the matter? Given the mainstream demonologies in Anabaptist-Mennonite circles, theology, ecclesiology, and pastoral practices face major re-orientations if it is true that 60 percent of the people in Mennonite churches suffer from personal or ancestral demonic oppressions.[109] Even if this is a greatly inflated estimate, there are still many people among us who battle futilely with a multiplex of spiritual, psychological, emotional, and physical phenomena directly tied to undiagnosed evil spirits. Anabaptist-Mennonites need to know that deliverance from evil spirit inhabitation is a valid aspect of Christian healing.

Such a re-orientation can happen in two ways. The first is a spontaneous reordering prompted by peoples' real-life encounter or confrontation with demonic activity and God's cleansing power through Jesus Christ. Ed Murphy[110] and Francis MacNutt[111] are examples of this process. The other type of reordering – Charles Kraft being a case in point[112] – happens when a person chooses to become open to changing his or her basic outlook and then taking

action which brings this change about. Shifting worldviews is never easy. But it's necessary if Mennonites are to experience personally the truth of Jesus' Nazareth proclamation: that he came to bring release to the prisoners, sight to the blind and freedom for the oppressed.

Notes

[1] I apply 'deliverance' to persons whose demonic oppressions are lower-intensity and 'exorcism' to situations of heavy occultism and satanism.

[2] Lawrence Burkholder, *Let My People Go: A Mennonite Theology of Exorcism* (Master of Theological Studies thesis, Conrad Grebel College, 1999: hereafter *"LPG"*)

[3] See Elizabeth Leeper, "The Role of Exorcism in Early Christianity," *Studia Patristica*, Vol. 26, (1993):60-61; and also Peter Brown's chapter, "Sorcery, Demons and the Rise of Christianity: From Late Antiquity into the Middle Ages," in Brown, *Religion and Society in the Age of St. Augustine* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), 119-46.

[4] Some of the Mennonite deliverance healers of whom I am aware include Dr. James Friesen (Los Angeles, CA), Rev. Randy Friesen (Waterloo, ON), Rev. Dean Hochstetler (Nappanee, IN), Dr. Dana Keener (Lancaster, PA), Rev. James Maust (Royersford, PA), Rev. James Mullet (Humboldt, SK), Ms. Doris Snyder (Vestaburg, MI), Dr. Willard Swartley (Elkhart, IN), and Dr. Lawrence Yoder (Harrisonburg, VA).

[5] The reference is to the formal denominational statement jointly approved by the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church in Wichita, KS, in July 1995. The core Vision statement reads, "God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy, and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world." Ken Hawkley, Dave Rogalsky, and Eleanor Snyder, "*Vision: Healing and Hope* – A Congregational Resource for Introducing Vision: Healing and Hope," (Scottdale, PA: Mennonite Publishing House, 1996).

[6] Hendrik Berkhof, *Christ and the Powers* (Scottdale, PA.: Herald Press, 1962 and 1977), 69.

[7] Berkhof lists the following as the 'powers' texts: Rom. 8:38ff.; 1 Cor. 2:8; 1 Cor. 15:24-26; Eph. 1:20ff.; Eph. 2:1ff.; Eph. 3:10; Eph. 6:12; Col. 1:16; Col. 2:15.

[8] Berkhof, 65.

[9] *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1995), 32-33.

[10] Everett Ferguson, *Demonology of the Early Christian World* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1984), 35-46.

[11] Walter Wink, *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 5.

[12] Rudolf Bultmann, "New Testament and Mythology," in Hans Werner Bartsch, ed. *Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate* (New York: Harper and Row, 1961): 1-3.

[13] Heinrich Schlier, *Principalities and Powers in the New Testament* (NewYork: Herder and

Herder, 1961), 25. Berkhof maintained that in Schlier's earliest lecture on the powers (*Mächte und Gewalten im Neuen Testament*) published in November of 1930, "Schlier sees in the powers no objective realities, but projections of what we might call, with Bultmann, man's self-understanding." Cf. Berkhof, 73, note 3.

[14] Andrew Lincoln, *Word Biblical Commentary Volume 42: Ephesians* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1990), 64.

[15] Paul Miller, *The Devil Did Not Make Me Do It* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1981), 195. It's important to note, though, that in later life Miller apparently believed his earlier analysis to be wrong and changed his mind about demonization. This opinion is based on information cited by Dean Hochstetler in personal correspondence to Willard Swartley, February 15, 1999.

[16] Don Jacobs, *Demons: An Examination of Demons at Work in the World Today* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1971), 32.

[17] Paul Hiebert, "The Flaw of the Excluded Middle," *Missiology* 10 (January, 1982):43.

[18] J. Howard Kauffman and Leo Driedger, *The Mennonite Mosaic: Identity and Modernization* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1991), 69.

[19] Rodney Sawatsky, *The Influence of Fundamentalism on Mennonite Nonresistance 1908-1944* (M.A. thesis, University of Minnesota, 1973), 123.

[20] "Deliverance and Exorcism," in *The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church* – An Assembly 75 Congregational Study Guide (Scottdale, PA: Mennonite Publishing House, 1976), 28.

[21] D.E. Aune, "Demon; Demonology," in Geoffrey Bromiley, ed., *International Standard Bible Encycopedia*, Volume One (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979): 919, lists nearly thirty Hebrew and Greek terms (about two-thirds OT) which are certain or possible allusions to demons. A non-exhaustive listing of several dozen relevant texts is found in Ed Murphy, *The Handboook for Spiritual Warfare* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1992, hereafter "*HSW*"), 20-21. Thomas Finger and Willard Swartley also provide numerous biblical references to support several of these identifications in their chapter, "Bondage and Deliverance: Biblical and Theological Considerations," *Essays on Spiritual Bondage and Deliverance* (Elkhart, IN: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1988, hereafter "*ESBD*"), 11-12.

[22] Wink, *Naming the Powers*, Chapter 2, "The Powers," and especially notes 25-63.

[23] The seven (without their parallels) are: 1) the demoniac in the synagogue, Mark 1:23; 2) the Gerasene demoniac, Mark 5:1-20; 3) the daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman, Mark 7:24-30; 4) the epileptic boy, Mark 9:14-29; 5) the dumb demoniac, 6) the healing of the woman with a spirit of infirmity, Luke 13:10-17; 7) the blind and dumb demoniac, Matt. 12:22ff. Graham Twelftree points out that one-half of these exorcisms have double sources, i.e., both a synoptic writer and Q. See Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist: A Contribution to the Study of the Historical Jesus* (Tübingen: JCB Mohr-Paul Siebeck, 1993), 213-14.

[24] Finger and Swartley, *ESBD*:19.

[25] Michael G. Kenny, "Multiple Personality and Spirit Possession," *Psychiatry*, Vol. 44 (November, 1981): 341. Kenny points out that James had written these remarks in full in the margin of his unpublished notes.

[26] Kurt Koch, *Between Christ and Satan* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1961: hereafter *"BCS"*), 78-82; Charles Kraft, *Defeating Dark Angels: Breaking Demonic Oppressions in the Believer's Life* (Ann Arbor: Servant Publications, 1992, hereafter *"DDA"*), 68-76; Francis

MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits: A Practical Manual* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Chosen Books, 1995: hereafter *"DES"*), 88-94; Dean Hochstetler, "Discernment of Demonic Affliction, Differentiation, and Basic Cure," (n.p., 1996): 4-5; Ed Murphy in *HSW*, 437-48.

[27] Kurt Koch, *Christian Counseling and Occultism* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1965, hereafter "*CCO*"), 21.

[28] Koch, *BCS*, 72.

[29] Divination is characterized by instruments which function as physical props for the occultist. The following list illustrates this: astrology, horoscope chart; tarot, deck of cards with symbols; I Ching, sticks or printed hexagrams; runes, dice; ouija board, an alphabet planchette; radionics/psychometry, divining rod or pendulum or 'black box' ("a diagnostic apparatus for calibrating energy patterns" – Weldon, see the citation which follows); palmistry, the hand; crystal-gazing, crystal ball or crystal rock; metoscopy/physiognomy/phrenology, forehead/face/skull; geomancy, combination of dots or points; water-dowsing, forked stick and other objects. See John Weldon, "Dowsing: Divine Gift, Human Ability, Or Occult Power?" *Christian Research Journal* (Spring, 1992):12.

[30] In *LPG*, chapter 4, "Volitional Demonic Entry into the Human Personality," I deal at length with Mennonite occultism.

[31] John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1996), 492.

[32] Russell Chandler, *Understanding the New* Age (Dallas, TX.: Word Publishing, 1988), 164. Chandler is here citing Michael Harner, *Way of the Shaman: A Guide to Healing and Power* (San Francisco, CA.: Harper and Row, 1980).

[33] I. M. Lewis, "Exorcism and Male Control of Religious Experience," *Ethnos* Vol. 55, Nos. 1-2 (1990): 26-40; Jacobs, *Demons*, 31; Kraft, *DDA*, 69.

[34] Jerald Belitz and Anita Schacht, "Satanism as a Response to Abuse: The Dynamics and Treatment of Satanic Involvement in Male Youths," *Adolescence* Vol. 27, No. 108 (Winter, 1992): 856. Don Jacobs in *Demons*, 43-44, sees esteem issues as inspiriting (building up) or despiriting (tearing down).

[35] Gary M. Steck, Stephen A. Anderson, and William M. Boylin, "Satanism Among Adolescents: Empirical and Clinical Considerations," *Adolescence* Vol. 27, No. 108 (Winter, 1992): 907; Neil T. Anderson and Steve Russo, *The Seduction of Our Children* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1991), 33; "Dabbling in the Occult," *World Press Review*, Vol. 42, No. 6 (June, 1995): 4.

[36] Water dowsing is of especial interest because of its continuing acceptance in many Mennonite circles. It is nontheless divination and thus is condemned in the Bible. In Hos. 4:12, God calls a spade a spade, "My people consult a piece of wood, and their divining rod gives them oracles. For a spirit of whoredom has led them astray, and they have played the whore, forsaking their God." Additional judgments against divination are found in Deut. 18:10,14; Isa. 44:24-25; Jer. 27:9 and 29:8; Mic. 3:7. More general prohibitions on occultism are clearly articulated in many other biblical passages as well.

[37] Kraft, *DDA*, 70-71.

[38] MacNutt, *DES*, 88-89, 196-202; Murphy, *HSW*, 433.

[39] MacNutt, *DES*, 88.

[40] Murphy, *HSW*, 134.
[41] Robert Sears of Loyola University uses the term 'cardinal deliverance' for the exorcism of spirits whose grounds are repeated acts of sin. See Sears, "A Catholic View of Exorcism and Deliverance," *ESBD*: 109.
[42] C. Fred Dickason, *Demon Possession* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1987), 208-09.
[43] Kraft, *DDA*, 73; also Burkholder, *LPG*, 151, which is a case study citation from Dean Hochstetler, May, 1986.
[44] Burkholder, *LPG*, 149, gives an account of a young Christian woman who brought tourist objects home to Canada from Papua New Guinea. Several which were infected with demonic attachments and which were found to be causing physical illness had to be spiritually cleansed.
[45] Freemasonry is one example, among many, of a false religion. "The true name of Satan, the Kabbalists say, is that of Yahweh reversed; for Satan is not a black god .... For the initiates this is not a Person, but a Force, erected for good, but which may serve for evil. It is the instrument of Liberty or Free Will": Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma*, "Master Mason / 3rd Degree," 102. Conversely, "It has been found that every act in the drama of the life of Jesus, and every quality assigned to Christ, is to be found in the life of Krishna": J.D. Buck, *Mystic Masonry*, 138. Both citations come from Jim Shaw and Tom McKenney, *The Deadly Deception* (Lafayette, LA: Huntington House, Inc., 1988), Appendix A, 133, 127. Deliverance healing often encounters spirits whose entry was Masonic.
[46] Murphy, *HSW*, 461.
[47] This is the term used by Jože Krašovec in his lengthy examination of collective retribution in the Old Testament. See Krašovec, "Is There a Doctrine of 'Collective Retribution' in the Hebrew Bible?" *Hebrew Union College Annual*, 65 (1994): 35-89.
[48] According to Krašovec, Ex. 20:1-17 is E; Ex. 32:1-34:35 is a mix of J, E; Num. 13:1-14:45 is mainly a blending of P, JE (Old Epic); and Deut. 7:9-10 is based on Ex. 23:20-33. See Krašovec, 40, 45, 49, 62. In the actual texts, Num. 14:18 says that God is slow to anger, but omits the thousandth-generation modifier. Deut. 7:9-10 states that God repays each person for his or her own sin; while Jer. 32:18 holds that God repays guilt into the children's laps, without specifying the third and fourth generations.
[49] Ibid., 51.
[50] Ibid., 53.
[51] R.K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1969), 852-53.
[52] Herbert G. Gray, "Individual Responsibility and Retribution," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 32 (1961):107; Barnabas Lindars, "Ezekiel and Individual Responsibility," *Vetus Testamentum*, XV (1965): 453-59.
[53] Daniel Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 10-24* (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1998), 559-60.
[54] Leslie C. Allen argues this "irresponsibility and nihilism among the exiles, revealed in their slogan [i.e.the proverb], are the targets of the oracle ...." See Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1994), 272.
[55] Examples include David and Bathsheba (2 Sam. 12:14); Saul and the Gibeonites (2 Sam. 21:1); David's military census (2 Sam. 24); Jeroboam's apostasy (1 Kings 14:1-18); Ahab and

Naboth (1 Kings 21:17-24); Manasseh's Asherah worship and bloodshed (2 Kings 21:1-16); Jeremiah and Shemaiah (Jer. 29:32); and Amaziah's false testimony against Amos (Amos 7:10-17).

[56] This evil-eviction linkage is made in Lev. 18:24ff, Lev. 20:23, Deut. 9:4-5, 1 Kings 21:26, 2 Kings 17:7-16, etc. In light of Ezekiel's statement that the Hittites were one of Jersualem's unclean 'parents,' A. Malamat's article, "Doctrines of Causality in Hittite and Biblical Historiography: A Parallel," *Vetus Testamentum* V (1955): 1-12, is significant in showing that the Hebrew doctrine of God's multi-generational wrath was echoed in Hittite thought.

[57] *Midrash Rabbah: Ruth* (London: Socino, 1939), 79, wonders if rabbi Elisha ben Abuya's apostasy was due to his mother having passed by idolatrous temples when she was pregnant with him, thereby invoking a multi-generational sin.

[58] Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1971), 478. Morris also points to citations in Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash*, II (München: 1922), 529, that leprous and epileptic births were due to parental sin.

[59] In addition to the key Deuteronomic text (linked to Isa. 56:1-5), J. Duncan M. Derrett, in "Christ and the Power of Choice (Mark 3,1-6)," *Biblica* Volume 65 (1984): 174, cites the Testament of Simeon, Philo, the Targums, and the Jerusalemite Talmud for the connection between curses and withering bodily illness.

[60] Derrett, 188.

[61] Commentators propose at least five historical identifications for Zechariah, the most reasonable being Zechariah the son/grandson of Jehoiada of 2 Chron. 4:20-22. See D.A. Carson, *Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 485. 2 Chron. is the last book in the Hebrew Bible, so that the 'genesis to revelation' phrase covers the murders of righteous people throughout the whole Jewish scripture.

[62] Gal. 3:10,14 is based directly on Deut. 27:15-26. The latter passage is often called the 'dodecalogue' because of the twelve commandments with accompanying curses which are listed.

[63] Burkholder, "Restoring the Christian Soul," *LPG*, 178-88.

[64] T. Lewis and R.K. Harrison, "Curse," *International Standard Bible Encylopedia*, Vol. One (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1979): 838.

[65] Murphy, *HSW*, 442-43.

[66] J. Sharbert, "m^{e}—r~h," *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, Vol. I (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1974): 410. The curses of Deut. 27 took effect for the following sins: idolatry; dishonoring parents; removing a neighbor's boundary mark; endangering the blind; perverting justice to sojourners, the fatherless and the widow; mother incest; bestiality; sibling incest; mother-in-law incest; secret murder; contract murder; failure to uphold this law. This is one passage to which Paul refers in Gal. 3:10ff.

[67] The tribe went from 59,300 men over the age of twenty (Num. 1:22), to 22,200 (Num. 26:14), to a mere 7,100 "mighty warriors" (2 Chron. 12:24). Moses didn't even mention Simeon when he blessed the Twelve Tribes prior to his death (Deut. 33).

[68] They were numbered from this infant age since they were to serve as one-for-one representational substitutes for the first-born males of the other tribes (Num. 3:12). There would

have been too few Levite males had twenty been the cut-off age as for the other tribes.

[69] Josephus, *Against Apion*, II, 8.

[70] "Chromosome test confirms a Jewish priestly caste going back almost to the Exodus," *Toronto Star*, July 19, 1998: F8.

[71] Various interpretations attempt to explain the the curse's instrumentality: that he who laid the foundation would offer his firstborn as a foundation sacrifice; that the references to the oldest and youngest sons mean that the task would consume the builder's whole life; that the sons simply died during the project; that the whole family was wiped out by the polluted spring which Elisha purified (2 Ki. 2:19-22); or that the Josh. 6 prediction is anachronistic, being written after the event recorded in I Kings. See Gwylim H. Jones, *I and II Kings, Vol. I: The New Century Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1984), 300; and Norman H. Snaith, *The First and Second Books of Kings – I Kings: The Interpreter's Bible Vol. III* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1954), 144.

[72] Allan P. Ross, "The Curse of Canaan," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 137 (July-September, 1980): 232.

[73] Lewis S. Ford, "The Divine Curse Understood in Terms of Persuasion," *Semeia* 24 (1982): 84.

[74] Derek Prince, *Blessing or Curse: You Can Choose* (Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, 1990), 17. Persons with the gift of discernment of spirits report that the Holy Spirit occasionally indicates generational involvements in a demonized person through the pictorial symbolism of a vortex passing through time.

[75] Koch, *CCO*, 114-115. Koch is here using Jung's three levels of the subconscious (personal, clan, general) and arguing that multi-generational occultic "typing" (my word) enters the hereditary transmissional chain at the clan level. Conceptually, Koch sees engrams as analogous to physical genes; thus, magic conjuration may become recessive for a generation if occultic activity is not practiced and still reappear as a dominant trait later. The theoretical basis for, and interactions amongst, engrams, multi-generational psychological scripting, and protoplasmic emotional transfers blends speculation with some fact.

[76] Kraft, *DDA*, 74; Prince, *Blessing or Curse*, 32.

[77] Kraft, *DDA*, 125; MacNutt, *DES*, 281-88; see also Burkholder, *LPG*, 136-40.

[78] MacNutt, *DES*, 119; Murphy, *HSW*, 447; Koch, *BCS*, 152; Dean Hochstetler, Case Study, February, 1997.

[79] George A.F. Knight in *Isaiah 56-66: The New Israel* (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1985), 93-94, notes that in ancient Israel, the phrase 'to the fourth generation' applies to a family household in which all of these generations are present. Thus inherited guilt in such an environment has natural relational conduits of the type discussed by Carter et al. in *Secrets of Your Family Tree* (Chicago: Moody Bible Institute, 1990). Note especially chapter 3 by Dave Carter, "Passing the Torch: The Multigenerational Transmission Process," which focuses on learned patterns.

[80] Chaper 20, "Generation on Generation: Children and Parents in Family Therapy," in Larry Constantine, *Family Paradigm: The Practice of Theory in Family Therapy* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1986), 375. An excellent biblical example of scripting is found in Gen. 16:12, where the hostility between Sarai and Hagar is spoken by the angel of the Lord as an oracle over Ishmael in the womb: "He shall be a wild ass of a man, with his hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him; and he shall live at odds with all his kin." The multi-generational

pattern is scripted out for Ishmael.

[81] Edwin Friedman, *From Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synogogue* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1985), 32. The genogram (multi-generational family tree) of this case study is depicted on his p. 33.

[82] Daniel V. Papero, *Bowen Family Systems Theory* (Needham Heights, MA: Simon and Schuster, 1990), 4-5.

[83] I. Mendelsohn, "Familiar Spirit," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1962): 237-38, gives an etymology of the term and its usage in the Old Testament. This usage is different than that which refers to a spirit embodied as an animal which is at the beck and call of a medium.

[84] The NAS, Webster, Young's Literal, ASV, Jewish Pub. Soc. and Green's Literal translations each render one or more of these texts with the term 'familiar spirit.' Even further, all of these verses include reference to spiritists and consulting the dead (necromancy), as do Lev. 19:31 and 20:6, even though the latter two do not mention familiar spirits *per se*. One of the deceptions of familiar spirits is that they are prone to impersonate dead ancestors.

[85] F.F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts* (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1954-1976, many editions), 332, n. 35. Bruce mentions Plutarch, whose term for such a person was a 'ventriloquist' in reference to the control demon who speaks through the human 'dummy.'

[86] Carl Kraeling, "Was Jesus Accused of Necromancy?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 54 (1940): 147-157.

[87] MacNutt, *DES*, 108. "Who told you that?" is a good question! *LPG*, 127, note 10 reports a case where the discernment of spirits (1 Cor. 12:7) was similarly crucial in the exorcism of a woman whose multi-generational linkages went back as far as a 1791 satanic ceremony in Haiti. The full citation in *LPG* combines supernatural and documentary sources of information.

[88] Gwen Wellington has analyzed and summarized the debate within the therapeutic community over how best to conceptualize and define SRA. See Wellington, *Conceptualizing Pervasive Sexual Abuse: A Grounded Theory Study* (University of Calgary, M.S.W. thesis, 1998), 9-14.

[89] Dr. Dana Keener of Lancaster, PA cites a case involving one of his clients. This person suffers from extreme dissociative polyfragmentation (personality mini-fragmenting), in which pre-alters have formed around specific traumatic memories but have not yet coalesced into alters with personalities of their own. The client's father hid his "Satanic High Priest activities by going to a Bible preaching Evangelical church" (client quote). She is now a member of a Brethren in Christ congregation. See *LPG*, 169.

[90] Margaret Smith, *Ritual Abuse: What It Is, Why It Happens, And How To Help* (San Francisco, CA: Harper, 1993), 117. For general abuse see David B. Peters in *Betrayal of Innocence: What Everyone Should Know About Child Sexual Abuse* (Dallas, TX: Word Publishing, 1986), 28.

[91] James Friesen, *Uncovering the Mystery of MPD* (San Bernadino, CA: Here's Life Publishers, 1991), 210; also MacNutt, *DES*, 234.

[92] Justin Martyr, "First Apology," in Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds. *The Anti-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1951, hereafter "*ANF*"), Ch. xxvii; "The Guilt of Exposing Children," Ch. xxvii; William Langer, "Infanticide: A Historical Survey," *History of Childhood Quarterly* 1 (1973-4): 360; John Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers* (New York:

Pantheon Books, 1988), 257-60, 327-29.

[93] "Demons and Spirits," in James Hastings, ed. *The Encylopaedia of Religion and Ethics,* Vol. 4 (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1911): 565-636.

[94] J. Bruce Long, "Demons: An Overview," *The Encyclopedia of Religion,* Volume 4 (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1987): 282-88.

[95] See the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders,* third edition, revised (Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association, 1987), 270-271 for psychiatry's stance: "The **belief that one is possessed** [DSM bold print] by another person, spirit, or entity may occur as a symptom of Multiple Personality Disorder. In such cases the complaint of being 'possessed' is actually the experience of the alternate personality's influence on the person's behavior and mood. However, the feeling that one is 'possessed' may also be a delusion in a psychic disorder, such as schizophrenia, not a symptom of a Dissociative Disorder."

[96] W.R.D. Fairbairn writes, "It becomes evident, accordingly, that the psychotherapist is the true successor to the exorcist. His business is not to pronounce the forgiveness of sins, but to cast out devils." See Fairbairn, "The Repression and Return of Bad Objects (with Special Reference to the 'War Neuroses')," in Peter Buckley, ed., *Essential Papers on Object Relations* (New York: New York University Press, 1986), 113.

[97] This is a Delores Williams quote from the Re-imagining Conference in Minneapolis in 1993 as cited by Joseph D. Small and John P. Burgess, "Evaluating 'Re-Imagining'," *Christian Century,* April 6, 1994: 344.

[98] Several references illustrate the progression of thought: Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," *ANF,* Vol. I, Bk. III, Ch. iii, Sect. 23.1; Justin Martyr, "The Second Apology of Justin," *ANF,* Vol. I, Ch. vi; Origen, "Contra Celsus," *ANF,* Vol. IV, Bk VII, Ch. xvii.

[99] The alternate NRSV reading here for *apekdusemenos* is "divested." According to F.F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Colossians* (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1975), 239-40, n. 68, the Greek Fathers saw Christ as stripping off the powers "like a shirt of Nessus" and the Latin Fathers saw him as stripping off his body.

[100] John Driver, *Understanding the Atonement for the Mission of the Church* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1986), 20.

[101] Since the Nicene Creed states that Jesus descended to hell, the issue is raised as to whether he in some sense died spiritually as well. However, in the context of Jesus' preaching to the imprisoned spirits of Noah's day (1 Pet. 3:19), the context clearly says that Jesus "was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit," vs. 18.

[102] Pierre Abelard, *Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*, quoted in Leon Morris, *The Cross of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1988), 16.

[103] Origen, "Contra Celsus," *ANF*, Vol. IV, Bk. VII, Ch. xvii.

[104] F.F. Bruce, *Commentary on Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1982), 160.

[105] This connection dates from as early as the third century. "As they [demons] see faith grow in a man, in that proportion they depart from him . . . from those who believe with full faith, they depart without any delay." However, when infidelity exists somewhere within the Christian, the demons can cling "and it is the greatest difficulty for the soul to understand when or how, whether fully or less fully, the demon has been expelled from it." Cited from "The Recognitions of Clement," *ANF*, Vol. VIII, Ch. xvii.

[106] The theory came to define redemption as our increase in God-consciousness (the subjective aspect) so that sin is the gap between what God wants us to be and what we are. Under the influence of the Enlightenment, Jesus' atonement was reduced to a mere – though admittedly powerful – model for human emulation.
[107] *LPG*, 70.
[108] Kraft, *DDA*, 177-80.
[109] Dean Hochstetler to Lawrence Burkholder, *Personal Correspondence*, February 6, 1997. Hochstetler speaks from the perspective of nearly forty years of deliverance healing experience.
[110] Murphy, *HSW*, pp. viii-xi.
[111] MacNutt, *DES*, pp. 18-20.
[112] Charles Kraft, *Christianity With Power* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1989), 1-9.

Response to Roland Spjuth

Nancey Murphy

George Ellis and I want to express our gratitude to Roland Spjuth for his review. We appreciate the fair and accurate report on the content of the book, as well as the fact that he raises important questions regarding the internal coherence of the project.

One of Spjuth's major worries is a (perceived) inconsistency between John Howard Yoder's rejection of "methodologism" and our very self-conscious methodological maneuvering in the book. I will not attempt to comment on all of the detailed criticisms Spjuth raises, but rather will focus on the genuine difference between Yoder's *style* of academic work and ours. Yoder argued for a style of theology that might be called "occasional" rather than "systematic." This was due, first, to his rejection of any starting point, e.g., philosophical anthropology, apart from the life and teaching of Jesus – a point with which we agree. Second, it reflected his view of the theologian as servant to the gathered community: the only legitimate task of theology (including theological ethics) is to help formulate answers to live questions that arise within the church as it seeks to be faithful to the way of Jesus.

Yoder's objection to "methodologism" in ethics might best be described as an objection to the view that one has first to choose among assorted metaethical theories (Kantian, utilitarian, etc.) and then go on to deal with the substance of morality itself. It is important to note, however, that Yoder has no objection to engaging in "*a posteriori* elucidation" of a community's or an individual's (e.g., his own) moral reasoning.[1]

In contrast to Yoder, my primary interest (and that of Imre Lakatos) is methodology itself. But "methodology" is an ambiguous term and, in addition, there are a variety of understandings of the relation of methodology to intellectual practice. "Methodology" can be used to refer to concrete methods

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of doing research – the sort of thing one learns in a "methods" class in psychology, for example. The meaning at issue here is more abstract. "The methodology of science" refers, most basically, to methods of reasoning. Philosophy of science attempts to give an account of what constitutes good reasoning in science. It is easy to list some of the desiderata of good theorizing: coherence and consistency, elegance, empirical fit, scope. I was attracted to Lakatos's account of scientific reasoning because it recognizes that there are good and bad ways to maintain theoretical consistency and to take account of potentially falsifying data. That is, any theory can be saved if enough qualifications are added. Some such additions lead to further discoveries and explanations ("novel facts"), while others are merely ad hoc. Programs can be compared as to the extent that their changes over time are progressive rather than ad hoc.

Lakatos's point about ad hoc modifications is well illustrated by this example:

> The story is about an imaginary case of planetary misbehavior. A physicist of the pre-Einstein era takes Newton's mechanics and his law of gravitation, (*N*), the accepted initial conditions, *I*, and calculates, with their help, the path of a newly discovered small planet, *p*. But the planet deviates from the calculated path. Does our Newtonian physicist consider that the deviation was forbidden by Newton's theory and therefore that, once established, it refutes the theory *N*? No. He suggests that there must be a hitherto unknown planet *p'* which perturbs the path of *p*. He calculates the mass orbit, etc., of this hypothetical planet and then asks an experimental astronomer to test his hypothesis. The planet *p'* is so small that even the biggest available telescopes cannot possibly observe it: the experimental astronomer applies for a research grant to build yet a bigger one. In three years' time the new telescope is ready. Were the unknown planet *p'* to be discovered, it would be hailed as a new victory of Newtonian science. But it is not. Does our scientist abandon Newton's theory and his idea of the perturbing planet? No. He suggests that a cloud of cosmic dust hides the planet from us. He calculates the location and properties of this cloud and asks for a research grant to send up a satellite to

> test his calculations. Were the satellite's instruments (possibly new ones, based on a little-tested theory) to record the existence of the conjectural cloud, the result would be hailed as an outstanding victory for Newtonian science. But the cloud is not found. Does our scientist abandon Newton's theory, together with the idea of the perturbing planet and the idea of the cloud which hides it? No. He suggests that . . .[2]

When I turned my attention from philosophy of science to theological method it was clear that theologians need to avoid the same temptation. To illustrate the point in somewhat crude fashion, compare Antony Flew's parable of the Gardener.

> Once upon a time two explorers came upon a clearing in the jungle. In the clearing were growing many flowers and many weeds. One explorer says, "Some gardener must tend this plot." The other disagrees, "There is no gardener." So they pitch their tents and set a watch. No gardener is ever seen. "But perhaps he is an invisible gardener." So they set up a barbed-wire fence. They electrify it. They patrol with bloodhounds. (For they remember how H. G. Wells's *The Invisible Man* could be both smelt and touched though he could not be seen.) But no shrieks ever suggest that some intruder has received a shock. No movements of the wire ever betray an invisible climber. The bloodhounds never give cry. Yet still the Believer is not convinced. "But there is a gardener, invisible, intangible, insensible to electric shocks, a gardener who has no scent and makes no sound, a gardener who comes secretly to look after the garden which he loves." At last the Sceptic despairs, "But what remains of your original assertion? Just how does what you call an invisible, intangible, eternally elusive gardener differ from an imaginary gardener or even from no gardener at all?"[3]

Now, about the relation between methodological reflections and the disciplines themselves: Methodologies (in the sense in which I'm using the term) are theories – theories about good theorizing. Since the work of Lakatos it has been recognized that these theories cannot be formulated *a priori,* apart from the actual practice of science. A good methodology is intended to serve

as a prescription for doing good science, but it can only get its force from the fact that it also serves as a description of science at its best.

In my first book, *Theology in the Age of Scientific Reasoning,* I argued that Lakatos's methodology could just as well work for theology as for science.[4] The chapter on Yoder's theology in *On the Moral Nature of the Universe* is an extension of that project. The quality and sophistication of the reasoning in Yoder's work has always impressed me. So an interesting question was whether Lakatos's methodology would serve as an "*a posteriori* elucidation" of Yoder's reasoning. I believe we have shown that it does. (Yoder, by the way, had no objections to this presentation of his work.)

Spjuth's second, related worry about our book is that its attempt at a unified and well-argued worldview (including ethics) is Constantinian. Ellis and I agree with Spjuth's claim that, from an Anabaptist perspective, a connection between ethics and science is *likely* to be problematic. As he says, "such a position has often implied trust in a generally accessible morality, which in practice has often only served to justify dominant moral views as 'natural.'" I believe that Spjuth's own account of the content of the ethical position we promote is adequate to dispel any worries that our book represents a justification of the status quo. In fact, we argue not for an ethic that conforms to dominant scientific images of human nature, but rather for one that calls into question the moral presuppositions of the social sciences themselves.

However, I also detect in Spjuth's comments an assumption of the "postmodern" claim that all systematic knowledge is inherently oppressive and all argument inherently coercive. This is a point of view that needs to be taken seriously and, in particular, stands in need of a theological critique, which I cannot undertake here but have attempted elsewhere.[5]

A final issue is whether we have succeeded in providing adequate justification for our point of view. We follow Alasdair MacIntyre's account of the possibilities and difficulties of justifying a tradition over against its rivals. MacIntyre's work is valuable for Anabaptists because it indicates how particular (even minority) points of view can be argued in the public arena. We believe we have made a start, but much remains to be done. Of course, the prior issue, as Spjuth points out, is whether there is something intrinsic to Anabaptism that makes such a task inappropriate from the start.

Notes

[1] John H. Yoder, "Walk and Word: The Altenatives to Methodologism," in Stanley Hauerwas, Nancey Murphy, and Mark Nation, eds., *Theology Without Foundations: Religious Practice and the Future of Theological Truth* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 77-90; quotation p. 80.
[2] "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes," in John Worall and Gregory Currie, eds., *The Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 8-101; quotation p. 16-17.
[3] Antony Flew, *New Essays in Philosophical Theology,* 96-99; quotation 96.
[4] *Theology in the Age of Scientific Reasoning* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990). In that book, by the way, I elaborate an account of theological method that takes as its data the deliverances of the same sort of communal discernment that Spjuth emphasizes in Yoder's account of ethics.
[5] See "A Theology of Education," in H. Huebner, ed., *Mennonite Education in a Post-Christian World* (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 1998); "Missiology in the Postmodern West: A Radical Reformation Perspective," in J.A. Kirk and K.J. Vanhoozer, eds., *To Stake a Claim: Missions and the Western Crisis of Knowledge* (New York: Orbis, 1999); and "Traditions, Practices and the Powers: A Radical-Reformation Epistemology," in H.T. Engelhardt, Jr., ed., *Christian Epistemology in the Third Millennium* (forthcoming).

Response to Lawrence Burkholder

Dana Keener

Lawrence Burkholder's article gave me a framework to begin organizing things that I have come to believe over the past several years. I once heard the statement, "A man with an argument is no match for a man with an experience." It is very descriptive of the nature of this subject. While there is certainly Biblical support for a concept of demons and Satan, as the author documents well, for most of us our theology of demons is largely based on our experience or lack thereof.

There are usually two sides on a roof from which you can fall off. You could ignore any role that the demonic might play in the need for healing. Modern science has given the tools we need to heal mental disorders. Disorders like schizophrenia, epilepsy, and others that were once seen as demonization or possession are now understood more fully as mental or physical conditions. Likewise, you could see everything as rooted in demonic activity. There is no need for understanding one's feelings, no need for medications. Just command the demons to leave. If things do not change, it is due to lack of repentance or unwillingness to part with the demons. Education and knowledge have no value.

Like many Mennonites I grew up believing in a literal Satan, a spirit world that included angels and evil spirits, and a need for protection from evil through a relationship with Jesus. However, I did not take these beliefs too seriously because in the United States demons were not really active (just in third world countries), and if any visited the United States, I was automatically protected as a Christian.

My main introduction to people who had experienced serious emotional, physical, and spiritual abuse, and subsequently to the question of deliverance several years later, began at Philhaven Hospital, a Mennonite psychiatric hospital in Mt. Gretna, Pennsylvania, during my psychology internship and

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employment from 1987 through 1991. During this time I became involved with several clients diagnosed with Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD), now renamed as Dissociative Identity Disorder. All the Christian psychologists that I knew were treating it as solely a psychological disorder. There were occasional questions and comments regarding some of the symptoms observed and the possible spiritual interface, but the general attitude was to focus on a psychological explanation, even among dissociative clients presenting with a history of satanic ritual abuse.

In 1991 I joined a group practice with several other Christian psychologists whose faith was an important part of their identity. During the next six years my own view of deliverance was largely formulated. My work with cult abused dissociative clients increased. Somehow word got around that I was willing to work with this disorder, and I had been educating myself about MPD. I also began to believe that God had called me to work with occult survivors as a ministry. Although the others in the practice were open to a belief in Satan and demons, they expressed some concern regarding my involvement with clients dealing with satanic ritual abuse, and some fear about the reputation it could give our practice and about retaliation from active cults. While they never forbade me to do deliverance as part of therapy, they questioned why it did not happen as easily for me as it did for Jesus, and suggested that this practice is not the realm of psychology but a job for pastors to do. I was delighted to have a pastor do this part of the work when one was around, which did happen on occasion. I even taught or encouraged some pastors to practice deliverance.

I began to meet other people working with dissociative disorders who had become aware of dissociative issues during ministry of deliverance. They realized that everything that manifest was not demonic, and were looking to the professional community to learn more about MPD. Some of these people taught me a lot about deliverance, although much of what I learned was on the job training or reading, including the Bible. I and my wife, who was also a therapist working with dissociative clients, would share experiences and try to make sense of what we were witnessing.

I am currently in solo practice. Now I am the one who worries about my reputation. I realized this is still an issue for me when I saw that Burkholder had included me in a list of Mennonite deliverance healers in the Notes to his

article. But I keep giving my reputation, along with my psychology license, to God's keeping. I have been very careful to move in a spiritual direction in therapy only when it is clearly a part of the belief system of the client. Now many of my clients come looking for God to be a central focus in therapy. Deliverance is for more than just those coming out of occult backgrounds. It can even be an area of my own personal need.

One area I would like to see further developed in the discussion of demons is the role of the Holy Spirit in guiding the deliverance process. I realize this may open another whole theological can of worms if one believes that some gifts of the Spirit are no longer operational. Some people are deeply committed to a concept of deliverance but approach it more as a structured formula: if a certain truth is applied, then there will be a specific response. Specific prayers are prayed for specific problems. God has certainly honored His word and people have found release. As clear as the Bible is that Jesus directly addressed the issue of demons and gives us authority over them (Luke 10:19), there is very little teaching on how to do it other than preparation through prayer (Mark 9:29) and perhaps fasting. To me this speaks of the importance of our daily relationship with God rather than concern for technique. This seems to allow for a diversity in how deliverance is practiced. Personally I enjoy working more directly under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The realm of the demonic is a spirit realm, one I cannot see for the most part, although God shows me glimpses at times. Some people can see more clearly in this realm, but I believe we are all better off to let the Holy Spirit lead the way. This allows for freedom and creativity in the act of deliverance, and makes it more fun, but it also means you can't always rely on formulas or past experience to inform you of what a new situation entails.

One day I was meeting with a woman dealing with an extensive array of mind control and demonic bondage in spite of a relationship with God that was very committed and genuine. We had already experienced deliverance in a variety of ways. On this particular day I had just finished a soft drink from a plastic bottle and was absentmindedly playing with it as the session began. We had exchanged greetings, and we were both quietly pondering what we were going to talk about for the session. I realized I had begun to rhythmically beat the bottle against my other hand, and thought I should stop and put the bottle

down so as not to distract or annoy her. But just as quickly I had a second thought to continue and sensed this to be God's direction, so I continued – still with no obvious reaction from my client. Shortly I became aware of an extremely evil and glaring presence looking at me through her eyes. I commanded it to leave in the name of Jesus, and there was a relaxing in her demeanor. Then just as quickly the look returned and I responded again, with the same effect. This went on for several minutes; my rhythmically tapping the bottle and dispelling demons by the authority Jesus gave me. Eventually this came to an end, and the woman told me of her experience of the demons literally being drawn into manifesting one after the other by the drumming sound.

I have been reluctant to commit this experience to writing because of its unorthodox nature, although we did joke about writing a book on Pop Bottle Deliverance. I share to demonstrate the spontaneity, creativity, and lack of religiosity of the Holy Spirit as well as to warn against codifying experiences into formulas.

Relying on the Holy Spirit also means following God's timing and agenda, which may be quite different from what we would prefer. God has been known to ignore people's theology. I remember watching with some humor as a Baptist colleague of mine was working with a satanic ritual abuse survivor, demonstrating new methods he had been learning. The Holy Spirit was speaking to him, giving very clear and intricate directions on how to walk through and disconnect the maze of demons and mind control programming that held this woman in bondage. As my friend the Baptist would share what God was showing him, he would repeatedly concede that what he was experiencing did not fit with his theology.

One caution I would add to Burkholder's article is that not all unpleasant things, apparent curses, come from Satan as God's judgment of sin. Sometimes because of His love for us, God uses Satan to sift us (Luke 22:31). I view this as a cleansing process and an educational process where God is preparing us for things ahead. To move into deliverance instead of obedience, asking God what our response should be to the situation, could result in a lot of frustration about why deliverance does not work.

Many people dealing with demonic activity have begun to focus more on the "cracks" through which demons enter or the legal ground that gives

them the right to operate in a persons life. What is it that continues to allow the demonic to harass a person? The actual act of commanding demons to leave is fairly simple, if we understand the authority we have in Jesus and the power of His blood. The difficult part is gaining awareness of their presence and right to be there. Even more difficult at times is helping the person reach the place of exercising his or her will to have them leave. Some people have grown quite accustomed to their demons and the power, perceived protection, or other benefits they are getting.

The stories of attempts at deliverance that I have heard from the Mennonite mental health community presented those involved as being on the fanatical edge, having departed from a true methodology of healing. Scientific understanding of emotional and psychological problems is certainly the standard. Some therapists, especially those working with dissociative disorders, quietly depart from that constraint when psychology does not explain their experience. They tend to move outside the mainstream, or connect with ministries more open to a joining of the psychological and the spiritual. This is more or less true across the Christian mental health field. There are pockets of Christian therapists and counselors who include deliverance in their healing but are cautious about disclosing to "outsiders".

I deeply appreciate Lawrence Burkholder's challenging us to take seriously the concept of demons from a Biblical understanding. There are many areas for further clarification and learning on this subject, but he has laid a solid foundation and pointed us in a direction we need to go if we are to move to a deeper understanding of what God has for us. As God has opened my eyes to a spirit realm that is very active, He has also begun to show me more and more of His power and love. We do not need to fear evil, because He has overcome evil and His love overcomes the fear.

The Evolution of a Christian Botanist

Carl S. Keener

In the Apocryphal book 1 Esdras the writer recounts a charming story of a debate involving three bodyguards in the court of King Darius. One night while King Darius was sleeping, the three young men began a debate over what each thought was the strongest item or event in their world. In arguing for truth, Zerubbabel said that "truth abides and remains strong forever .... There is no favoritism with her, no partiality .... Hers are strength and royalty, the authority and majesty of all ages. Praise be to the God of truth!" (1 Esdras 4:38-40). Eventually truth was declared the winner, and the people shouted "Great is truth: truth is strongest!"

Whether fanciful or not, the outcome was that Zerubbabel, the winner of the debate, was able to convince King Darius to allow the Jews to return to their homeland and rebuild the temple and their homes. Yet truth remains, now, as then, as elusive as ever. In my professional life as a teacher and a systematic botanist, I have had to confront the theory of evolution, not only as a central premise of biology but also as a philosophical view of the way the world works. In this essay, I do not intend to settle the issue of truth, except to state that whenever worldviews clash, as they inevitably will, truth, however understood, is an overriding issue. And thus begins a story of the evolution of a botanist who is now retired, yet remains a dedicated Christian and a Mennonite.

Early influences and a cognitive shift

As a junior at Eastern Mennonite University in the mid-fifties, I bought a slim book of 135 pages titled *New Concepts in Flowering-Plant Taxonomy*.[1] Full of new words, this book opened windows to a world I never knew existed. Until then I was a special creationist who believed that all species were created fresh from the hand of God roughly 6000 years ago. This was the view I was

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taught, and I had no first-hand experience in natural history to counter it. But as I read *New Concepts*, the belief that all species were created 6000 years ago just was not tenable. Among other matters, *New Concepts* described polyploidy in plants, a genetic means whereby a hybrid offspring inherits the full chromosome complement of its parents, themselves two different species. I've left out a lot of technical details, but my point should be clear: Polyploidy means that new species can evolve now, in our time. Special creationists simply had no answer to this clear evidence that not all species were created during a week of intense creative activity by God.

Prior to reading *New Concepts*, I believed that all species were created in some unspecified manner by God and remained basically unchanged since their initial creation. This idea was reinforced by two books I had read in my youth: Chester K. Lehman's *The Inadequacy of Evolution As a World View*, and *Doctrines of the Bible* edited by Daniel Kauffman.[2] Both books claimed that God created *de novo* all species of living things, and that evolution itself was both unscriptural and unscientific. In particular, Lehman argued that the alleged evidence simply did not support evolution.

When I read *New Concepts*, I knew at once that not all species were created 6000 years ago, that new species can evolve now, and that evolution, at least with respect to plant species, continues unabated into our time. Nevertheless, these new ideas clashed with my previous beliefs about creation. When humans encounter new ideas differing from their present beliefs, conflicts inevitably arise. Moreover, these conflicts require some sort of decision whereby one attempts to reduce what Leon Festinger has called "cognitive dissonance."[3] Specifically, one just could not with any intellectual integrity hold to the view of a recently completed creation and at the same time accept the view that species are a result of evolutionary changes within populations. Despite the invigorating new ideas encountered in *New Concepts*, I had not yet come to terms with Darwin.

Several years later, in January 1959, the Mennonite Graduate Fellowship (MGF – a group of young Mennonites who were then in graduate school) met at Ohio State University to discuss a wide range of topics, including a paper by Stanwyn Shetler dealing with evolution to which I added some remarks out of my experience as a graduate student. At a subsequent meeting (December 1959), the MGF met in Chicago to discuss the impact of the theory of evolution

on Christian thought, and represented, so far as I know, the first general treatment of evolution within Mennonite circles.

In re-reading those papers forty years later I am struck by the evident earnestness in aiming to follow the empirical evidence where it leads, but all the authors drew back from developing a thoroughly evolutionary view of life. God still worked in the gaps of our ignorance, despite accepted natural mechanisms for speciation. And clearly all presenters were quite assured of the power of God to create in any manner God intended to utilize. For most of us, an overarching synthesis of philosophy, anthropology, sociology, biology, and theology still lay in the future. Nevertheless, evolution, as a theory accounting for the origin of species, made an entrance into Mennonite thought, and in my opinion this was, at the time, a significant breakthrough.

Some basic questions

In any overview of the relationship of God, nature, and the human species, certain questions keep intruding. Although I cannot discuss them in detail, they have formed the basis of my ongoing inquiry over the years.

1. Can an evolving universe reveal purpose and design, or is the present universe a result of random but interacting events? To what extent can the universe be said to be planned, if evolution is true? Are the laws of nature externally imposed, or are there immanent resident forces guiding basic changes within the present universe? Can design and chance be united in some philosophically coherent manner?

2. Can the structures of the present universe reveal any aspect of the nature of God? How do we understand the meaning of "God acts"? Is God likewise subject to metaphysical principles, or has God in some manner imposed the basic structures of reality in this particular cosmic epoch? Can we ascribe the cruelties observed in nature to God's creative designs? How do we reconcile human freedoms with God's omnipotent power?

3. How can sentient forms (minds) evolve from seemingly lifeless, inert matter? Is Darwinian evolution the best current model available explaining

"descent with modification"? How do we best understand the history of the universe, including the history of life on earth?

4. Can a faith based on revelation be correlated with science based on reason and factual observation of how the world works? In a world of science, how does one correlate Christian views of providence, miracles, original sin, Jesus, and eschatology with an evolutionary explanation of human origins?

5. Does evolution imply atheism, or can a Darwinian also be a Christian?

Evolution as a biological theory

During my studies in graduate school I read the major works by twentieth-century empirical evolutionists, and these helped me understand the fundamental neo-Darwinian synthesis involving genetics and Darwin's views of natural history.[4] To be sure, in his seminal book, *On the Origin of Species* (hereafter, *Origin*), Darwin regarded evolution as "descent with modification"[5] by means of the "accumulation of successive slight favorable variations."[6] Although Darwin lacked any knowledge of modern genetics, we can now view organic evolution as a process involving genetic continuity coupled with changes among organisms within local populations over time. Thus evolution has two components: transformation (i.e., changes as seen in the fossil record) and diversification (i.e., multiplication of species).[7]

The idea of natural selection (NS), particularly, has been often widely misunderstood. To Darwin, NS is the "preservation of favorable variations and the rejection of injurious variations."[8] Basically, NS is the preservation of slight but useful variations which favor those individuals in the "struggle for existence" (a metaphor meaning "dependence of one being on another" and "success in leaving progeny").[9] Ernst Mayr has suggested that NS can be understood as a "differential reproduction of individuals that differ uniquely in their adaptive superiority."[10] That is, if there is variation, if the variations are inherited, if the variant individuals differ in reproductive success, there will be evolutionary changes within populations. Consequently, NS is a two-step process involving 1) production of genetic variability, and 2) selection which "orders" that variability, and is therefore reproduction and differential survival. Darwin's approach was thoroughly empirical and thus was open to crucial tests. Still, as

Mayr noted, there were a number of reasons why scientists did not initially accept Darwinian evolution – no proof, a threat to views that nature was planned by God, NS could eliminate but not create, too much chance (the law of "higgledy-piggledy"), empirical evidence too scanty, etc.[11]

Despite numerous criticisms, the Darwinian revolution had an enormous impact in how people viewed themselves within an ever-changing cosmos.[12] In brief, a Darwinian view of life resulted in replacing a world of fixed types (or species) by an evolving one, and thus replaced essentialism by population thinking. Essentialism implied a descent with perpetuation of the type of the species, but an evolutionary view implied that the basic properties of a species themselves can undergo significant changes.

The last point, particularly, has important ramifications not only for viewing natural history but in contemplating certain basic aspects of the universe. As Mayr indicated, the shift from essentialism (typological thinking) to population thinking had immense consequences both in biology and philosophy.[13] For more than 2000 years Western thought had been geared to essentialism, the idea that even variable objects of appearance owe their existence to an invariant type or class.[14] As William Whewell stated, "Species have a real existence in nature, and a transition from one to another does not exist."[15]

In the post-Darwinian controversies roughly spanning the years 1860-1920, three broad types of Christians responded to Darwin.[16] As James Moore has asked, why did some Christians "become Darwinians and others Darwinists? Why was it that a few remained loyal to Darwin, despite the travails of his theory, while the many, aping and abetting the critics of natural selection, took up other versions of evolution?"[17] Still, why did others refuse to accept any theory of evolution?

Can a Christian be a Darwinian?

Recently, two books have attempted to answer the question of whether there can be a common ground between God and evolution. In *Can a Darwinian Be a Christian?*, philosopher Michael Ruse states that evolution "is a fact and . . . Darwinism rules triumphant. Natural selection is not simply an important mechanism. It is the only significant cause of permanent organic change."[18] Ruse cannot understand why people cannot be both Christians and Darwinians, and he remarks that Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas would have

been "appalled at such a presumption." Consequently he has written a broad-ranging account of how evolution and orthodox Christianity are compatible.

Ruse correctly points out that when discussing evolution, one must note the "*fact* of evolution, the *path* (or *paths*) of evolution, and the *mechanism* or *cause* (*mechanisms* or *causes*) of evolution."[19] That there is descent with modification, that there are phylogenies (branching trees) indicating organic relationships, and that natural selection and adaptations are powerful forces involved in these changes, are views accepted by virtually all biologists dealing with natural history. Such biologists are indeed Darwinians, who as "[w]orking evolutionists, looking at real organisms, stay within the Darwinian fold: natural origins, a branching tree, selection and adaptation."[20]

Ruse then contrasts a Darwinian view of life with fairly traditional views of Christianity stemming from Augustine (Catholic and mainstream Protestant). Ruse parses out Fundamentalism and shows that basing one's science on a literal reading of the Bible helps neither the science nor the Bible. The view that Noah's flood (which has been the basis of flood geology theories) can explain geological phenomena, including fossils, simply leads to an unacceptable science.[21] However, in Ruse's view, the Augustinian option regards evolution as God's work, and contends that God is "actively involved in seeing that things occur as they should, [that] the laws, random or not, are His laws and events, and he foresaw and intended the end result."[22] Nonetheless, Ruse notes that there are costs to this solution: the question of human freedom looms large, as does the problem of evil and pain. However, he supports Augustine's thinking about predestination, and argues that Augustine "would expect an all-knowing Being to know what is going to happen to us: how we will choose, and what the consequences will be."[23] Still, God "is not interfering in our choices. We are free." As I understand Ruse, classical theism is thus perfectly compatible with Darwinism. Finally, he sees "remarkable parallels between the Darwinian human and the Christian human. On both accounts there is an internal battle. Human beings are selfish individuals . . . [yet] we do have real moral feelings for others," although we may not necessarily act on these feelings.[24]

In the second book, *Finding Darwin's God*, cell biologist Kenneth Miller covers much of the same terrain as Ruse except that Miller deals more with various modern anti-Darwinians such as Michael Behe, Duane Gish,

Henry Morris, and Phillip Johnson.[25] Miller shows that scientific creationists tend to reduce God to the status of a charlatan (fossils were placed in the rocks by God and, despite appearing old, the universe and the earth are actually quite young), or a magician (God periodically created *de novo* complicated structures as well as the major forms of life), or a mechanic (God created irreducibly complex structures such as the cell, thus a modern version of the old design arguments). To Miller, God is none of these (charlatan, magician, mechanic), but as architect, God in subtle ways influences what goes on within nature. As Miller puts it, God is "one whose genius fashioned a fruitful world in which the process of continuing creation is woven into the fabric of matter itself."[26]

Hence, the key question for Miller is whether "what science tells us of the physical world, including evolution, [is] compatible with what we *think* we know about God."[27] Moreover, "the God of the Bible, even the God of Genesis, is a Deity fully consistent with what we know of the scientific reality of the modern world."[28] Throughout his book, Miller claims that "[t]rue knowledge comes only from a combination of faith and reason."[29] The structures of reality as seen in physics and chemistry which run our lives have also produced those lives as well.

Both Ruse and Miller believe that the universe is very old, and that matter as we know it arose from the stuff of stars which eventually became the basis of life. The history of life is marked by evolution and natural selection, human freedom, and quantum indeterminancy. Ruse and Miller disavow biblical literalism concerning Genesis, but they allow for the possibility of miracles and accept some form of classical theism in establishing their arguments. They have written persuasive books showing that science is not necessarily antithetical to religious belief, and that, properly conceived, God can be worshiped as the Creator and Sustainer of the universe.

A process view of life

Can a Christian also be a Darwinian? Both Ruse and Miller say yes, and I concur. Still, the problem remains how one might integrate two seemingly disparate streams: Darwinian natural history and Christian faith. Several possible integrative approaches include 1) interpreting Christianity (and religion generally) strictly within the context of natural history,[30] 2) interpreting natural history

largely within the context of revelation and Christianity,[31] or 3) synthesizing Christian faith and natural history.[32] Each of us in our own way must work at resolving complex and knotty issues concerning God, human freedom, and the overall history of the cosmos. However, once I accepted an evolutionary view of life, eventually I was faced with the problem of God's power and goodness as witnessed in creation with its inexplicable evils. But first, a little background concerning a second major cognitive shift.

In 1972 I was visiting a Provident Book Store in Scottdale, Pennsylvania, when I chanced upon a book of essays edited by Ewert Cousins.[33] Here was an untapped mine of rich intellectual ore, so I bought the book. Later that same year, I also bought a book of essays by Delwin Brown et al.[34] and discovered that one of the writers, Lewis Ford, was then teaching philosophy at Penn State. I quickly made my acquaintance with Lewis, sat in on a number of his classes, and learned the idiom of process thought first-hand. As the outstanding contemporary Whiteheadian scholar, Lewis helped me understand something of Whitehead's dense prose, and showed me that process thought was an invigorating and enlightening means to "see" the world and my Christian faith differently and more coherently.

The important ideas of process thought deal with the generic traits of existence, including the primacy of events over substance, mind, person, matter.[35] Consequently, a metaphysics of process appeals to me because science and history are important, and in particular, evolution is given its proper due. Processes are more important than static substances; thus "process" is the reality. Furthermore, process philosophers emphasize experiencing and relating selves (events) rather than a mere sense perception of objects: i.e., there is feeling of feelings, even for God. Moreover, process thought seeks logical clarity and coherence, and insofar as possible, aims for an adequate and applicable interpretation of all data of experience, touchstones for any broad-based metaphysics.

The historical roots of process theologies are deep and include various streams of Greek, Indian, Chinese, and Hebrew thought.[36] In the United States, Whitehead and the Chicago school of Wieman, Hartshorne, Meland, Loomer and others have been influential in portraying a process view of life.[37] Process philosophy has also influenced a number of contemporary secular writers.[38]

Whitehead once summed up the complete problem of metaphysics in terms of the familiar evening hymn: "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide."[39] How can there be permanence amidst the flux of changing events? Moreover, whatever our vision of God, is God an exception to metaphysical principles governing this cosmic epoch, or is God their chief exemplification? How might we best envision God and God's activity within the cosmos? Whatever our vision and, despite living in the "face of mystery," to use Gordon Kaufman's felicitous phrase, this vision must, I think, address three basic problems:

1. The question of design (Darwin's problem): Is this the best of all possible worlds? What about animal cruelty, an aspect of the living world Darwin could not square with a belief in a good but all-powerful God?[40]

2. The question of evil (Ivan Karamazov's problem): If God is totally sovereign, yet truly good, why are there evils such as wanton human cruelty against children and against innocent animals, and terrible genocides ancient and modern? If God is truly good why didn't God prevent these terrible evils? Does one not then accuse God of criminal neglect, the same as we would a human who merely watched one's child suffer and die?[41]

3. The question of human freedom (the existentialist's problem): Do we really have freedom of choice if God actually knows, in advance of our acts, what we will do? Is classical theism with its view of God's impassivity, power, foreknowledge, and simplicity coherent, if human freedom is real in some basic sense?[42] Or are our so-called freedoms illusory?[43]

In brief, any modern vision of God must deal with evolution (a series of experiments without clearly defined deterministic goals), and the problem of evils within our world. That God influences the creative activities within the world is part of the process theological vision.[44] But God's power is the power of persuasion, of lure, of providing initial aims to all creatures everywhere, and thus, as Lewis Ford claims, God is to be envisioned as the power of the future.[45] All this requires a reconception of God's power as traditionally understood, but it also underscores the reality of God's love and the intended maximization of our love and creative interaction with other creatures.[46] Thus,

in such a reconception we also enrich God's experiences of God's creatures. And in that respect God is everlastingly different because of our lives and our creative endeavors to make the world a little bit better than it was when we began our own creative advance.

Concluding thoughts

In working out a synthesis of one's Christian faith and evolution, as I see it, there are at least three possible outcomes. One can accept an incoherent theology with no questions asked, and simply do business as usual, i.e., accept the paradoxes! Or one can drift toward a coherent Calvinism and fatalism, a view underscoring God's supernatural transcendence and perfection including God's omnipotence and omniscience. God will thus always be in complete control of all events, including holocausts. Or one can work out a reconceived theism which deals with an evolutionary view of life, human freedom, and a vision of God best seen through the life and work of Christ. God's goodness is thus preserved, but the orthodox view of God's coercive power is fundamentally transformed. As this essay has tried to show, that is my view.

Notes

[1] J. Heslop-Harrison, *New Concepts in Flowering-Plant Taxonomy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956).

[2] Daniel Kauffman ed., *Doctrines of the Bible* (Scottdale, PA: Mennonite Publishing House, 1952 [reprint of the second edition of 1928]); Chester K. Lehman, *The Inadequacy of Evolution as a World View* (Scottdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1933). Kauffman wrote that "the theory of an evolution from one species to another is both unscriptural and unscientific" (41), and that evolution "is but a way-station on the road to atheism" (42).

[3] Leon Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1957); James R. Moore, *The Post-Darwinian Controversies* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 112.

[4] See especially Theodosius Dobzhansky, *Genetics and the Origin of Species,* Third ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951); Ernst Mayr, *Animal Species and Evolution* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963); George Gaylord Simpson, *The Major Features of Evolution* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953); G. Ledyard Stebbins, *Variation and Evolution in Plants* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950).

[5] Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (London: John Murray, 1859 [1964 facsimile ed.]),

459.

[6] Darwin, *Origin*, 480. Nonetheless, despite some overlap and confusion, even with Darwin himself, Ernst Mayr has noted that Darwin's paradigm consisted of at least five aspects: evolution as such (i.e., various organic changes), evolution by common descent by means of a process of branching, the gradualness of evolution implying more or less slow and orderly changes within living systems, populational speciation (i.e., the multiplication of species), and natural selection see Ernst Mayr, *The Growth of Biological Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 505ff.

[7] Mayr, *Growth*, 400.

[8] Darwin, *Origin*, 81.

[9] *Ibid.*, 62.

[10] Mayr, *Growth*, 57.

[11] *Ibid.*, 510ff.

[12] See Mayr, *Growth*, 510ff.

[13] Ernst Mayr, *One Long Argument: Charles Darwin and the Genesis of Modern Evolutionary Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 40ff.

[14] See Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936 [Reprint edition, Harper Torchbooks, 1960]) for an account of essentialism and its influence in Western thought.

[15] Quoted in Mayr, *One Long Argument*, 41.

[16] See Moore, *Post-Darwinian Controversies*, for a discussion of three broad patterns in response to Darwin: Christian anti-Darwinians (the *Origin* was insufficiently scientific – it had too many guesses), the Christian Darwinists (evolutionists, yes, but not Darwin's version of natural selection), and the Christian Darwinians (Darwin's views accepted as God's way of creating new species). Moore suggested that each group represented a pattern of "dissonance reduction" with significantly different outcomes.

[17] Moore, *Post-Darwinian Controversies*, 300.

[18] Michael Ruse, *Can a Darwinian Be a Christian? The Relationship Between Science and Religion* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), ix.

[19] *Ibid.*, 12.

[20] *Ibid.*, 28.

[21] *Ibid.*, 218.

[22] *Ibid.*, 92.

[23] *Ibid.*, 216.

[24] *Ibid.*, 218.

[25] Kenneth R. Miller, *Finding Darwin's God: A Scientist's Search for Common Ground Between God and Evolution* (New York: Cliff Street Books/HarperCollins, 1999). For a discussion about various anti-evolutionists, see Robert T. Pennock, *Tower of Babel: The Evidence Against the New Creationism* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999).

[26] Miller, *Finding Darwin's God*, 243.

[27] *Ibid.*, 249.

[28] *Ibid.*, 258.

[29] *Ibid.*, 267.

[30] For example, Edward O. Wilson, *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998).

[31] For example, Carl F. H. Henry, *"Theology and Evolution."* In R. L. Mixter ed., *Evolution and Christian Thought Today* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1959),190-221; Bernard Ramm, *The Christian View of Science and Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1955).

[32] For example, Charles Birch, *A Purpose for Everything: Religion in a Postmodern Worldview* (Mystic, Conn.: Twenty-Third Publications, 1990); John B. Cobb, Jr., *God and the World* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969); Lewis Ford, *Transforming Process Theism* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2000); David Ray Griffin, *Religion and Scientific Naturalism: Overcoming the Conflicts* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2000); Charles Hartshorne, *Creative Synthesis and Philosophic Method* (La Salle, IL: Open Court Publishing Co., 1970); Bernard E. Meland, *Faith and Culture* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1955); Daniel Day Williams, *The Spirit and Forms of Love* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968).

[33] Ewert H. Cousins, ed., *Process Theology: Basic Writings* (New York: Newman Press, 1971).

[34] Delwin Brown, Ralph E. James, and Gene Reeves, eds., *Process Philosophy and Christian Thought* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1971).

[35] For example, see Ford, *Transforming Process Theism*; Charles Hartshorne, "Ideas and Theses of Process Philosophers" In Lewis Ford, ed., *Two Process Philosophers* (AAR Studies in Religion, No. 5, 1973), 100-103; C. Robert Mesle, *Process Theology: An Introduction* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1993); Andrew J. Reck, *"Process Philosophy, a Categorial Analysis." Tulane Studies in Philosophy* 24 (1975): 58-91; Nicholas Rescher, *Process Metaphysics: An Introduction to Process Philosophy* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996).

[36] John B. Cobb, Jr., *Process Theology as Political Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982); Charles Hartshorne, *"The Development of Process Philosophy"* In Ewert Cousins, ed., *Process Theology: Basic Writings* (Paramus, Toronto: Newman Press, New York,, 1971), 47-66.

[37] See Cobb, *Process Theology*, and Bernard E. Meland, *"Introduction: The Empirical Tradition in Theology at Chicago,"* In Bernard E. Meland (ed.), *The Future of Empirical Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 1-62, for an extended account of these developments.

[38] See especially Birch, *A Purpose for Everything*; Freeman J. Dyson, *Infinite in All Directions* (New York: Harper & Row, 1998), 119, 295ff.; Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 268; Alister Hardy, *The Biology of God: A Scientist's Study of Man the Religious Animal* (New York: Taplinger Publishing Company, 1975); possibly Wilson, *Consilience*, 263.

[39] Alfred N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology.* Corrected Edition, David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne, eds. (New York: The Free Press, 1929), 209.

[40] See Adrian Desmond and James R. Moore, *Darwin* (New York: Warner Books, Inc., 1991), 387, 479, and 622ff. for Darwin's views of God's goodness and power.

[41] See David R. Griffin, *God, Power and Evil: A Process Theodicy* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), and David R. Griffin, *Evil Revisited: Responses and Reconsiderations* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991), for a masterful discussion of this perplexing

problem..

[42] See Thomas J. Gornall, *A Philosophy of God: The Elements of Thomistic Natural Theology* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1962) for a treatment of classical theism. For a different view of God, see Griffin, *God, Power and Evil* or Hartshorne, *Creative Synthesis*.

[43] See Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 342, 343, for a brief discussion of four visions of God.

[44] See Mesle, *Process Theology;* Norman Pittenger, *The Lure of Divine Love: Human Experience and Christian Faith in a Process Perspective* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1979); Williams, *The Spirit and Forms of Love.*

[45] See Ford, *Transforming Process Theism*, for a monumental study of the complexities of process theism, and how we might envision God's interactions with the cosmos.

[46] Williams, *The Spirit and Forms of Love.*

A Certain Slant of Light: the Physics of Incarnation

Edna Froese

I am grateful that my Bible School homiletics teacher of thirty years ago is not in the congregation this morning, for I am about to violate many of the principles he taught us. My sermon-writing this time began, not with a Scripture text as it should, but with the sermon title. And that comes from a poem by Emily Dickinson which begins:

> There's a certain slant of light,
> On winter afternoons,
> That oppresses, like the heft
> Of cathedral tunes.
>
> Heavenly hurt it gives us;
> We can find no scar,
> But internal difference
> Where the meanings are.

The first time I ever read that poem, I recognized that heavenly hurt: I used to call it the Sunday evening blues because that's when it often struck me. It's an irresistible mixture of *Sehnsucht* and *Angst*, longing and terror, an appropriate response to the glimpses of holy mystery we are sometimes granted.

My next homiletical sin is to come before you, not with an obvious outline that marches nicely toward direct answers and instructions, but with a kind of thinking aloud about difficulties I haven't worked through yet. It is my prayer that somehow, through my moth-like anxious circling around the light I'm afraid to get to close to, you may receive some heavenly hurt that will make an "internal difference where the meanings are," perhaps not today, but sometime when it's needed.

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Having opened the door to poetry as it were, poem after poem walked in, demanding attention, flaunting images of light, and claiming to shed light on those images of light. The more I tried to find some other topic, the stronger was the compulsion to face, after long evasion, that daunting statement Jesus makes in the Sermon on the Mount: "You are the light of the world. . . . Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

That command (or is it an observation?) has always caused me trouble. It has usually been quoted as an imperative to witness, an activity strongly encouraged, even organized, by the churches I have been part of. Unfortunately, for me it has usually meant specific methods, such as door-to-door selling, or giving testimonies at "outreach events," or confronting people with tracts. Being neither outgoing nor a natural salesperson, I find such definitions of witnessing scary, even though I know that many people's lives have been changed by such methods. Even as a child I felt uneasy singing that little chorus, "This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine." I was never sure I had a light worth shining or a salvation worth selling.

Quite probably I also cringed at "You are the light of the world," because of the equation between light and truth, and light and God. "God is light," we are told, "and in him is no darkness at all." That is not necessarily comforting. I personally prefer to hide in some shadows. Light is not an unambiguously good thing, not when you have a migraine headache or a hangover. Truth can be just as much of an assault on the vulnerable. What I was taught in the church and at home was truth. It divided the world into good and bad, into black and white. Everything I was told about God was truth, fact, and it was all unambiguous, unnegotiable. If I learned those facts correctly and if I believed those facts I would be saved. Those facts also included some very specific instructions about how to live, how to dress, what not to do. To fail to follow those instructions was to walk in darkness all the way to hell. To this truth – to this unbending, glaring light – I was to witness?

No doubt my understanding of truth and of witnessing to that truth was thoroughly skewed. All those preachers I remember could not possibly have meant what I often heard. Nevertheless, to find my way out of the difficulties with "you are the light of the world," I turned, not to the usual Christian authorities, but to poets and to the principles of physics. About poetry I

understand something, about physics I understand very little. And I understand even less about that scary story of Moses' personal meeting with Yahweh, the God of light. Yet, feckless fool that I am, out of these three – poetry, physics, and story – I hope to translate glare into glory and to turn witnessing as salesmanship into witnessing as incarnation.

The first thing that physics tells us about light is that it can be reflected. Rays of light strike a shiny surface and bounce off again at the same angle. The shinier and the more impenetrable the surface, the better the reflection. If God is light, and if we are to be the "light of the world," then that would mean we act as reflectors, mirrors of the Father of Lights.

The story in Exodus seems to endorse the mirroring process. "When Moses came down from Mount Sinai [where he had asked to see the glory of God], he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him." Hence, the veil. In the most popular interpretation of this story, one that Paul picks up again in 2 Cor. 3 where he declares that under the new covenant we will all "reflect the Lord's glory" with "unveiled faces," Moses's veil is designed to hide the reflected glory of God, which is too intense, too terrifying for the Israelites to face.

The glory of God as unbearable glare. Human beings cannot tolerate too much light, because they are tinged with darkness. All through the Old Testament, the Shekinah Glory of God appears only intermittently, veiled in cloud, shrouded in smoke, concealed behind a heavy curtain – always dangerous. When Moses daringly demands to see the glory of God, God replies, "No one may see me and live." Moses had to be hidden in a rock and shielded by God's hand and allowed only a brief glance at the glory already gone by. To quote Emily Dickinson again,

> Tell all the truth but tell it slant
> Success in circuit lies
> Too bright for our infirm delight
> The truth's superb surprise
>
> As lightning to the children eased
> With explanation kind

The truth must dazzle gradually
Or every man be blind

And we are to be mirrors to reflect the dangerous light of truth? The mirror image makes me uneasy. You see, the virtue of a mirror lies in its impenetrability. Light remains external to the mirror; if it is a good mirror, it will transmit the light unchanged, perhaps even intensified and narrowed. Any mischievous child (of whatever age) knows what to do with a mirror and a light. Mirrors are hard, superficial, essentially interchangeable with any other mirror.

Margaret Atwood, in one of her more angry poems about the relationship between men and women, pictures the role of a young woman as that of a mirror to her egocentric male partner who wants only to have himself reflected back to him, larger than life. "Mirrors are the perfect lovers," the woman mutters bitterly, and then rebelliously cries out, "There is more to a mirror / than you looking at / your full-length body / flawless but reversed, / . . . Think about the frame. / The frame is carved, it is important, / it exists, it does not reflect you, / . . . it has limits and reflections of its own. / There's a nail in the back / to hang it with; there are several nails, / think about the nails, / pay attention to the nail / marks in the wood, / they are important too."

Atwood here writes beyond her original intention to expose narcissistic exploitation in relationships. Her insight that a mirror is more than reflection leads her to the meaning of suffering and to the importance of God-given individuality. The reference to the nail marks catches our breath. Did Christ reflect, mirror-like, the glory of God? Or did he, framed in human flesh, have "limits and reflections" of his own? What about that frame, with its nail marks? When truth, told slant, enters the framework, is reflection alone adequate to explain what happens?

Once again, I turn to physics for help. You see, unless light is slanted or bent in some way we cannot see it at all. And when light is bent, as it is by earth's atmosphere, broken into wavelengths or refracted, it reveals colour. Pure light holds all color within it and is forever on the verge of breaking into color at the slightest change of angle and imperfection of surface. And color has always had a tendency toward beauty and design. Color intrinsically means something (even computer-generated attempts at randomness turn out to become infinitely

receding designs), and the play of color touches something deep within us – "heavenly hurt it gives us . . . where the meanings are." Prisms, rainbows, diamonds, dew-drops. We are attracted by possibility, by variety, by infinite color and design. Light is thus the opposite of black which absorbs all colors and makes them disappear. Conformity is not godliness! Black holes in space are pure nothingness and absorb into nothingness whatever nears them.

To return then to the Light of the World – to the very origin of Light that in the beginning stood against chaos and formlessness and black holes – how was the Glory of God to be revealed to shadowy and shadowed human beings with weak eyes? Through incarnation – the prism of human flesh. We cannot see pure light unless it be broken. As W.B. Yeats once observed through the persona of a derelict old woman named Crazy Jane, "Nothing can be sole or whole . . . / That has not been rent." The One who is Light has been broken, refracted through the humanity and suffering of Jesus. Unbearable light has been turned into flesh with its shadows and edges and curves and opacity. Holiness enfleshed, made touchable. Glory refracted painfully into goodness.

When Moses, desperate in his need for God's presence, demanded to see the glory of God, God's reply was not only the warning, "No one can see my face and live," but also, "I will make my goodness pass before you." There is a possibility, I am told by a scholar of the Old Testament, that the Hebrew word that has always been translated "radiance" could mean disfigured. Moses is indeed marked indelibly by his encounter with glory even though, or perhaps especially because, the glory has been refracted into goodness. Divine goodness leaves nothing the same as it was. The veil hides the burnt face of Moses, which the people could not look at. Likewise Jesus is scarred by his change from glory into goodness, becoming the suffering servant the prophets described as one from whom we would hide our faces.

What does it mean for us to let our light shine? Not carrying a candle as I once thought, some light outside of myself, leaving me untouched and others blinded. The mirror image will not do – unless we take into full account the brokenness of the one we are to reflect. The "truth must dazzle gradually" and the light be slanted through us, through the cracks and disfigurements and broken edges, what glass workers or potters call crazing. Look not to be an untouched, unmoved mirror. Aspire rather to be what poet George Herbert

called "a brittle, crazy glass" that will refract the Light of the World into a pattern of beauty, a design of goodness, that only you can produce – so that "others may see your good deeds and give glory to your Father in heaven."

There is a third physical quality of light for which I have no object. The physics of incarnation has no easy symbol. I feel as if I walk in mystery here, a mystery I have only glimpsed briefly, but neither understood nor lived. Light can be reflected; it can be refracted. It also radiates – but this changes us from an object, a mirror or a prism, to a source. Did not Christ say, "You are the light of the world?"

Radiate – that means to emit light from a center. We've come to use the picture of rays of light streaming out from a central source to describe people who radiate joy or life or love. If we return to our story of Moses we read that "his face was radiant," something he was not even aware of. "His face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD." He calls the people to come to him and not to be afraid. After he speaks with them, he puts the veil on his face. This process is apparently repeated: "Whenever Moses entered the LORD's presence to speak with him, he removed the veil until he came out. And when he came out and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, they saw that his face was radiant. Then Moses would put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with the LORD." Why the veil? Some suggest that it was to conceal from the people the fading inner light, which needed a re-encounter with the God of glory to be rekindled.

The central teaching of the gospels and the epistles is that Christ is in us. Already in Ezekiel comes the poignant promise, "I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh." Such an inner transformation is possible because Jesus first laid aside his glory and took on a heart of flesh within a body of flesh – light/truth incarnated, translated into goodness made known in suffering, ultimately on the cross. Having come down into humanity, Jesus then begins the process of drawing humanity up into God: "I will ask the Father and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever – the Spirit of truth. . . . you know him, for he lives with and will be in you . . . . In that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me and I am in you." Thus Paul could describe his experience as "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God."

We have too often, I think, understood that teaching to mean a negation of the self that we were truly meant to be. We have thought mirrors, unthinking, bouncers-back of light that in themselves are nothing and are practically indistinguishable from one another. We have forgotten about the frame with its own nail marks. "The life I live in the body" means incarnation. Spirit lived through the flesh, the particular bodies of each of us. Prisms refracting Light and becoming sources of light, each one a unique, colorful, radiant "yes" flung against the blackness of nothingness and meaningless conformity.

Let me turn again to the congregation of poets for help, this time Gerard Manley Hopkins, a man of God who initially thought that his entrance into holy orders meant giving up his gift of poetry and becoming a priest like other priests. That surely was the expected denial of self and proper service. Only after years of suffering through the suppression of what God had given him in the first place did he recover the freedom to write. Out of his struggle to understand the meaning of grace, out of his descents into depression and despair, comes his particular voice, not quite like any other poet's, yet akin to that of the Psalmists who gave us their unvarnished experiences of the Holy One. Hopkins's unique contribution is his powerful belief that each person, each animal, each thing is highly individualized and different from all other things, so much so that each object is to him almost a separate species and the world is full of selves, each with its own unique God-given essence. "The world is charged with the grandeur of God," he declares in his most famous poem. In another poem, he turns *self* into a verb – *selves*, an action that each of us does by letting the inmost being ring out like a bell. In his journal he wrote, "all things therefore are charged with God, and if we know how to touch them give off sparks and take fire, yield drops and flow, ring and tell of Him."

Here is that same insight, in poetry:

> As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;
> As tumbled over rim in roundy wells
> Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung bell's
> Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;
> Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:
> Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;

Selves – goes itself; *myself* it speaks and spells,
Crying *What I do is me: for that I came.*

I say more: the just man justices;
Keeps grace: that keeps all his goings graces;
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is –
Christ – for Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the features of men's faces.
– *Gerard Manley Hopkins (1882)*

That final picture of God as the audience in a theatre in which Christ plays himself in other people's bodies delights me. Imagine: you and I are actors in a divine comedy, improvising with others, revealing Christ within us to the applause of God and all the other human actors who have already completed all their scenes. Somehow that reduces the terror and dread seriousness of "let your light so shine before others." May I paraphrase, "let your colors so play before all audiences that they too will join in"?

Reflection, refraction, radiance – the physics of incarnation really implies all three. Since I have been made into a new creation with Christ in the very center of me, what I need to do is to live out of that center, looking up always to the source of Light. Mirrors and prisms do only what they are. They selve – what they do is be. Let your light so shine – keep grace – keep all your goings graces – act in God's eye what in God's eye you are – the light of the world.

Notes

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Book Reviews

Michael W. Higgins, *The Muted Voice: Religion and the Media*. Ottawa: Novalis, 2000.

In June 1998, church leaders and media representatives got together in Ottawa for the first "Faith and the Media" conference in Canada. Initiator of the event was John Longhurst, a Mennonite journalist with a passion for helping the church share its good news through secular media. Two recurring themes shaped the Ottawa discussion: 1) The media don't understand religion and are only after the sensational; 2) The church doesn't know how to "use" mainstream media and expects special treatment. Heated debates moved both sides to reconsider their stereotypes.

In the fall of 1998, Michael Higgins, an English and religion professor, author, documentarist and columnist, continued the discussion at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax, where he lectured on the role of religion in mainstream media. The title of these lectures, "The Muted Voice," indicates Higgins's concern about the marginalization of religion, although it is hilariously ironic in relation to the lecturer himself. Higgins is no muted voice, in either religion or the media. As he puts it, silence is "a topic on which I can speak with inexhaustible ignorance" (20). Highly conscious of his own voice and a gleeful name dropper, Higgins promises that this book will be "chatty, anecdotal, autobiographical . . . replete with quirky insights and peppered with occasionally acidic asides" (7). The polemical style makes for entertaining reading.

This book is a tilt at the media based on Higgins's considerable experience in radio, television, and the press. A committed Roman Catholic, Higgins nevertheless recognizes that people's attitudes are shaped far more by secular media than by religious ones. So, while spirituality may be a hot topic in the media these days, he notes that it is portrayed as a "chicken soup for the soul" kind of self-fulfilment, the opposite of Christian spirituality. Higgins is also deeply concerned with what novelist Timothy Findley calls "our civilization's falling away from articulation," the result of both television's "airy incoherence" and academia's "dense incoherence" (25).

Coverage of religion in the media tends to focus on politics and society, not on spiritual life or faith. "The only time they drag out religious studies

professors to make any kind of national commentary is usually when there's a religious crisis, a scandal, or the pope is coming for a visit" (31). In television, religion is used as backdrop or "sanitized product; it's religion as commodity" (47). This marginalization means that religion becomes "an unreflected, unmediated, often trivialized subject" (31). While Higgins realizes that denominational religion is not a good sell, he expects the media to treat religion like other cultural institutions – the media's task is that of "clarification, of instruction, of reasonable stimulation, and of information" (27). This requires religion reporters who are at least as informed and committed to their subject as reporters on politics or economics. At the same time, the church must open itself to public scrutiny if it wants to be taken seriously. While the media can be cruel and unfair, the church cannot withdraw from the public arena, Higgins says.

Granted, religious faith is an elusive subject on which to report. But Higgins is baffled that Canadian media are so timid in analyzing the personal faith of public figures: "sexual predilections are a matter of historical record, but the very foundation of one's values, teleology, self-definiton, is not?" (78). Too bad we don't have his comments on the media frenzy around Stockwell Day's religion. Higgins also sees a vital role for religious commentators speaking about their own faith in the public arena: They should "help explain the tradition at the same time as entering publicly into a critical dialogue with it, a dialogue marked by love, honesty, and fidelity" (79).

Higgins's experience and passion for the subject make this a valuable little book; the chatty style opens the debate to any reader. One could wish for more subtlety at times; for example, Higgins holds up British, and even American, media as superior to Canadian (34-35), but instead of developing the point he simply repeats it (68-75). While this book is not meant to be a systematic or scholarly approach, it does include a good bibliography for further study.

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John W. Miller. *Calling God "Father": Essays on the Bible, Fatherhood, and Culture*. 2nd Ed. New York: Paulist Press, 1999.

In *Calling God "Father": Essays on the Bible, Fatherhood, and Culture,* John W. Miller has updated and added to the collection of essays first published under the title *Biblical Faith and Fathering: Why we call God "Father"* (Paulist Press, 1989). The new edition contains some minor revisions, a new essay and some bibliographic updating. It is organized into four sections: Theoretical Considerations, God as Father in Biblical Tradition, Human Fathering in Biblical Tradition, and Contemporary Issues. There is also a concluding chapter and appendices.

Miller's goal in republishing this collection is, he writes, the same as it was ten years ago. The author wants to draw attention to "omissions and distortions" in the ongoing discussion of biblical patriarchy and the language used in reference to God. Miller is concerned about what he sees as the "refutation of 'the "Father" in God' in contemporary feminist theologies" and its implications for the maintenance of father-involved families (xvii). Chapter ten, a new essay, is particularly directed toward this end.

What propels Miller's work is his belief that there is a fundamental harmony between the Bible and psychoanalytic theory when it comes to the importance of fathering and the impact of fathers on healthy child development. Miller sees a link between Israelite faith in a father-god (in contrast to the mother-gods or son-gods of other eastern traditions) and the development of a strong pattern of father-involved families. Christianity, arising out of a Jewish context, also emphasized the importance of good fathering, and Miller goes on to suggest that there has been great benefit to all cultures which have embraced the idea of God as a gracious father. Since God as "Father" provides the ideal model for human fathering, feminists who seek to downplay the importance of this name and the role it represents risk doing further harm to modern families and particularly to children.

Miller begins his defense of "the 'Father' in God" with an examination of how the two-parent family came about in history and the changes this development brought to human culture. Father-involvement, he suggests, could only arise as humans began to understand the role that males play in human reproduction. This led to the creation of specific male-female pair bonds and

ultimately to the father-involved family. In his view, fathering is "the definitive cultural artifact that lies at the foundation of all other cultural achievements" and is the primary factor in distinguishing humans from other life-forms (17). Yet, because human fathering is a cultural construct, it is inherently more fragile than the biological bond that shapes the relationship of mother and child, and is thus more at risk.

Miller argues that the very name Yahweh implies fatherhood and that throughout the Old Testament God's actions demonstrate the nature of God's fatherhood. Patriarchy, he suggests, is best understood as good fathering and not simply masculine power or supremacy. This is fundamentally important for both males and females, who need a healthy father in order to develop secure gender identities.

Miller is aware of earlier criticism directed toward these essays and tries to refute the critique that his focus is too directed toward fathers and sons. He attempts to argue that it is also girls and women who need both a strong father figure in God and good human fathering in order to develop healthy identities. That may be so, yet many readers will object to Miller's strong reliance on Freudian psychoanalytic theory to develop this point. This is a major weakness of the book and betrays a rather narrow and dated understanding of human developmental theory. In addition, Miller's reluctance to fully grapple with the implications of the New Testament's reorientation from biological family to spiritual family is problematic. It is not enough to say that Jesus and Paul were both single and therefore naturally drawn to the community formed by the early church. Surely this NT orientation and its concern for widows and orphans have much to offer a society beset by rising divorce rates and single-parent households.

Because these essays grow out of lecture material and previously published articles, they are somewhat repetitious. Nevertheless, Miller writes in a clear, organized, and generally accessible fashion. Readers seeking to understand the biblical arguments in support of God as "Father" should find this a helpful resource.

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Loren L. Johns, ed. *Apocalypticism and Millennialism: Shaping a Believers Church Eschatology for the Twenty-First Century.* Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2000.

Although this book was completed in 1999, its publication did not quite get under the wire of the proleptically fateful breaking of the year 2000, but I suspect that none of the authors represented in it had concerns about that. The book's importance is not the date but its subject: this third volume in the series 'Studies in the Believers Church Tradition' is an exceptionally good collection of essays on an aspect of Christian belief, careful scholarly study of which, in this form, has long gone begging.

The essays are grouped under three categories: biblical, historical and theological, and contemporary issues and pastoral perspectives. Topics include Jewish apocalyptic literature by James C. Vanderkam, the eschatology of Jesus by William Klassen, the book of Revelation by John R. Yeats, and millennial and apocalyptic expectations in early and medieval church by Everett Ferguson and in Anabaptism by Lois Y. Barrett. Paul Boyer writes on prophetic belief in America past and present, William Trollinger on premillennial dispensationalism, and Tom Finger on a believers church eschatology. Hal Lindsey and Tim LaHaye, modern American prophecy adepts, get special attention. There are a total of twenty-seven essays plus a fine introduction.

A few of the offerings strike this reviewer as especially important. The first is the Introduction by the editor Loren Johns, in which he provides careful definitions of the terms apocalypticism, millennialism, and eschatology, plus a survey of past Believers Church Conferences and an indication of where records of them can be found. William Klassen offers an extremely compact treatment of the basic eschatological question, the rule or kingdom of God in the teaching and life of Jesus. Another significant contribution is Paul Boyer's essay "666 and All That," in which he captures the essence of his 1992 book *When Time Shall Be No More.* Mennonite intersection with premillennial dispensationalism is chronicled in papers about the Amishman called "Der Weiss Jonas Stutzmann," the prime Mennonite millennial exhibit Claas Epp, and others. One of the best essays is Tom Finger's "Outlines of a Contemporary Believers Church Eschatology," in which, among other things, he ventures into an area that has received little attention so far – eschatology and science.

A piece by Robert J. Clouse details the fortunes and work of America's number one apocalyptic forecaster, Hal Lindsey.

This attractive book is a first-rate exposition of what is being thought about the complex and vexing subject of the Endtimes by scholars in what is called the believers church tradition. Much of what is offered here is held in common with thinkers from other Christian traditions, e.g., historical surveys and much of the biblical work. Still, the essays on Jesus by Klassen and on believers church eschatology by Finger point to the conviction about the present rule of God and the hope for its future fulfillment as occupying a special place in believers church theology. The collection is scholarly in the best meaning of that term and establishes a high water mark of the maturity of the Believers Church Conference.

The lively book will be of special interest to pastors and church leaders in and beyond the confines of believers church congregations. It is recommended for spiritually and intellectually alert Christians everywhere. It is also an important resource for teachers and scholars.

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