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INTRODUCTION

This collection of papers comprise most of the presentations made at the 1998 annual meeting of the Adventist Society for Religious Studies held in Orlando, Florida. As you know, this group is an open group of religion teachers, pastors, graduate students, administrators, and others who are dedicated to the Seventh-day Adventist Church and interested in its theological life and thought. The common theme focused on the relationship between scholarship and servanthood. This year's presentations were intended to address the question, "How does the work of the Adventist scholar serve the interest of students, laypersons, society, and church?"

Unique to this year's program was a joint meeting of Adventist Society for Religious Studies with the Adventist Theological Society held at Celebration Health, a subsidiary institution to Florida Hospital. Members and friends appreciated the meal provided by Southern Adventist University, Walla Walla College and Florida Hospital. Gorden Bietz addressed those present.

Two of our presenters came from overseas institutions: Rolf Poeholer came from Friedesau in Germany and A. Gerhard van Wyk from the University of South Africa.

Roy Adams, president elect, and Lawrence Geraty, president arranged this year's program. Ernie Furness has faithfully toiled to get these materials together and sent out to you. Many thanks to him. Please continue to be an active participant in the Adventist Society for Religious Studies. As a community we want to continue in our mission of loving God with all our heart, our soul, and our mind.

Larry Geraty
1998 ASRS President
SIEGFRIED H. HORN: A VOICE FROM THE DUST HEAPS"

ASRS 1998 Presidential Address

Lawrence T. Geraty
La Sierra University

Being the eve of National Bible Week an interfaith campaign to promote the reading and study of the Bible, it somehow seems appropriate that Adventist Bible and religion professors should be gathered here to consider the general topic of our “Scholarship in the Service of the Church.” I thank you for the honor and privilege of serving our society this past year. It is one of the most meaningful things that has happened to me in my 36 adult years of service to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I enjoyed the task of helping to organize last year’s annual meeting and have worked hard and persistently during this last year to help bring together the members of ASRS and ATS for some kind of collaborative effort this year. Only time will tell how productive of good last evening’s modest beginning will have been in this attempt. And, for the record, let me publicly thank my fellow officers this year for the joy in Christian service which we have experienced in our combined efforts: Roy Adams, Ernie Bursey, Ernie Furness, and Gerald Wheeler, who also, to quote Paul in Romans 16, “risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I but also all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks.”

DIARIST

My topic this evening, in keeping with our theme, is “Siegfried H. Horn: A Voice from the Dust Heaps” (compare the title of his early booklet, “Light from the Dust Heaps,” RHPA, 1955). I am quite confident that in this group I do not have to defend his scholarly reputation. I think it could be successfully argued that no other Adventist religion professor has been better known both within and without his denomination. And because the primary motivation in his scholarship was that it might be beneficial to his church, I thought it might be instructive, as an example, to consider again his life’s work in this setting and within the framework of this year’s theme. Furthermore, thanks to the generosity and kindness of his widow, Elizabeth, I have had the privilege this last year of reading in Dr. Horn’s meticulously kept diaries, dating from 1924 through 1993—a treasure trove of information and insights covering three score and ten years of denominational and personal history. For instance, I found Horn’s lists fascinating. Here are a few of them: a listing of the times he read through the Bible in both Hebrew and Greek, a list of those he baptized through the years, a list of eclipses observed, exams taken, extension schools at which he taught, eye glasses purchased, fires experienced, foreign trips taken, GC sessions attended, locations he colporteured, his cholesterol record through the years, circuses visited, driver’s licenses obtained, and earthquakes experienced! In one sense, perhaps it could be said that I have put my archaeological skills to work in that different dust heap. Actually, like the man who tried to build a house before he counted the cost, I bit off more than I could chew. There was no way, in the time available to me as a busy administrator, that I could read carefully through the thousands of pages covering 70 years in 35 volumes, in their entirety, or even look up all the things that seemed of interest in his comprehensive 5-volume index! I take full responsibility for the subjective choice of passages I share this evening and the interpretations I give of my discoveries, though I try to be balanced, representative, and fair. Even so, I have to say this represents a first draft attempt that neither does justice to the man, nor to the documentation that he has left. This is a project I plan to complete in my retirement. In the meantime, I hope what I do share will be an inspiration to you, as it has been to me: hearing Siegfried’s voice from the past on issues of scholarship and service with which we, as servants of the church, continue to deal.

EARLY LIFE

Siegfried Herbert Horn was born in Wurzen, Germany, on March 17, 1908, to the union of an Adventist Bible worker with one of the world’s first aviators (with whom Siegfried first flew only 8 years after the Wright brothers at Kitty Hawk, in 1912). He died in St. Helena, California, where he is buried, on November 28, 1993. Next week, that will have been exactly five years ago. He received his undergraduate education at Friedensau Seminary in Germany.
from 1926 to 1928, and at Stanborough College in England from 1929 to 1930. Horn's early diaries, written in German until 1953, contain some fascinating accounts. For instance, in 1929 he and a friend found a deer dying in the forest so they dragged it to Friedensau, slaughtered it, and ate it during the following days! I was surprised at the number of women he fell in love with before his marriage and the frankness with which he characterizes these relationships. Horn was made of flesh and blood and had emotions after all! Did you know he was offered a job as an electrician at Granose Food Factory in England when he finished college, that he was offered the job of Home Missionary Secretary of the Northern European Division, that the GC tried to get him to accept the principal's job at Niaierenhohe after the war, in 1948?

WORLD WAR II INTERNMENT

Horn's active professional life was divided in two unequal parts by six and a half years (1940-1946) Of internment as a German prisoner of war, first by the Dutch in Indonesia and then by the English in India. That period of his life is fascinatingly retold by himself in "Promise Deferred," published by the Review and Herald in 1987, and by Joyce Rochat in "Survivor," published by Andrews University Press in 1986. The Providence from this period of his life never failed to give Horn a sense of purpose. He felt he had been preserved for a purpose. Only one of the highlights of this period was Horn's own hand-written translation of the entire Bible from the original languages.

MINISTER/MISSIONARY

Before this defining event of his life, from 1930 to 1940, Horn served as a minister in the Netherlands and a missionary teacher/administrator in the Dutch East Indies. How many of you knew his first congregation in the Netherlands would not accept him to preach even his first sermon because they spied their young new pastor during his first week wearing brown shoes downtown rather than black-the only acceptable footwear for an Adventist man of the cloth! The conference president had to move him immediately to another new district. By his own account, 1939 was the first "black year" of his life: "Our baby boy died at birth, World War II broke out and our furlough was postponed," resulting in his being imprisoned for the remainder of the war. [1958:10] During his internment, and indeed his whole life, it can be said of him as it was of Edward Robinson, "He used freely whatever lay open to be freely used. But he took the learning of others, whether dead or living, not for a Jacob's pillow to steep on, but for a Jacob's ladder to climb by." (Quoted in F. J. Bliss, "Development of Palestine Exploration," p. 203.)

HIGHER EDUCATION

Upon gaining his freedom at the conclusion of World War II, with the help of the General Conference, Horn immigrated to the United States and quickly completed his formal education with a B. A. from Walla Walla College in 1946 to 1947, an M.A. from the SDA Theological Seminary, at that time in Washington, DC, from 1947 to 1948 (where, as a boy, I first became acquainted with him because we lived in the same Seminary apartment building), with a thesis "The Topographical History of Palestine According to the Egyptian Asiatic Lists and Other Sources," and a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, from 1948 to 1951, with a thesis "The Relation Between Egypt and Asia During the Egyptian Middle Kingdom." Although he was offered teaching positions at several Adventist colleges in the United States, Siegfried Horn chose to accept the call from the SDA Theological Seminary where he taught from 1951 to 1976, first in Washington, DC, and then in Michigan when it moved to Andrews University from which he retired as Professor Emeritus of Archaeology and History of Antiquity.

In summarizing his second quarter-century of life, Horn said: "This is a brief outline hitting only the high points, and does not mention illnesses and operations of Jeanne and myself, the writing of hundreds of articles for periodicals, the building up of my well-stacked archaeological library, the making of hundreds of trips of minor importance, the teaching of years, the preaching, baptizing of souls, etc.-It was a quarter of a century through which God has marvelously led me, although it had its extremely dark but useful years." [1958:121]
ARCHAEOLOGIST

As an archaeologist, Horn is known particularly for the influential dig he initiated and directed at Tell Hesban (biblical Heshbon) in Jordan during its first three seasons, 1968, 1971, and 1973. After that he continued on as senior advisor and object registrar in 1974 and 1976. Before this, he gained his first field experience under G. Ernest Wright as a core staff member of the Tell Balatah (biblical Shechem) dig on Jordan's West Bank during 1960, 1962, and 1964. When I started the Madaba Plains Project in 1984, he visited us in the field, in Jordan, and continued that personal demonstration of his interest until the time of his death. He founded in 1970 the archaeological museum at Andrews University that now bears his name and the next year, 1970 to 1971, served as Director of the American Center of Oriental Research in Amman, renting its first quarters. He continues to be known in Near Eastern, archaeological circles most of all for the prompt publication of his finds.

Interested in every aspect of the relationship between archaeology and the Bible, while judicious, Horn sometimes participated in questionable ventures just so he could speak authoritatively to his communion about topics of perennial interest For that reason, for instance, he accompanied Vandeman on his trip to Mr. Ararat in 1960 to look for Noah's Ark [1960:273-294], and went with Ron Spear to Kansas in 1982 to meet with a group who claimed to have discovered the Ark of the Covenant [1982:153-164]. His conclusion: "I am sure that the search for the two Arks (of Noah and of the Covenant) will go on indefinitely as long as this world will exist." [1982:154] Horn had a knack for separating sound field results and good scholarship from what was ephemeral and transitory, and made it his business to educate the church on these matters, both as to process and results.

At the conclusion of Horn's 60th year he wrote, "God has been good to us. To him be the thanks. He has blessed and protected. My only regret is that I get old. The last 10 years have taken us into the Jet-, Computer-, and Space Age and life is becoming so interesting that it is a shame that we are now running downhill and in the foreseeable future may come to a stop. It is very questionable that 10 years from now I can write such a full and interesting report as I could today. Yet I enter the next decade of my life with a good spirit and optimism." [1968:28] Needless to say, Horn was to five productively for another quarter century.

PROFESSOR

As a professor, Horn established a reputation for giving students their money's worth. He was a master of the material he presented. And it was always current thanks to his own personal library, now at the Horn. Archaeological Museum, whose thousands of archaeological volumes outshone in that area most college libraries. He stayed on top of discoveries through his associations in and journals from the Palestine Exploration Fund, Palestine Oriental Society, German Palestine Society, American Oriental Society, American Schools of Oriental Research, Society of Biblical Literature, and the Chicago Society of Biblical Research, the nation's oldest biblical society and the one which he served a term as president. He began the doctoral program at Andrews University. Not content with the classroom, in addition to his digs, he led several renowned study tours to the Middle East, several of which I had the privilege of being a part of. I was always the first off the bus and the first up the mountain. He knew how to put his commanding knowledge of detail 'into the coin of the realm.'

What were Horn's views on some of the issues that his students faced? Take the age of the earth, for instance. In 1966 he attended a Bible Teachers' Conference at the Seminary and reports, "They discussed Science and Religion and Bob Olson, the chairman, took votes on how many believed that the earth was 6,000 years old and how many felt uncomfortable in hearing doubts expressed in this age of the earth. How ridiculous people can get!" [1966:64] A couple of years later, Horn referred to a Review article by GC President Robert Pierson: "He reports on his participation in the Geoscience Institute Field Conference, . . . and defends the 6,000 year age of the earth because E. G. White over a period of 40 years had said so some 18 times. This is an argument adopted from Arthur White who always uses it. It is regrettable that a man like Pierson comes out with such a statement on a controversial point. It could easily be the beginning of a witchhunt, as the pope's decision on birth control is now in the Catholic church. I would not be surprised if they would require us either to teach the 6,000 year age of the world in the future, or get out. It can happen under the administration of ill-trained and narrow-minded men, as we have a few in high places. Well in my age, one is no longer easily threatened, for even retirement is so near, that this could be an easy way out in case the situation would become untenable." [1968:264]
In 1975 Horn addressed this issue in his diary at some length [1975:46-51] under the heading "The 6,000 year age of the Earth craze." Note his public teaching method when he says, "During 25 years of Seminary teaching on 5 continents I have never allowed myself to be pinned down with regard to the age of the earth. Many times students have tried by various means to push me into a comer and attempted to bring me to the point where I would commit myself to date the Creation of the Earth or the Flood. My biblical chronology begins with Abraham. For earlier periods we have no chronological data in the Bible, except genealogies which are useless for dating purposes as Saint Paul already recognized in his day, for which reason he exhorted his young fellow workers Timothy and Titus to shun discussions on 'endless genealogies' which he classifies with myths, stupid controversies and dissensions (1 Tim 1:4; Tit 3:9).

"Bishop Usher's date for the age of the earth-4004 BC as Creation date-based on genealogical figures of the Hebrew Bible, is of no value whatsoever, and it is evident that Ellen White was influenced by Usher's dates which in her lifetime were still printed in the margins of the English Bibles . . .

"If every one of her chronological statements would have to be accepted as divinely inspired gospel truth we would indeed be in deep trouble, because she sometimes makes gross chronological efforts and contradicts herself. [Horn gives several examples.] . . .

"I got a letter from Kenneth Vine inviting me to participate in a symposium on 'the problem of the age of the earth and dating.' . . . In the meantime Larry Geraty had read a paper on practically the same subject in Washington in a meeting of the Adventist Forum and consented to have that paper published in the Forum's magazine 'Spectrum.' . . . I agree with this article 100%, although I told Larry that I questioned the wisdom of having it published, especially for him as a young man who has to build up a reputation . . .

"Returning from California I found on my desk a copy of a letter written by W. Hackett to Larry Geraty in which he castigates Larry in the following words: 'I was a little surprised, . . . that as a teacher in our Seminary you would deal with this sensitive and controversial issue through "Spectrum." I am sure you are aware of the fact that the constituency of this church wishes its Seminary to be a theologically Bible and Spirit-of-Prophecy oriented teaching institution, and that rightly or wrongly the presentation of chronology in the framework of your article puts one in the category of one who questions certain Spirit of Prophecy statements on the subject you have dealt with . . . At this point in time my concern is not to contend for one position or the other, but it is my concern that for the Seminary to carry this particular Rag would compromise our effectiveness and reputation with a very conservative church membership... I think, Brother Geraty, that you recognize that the forces of evil are working from without to bring great problems to the work of God through His church. We have so many challenges and problems at the present time that we hardly need any divisive elements working from within. Let's voice these problems that are real and of concern to us in a group that is prepared to look at the issues from a scholarly as well as a pragmatic point of view.'

"In talking to Grady Smoot and Dick Hammill about Larry's article and Hackett's letter, these two men were first inclined to condemn Larry. Grady said, 'There is nothing new in it.' I said, 'That's it! There is nothing new in it-it's Biblical and if we are a people of the Book, as we always claim to be, we should not condemn Larry for presenting a defensible Biblical view, although I question whether it was wise for him to have it published.' They concurred with me. - Larry has in the meantime replied to Hackett's letter and told him that he too is out to build up the church and that he has confidence in the writings of Ellen White, but also feels that the church is mature enough to face problems which exist and which do not disappear by being ignored."

On the specific issue of the role of Ellen White in scholarship, Horn gave an account of a meeting of the Seminary Faculty Forum which met in 1970 to listen to Bill Peterson's study on the chapter in Great Controversy dealing with the French Revolution. He labeled her reconstruction of the French Revolution as "bad history." Horn goes on to comment: "The trouble is that our leaders have put Ellen White on such a high pedestal as authority on history, chronology, science, diet, health, social life and what have you, that they would wreck the church if they would dare to admit that she was wrong in any of these disciplines. So they go on muddling until a catastrophe occurs, hoping that the good Lord will soon come to solve their problems, which for them unsolvable. A real revolution could come one of these days." [1970:42]

Noone was more surprised than Horn when the Church tapped him for Seminary Dean in January of 1973. He says in his diary, "I cannot see what they see in me. I am not a great speaker, I am not very pious, but rather liberal by all standards (for example I am not a vegetarian), I do not have the charisma which Murdoch had, and do not like administrative duties. I am a scholar and think I could get the doctoral program through . . . Well, perhaps I should help them out, although I think they make a mistake to choose me. I cannot think of anyone more unfit for the job than
I am and the choice of these men shows clearly how fallible they can be in selections they make.” [1973:280-281]

It had been at the 1976 ASRS meetings in St. Louis that Horn heard for the first time about "two position papers produced, sanctioned or sponsored by the GC, one on Inspiration and Revelation, which carried Richard Hammill's name as author, and another anonymous one, written in poor English, on Creation. They were supposed to be adopted at the recently held Annual Council as articles of faith. Many or all paragraphs began with the words 'We believe'-a kind of credo, a thing Adventists have always shied away from. One of the 'beliefs' is that we consider Gen. 5 & 11 to be sources of biblical chronology. I was glad to hear that many consultants had advised to refrain from bringing these documents before the Annual Council and this advice was fortunately followed. It seems that the present administration tries by hook or crook to raise the view of the 6,000 year age of the earth to the level of a church doctrine. I hope that this effort "I not be crowned with success during the next 45 months. After that the wind in Washington may blow in a different direction. Sanity and reason may then once more reign over bigotry and medievalist intolerance in which our denomination is immersed right now." [1976:370]

In 1977, Horn recorded the exact wording of the Creation statement being pushed by the Geoscience Research Institute: “We accept the chronological data of the first eleven chapters of Genesis as providing the basis for our belief in the biblical chronology.” Horn went on to say, “I am lucky that such a credo was not adopted during my term of service because I would have been forced either to be a hypocrite or to resign. We are getting more and more into the Dark Ages. It seems to me that Pierson & Co are determined to raise the age of the earth question to the level of an article of faith before they move off the scene of action in 1980. It really is awful.” [1977:49.50]

Later the same year the same topic came up at ASRS in San Francisco: “In the evening Duncan Eva talked on ways to improve the relationship between the church's administrators and the denomination's scholars, a need which grew out of an attempt to get a declaration of faith on the matter of creation accepted by the Bible teachers. A very hostile reception was experienced last spring when he, W. Hackett & Richard Hammill-I am surprised that Dick lent himself for such work-tried to push such a credal-like declaration down the throat of the West Coast Bible teachers assembled at PUC. It was finally decided to create a kind of fellowship consisting of 7 Adventist scholars and 5 GC-appointed people to establish and maintain contact, discussion and dialogue between the Olympus and the Stoa." [1977:233]

In Horn’s report on the ASRS's 1980 conference in Dallas, he says, “In the evening John Brunt of Walla Walla College spoke on Redaction Criticism and recommended it to SDA Bible teachers, using as his case study the parable of the wicked tenants of a vineyard. A few years ago a teacher, daring to present such ideas, would have signed his death warrant in the Adventist church. That a man can present a paper like this and get away with it shows how far we have traveled on the road of other churches. It is a development that cannot be arrested.” [1980:237]

If we had the time, it would be interesting to share Horn's comments year by year on the ASRS meetings and the issues discussed there but that would be a whole paper on its own. On the 25th anniversary of his having received his Ph.D. and the beginning of his teaching career, Horn wrote: “And last, but not least, I should mention that I began and directed the first archaeological expedition under Adventist auspices, the excavations of biblical Heshbon which will find its end this summer under the direction of Larry Geraty, my young colleague and successor in teaching and museum work. As a kind of appendix I should also note that this 25th anniversary of my academic career sees me now as Dean of the Seminary to which I have given the best years of my life. And as Chairman of the Th.D. Committee and Dean of the Seminary I have also gotten our doctoral program accredited which President Richard Hamill actually considers the crown of my career. This quarter of a century, the age of the computer and of the exploration of outer space, which has seen the cold war and détente, the Korean and Vietnam wars, many revolutions and upheavals, natural catastrophes, but also repeated human landings on the Moon, has been a good period for me. I look back with satisfaction and gratitude to God for having given me opportunities to accomplish all that I have described.” [1976:681]

**SCHOLARSHIP IN SERVICE OF THE CHURCH**

As an author, few to this day are Horn's equal in terms of accessible, relevant output. Consider his bibliography which runs to nearly 800 items, not counting his unpublished diaries which he kept all his life and of which I have already spoken. Though he made major contributions to the scholarly world, he devoted most of his time to interpreting for his church the results of sound scholarship, and for that reason, probably did more than any other individual to make scholarship respectable within Seventh-day Adventist circles. Along with Ray Cottrell and Don Neufeld, he was one of the first to attend SBL on an annual basis, setting that pattern as opposed to ETS, largely because of the latter's
statement on inspiration to which members must subscribe and he could not. Horn's monumental contributions to the multi-volume “SDA Bible Commentary” and “SDA Bible Dictionary” are without a peer. And it was he who brought about the birth of Andrews University's first scholarly journal, “Andrews University Seminary Studies,” which he edited from 1963 to 1974. It is instructive to read Horn's summaries of the Bible Commentary and Bible Dictionary with which he was so intimately involved, the Bible Conferences he attended, the Bible Land Tours which he either conducted or lectured for, and his characterization of such entities as the Biblical Research Institute and the Geoscience Research Institute.

I found a passage that is particularly revealing about Horn's decision to use his scholarship in the service of the church: "It was during my student days in Chicago that a conversation with a fellow student, Carl DeVries, planted a seed in me that soon came to fruition. He mentioned that Joseph Free, who at that time taught at Wheaton College, was not an outstanding archaeologist in the scholarly world as a whole, but that among the Evangelicals he had become an archaeological authority without a peer, for a one-eyed man is king among blind people. I learned the lesson. It was obvious that at my age (42 when I got my Ph.D.) and endowed with only mediocre talents, I could not become an Albright or a Petrie, but that I could become an authority on Biblical Archaeology in my own church. And that has happened." [1976:137]

Following his year by year summary of the highlights of his 60th to 75th years of life, Horn added: “There were other things that should not be forgotten, namely the daily routine work and the little pleasant or less enjoyable experiences of life. The following statistics include some of these unrecorded items of what I did and what happened during the last 15 years:

- I traveled by car or bus 232,700 miles
- I traveled by train 47,700 miles
- I traveled by boat 22,100 miles
- I traveled by plane 590,000 miles
- I taught for 1,470 hours in the USA, Austria, Korea, the Philippines and England
- I lectured or preached 590 times in 16 countries
- 166 of my articles, 16 books and 16 book contributions were published, for which I received $16,500 in royalties
- I wrote 9,500 letters and received 14,800

Our (Jeanne's and mine) combined income including professional expenses amounted to $4 10,000

This is a good report and to God be the glory for what He has allowed me to experience and I give thanks to Him for all his favors and that I am still here and in good health to write these pages of reviewing the last 15 years of my interesting life.” [1983:121-122]

And remember, all this occurred after the traditional age of retirement!

CHURCHMAN

As a churchman, Horn brought balance into a communion sometimes tempted to extremes. He served his denomination, at one time or another on every continent, as pastor, missionary, teacher, editor, committee member, curator, and seminary dean, choosing, as we have said, to make his major contributions within and for the benefit of the church. He has left his imprint on Adventism—both in terms of scholarly method as well as commonly-accepted truth.

It is fascinating to read Horn's evaluation and opinion of numerous church leaders and well-known scholars, including some very frank things about me, I might add. While he often differed with Gerhard Hasel's views, for instance, in one place calling them "hasidic and dogmatic" [1985:254], he nevertheless could admire his scholarship: "I also began to read the 99-page manuscript of Gerhard Hasel's chapter 'Higher Criticism' which he wrote at my request to replace the one in the 5th volume of the SDA Bible Commentary which I had written 25 years ago and which badly needed updating. No one could have done a better job than Gerhard did, I like the way he has handled the subject." [1978:221]

Let's look at another relevant topic: the issue of accreditation and academic freedom. In 1962, Horn had just returned to the Seminary from having taught at an extension school in Japan. He says, "The big stir is the rejection of the application for accreditation on the basis of 3 items that need rectification, [the third being] research has to have more academic freedom. Last Sunday and Monday the Wise Men from the East were here for a board meeting and
passed the buck to a committee of 9 created for that purpose. Hammill who is in Europe has been recalled to work on this problem at once. Murdoch said today that the Spring Council in Washington had again wrestled with the Ministerial Training program, but confirmed their position that the Seminary is to be the only training center of the denomination and that Loma Linda University is not to be permitted to grant MAs in Religion. ‘All our leaders are in agreement on this point,’ Murdoch said. I question the correctness of this statement very much. If another GC president comes on, the situation could quickly change.” [1962:146] The more things change, the more they stay the same!

In 1969, Horn says, “We had meetings with Pierson, Hirsch and Bradley to hammer out a policy statement on Academic Freedom for Seminary teachers and those who teach in the Department of Religion. It amounts to practically no freedom except in inconsequential details. We are supposed to defend the doctrines and spend ingenuity and efforts and time to find means of apologetic values, but to search for no new truths or new interpretations, because we have it all, there is nothing to discover or to find. How can anything be found that does not exist? Having EGW, all truth that there is we have in the red books. That is the attitude of the leaders, although they say it not quite so bluntly.” [1969:364]

In Horn’s 1975 diary he recounts a conversation he had with Ray Cottrell during the ASRS meeting in Chicago, “Cottrell told me that Robert Pierson said to him 2 weeks ago that theological questions will be decided by administrators and not by the church’s theologians. I am really surprised that he made such a statement. I know that this is their practice, but that they are actually admitting it is amazing. Pierson has put the clock back and it is high time that we get a John XXIII at the top, but we will have to wait at least another 5 years before this can happen.” [1975:256-257]

Horn’s commitment to his church is clearly seen in words penned on the 50th anniversary of his baptism: “My baptism was not the result of a conversion. I simply conformed with customs. I had been raised an Adventist and it seemed to be a natural thing to belong to the church of my parents and grandparents. However, I experienced a kind of conversion 5 years later in England and then became an Adventist who was fully convinced that salvation was possible only if I remained a faithful member of this church fully believing each of its doctrines and carrying out all its policies and regulations, regardless whether they are based on the Bible or not.

“In recent years my convictions have experienced quite a change and have become rather liberal in outlook as occasional notes in the volumes of MY DIARY penned during the last 30 years show. Yet I have neither the desire nor the intention to change my church affiliation or leave my church. What I have and am I owe to my church and I am grateful that my church has supported me and given me opportunities for growth and allowed me to pursue my various interests. And since my church is tolerant enough to allow me as a liberal Adventist to work within this church organization I want to support it as best as I can, and stay with it.” [1974:195-196]

A little later, in the same year, Horn quotes approvingly from an issue of THAE devoted to the question, “How true is the Bible?” “Believing critics argue and experience has sometimes shown—that rigid faith is the most vulnerable to complete destruction. In their view, the believer who can live with some doubts is more likely to keep some faith. An occasionally fallible Bible, therefore, is a Bible that paradoxically seems more authentic.” “Believers who expect something else from the Bible may well conclude, that its credibility has been enhanced. After more than two centuries of facing the heaviest scientific guns that would be brought to bear, the Bible has survived—and is perhaps the better for the siege.” Horn calls both these quotes “interesting and also true.” [1974:270-271]

CONCLUSION

Because John Glenn has again just returned from space, a story that has been very much in the news, I thought it might be appropriate to close this retrospective on Siegfried Horn with a reference he made to Glenn’s earlier trip in 1962. Horn spoke for seminary chapel and said, “I took my point of departure from an answer of astronaut John Glenn. When asked by reporters whether he had prayed when he learned during his space flight that Ins heat shield was coming lose and that he might burn up at his re-entry into the atmosphere, he said: ‘I don’t need God just for an emergency. I have made my peace with God long ago, and now take all eventualities as they come.’ Horn concludes, “I spoke on Rom 5:1 and asked the question: ‘Has justification brought us that peace with God that we can face all eventualities of life?”’ [1962:151,152] For those of us who had the privilege of knowing this example for us of a scholar whose scholarship was always in service for the church, who exhibited balance, good judgment, and never sought
public controversy, but put his more controversial thought down in his diary. I think our answer is an unhesitating, “Yes, Siegfried, your life has helped to inspire us to claim that peace with God that has indeed helped us to face all eventualities of life. We know your soul rests in peace. We look forward to seeing you on resurrection morning. Till then, thanks for pointing the way home.”

Horn’s last entry in his diary was penned on October 21, 1993, five weeks before he died. (In the hospital, he was just too sick to write.) It read: “The mail brought us today the latest number of the Biblical Archaeology Review (BAR). . . . It contains 2 feature articles which are of special interest to me. Both are written by Larry Herr and are entitled: ‘What Ever Happened to the Ammonites’ and ‘The Search for Biblical Hesbbon.’ They contain pictures of Tell Hesban, of the deep pool excavated in Hesban, and Ammonite ostraca found during the excavations of Hesban, but also several pictures from the excavations and objects found at Tell el-’Umeiri. Finally the second article contains a picture of me, explaining that I began the excavations of Hesban 25 years ago, and by instituting an archaeological survey of the Hesban region pioneered modern, multi-disciplinary research. The write up to the picture also states that I am a member of BAR’s Editorial Advisory Board, and served as professor of archaeology and history of antiquity from 1951 to 1976 at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan.” It was almost as if, at the close of his life, he wanted us to remember those key points—a convenient summary of a remarkable life, uncompromised when it came to scholarship, yet always lived in service to the church and gratitude to his Lord.

Since I began this evening with a quotation from Paul, speaking now as your retiring ASRS president, I would like to close with another, this one from 2 Corinthians 13:11-14: “Finally, my brothers and Sisters, farewell. Mend your ways, heed my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.”
SERVING THE CHURCH IN THE ACADEMIC WORLD

Gordon Bietz
Southern Adventist University

I am not an academic. When invited some years ago to serve Pacific Union College on their faculty I declined because I did not see academics as my career path. So what am I doing at SAU? I looked around and it was the only job available that I could take without moving.

Once upon a time during the last century a school opened for the purpose of educating ministers and church workers. At the end of the first year enrollment had swelled to seventy-two. This Christian school combined manual labor with studies. So the students could learn practical skills and earn money to operate the school at the same time. The teachers and the students were involved in working on the farm. The arrangement didn't last long for the farm never really turned a profit.

Even without farm income the school prospered but there were difficult times of stress between the denomination and the academics. The church members, mostly simple folk, began to criticize the college for its defection from church ideals. It was little things at the beginning that signaled changes. For instance the students were required to attend chapel services but the faculty were finding other activities to fill their time. Without the faculty presence in chapel to help maintain decorum the services became less reverent and worshipful. One time the students even kept a faculty attendance record and published the results in the student newspaper.

Other unobtrusive changes gradually came into the school. There were not enough academics in the denomination to adequately fill the teaching positions and so those who were not members of the church were hired to teach classes.

There was a growing concern in the constituency that the Board of Trustees could not be trusted to keep the school on the straight and narrow. One time when the school needed money, the constituency, along with a commitment of funds, required that they have the power to select and remove any of the trustees. They would see to it that there was no religious drift from the faith of the fathers.

But the drift continued anyway. Chapel frequency was reduced to two times a week and it was no longer required. The natural result was that the student body as a whole no longer participated. Weeks of prayer and revivals became less frequent, baptisms were down and an attitude was expressed among the students that one man's religion is as good as another's. Another contributing factor to the declining spiritual atmosphere of the school was weekends away, either at home or for recreational activity. This deprived the college community of the weekly communal worship experience. All of this contributed to accusations that were made about a new theology in the school.

And then there was the “Dancing Debacle.” In a sense it was the symbolic catalyst for the constituency to rally around decrying the spiritual drift at the school. The problem was that students had become interested in dancing. They were at first prohibited, then they were regulated, then they were supervised and then ... well nothing was done. With the word being out among the constituents that there was dancing at the school the inclination for financial support decreased significantly. The school put on a strong public relations campaign and spoke about all the fine religious things that were happening on campus. It apologized for various ways that they had offended the constituency but at the same time there was quiet talk among the academics about the church control of the school being a "millstone" around their neck.

The Council for Higher Education suggested a change in the relationship between the church and the school. They suggested that they establish a covenant between independent parties rather than authority by one over the other.

The annual subsidy from the church was a dwindling percentage of the school budget and there was a call for a cut off of aid to the school since the school was getting so much foundation and government money. Motions were made at constituency meetings to cut the allotment to the school because it was not morally defensible to spend church mission money on an institution that was not a mission and was, in fact, straying from the mission of the church.

Other issues rubbed the salt of secularization in the opening wounds between the church and the school. Accusations were made that school no longer upheld the faith because speakers were allowed on the campus who espoused non-Christian ideals. There was a dwindling number of religion credits required, the non-required chapel attendance had dwindled to nearly zero and weekend worship services were joined by very few teachers or students. Certain government funds were not accepted by the school but the academics who wanted more federal money pointed to the inconsistency of the fact that hospitals owned by the denomination accepted federal funds.
One time the Board of Trustees came back from a church constituency meeting that they found particularly frustrating and decided to rewrite the constitution. They deleted the provision that indicated that the school was an agency of the church and withdrew the power of the church to elect trustees. The president of the church immediately cut off the annual subsidy.

A compromise was reached within one year and the compromise was that the constituency would stop subsidizing the school but congregations could earmark special contributions that they could send through the denomination office. The compromise received constituency approval and the progressive divorce between school and church continued.

The final break came when finally the two institutions decided to go their separate ways. The denomination yielded all claim to governance and the school yielded all claim to funding. Reactions to this final severance were varied. Two days after the action the *Winston-Salem Journal* ran its editorial under the headline "Wake Forest Goes Secular." So Wake Forest University, established by the fervor of the Baptist church to train ministers became a private secular university.

Wake Forest's public relations officer sought to put the best spin on the separation. "At the same time, Baptist beliefs and traditions, and a relationship with the Convention which provides an opportunity for sharing in those beliefs and traditions, will continue to give Wake Forest University a unique perspective and unique opportunities in Christian higher education." ¹ One might ask how Wake Forest, by simply providing an “opportunity” to share in Baptist beliefs and traditions, would differ from the University of North Carolina or even nearby Belmont Abbey College, where such opportunity also existed. In 1997 the Southern Baptist Convention dissolved all central sponsorship of higher education.

We might have told the story of many other schools, schools begun in the fervor of Christian conviction that now have drifted from H. Richard Niebuhr's paradigm of “Christ against Culture” to “Christ of Culture.” James Burtchaell outlines other denominational colleges in his book *The Dying of the Light* subtitled, “The Disengagement of Colleges and universities from their Christian Churches." ² There you will read about:

- Congregationalists - Harvard and Dartmouth
- Presbyterians - Lafayette and Davidson College
- Methodists - Millsaps College and Ohio Wesleyan University
- Baptists - Besides Wake Forest there is Virginia Union University and Linfield College.
- Lutherans - Gettysburg and St. Olaf College and Concordia University.
- Catholics - Boston College, The College of New Rochelle, and Saint Mary's College of California
- The Evangelicals - Azusa Pacific University and Dordt College

Many were the influences that led these schools down the slippery slope from Bible based, church funded ministerial training schools to secular universities. Influences:

- Such as faculty focused more on their own discipline and less on the institutional mission,
- Such as the growing independence of boards and the growing divergence of missions.
- Such as regional accrediting associations replacing the church as the primary authority.
- Such as faculty selection becoming more depend on academic expertise than spiritual commitment.
- Such as financial security depended more and more on government grants and endowments than church subsidies.
- Such as customer driven admissions officers focused more on getting any student as compared to students that complement the mission of the institution.

These and other influences grew not out of a malevolent conspiracy to overthrow the spiritual foundations of the school. There were no clandestine Jesuits following a grand strategy of insidious corruption. Good people of high moral conviction led these schools. The transformation of their mission statements from counter culture to culture reflecting came slowly but surely through many small decisions made by church administrators, college presidents and faculty search committees. The law of unintended consequences devolved through small decisions that related to chapel

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² James Tunstead Burtchaell p. 382.
attendance, funding sources, behavior restraints and a multitude of decisions that led these schools away from their founding churches.

James Burtschaell says in the Preface of his book “I have had to leave aside what may have been even more interesting stories: those of the Mennonites, the Mormons, the Quakers, the Disciples of Christ, the Episcopalians, the Seventh-Day Adventists.”

And what would his story have included if he would have told the story of Seventh-day Adventist higher education?

- Would he have told of pressures of new theology, lifestyle changes and accrediting bodies pending SDA colleges and universities for more independence from the church?
- Would he have suggested that the 1992 decision of the Annual Council that clarified the independence of the College and University Boards as a watershed event?
- Would he have told of false anecdotal stories that resulted in constituencies withdrawing students if not subsidies?
- Would he have reported the recent Annual Council action on "International Coordination and supervision of Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial and Theological Education."

If he was writing the future instead of the past what predictions would he make. Will SDA higher education maintain the connection with the church or will the subtitle of his future book be “The Disengagement of colleges and universities from the SDA church?”

The theme of the ASRS meetings, "Academics in the Service of the Church" appears, if history is to be a guide, to be an oxymoron. Academics have generally led to separation from, rather than service to the church.

James Burtschaell says in his summary chapter, "Access to independent funding often provided the first inspiration to the colleges that they might stand on their own. The patronage of the churches was often stingy, and their chosen trustees were sometimes more to be humored than to help. As the colleges gained in sophistication and financial stability, they naturally suffered church fools less gladly."

How might Adventist academics defy the trends of history? Is it possible for academics to serve the church? If so, how? I would like to suggest a number of areas:

1st Academics serve the church in their attitudes about the church and its leaders

Schools and their faculty were quick to complain about unwelcome interference and intrusive concerns being expressed by ecclesiastic authority and unenlightened church constituencies. But they compliantly bowed to civil authorities on issues of zoning and occupational safety. They raised little fuss about the demands of accrediting bodies while they impugned church concerns.

Such a response to the church by the academy is not dead. The “Total Commitment document,” however misnamed, asks simply for some accountability and yet it is characterized, by those of us who would quickly respond to an accrediting body, as big brother church intruding itself where it doesn't belong. We behave like our stewardship responsibility is more to regional accrediting associations, alumni and the government than the church.

I confess my own guilt as I evaluate my own visceral reactions to the “Total Commitment document” or to the “International Coordination and supervision of Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial and Theological Education,” and even more personally to the request of the North American Division Higher Education Council relative to Southern’s own Masters in Religion degree.

There is a condescending insolence among some educators to the perspective of those in church administration. I have felt it myself as I resist some of their directives. It is amazing how quickly one's perspective can change when you move from church administration to school administration. For instance my perspective on the Union subsidy to

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3 James Tunstead Burtschaell p. x
4 James Tunstead Burtschaell p. 823
5 A number spoke to me following the presentation suggesting that I had been hard on accrediting bodies suggesting that the accrediting agencies had generally been a help in encouraging the institution to focus on its mission. My intention is not to demean the place of the accrediting bodies only to suggest that the formally elected leadership of the church should have at least as much influence.
Southern is quite different now. Intellectual insolence that disables our mutual trust contravenes the Gospel.

David refused to cut the garment of Saul, Jesus allowed his crucifixion by Jewish leaders and Paul encouraged respect for those in authority. In no case should there be an artificial compliance but the academy needs to take seriously the concerns of those elected to lead the church. We serve our church through loyal conversation and positive attitudes toward our leaders.

2nd Academics serve the church through an unashamed commitment and loyalty

It is not unreasonable to ask that the intellectual pursuits of the academy show loyalty and commitment to the church.

James Burtchaell says in the conclusion of his book, “Naturally a Christian church, which offers the gospel for conviction and commitment, exacts an intellectual loyalty that makes it a meddling patron of education thus understood. Rational discourse in the contemporary academy believes - or says - that it can abide no prior convictions, commitments, or loyalties. But Christian scholars, to be at home in this kind of academy, need not actually forswear their faith. All they must do is agree to criticize the church by the norms of the academy, and to judge the gospel by the culture. And most of them have burnt that incense whenidden.”

Academic peer pressure tempts the dilution of simple gospel commitments and loyalties. I spent a semester at the Harvard Divinity school during which time the pastor came out of the closet. It was indecorous to claim Christ as a personal savior but quite apropos to be gay. It was difficult to talk about scripture as having authority but quite appropriate to find fulfillment in new age chanting.

For academics to truly serve the church they must not lose their nerve and be intimidated by their academic colleagues into politically correct beliefs expressed in vacuous theological mumbo jumbo that leaves everyone guessing about what they believe. We must not talk religiously without giving offense by saying much and affirming little.

Colleges and Universities that separated from their founding churches found a nice foil in the narrow exclusivism of the founding churches. They were as good at using this straw man as an excuse for separation as the church was good at finding anecdotal stories of a loss of faith in the school. Both sides found what they were looking for and they got what they didn’t want - separation.

3rd Academics serve the church by helping it find theological depth and upholding church dogma.

There is a subjectivism today that suggests that telling my story is the same as telling God’s story. The church faces the danger of the religious equivalent of safe sex – all feeling and no risk. As Ralph Wood has said, “this new ease in Zion, this friendly familiarity with the Lord God of the cosmos, can be discerned in old-fashioned liberal no less than new-fangled evangelical churches.” Edward Farley has recently declared that the relevance-driven worship practiced in old line liberal congregations prompts one not to exclaim “holy, holy, holy” but “nice, nice, nice.” In his book A Far Glory, Peter Berger argues that we are witnessing “the triumph of triviality even in traditional churches.”

The loss of mystery and the accommodation of worship to a God who is just a kinder and gentler version of ourselves leaves no space to inspire worship or command our service. As Flannery O’Connor said, “Sentimentality in religion is like pornography in art: they both cultivate immediate sensate experience for its own sake.”

Everyone wants to be spiritual but no one wants doctrine. Today spirituality can be as vacuous as feeling good in a hot tub to having chills go up your spine when you capture the view of the Grand Canyon. Instead of a spirituality that grows from dogma about the nature of God there is developing a spirituality that rather than being rooted in the Bible is a gaseous gossamer thing that means everything and nothing at the same time. The end result of such a depleted concept of spirituality will be to avoid the scandal of the gospel and to have an unwillingness to confront the cultural conformists of the world. We better be very clear when we march to the beat of a different drummer that we are not hearing the band play without a score.

An evangelical reporter is said to have asked Karl Barth, when he was visiting this country in 1962, whether he had

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6 James Tunstead Burtchaell p. 850-851
7 Ralph C. Wood p. 30
8 Ralph C. Wood p. 30
ever been saved. "Yes," Barth is rumored to have replied. "Then tell us about your salvation experience," the reporter eagerly requested. "It happened in A.D. 34, when Jesus was crucified and God raised him from the dead."  

The academy can help the church find the balance between a feel good pietistic religion with roots no deeper than Yanni’s mood music and a Teutonic doctrinaire true believer fundamentalism with roots in stone.  

On the one hand let us not be caretakers in the museum of truth dusting off memorials to the pieties of previous generations.  

On the other hand let us not accept designer doctrines fabricated in the New Age laboratories of a heathen society.  

Committed belief is not toxic to the academy. A principled worldview that draws lines in the sand is a necessary framework to learning. Burtchaell speaks of the colleges that lost faith, "So they begot piety unsustained by morality, church without theology, preaching without sacrament, community without order. They would inevitably have a short half-life."  

Flannery O’Connor has said, “Dogma is an instrument for penetrating reality”  

We must never face the “cut flower” phenomena – looking beautiful and bright but cut from our doctrinal roots. Dead but not knowing it yet. Our roots grow deep in traditional Biblical interpretation and are nourished by a commitment to Biblical truth. Let us never separate ourselves from those roots. We must deepen our grasp of the doctrinal fundamentals of the SDA church and the academy must have the academic freedom to follow the instructions in the preface to those doctrines in the Church Manual.  

"Revision of these statements may be expected at a General Conference session when the church is led by the Holy Spirit to a fuller understanding of Bible truth or finds better language in which to express the teaching of God’s Holy Word."  

In my inauguration address I quoted Albert Meyer who said, “Education is a conversation between the older and younger generations on what is important.” For our conversation toward faith maturity to take place it must be secure from external threat. In the secular university where academic freedom is claimed as the holy grail one finds that the social restrictions of politically correct speech proscribe the thoughts of student and teacher alike about as tightly as many denominationally sponsored schools. Certainly there are boundaries to the conversations but those who are not intimate participants must not, because they hear snippets of the conversation, jump to unwarranted conclusions about the faith of the conversants. We must trust each other, constituent, faculty, staff, administration and board of trustees.  

In this relationship of mutual trust we have freedom to experiment with thoughts and expressed thoughts that find no home in the community are allowed to die a natural death. We need no conspiracy theorists manufacturing with our words a complex chain of accusations meant to trap people in dungeons of rumor. The academy should be a place for having a conversation secure in the knowledge that through mutual love and trust we take each others words as a sacred truth and sift out the chaff while holding firm to the wheat.  

Ellen White says, "It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thought." We are not here to clone the past so as to protect the status quo. Our Lord died on the cross to protect our freedom and we dishonor Him when our view of education is programming rather than conversation.  

The church must recognize that it isn't possible to bring a young person along the journey to a maturity of faith without losing some of those young people along the way. The faith maturity process deals with troubling issues that some adolescents will use as the key for their rebellion. What we must be sure of is that as we give them the keys we don't push them through the door. Let us teach them the responsible use of those keys and assure them from our own experience that doubt and questions are not destructive of faith but rather necessary ingredients to it.

9 Ralph C. Wood p. 31  
10 James Tunstead Burtchaell p. 841  
11 Flannery O’Connor quoted in "In Defense of Disbelief" p. 29  
12 Church Manual Chapter 2 Preface to the Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists  
13 Albert J. Meyer, Mennonite Board of Education, Box 1142, Elkhart, IN 46515 Article “The Church and Higher Education Monday Nov. 1, 1993  
14 BC- Ed-TI- Education-CN- 1-CT- Source and Aim of True Education-PR- 02-PG- 17
4th Academics serve the church by Living in Unity with one another

When my Dad was a kid on the farm one day his Mother told him to take a drink of water to his Father who was out plowing a field. Dad walked over the plowed field and as he came over a little rise in the field and saw the horses standing still and his father kneeling down by the plow. Dad thought he was fixing the plow but as he got closer he heard his father praying. Dad said it was like he was standing on holy ground as he heard him review each of his nine children's names and pray for them one by one. There is something powerful about hearing your name in the prayer of another.

If there is any place in the Bible where we are included in prayer - it is in John 17:20, Jesus says,

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,”

Jesus is praying for us! We have believed in Jesus because of the message of the disciples. Mrs. White says,

“The instruction given me by One of authority is that we are to learn to answer the prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John. We are to make this prayer our first study.”

What is the message of this last prayer of Jesus for us? As He is 24 hours from the gallows what does He think about when He prays for us.

“I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.”

The last plea of Jesus to His Father was “that all of them may be one,”

- Jesus did not pray for our faith
- He did not pray for our doctrinal purity
- He did not pray for perfect performance
- He prayed for our UNITY
  “that all of them may be one,”

Why is this unity important to Jesus? He gives us His 2 reasons:
The 1st reason that our unity is important is evangelism - verse 21

“May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”

What good does it do to preach that the Father sends Jesus if we don't show in our lives the unity of Jesus and His Father? What satisfaction is there in holding to the Truth if that grip on Truth does not hold us together? It is as basic and simple as you can't communicate what you don't live.

Ellen White says,

“The world needs to see worked out before it the miracle that binds the hearts of God's people together in Christian love.”

Our high statements of truth are of no value if they don't translate into unity with people.

Ellen White again:

“It is the purpose of God that His children shall blend in unity. Do they not expect to live together in the same heaven? Is Christ divided against Himself?”

The 2nd reason that our unity is important is so the world may know of his love – John 17:25

“I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

What will the world know? That God loves them as God loves the son.

- Not just that God loves the Christians, but that He loves the world.
- Our unity is to portray love
- People see how we love one another.
- People see how we dwell in harmony.

15 8T 239
16 John 17:21
17 9T 188
18 8T 240
We tell you we have the truth. How do you know? You can see it in our lives, and how we love one another, and how we dwell together in unity.

Ellen White

"Union with Christ and with one another is our only safety in these last days. Let us not make it possible for Satan to point to our church members, saying: "Behold how these people, standing under the banner of Christ, hate one another.""^{19}

Do you know what happened to the first love of the early church?

Ellen White

"But the early Christians began to look for defects in one another. Dwelling upon mistakes, giving place to unkind criticism, they lost sight of the Savior and of the great love He had revealed for sinners. They became more strict in regard to outward ceremonies, more particular about the theory of the faith, more severe in their criticisms."^{20}

As they lost sight of the Savior they became "more particular about the theory of the faith, more severe in their criticisms." Theologians should be rightly concerned about "the theory of the faith" but let us not allow that concern to destroy the practice of our faith. Let us not allow the particularity of our faith destroy the universality of our love for each other. We should not allow the honest differences of our hermeneutics separate us from the Lord’s commandment "Love your neighbor as yourself."^{21}

Imagine with me that we are shooting some rapids in a canoe and the canoe hits an unseen rock and a large hole is punched in your end of the canoe. My immediate response is to say, "Boy do you have a problem! You have a hole in your end of the canoe!" Whose problem is this? It is our problem we are in the same canoe. So should it be when we hear of a problem at La Sierra University, Walla Walla College or Atlantic Union College. We are in the same canoe. So should it be when we hear of a problem at church headquarters or in the conference office. We are in the same canoe. We are together in this. Their problem is my problem. It is our church.

Moses came down from the mountain and found the people had made gods of gold. God said, "Let me destroy them and I will make a great nation out of you." I might have responded, "Good idea God, they have been nothing but trouble since we left Egypt." But Moses said,

"But now, please forgive their sin -- but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written."^{22}

Rather than being so committed to each other that we would lose our salvation rather then to see another lost, we show little concern about their salvation because they don’t believe in salvation the way we do. Are we so committed to each other that we are ready to sacrifice our salvation for each other?

On September 13, 1993 Yitzhak Rabin shook hands with Yasir Arafat and said "we who have fought against you, the Palestinians - we say to you today, in a loud and clear voice: enough of blood and tears. Enough!"^{23}

We have shed no blood but there have been tears and I say ... Enough! Not that there should be agreement, not that there are not places where we draw a line in the theological sand, not that ideas should not be opposed with every fiber of our being, but that we not personalize our differences and build caricatures of those who disagree with us.

May this be the day that academics serve our church by saying "Enough!" and showing them "the miracle that binds the hearts of God’s people together in Christian love."^{24}

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^{19} 8T 240
^{20} 8T 241
^{21} Matthew 22:39 NIV
^{22} Exodus 32:32 NIV
^{23} William Safire, Lend me Your Ears, Great speeches in History, 1997, p. 157
^{24} 8T 188
PRAYER

Lawrence Geraty
La Sierra University

Lord,

We confess that as perfectionists
We do not have too many sins with which to bother you.
We are Bible-believing Adventists
    and that eliminates many mistakes right there.
We generally disagree with the Democratic party
    because we know what they stand for.
We hedge on our income tax
    because we disagree with the government
and we tend to think of women as subservient,
    but the Bible is not too clear about that.
We support what our nation does militarily--
    very close to what our enemies do,
but our motives are purer.
We have little time and money
    to care for the poor and homeless
because we are very busy in Church.
We don't visit the sick in the hospitals,
    but we inform the Pastors,
and we don't evangelize our city for Christ
    because in church we want quality, not numbers.
We don't love you with our whole mind
    and soul and strength,
but we don't know of anyone else who does either.
But we are deeply conscious of our little compromises, Lord,
    because, as children of grace,
We tend to think of ourselves as outside the law.

Lord,

Let the scales drop from our eyes
    and thank you for bringing us together this evening
to continue that process.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Adopted from a prayer by Robert James St. Clair,
a Presbyterian minister in Berkeley, CA.
MORNING PRAYER

Sally Kiasiong-Andriamiarisoa
La Sierra University

Lord,
   as we gather to speak
       and hear many words,
   keep us in the sense of Your presence
       of Your Word

May our many words
   be kept within the freeing influence of Your Word
May it be Your Word
   Your presence
       that even re-creates in us
   The movement of intelligence - -
       that willingness to listen
           to let go
           to truly hear

May Your Word keep us within the movement of humility - -
   that willingness to change
       to differ
   and yes - - sometimes not to understand
       to disagree
       to contend

And may Your Word bring about the movement of life
   That we may be free
       to think
       to reflect
       to be

   Alive as your children
       complex
       diverse
   Keep us transforming conversation
       with others and with You.
EPHESIANS 4:1-16,
A SYLLABUS FOR DIDASKALOI AS SERVANTS OF THE CHURCH

Agniel Samson, Th.D.
Oakwood College

Ephesians is one of the Prison Letters of the New Testament. We have three indications of it in the epistle, the first one, at the beginning of chapter 3, the second one, at the onset of the pericope under consideration, and the third one, in the peroratio, as part of the final greetings. Some see in such a precision a definite proof of the letter pseudonymity while others use it as additional evidence of its authenticity. Although aware of this debate, I will still refer to the author as Paul.

Occasion for the Letter

The content of the letter gives the impression that Paul was reacting against a latent tension between the Jewish wing of Christianity and the Gentile segment of the Church (2:11-22; 4:3-6). That conflictive situation was due either to the resistance of the latter to include the former in the governance and ministry of the community or to the rigorism of traditional Judaism that was strongly challenged by the defiant laxity of the uncircumcised. Besides, the Church seemed to have been polarized between those who advocated an episcopal model of hierarchical structure and those who defended a rather charismatic form of ministry under the direct leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ. If this is the case, Paul must have been among the latter. However, such conjectures remain to be proved.

Ephesians 4:1-16 bridges the exposition and the exhortation as indicated by the transition from the indicative to the imperative mode and the use of the consecutive particle οὖν (oun). Paul had previously established the foundations of his ecclesiology. He endeavors now to edify the body of Christ that is the product of a vocation — the Christian vocation as a progressive movement toward the ideal αὐτής (autēs), to the level of the πληρωμα, Christ himself.

Following the stylistic and argumentative patterns of the rhetorical categories of his day, Paul combines in this pericope three different genres: an encomium, a credo, and a midrash. This combination of protreptic, apotreptic, and

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1 This letter has been submitted to serious analytical scrutiny regarding the questions of introduction like its author, its addressees, its place and date of redaction, and also the problems of unity and integrity its poses. Since they will in no way affect the purpose of this paper, I will dispense from revisiting these questions as well as the variants related to the challenging textual criticism issues raised by this writing. My decision is based on the fact that, in its present state, the letter is traditionally known as the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians. Besides, despite the uncertainty of the lesson “to the Ephesians,” we still refer to it as “Ephesians.” For an original solution to the problem of authorship, see E. J. Goodspeed, The Key to Ephesians, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956, pp. V-xvi.


4 I concur with A. T. Lincoln’s (Ephesians, [Word Biblical Commentary 42], Dallas: Word Books, 1990, pp. xli-xlvi) analysis of the rhetorical features of Ephesians: Exordium (1:1-23), Narratio (2:1-3:21), Exhortatio (4:1-6:9), Peroratio (6:10-24). I also agree with his unwillingness to classify the book according to clear-cut epistolary patterns and rhetorical categories. Otherwise it would be baffling to explain the mixing of laudative and deliberative elements in the exhortative section of the letter. The fact is that the second section of Ephesians follows its own rhetorical pattern: Prooemium (v. 1), Propositio (v.2,3), Argumentatio with Probatio (vv. 4-13) and Refutatio (v. 14), and Peroratio (vv. 15,16).
epitreptic elements helps him in the presentation and elaboration of his paraclesis⁵ that couples descriptive and prescriptive elements. It applies the Christian principles contained in the first section (1:1-3:21) which blends liturgical and doctrinal materials⁶. The apodictic force of his argumentation is further emphasized by the conceptual inclusio formed between the concepts of “lordship,” “walk,” “vocation,” “mutual support,” “love,” “bonds,” “peace,” of the first part (4:1-3) and the ideas of “head,” “growth,” “profession,” “joints,” “togetherness,” “unity,” and “love” of the last part (4:12-16). They serve as hook-words which keep together the exordium and the exhortatio per se.⁷ Between these two poles, Paul defines his philosophy of Christian teachers and the purpose of their mission: unity in diversity for “the perfecting of the saints,” introduced by the preposition πρὸς (pros). The other two prepositional phrases (the μετά [mechri] clause of verse 13 and the ἐν [hina] clause of verse 15) indicate the temporal scope of the ministries and the present condition from which the Church should come out.

Interestingly, Paul combines literary categories of the three major cultural components of his day. The encomium is essentially Greco-Roman⁸; the confessional fragment reflects the liturgical formulations of the Christian Church⁹, and the midrash is of Jewish origin.

**The encomium**

The epiptic nature of verses 1-3 is obvious. It is as if Paul were engaged in an aretalogy of the seven cardinal virtues which should characterize the Christian vocation. He will later elaborate on them in the catalogue of vices and virtues as well as in the household code of the subsequent chapters. The vices to the Christian Church⁹, and the midrash is of Jewish origin.

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⁵ Cf. R. Schnackenburg, Ephesians: A Commentary, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991 (English translation by Helen Heron of Der Brier an die Epheser), pp. 158ff.; M. Bouthier (L’Épitre de Saint Paul aux Ephésiens, Genève: Labor et Fides, 1991, pp. 168ff. are among a handful of exegetes who have identified this section of Ephesians as such. This is a Christian genre that is often confused with the paraenetical text of ancient literature. That may explain Ch. Perelman’s (The Realm of Rhetoric, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1982, pp. 19, 20) understanding of the presence of both persuasive and dissuasive arguments in the pericope. However, for an assessment of the differences, see M. Ferrer-Welty, “La transmission de l’évangile”, ET 32 (1957), p. 90 and, especially, H. W. Attridge, “Paraeesis in a Homily (λόγος παρακλήσεως): The Possible Location of, and Socialization in, the Epistle to the Hebrews.” ” Semeia 50, pp. 211-226.


⁹ It may be reminiscent of some articles of the shema, but both in its formulation and content, this credo is essentially of Christian origin.

¹⁰ These virtues were highly valued by the Stoics as well as other philosophical schools of that era. The only exception is “humility” that some would regard as a deficiency or even a vice (Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics, 1107b; Cf. W. T. Jones, The Classical Mind, New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1968, p. 268; C. Sommers, Vice & Virtue in
indispensable to the exercise of the gifts that he is about to list by creating an atmosphere of harmony and mutual respect within the Church whose members value the privilege of being the servants of each other.

The Confessional fragment

As customary with New Testament writers, Paul relies heavily on liturgical and catechetical materials to bolster both the fides and the praxis of his audience. That is the case with this segment (vv. 4-6) that exhibits the contours of an hymnic fragment. Its Sitz im Leben may well have been the confessional and baptismal legoumena of the early Church. Whether this septuple acclamation has been quoted verbatim or edited by the author does not change the fact that it must have rendered a familiar sound that pricked the conscience of the listeners.

From a compositional standpoint, it presents the structure of a tercet with an obvious trinitarian content. Each one of its stichs is commanded by a “person” of the Trinity (although in the reversed order of the formulation of the Apostolic and Nicene creeds) around which seem to have been clustered the theological virtues and three levels of the ecclesiastical order, “body,” “baptism,” and “the whole.” The outline of this creedal formulation would then have been as follows:

one body, one Spirit, one hope
one Lord, one faith, one baptism
one God,

Father of all,
over all,
and through all,
and in all.

While the pattern is obvious for the first two stichs, the third one baffles the analyst’s attempt to explain its lack of correspondence with the initial and expected scheme. Until the second hemistich of the third line, the dominating concept is that of “oneness,” as emphasized by the anaphoric repetition of the numeral “one” in all three genders, εις condemn. (heis) μία (mia), ἐν (hen). The last part breaks with such a pattern by playing on the alliterative effect of the adjective πάντων (panton). The discrepancy may well be due to the fact that we have here the conflation of two unrelated liturgical formulations. A baptismal confession of faith is modified to append a doxology reminiscent of the Stoic representation of the universe that has already been discussed in previous chapters. Be as that may, Paul seems to use it as a synonymous allusion to the “pleroma” that he does not hesitate to equate with the mystical Christ. An additional evidence of the disparate textures of the quote is the dominance of asyndetic constructions in the “one” section while the last hemistich is characterized by a cascade of the conjunction καί (kai).

The midrashic elements

The third section (vv. 7-16) is based on a midrashic reinterpretation of Psalm 68:19 (LXX 67:19; Mt 68:19), as an introduction to the paraclesis per se. This genre generally springs from the application of an Old Testament passage. By so doing, the Christian writer evokes a higher authority agreed upon by both the rhetor and the audience.

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11 Although he recognizes the omission of “love”, the third theological virtue that one would expect in the last stich, M. Boutrier (Op. Cit., p. 176) believes that its mention was only delayed until the conclusion of the pericope. He also interprets the series of “πάντων” (panton) of the last stich as a reference to the universe. I personally prefer to see in it an allusion to the “pleroma” that the apostle identifies with Christ himself.


This is a martial ode that has been significantly altered to fit the argumentation\textsuperscript{14}. On the one hand, the psalmist addresses YHWH, in the second person, as the conqueror who receives gifts for Himself; on the other hand, the apostle introduces Christ, in the third person, as the ascending victor who has showered his gifts upon the believing community. After his incursions in the realm of the κατώτερα (katotera), he ascended to the ὑπεράνω (huperano) from where he showers his Church with the gifts listed in this pericope.

Because of its obvious "disconnectedness,"\textsuperscript{15} the Psalm has been considered as a "libretto of songs for the sanctuary,"\textsuperscript{16} used during festive occasions, especially royal processions celebrating the victories of Israel over her enemies. Throughout the stanzas of this epic, the precentor goes from past interventions of God in the history of Israel to future irruption of Yahweh in the destiny of his people. It is in this context of triumphal procession that the Lord is presented as the royal victor who has not only led captives, but also has been showered with gifts from his conquered enemies who are shown under the metaphor of envious mountains.\textsuperscript{17}

LePeau's analysis, followed closely by Tate, helps us to understand that Paul's choice of this quotation is well-suited for this Christian celebration of Christ's victory in the cultic language and practices of the early Church\textsuperscript{18}. In Psalm 68, God is first presented as a warrior who "arises", goes out, smites his enemies and submits his foes. He is the "coming God" (first movement, vv. 1-15). Verses 16-19 play a role of pivot by presenting him as the "coming back God" to dwell and bless (second movement). These verses indicate God's choice of Zion where he abides (the "abiding God")\textsuperscript{19} and from where he grants his blessings. The apostle follows the pattern of Ps. 68 where the God who arises and the God who ascends is identified as one and the same. Paul's precaution in indicating that the one who ascends is the same Christ who had previously descended has the same purpose. He is the victor who, after his descent into the κατώτερα (katotera) has taken captives with him and is now dwelling in the ὑπεράνω (huperano) from where he showers his gifts on the Church, the dwelling place of his lordship.

The cosmogony of the psalm was overused to foster the penchant for celestial visions among those who associated it with the Moses mysticism of late Judaism.\textsuperscript{20} Paul takes up this ode of ascent and gives it a Christian flavor through the reutilization of its cosmological representations, as evidenced in the previous chapters\textsuperscript{21}. That allows him to explain the incarnation and ascension of Christ as well as his death and enthronement in terms of the double movement of

\textsuperscript{14}Cf. A. van Roon, *Op. Cit.* notices the polemical aspects of these alterations.


\textsuperscript{19}The phrases "coming God," "abiding God," "leading God," and "hiding God" determine W. Brueggemann's, "Presence of God, Cultic," *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, (Supplementary Volume), p. 680 interpretation of the text. In Ephesians, Christ also appears as "the leading God" Brueggemann speaks about. But, instead of an "hiding God", he seems to be the disclosing God of the eschatological theophany that has started with the incarnation process.


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Against such a backdrop are presented five groups of ministers of the word: “apostles,” “prophets,” “evangelists,” “pastors,” and “teachers.” Based on the absence of both the definite article and the conjunction δὲ (de) right before διδάσκαλοις (didaskalous), I translate the phrase τοις δὲ ποιμένεσι καὶ διδασκάλοις (tous de poimenas kai didaskalous) as “the pastoral teachers,” assigning to καὶ (kai) an epexegetical function.22 Be as that may all those “gifts” are assigned to the “work of service.”

Christian διδάσκαλοι (didaskaloι)

The language of this epistle shows clearly that Paul is not at all concerned with the institutional aspects of the ministerial exercises of the diverse gifts he lists. Contrary to the picture he paints in the Hauptbriefe, he does not even emphasize the charismatic nature of those gifts. Neither the substantive “charisma” nor any of its derivatives appears in the text. He prefers the term δόμα (doma), and for obvious reasons. After he has quoted Psalm 68:19, He uses the terminology of that passage, by emphasizing both the act of giving and the objects of the giving.24

The syntactical construction of verses 11 through 16 seems to indicate that Paul had in mind three main goals with a certain number of intermediate objectives for each. Three different final particles head the next three verses.25

Verse 12 starts with πρὸς (pros) that indicates the main goal of the gifts that the ascending Lord has granted to the Church. It is the equipping of the saints with two explicative and, maybe intermediate objectives, introduced both by the sub-final preposition εἰς (eis)26. Thus the structure of the verse would be:

πρὸς (unto) the perfecting of the saints
εἰς (for) the work of ministry

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23 M. Barth, Ephesians: Translation and Commentary on Chapters 4 - 6 (The Anchor Bible 34A), Gaarden City: Doubleday, 1974, pp. 438,439 prefers the translation “teaching shepherds.”

24 The choice of word seems also to indicate that the most important aspect of the ministries is the fact that they are grounded on the supreme reality of the grace of God manifested in and through Jesus Christ. From this derive the subordinate gifts which the ministers represent. Cf. Büchsel, “δίδωμι” in ThDNT, vol. II, p. 166 who observes, after Philo, Cher. 84; Leg. All., III, 196, that δορεά (dorea) as referring to more valuable gifts than δόματα (domata). Contrary to Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon, (The Century Bible), edited by G. Johnston, London-Edinburgh: Nelson, 1967, p. 18, the word charisma is not used here in reference to the reality of grace.


26 L. Morris, Op. Cit., p. 128 sees in the these two εἰς (eis) clauses two parallel statements which indicate the double purpose of the equipping of the saints.
εἰς (for) the edification of the body of Christ.27

Verse 13 reveals the chronological setting for the fulfillment of the ministerial gifts. It begins with the adverbial preposition, μέχρι (untl). Two aspects of this goal are worth paying attention to. The first one has to do with the temporal clause that introduces the verse. It gives Paul’s wish a certain flavor of remoteness akin to the time of the eschaton.28 These gifts will be exercised until the Church reaches the unity of the faith that is equivalent to the knowledge of the Son of God (the καὶ [kai] that bridges the two statements having an expository force). Besides, the epistemological concerns of Ephesians favor an objective understanding of the word “faith”29. It does not refer to the fides qua creditur (the act of faith), but to the fides quae creditur (the content of faith).30 The second aspect conveyed by the adverbial preposition μέχρι (mecuri) reveals the scope of the mission. Unity of faith is not reached until the totality of the Church has come to a common understanding and agreement of its doctrinal tenets epitomized in the Son of God.

The verse follows the same compositional structure as the preceding one, but instead of two sub-final clauses, it uses three:

εἰς (to) the unity of the faith, the knowledge of the Son of God
εἰς (to) a perfect man
εἰς (to) the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Verse 14 is introduced by ἵναι (hina). Used in conjunction with the intensifying negation μηκετι (meketi), it plays here the role of an adversative particle that serves to list some of the childish conditions the congregation has exhibited. Ministerial services have the purpose of eradicating them. Read in connection with the preceding metaphor, this verse reminds us of the antithetical imagery man/child found in the Haupbtbriefe as well as in the book of Hebrews. Interestingly, in all three corpora, the antithesis is used with a cognitive connotation. Plenary knowledge reveals a state of spiritual maturity and perfection while partial understanding is indicative of a condition of immaturity and imperfection. By reaching the mature condition of knowledge spoken by the apostle, the Church will be able to withstand the sophistries of false teachers. When Paul returns to the affirmative formulation of his objectives, once more he will use the sub-final particle εἰς (eis), this time to reemphasize the concept of recapitulation already expressed in the previous chapters. Here, he does it in terms of “growth” whose culmination will reach the stature of Christ who is the sum total of fullness and perfection. Such a growth is neither automatic nor static. It is rather dynamic and cooperative. Each member of the body, contributing to the development of their fellow-servants, draws his/her substance from the head who is Jesus Christ.31

This cascade of anaphoric usage of the preposition εἰς (eis) allows the author to emphasize the functionality of the different gifts that the enthroned Lord has bestowed upon the Church. What were really the functions of the Christian “teachers”, as defined by Ephesians?32 Verses 11-16 answer the question by defining the mission, the goal,

30 L. Morris, Op. Cit., p. 128 applies this didactic acception to the entire content of the early Church teaching.
32 Some of those who advocate the deuto-Pauline authorship of Ephesians suggest that the author could have been one of the “pastoral teachers” he is referring to. (Cf. Lincoln, Ephesians, p. 252).
and the objectives of the Christian διδάσκαλοι (didaskaloi) as would a syllabus do. All seem to indicate that the Christian teachers performed a theological and pedagogical function similar to that of the synagogal rabbis. Both the structure of the pericope and the argumentation of the entire epistle allow us to deduce at least in part the content of that didaskalia:

1. Christian adaptation of the moral imperatives in favor among the Greco-Roman schools of philosophical teachings like the seven cardinal virtues (vv. 1-3)
2. Confessional formulations of Christian beliefs and practices (vv. 4-6)
3. Midrashic interpretations and applications of Old Testament passages (vv. 8-11)
4. Transmission of traditional values and systems of conviction (maybe the apostolic cosmogony as well as his anthropology were adventitious elements of their teachings) (vv. 12-16)
5. Catalogical parenesis with implications for domestic and social duties among believers. (vv. 17-32; chapters 5,6)
6. the entire Ephesian μυστήριον (mysterion).

Characteristics of the Christian didaskalia

The Christian διδάσκαλιά (didaskalia) replicated somewhat the rabbinical methodology of the scribes whose practical and even casuistic approach has influenced the catechetical functions of the Christian διδάσκαλοι (didaskaloi). In addition to its doctrinal content, this teaching was the revelation of the eternal mystery whose multifaceted pleroma had been hidden in previous ages. Despite its public display on the cross, it requires the ministry of the apostles and the prophets to announce its richness that the διδάσκαλοι (didaskaloi) had to actualize and contextualize according to the needs of the ever maturing body of Christ.

In conjunction with the apostles, the prophets, and the evangelists, the pastoral doctors have the God-given responsibility to build up the Church. That explains why the New Testament model of ministry is neither competitive nor conflictive, but interactive. No single ministry should infringe upon the others. Between them should rather exist

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33 A. T. Lincoln, Ephesians, p. 226 considers verse 11 as an expansion on the nature of the gifts made to the Church by the ascender/descender while verses 12-16 indicate their purpose.

34 Especially the Stoics whose moral values have found an echo in the paraenetic instructions of the early Church (Cf. A. L. Herman, The Ways of Philosophy, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990, pp. 149-163).

35 In his desire to emphasize the specificity of the Christian teaching, C. H. Dodd (The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments, London, 1944, pp. 7,8) reduces it to paraenetic instructions and apologetic arguments. Max-Alain Chevallier (Esprit de Dieu, paroles d’hommes: Le rôle de l’esprit dans les ministères de la parole selon l’apôtre Paul, Neuchatel (Suisse), Delachaux and Niestlé, p. 204) shows judiciously that the early Church didaskalia goes beyond such description by engaging, among other activities, in the transmission of the basic “paradosis” of the apostolic dogma.


40 For Ephesians, the enemies are the “evil spirits of the heavenly places,” not the believers who may not share each other’s understanding of the Church corpus of faith. (Cf. J. C. Kirby, Ephesians: Baptism and Pentecost, An inquiry
a collaborative rapport. It is a functional, not an institutional model. In such a paradigm there is no room for the dictates of hierarchical powers. Rather it creates an atmosphere of reciprocal empowerment that compels the individual minister to a constant adjustment to the overall structure of the whole for the growth of the community.\footnote{As pointed out by C. L. Mitton, \textit{Ephesians} (New Century Bible), Frome-London: Oliphants, pp. 150-153, the participation of the entire community in the work of ministry and the edification of the Church in the twofold purpose of the perfecting of the saints fosters peace and cooperation while preventing unfair alienation and schisms within the body of Christ.}

Without negating the extrinsic components of the ministries, Paul does not follow in Ephesians the lead of the major epistles. The emphasis lays upon the cognitive aspect of the δόματα (\textit{domata}) instead of their charismatic origin. It may be because the teaching of the Church was mostly concerned with the preservation, transmission, and explication of the Christian \textit{paradosis}\footnote{Cf. M.-A. Chevallier, \textit{Op. Cit.}, pp. 207,208.}. This gives all the ministries of the Church, and in a special way, that of \textit{didaskalia}, the status of God-established missions.

\textbf{Implications}

1. Teaching as well as the other ministries of the Church is a gift from the Lord.

2. The goal of Christian teaching is “the perfecting of the saints” which implies the fitting back together of disjointed body parts. Consequently, it is a ministry of reconciliation.

3. This mending of broken parts should be accomplished through mutual service.

4. This fitting together will make possible the edification of the Church.

5. Christian teaching should foster the cardinal virtues of vv. 1-3, like “humility,” “mutual understanding,” “peace,” “unity,” to name a few.

6. The teaching of the teachers should reflect their faithfulness to the faith of the Church. But for that to happen, the faith of the Church should be faithful to the teaching of the Bible.

7. The frame of reference for the \textit{didaskalia}-service is the double axis of truth and love. On the abscissa axis is the faithfulness of the teachers to the veracity of their teaching material and on the line of the coordinates is their love toward those who should benefit from their teaching.

8. As servants of the Church, theologians should exercise their ministry as a complement to the other δόματα (\textit{domata}) the Lord has showered upon his body\footnote{G. W. Dawes, \textit{The Body in Question: Metaphor and meaning in the Interpretation of Ephesians 5:21-33} (Biblical Interpretation Series 30), Leiden, New York, Köln: Brill, 1998, argues in favor of the interconnectedness of all the metaphors used in Ephesians for the purpose of unity and peace as integrative and requisite conditions to the edification and growth of the Church.}.

Based on the exhortations of Ephesians, I would like to draw a few practical conclusions for the ministry of modern \textit{didaskaloi} as Servants of the Church. Let me say, first of all, that the spiritual \textit{domata} were not given to the Church for self-gratification. They are not supposed to be kept in isolation nor to be used in some kind of academic narcissism.

They are intended for service (=ministry), for the benefit of the corporate body.

Recommendations

1. We should teach "the truth, all the truth, and nothing but the truth".
2. However, in teaching the truth, we should keep in mind that unless we do it in a spirit and attitude of love, the truth will tear down instead of building up the Church.
3. Our teaching should equip the membership of the Church for the service of the Church.
4. For our teaching to be effective, it should be measured and progressive, because growth is better achieved gradually.
5. We should teach for the sole purpose of edifying the Church.
6. Our teaching should foster unity and peace.
7. Our teaching should be "Christo-genic" as well as Christocentric.

Practical Applications

If we want our ministry to really benefit the Church,

1. Instead of being the culprit of the ongoing dichotomy between the scholarship and the membership, we should be engaged in a constant dialogue with both the administration and the membership of the Church. This means that we should be sensitive to the issues which have prompted the Iguacu document on the "International Coordination and Supervision of Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial and Theological Education." As "pastoral teachers," we should remember that the edification of the Church will not be achieved through confrontation. We have also the responsibility to help the Church understand that unity will be better served through consensus born out of a constant and open dialogue between co-servants than through decrees and dictates which presuppose the superiority of a group of servants over another group of servants. Consequently,
2. We should organize periodic exchanges between the different segments of the Church.
3. We should present seminars, workshops, symposia, etc. on both theological and practical issues, involving not only the academicians, but also the membership.
4. While speaking the language of our discipline, we should also speak the language of the disciples.
5. Following the example of the New Testament writers, we should reutilize contemporary methods and materials with necessary adaptations concordant with the canons of our Church.
6. Should we deem necessary to adopt views incompatible with the "orthodoxy," we should always make a positive usage of them to build, not to destroy faith.
7. We should not be "mere reflectors of other men's thought." Rather we should develop our own grid of interpretation based on sound scholarship, keeping in mind the Pauline recommendation to the Thessalonian...

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42 We need to remember that the teachers were not academicians, but Church servants called to perform pastoral responsibilities of both instruction and edification. Cf. Ephesians (The Century Bible), p. 19. They were to give both content and relevance to the truth they were transmitting.

43 GCDO98AC, p. 294.

44 Parlons net!...: histoire, mystère, autorité de la Bible (Lettre pastorale du Synode général de l'Eglise réformée des Pays-Bas), Paris: Les Bergers et les Mages, 1976, pp. 47-60 is a good example of what kind of beneficial posture the scholarship of the Church could adopt to study, analyze, adapt, and apply even the most controversial issues for the growth of the Church.

45 E. G. White, Education, p, 17.
Church: “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

8. If we have to grow toward the oneness of the fullness of Christ, we should have the courage to at least address the problem posed by the modern “wall of partition” between the ethnic, cultural, professional, intellectual segments of the Church unless we see this fragmentation as profitable to the growth of the Church.

9. Above all, whatever the situation may be, we should always endeavor “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3) “into the effectual working in the measure of every part, (for) the growth of the body unto its own edification in love” (Ephesians 4:16). Because, after all, as didaskaloi, we are not only parts of the “gifts” the Lord has granted the Church, we are also servants of the Church.
THE PROPHETIC/SERVANT FUNCTION OF BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL SCHOLARSHIP

Norman R. Gulley, Ph.D.
Southern Adventist University

The Greek philosophy of Aristotle, Socrates and Plato had no category of hope. In fact in the famous Pandora’s box, associated with the god Zeus, hope was one of the evils inflicted upon mankind. So hope was rejected. The Greek view of history with its endless cycles provided no goal to history, and so no hope. Some Greek cosmology added a chorizma, or unbridgeable gulf, between the world of the gods (kosmos noetus) and the world of humans (kosmos aisthetos), so that neither the incarnation nor second advent of God to this world were possible, thus separating human history from any real hope.

The Athenians achieved a higher level of culture than their countrymen. It became the literary and artistic center of Greece. Yet, “the ‘great age’ of Athens lasted less than fifty years.” Who brought an end to this mother of arts and invention? “It was the Sophists who popularized Protagoras’s phrase Man is the measure of all things and translated it to mean that individuals are not responsible to any transcendent moral authority for their actions.”

The Sophists were not concerned with “reaching the truth. Some even denied that there was any truth at all. They said that all knowledge is relative, and that things are correct or incorrect only as people consider them so. Each person’s view had equal value at the table. There was no certain authoritative voice of God, no accepted standard by which to judge the plurality of voices. The Sophists claimed there are no absolute standards of morality. They declared that the will of those in power determines what people consider right or wrong.”

As Russell Kirk observed, “It was the clear relativism of the Sophists, not the mystical insights of Plato, nor Aristotle’s aspiration after the Supreme God, which dominated the thinking of the classical Greeks in their decadence. The failure of the Greeks to find an enduring popular religious sanction for their order of civilization had been a main cause of the collapse of the world of the polis.”

No ancient Greek philosopher defended Protagorean relativity. Socrates and Plato taught that truth was absolute.

One wonders if the lack of hope in Greek philosophy was one factor that lead to the relativism of the Sophists? Hopelessness and relativism flowed from human thinking and led to the demise of the great age of Athens. No wonder the Greek plays were all tragedies. Ravi Zacharias warns, “In our time, the gods of relativism who shape our ideas may well be in the same mold and worthy of abandonment if we are to avert the debacle that overtook the Greek soul.”

Postmodernity

We have entered a postmodern world, with its relativism, lack of objective truth and hope, a world similar to the declining days of the Greeks. Postmodernism presents Adventist scholars with two opposite challenges. First, it is a time of unprecedented relativism in Biblical studies with the emergence of Reader-Response theories. Reader-Response theorists are like the Sophists in that truth is not truth because it is truth, but is only true if it is truth for them. In the book The Challenge of Postmodernism: An Evangelical Engagement (1995) I wrote a chapter titled, “Reader-Response Theories in Postmodern Hermeneutics: A Challenge to Evangelical Theology.” Time allows only a brief mention here. Radical reader-response theories begin with the local sociological-cultural context and read that into the text, such as in liberation (Boff, Gutierrez), black (Cone, Mosala), and feminist (Radford-Ruether, Fiorenza, Tolbert) hermeneutics. This is the cultural paradigm following the historical (source, form, and redaction criticism) and literary paradigms (canonical criticism and structuralism).

Reader-Response theories place the reader as co-author, where the reader allegedly brings meaning to the text. The readers social-location is determinitive in their hermeneutics. This was illustrated at an international conference on biblical interpretation that I attended at the Divinity School, Vanderbilt University, Oct 21-24, 1993, and recorded in the above chapter. Allow me to give an analogy that illustrates what I heard at the Conference. The analogy is about a Reader-Response theorist using the cultural paradigm while ignoring the historical and literary critical methods.

A starving man comes to a banquet. He does not probe into the different items on the plate, nor does he try to speculate how these items got onto the plate, nor does he try to figure out the cook’s intention in choosing the items.

34
and why he arranged them as they are. Rather he comes to the food to see what he can add, by way of thinking, to make the food come alive, to give it meaning. He realizes that he is a co-cook and must apply his human reason to give the real meaning to this scrumptious feast. He comes to force onto this cooking his cultural ideas of cooking. After much thought he believes that he has added significantly to the meaning of the food. With that he gets up and leaves—empty. He may claim to be liberated by the process, but remains unfed. Why? He ignored the cook who handed him the plate, and the reason he did so.

Biblical scholarship needs to go beyond the social location of the reader to the spiritual location of Scripture. For the meaning of Scripture is found in the spiritual location of the divine author rather than in the social location of the human reader. "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God...because they are spiritually discerned (1 Cor 2:14). For "the Spirit of Truth... will guide you into all truth" (John 16:12).

The second challenge of postmodernity has to do with an opportunity it provides, in spite of rampant relativism (see Appendix A). For postmodernity has a void that biblical truths can fill. Fundamental truths about where we came from, why we are here and where we are headed are basic examples. Modernity called in question these truths, and now is itself being called in question by postmodernity.

"A massive intellectual revolution is taking place," says Diogenes Allen, "that is perhaps as great as that which marked off the modern world from the Middle Ages. The foundations of the modern world are collapsing, and we are entering a postmodern world. The principles formed during the Enlightenment (c. 1600-1780), which formed the foundations of modern mentality, are crumbling." Postmodernism calls in question modernism’s vaunted reliance upon human reason that brought the planet to the brink of nuclear extinction. Postmodernism is, in part, a rejection of the modern world view.

As Stanley Grenz reminds us, "most major Protestant denominations" "defected' to 'modernism."* The tragedy is they capitulated because unsure of their own biblical foundation. They caved in to science and to culture. With the collapse of modernity the limitations of science have been demonstrated. Science cannot deal with ultimate or existential meanings. "Theology need cater to our prevailing styles of thought only if it wishes to," says Huston Smith, "Nothing in the way of evidence requires that it do so." Accommodation follows close after the desire for acceptance. To confine Scripture to a cultural artifact (Jesus Seminar) is a case in point.* Then Scripture ceases to be the Word of God to culture. It comes under the judgment of culture.

In his book The Dying of the Great Light: The Disengagement of Colleges and Universities from their Christian Churches James Burtschell tells how, during modernism, faith and knowledge became separated, and he examines this fact in twelve colleges* and five universities* that once belonged to Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans, Catholics and Evangelicals. He notes how scholars relate to truth, church and the academy. "But Christian scholars, to be at home in this kind of academy, need not actually forswear their faith. All they must do is agree to criticize the church by the norms of the academy, and to judge the gospel by the culture. And most of them have burnt incense when hidden." He continues with a challenge to contemporary scholars; "If Christian scholars have the insight and the nerve to believe that the gospel and its church are gifted, that together they offer a privileged insight, a "determinative perspective,' then they will be grateful to grapple some more, using the very insights of the gospel to judge critically both the church and the academy and the culture. But if they lose their nerve and are intimidated by their academic colleagues, as is true of most of the characters in these stories, they, too, will end up judging the church by the academy and the gospel by the culture."*12

Diogenes Allen reminds us that Christianity has been on the defensive intellectually during modernity. During that period many have declared that the post-Christian age has dawned "on the basis of physics, biology, philosophy, psychology, sociology, and anthropology."*13 We are now in an age when philosophy and science, once used to attack Christianity, are themselves under attack. It was during modernity that Christianity came under severe attack for the first time. This was a revolt against authority found in church and Scripture. Humans became their own authority, and human reason reigned supreme. This was the time when critical methods of biblical study did their devastating work on the biblical documents. This was when evolutionary theory radically called in question the Genesis account of creation, and when geology questioned the universal flood. This was the time when human reason was elevated above divine revelation, thus bringing into captivity God's Word to mankind. Although much of this criticism continues, it is this modern worldview that is collapsing.
As Allen notes, "No longer can Christianity be put on the defensive, as it has been for the last three hundred years or so, because of the narrow view of reason and the reliance on classical science that are characteristic of the modern mentality." We have come to a new opportunity to reevaluate the viability of Christianity. 14

Scripture is Transcultural

Christianity is viable because Scripture is transcultural, it’s authority is not dependent upon any passing culture or worldview. It is unchanging above changing cultures and worldviews. Scripture is God’s authoritative Word over all cultures. This summer (1998) Adventist scientists met at Andrews University and some held to a long evolutionary chronology. The same summer a very significant paper15 was given in another scientific gathering at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology in Maryland. Col Vernon Armbrustmacher, Director of the Armed Forces DNA Identification Lab, presented the findings of six different labs. Those labs were the Armed Forces DNA Identification Lab, Office of the Armed Forces Medical Examiner, The Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, The Forensic Science Service, Birmingham, England, The FBI Lab, Washington DC, and The Department of Chemistry, Gettysburg College, Pennsylvania. In their study of mitochondrial DNA in human history they came to the conclusion that the length of human history theorized by evolutionary creation needs drastic revision, and estimated that human history began about 6,500 years ago. 16 These findings were published over a year before in Nature Genetics, April 15, 1997. There is also an extensive literature from molecular biologists who have scientifically called in question Darwinian evolutionary theory. 17 Capitulation to so-called science, as done by Christian scholars, 18 is no better than caving in to the present culture or prevailing world view. Scripture is transcultural, and judges culture, and is not to be judged by culture.

One of the problems of Greek thinking was relativism, or pluralism. In his book The Problem of Pluralism, Jerry L. Walls documents the damage done to the United Methodist Church since their General Conference adopted theological pluralism as a ‘principle’ in 1972. After devastating effects, twelve years later, The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church (1984) said there is “general agreement that the United Methodist Church stands urgently in need of doctrinal reinvigoration for the sake of authentic renewal, fruitful evangelism, and the effective discharge of our ecumenical commitments. Seen in this light recovery and updating of our distinctive doctrinal heritage--‘truly catholic, truly evangelical and truly reformed’--takes on a high priority.” 19

In such a time as this what is the prophetic/ servant function of Seventh-day Adventist Biblical and Theological scholarship? To answer this question I wish to submit two factors involved and the crucial Biblical principle that undergirds the task.

What is involved in the Prophetic/Servant Function of Biblical/Theological Scholarship

1. The scholar in her/his prophetic/servant function will speak “for God,” thus authentically interpreting Scripture, so as to allow the divine content to be as transparently communicated as is possible, without adding or taking away from what is written. This necessitates accepting propositional revelation, the internal evidence for the unity of Scripture, and allowing it the right to speak for itself as judge over everything human, including scholarship, culture and tradition. This finds in Scripture universal and absolute truths. The scholar is thus servant to Scripture and as such fulfills the prophetic function. The scholar believes “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Tim 3:16, NASB) and that “No prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God” (2 Pet 1:20-21, RSV).

2. The scholar in her/his prophetic/servant function will speak about Biblical prophecy as genuinely prophetic. They will accept the New Testament as the final context for interpreting Old Testament prophecy, contra Dispensationalists; and they will accept all Biblical prophecy as evidence of God’s omniscience, contra Process theology, or any qualified form of the same.

Behind both of these definitions of the prophetic/servant function is the important Reformation Biblical hermeneutical principle of sola Scriptura. 20 We will focus on this principle.

The Catholic church believes the canon of Scripture is the product of the church, rather than the church being the product of the Biblical canon. 21 This positions the church above Scripture. This is why the Second Vatican Council (1963-1965) stated, “For all of what has been said about the way of interpreting Scripture is subject finally to the judgment of the Church, which carries out the divine commission and ministry of guarding and interpreting the word of God.” 22 This sitting in judgment of Scripture caused the Church to accept evolution, affirming “the legitimate autonomy of human culture and especially the sciences.” 23
This sitting in judgment of Scripture is the basis of all false doctrines espoused by Roman Catholicism. The Reformers revolted against this error with the cry sola Scriptura (scriptura sui ipsius inntres; scripturam ex scriptura explicandam esse). This means that the Bible is capable of interpreting itself, and does not need the church or tradition to interpret it. Viewed today, this doesn't deny legitimate insights from archaeology, history or any other research. It does deny that human knowledge can be forced upon Scripture while ignoring its own self-interpretation. In this qualified sense Scripture is the sole interpreter of itself. The word sole is vital. It is the erosion of this word sole that has led to pluralism and relativism in Biblical and theological study, and is the reason for the fall of Babylon mentioned in the Book of Revelation (Rev 14:8 cf 18:2-5).

The battle today is between the internal interpretive role of Scripture versus the external interpreters who reject Scripture’s self-interpretive role. Experience, reason and tradition are not final interpreters of Scripture. Interpretation comes under the guidance of Scripture. Interpreters do not sit in judgment of Scripture, but come under the judgment of Scripture. This is their servant role to Scripture’s authority. Scholars must be clear that Scripture is not just the primary authority (prima Scriptura) in matters of divine revelation, but the sole authority (sole Scriptura). The Bible is not the first among equals in this task. The written Word of God does not share its role with other contenders anymore than the Living Word of God shares His salvation mission with others. Just as there is only one Saviour, there is only one Scripture. Just as there is only one Living Word as God’s revelation to mankind so there is only one Written Word as God’s revelation to mankind.

We live in a time when cultural and sociological issues push Biblical and Theological scholars/leaders to jettison truth in the quest for ecumenical gains. Uniting on common points of doctrine, while ignoring major differences, is deemed a noble means to fight humanism, though the very process is humanistic. Consensus is gained at the expense of truth. Charles Colson illustrates this in saying, “When the barbarians are scaling the walls, there is no time for petty quarreling in the camp.”

This dumping of doctrines for ecumenism was dramatically demonstrated on March 29, 1994, when thirteen persons, Catholic and Evangelicals, issued a Document entitled “Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the 3rd Millennium.” It was endorsed by 25 well known Catholic and Evangelical leaders. The document caused a furor in Catholic and Evangelical circles. Dave Hunt said, “The document in effect, overturned the Reformation and will unquestionably have far reaching repercussions throughout the Christian world for years to come.”

One of the key differences between Catholic and Evangelical theology has to do with justification by faith alone through Christ alone. Martin Luther discovered in Romans that, “The just shall live by faith” (Rom 1:17). This was the heart of the Reformation. It was against the Catholic notion that Justification is through faith plus works. Any human works detract from the one saving work of Jesus Christ. “The doctrine of Justification,” wrote John Calvin, “is the principal ground on which religion must be supported.”

R. C Sproul’s book, Faith Alone: The Evangelical Doctrine of Justification, calls in question the document on Catholic and Evangelical unity. He rightly points out that justification by faith is understood differently by Catholics and Evangelicals. Even the Council of Trent taught justification by faith. But it was not only by faith. That was the key issue of the Reformation. “The word alone was a solecism on which the entire Reformation doctrine of justification was erected. The absence of the word alone from ECT’s joint affirmation is most distressing.”

The key word “alone” is missing throughout Catholic thinking. Evangelicals believe the gospel is justification through faith alone by Christ alone found in Scripture alone. By contrast Catholics see faith as a human work, so there is no faith alone, Christ alone nor Scripture alone. Human penance is added to justification and to Christ’s work, and the tradition of the Magisterium is added to Scripture. It is the human additions to the work of Christ in salvation and biblical interpretation that deny the free gift of the Living and Written Words of God.

Seventh-day Adventist biblical and theological scholars who place those “outside authorities” above, or equal to Scriptural authority, have a Catholic view, not the Reformer’s view of Scripture, whether they know it or not.

John MacArthur said, “Despite all the recent dialogue among those desiring to reunite Rome and Protestantism, there has been no suggestion that Rome will ever repudiate its stance against justification by faith. For that reason, I believe the trend toward tolerance and cooperation is a destructive one because it blurs the distinction between biblical truth and a system of falsehood.”

37
Biblical prophecy tells us that there will be a final showdown between two universal churches, the Catholic Church with all the world wondering after it, and empowered by Satan (Rev 13:3-4) and the remnant church who are true to God and believe in the totality of Scripture (Rev 12:17), and joined by those who come out of fallen churches (Rev 18:1-4). The showdown will be over the Sunday/Sabbath issue on worship (Rev 13:1-4, 12-15; 14:6-10). What separates the two groups is that Catholics have replaced God’s Word about the Sabbath with human tradition, whereas Sabbath-keepers hold God’s Word above human interpretation. Catholics jettison the Word of God by words of men. The remnant reject the words of humans because they accept the Word of God.

Non-Adventist scholars grasp the basic issue. Michael Horton notes that Rome has not changed, but Protestants have.33 James R. White asks “What has led to the ‘de-protestantization’ of much of Protestantism today?” He answers, “The Reformers knew the key to resisting the onslaught of Rome in their day, but many today seem to have forgotten what it is. The Bible. The Bible alone, and all of the Bible. Sola Scriptura is just as important today as it was for a Luther or a Zwingli or a Calvin at the time of the Reformation.”34

As we hasten to the eschatological final test over Biblical truth, sola Scriptura will be the difference between the two sides. Where we stand then is being determined by the way we interpret the Bible now. Either it is the most authoritative cognitive revelation from God, and thus written by God as it’s sole author, and hence has an internal unity that requires the hermeneutical principle of sola Scriptura; or it is less than what Christ35 and the Biblical writers36 claim it to be.

Appendix A

Post-modernity:
Opportunity for biblical truth

Today we’re in the midst of a profound transition from modernity to postmodernity. The human race has entered a new era that presents unprecedented challenges and opportunities to Seventh-day Adventist scholarship as we approach the third millennium. A number of non-SDA scholars have recognized these opportunities for truth.37

"We are experiencing enormous structural change in our country and in the world," says Leith Anderson, "—change that promises to be greater than the invention of the printing press, greater than the Industrial Revolution, and greater than the rise and demise of communism. Our world is changing so quickly that we can barely keep track of what is happening, much less figure out how to respond."38

Modernity stifled religion. It closed the door to the transcendent with its rejection of metaphysics (modernity also lives on in some of these matters). It confined the parameters to a closed continuum of cause and effect, so that God was removed from the realm of human history. Science limited reality to the observable, so that the religious dimension of human experience could only occupy an interior immanent substitute for objective reality. Now with the collapse of this modern world view, the strictures and confinement have been radically called in question.

"In a way that has never been possible in modernity, one can find philosophical or rational space for ‘giving an account for the hope that is in you,’ comments Don R. Stiver, "In other words, there is no philosophical hindrance that a priori calls such a response into question. And given the importance of reason in modernity, this renewed sense of the rationality of religion opens up a new social and cultural space for religion. In other words, if the opportunity can be seized, postmodernity allows conceptual space for religion’s stretching its arms and walking about in a way not possible in the cramped quarters allowed for it since the onset of modernity. The danger is that it may continue to pace back and forth in its all-too-familiar constricted confines, not knowing that the surrounding bars have long ago rusted away."39

Appendix B

The Journey of John Hick:
Case-Study: “From Sola Scriptura to Pluralism”

We noted the fall of Athens, where culture was more important than truth, and how Protestants joined with Catholics in the ECT document, where ecumenism was more important that doctrinal differences in violation of the sola Scriptura biblical principle. In fact the Ecumenical Movement is replete with examples of Evangelicals and
Catholics uniting over a social agenda while ignoring their differences in biblical interpretation. To them culture and values are more important than truth.

We come now to see the journey of one man, who is representative of so many Bible believing youth who went off to Seminaries and Universities and lost their way. It is a story that, in various degrees, has happened and is happening to some Seventh-day Adventists. It is a story of one conservative who gave up the sola Scriptura principle, and plunged into pluralism away from truth.

In the recent book, More Than One Way, John Hick speaks of his journey away from a conservative Christian thought-world to a liberal worldview. Like Friedrich Schleiermacher and Rudolph Bultmann before him, Hick questioned the biblical documents, because driven by an attempt "to preach the gospel in a way that made sense to ordinary twentieth-century men and women, both young and old." He speaks of the evangelical package that he once accepted. It included "verbal inspiration of the Bible; Creation and Fall; Jesus as God the Son incarnate, born of a virgin, conscious of his divine nature, and performing miracles of divine power; redemption by his blood from sin and guilt; Jesus' bodily resurrection, ascension, and future return in glory; heaven and hell." Most of these are biblical doctrines. Yet, Hick says this package for him "has long since crumbled and disappeared." Thus, for Hick, Jesus is not unique in the process of salvation/liberation/enlightenment. Nor is the function of the Holy Spirit to make Jesus known.

Basic to this jettisoning of biblical doctrines is Hick's rejection of propositional revelation. He said, "I do not believe that God reveals propositions to us, whether in Hebrew, Greek, English, or any other language." However, this dismissal is itself a proposition. Yet, a proposition that Hick never evaluates. He never attempts to see if it is true. As Ronald Nash rightly says, "it apparently never occurred to Hick to examine critically the faulty presuppositions that led him to deny even the possibility of divinely revealed truth." Rather than do that, Hick turns away from particular revelation in Scripture to God's alleged revelation in all world faiths. In doing this he rejects the unique work of the Holy Spirit in biblical revelation, and so jettisons sola Scriptura.

The early Hick called this a Copernican revolution. He claimed that the Ptolemaic worldview of Christianity was exclusivistic, where salvation is thought to be impossible beyond God's revelation in Scripture or outside the church. Hick claimed that salvation is possible in every religion. All religions are "revelations of God's activity." Hick replaced the centrality of Christ by an all-loving God who works through all religions to save mankind. The problem with this idea is its focus on a Personal being, whereas many religions believe in an impersonal god (e.g. Pantheism and Mysticism).

Beyond that, if the same God works through all religions, how come their doctrines are so divergent and contradictory? (the same can be asked of the tongues movement that is at home in Catholicism and Protestantism) For example, as far as salvation is concerned, how can God be at work through all religions when salvation is a gift in Evangelical Christianity but has to be earned in non-Christian religions? How can it be the same God working in all when this life is the only time for accepting salvation in Evangelical Christianity, but is only one of many life-times for earning salvation in the reincarnational samsara of Hinduism and Buddhism? Here are two concurrent soteriologies that speak more about a schizophrenic God than about a God of love, who as such must necessarily treat everyone alike. One is tempted to think that Hick has rejected all propositions in non-Christian religions as well as in Scripture. At best his position demonstrates a meaningless pluralism.

By contrast, Muslims really believe in their propositions. Journeys to Mecca are sought on the basis of propositions about its benefits. Reincarnation is a propositional view found in a number of Eastern religions. Becoming a god, or enlightenment, is a propositional belief in Eastern mysticism. Even Hick's theory about pluralism is given in propositions throughout his writings. He uses the very method he denies. He reminds me of Karl Barth who denies propositional truths in Scripture and yet fills his thirteen volumes with propositional truths from Scripture. Its true that Barth is considered more orthodox than Hick. Yet both are liberal, even if at different points along the liberal spectrum away from Scripture. Both share the common problem of rejecting biblical propositional truths, and the importance of sola Scriptura.
References


10. Dartmouth, Beloit, Lafayette, Davidson, Millsaps, Linfield, Gettysburg, St. Olaf, Boston, the College of New Rochelle, Saint Mary’s, and Dordt.


16. This finding is supportive of a short chronology, compared to the evolutionary theory, but Scripture does not need to depend upon either, for Scripture is silent on the date for creation as it is for the date of the second coming. However internal evidence in the O.T. does suggest a shorter rather than a longer time-span. The recent findings of DNA illustrates that it is not wise to go with any passing “scientific” view (evolutionary) that calls in question the internal evidence of Scripture.


19. Many Christian scholars accept evolution as the method God used in creation (theistic evolution). But this is a marriage of two mutually exclusive worldviews, supernaturalism (God) and naturalism (a closed universe, with no inbreaking of God into the natural nexus of cause and effect). Furthermore this assumes death before sin, and hence denies the biblical claim that death is the wages of sin (Rom 6:23). Progressive development denies the Fall (Gen 3) and the need for atonement. See Marcos T. Terreros, *Death Before the Sin of Adam: A Fundamental Concept in Theistic Evolution and Its Implications for Evangelical Theology,* Ph.D. dissertation, Andrews University Seminary, 1994.

19. *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church,* 1984 edition, p. 50 quoted in Jerry L. Walls, *The Problem of Pluralism.* Walls asks if the “recovery and updating” of doctrines has been achieved by pluralism, and answers, “A growing body of evidence suggests otherwise, and that persons all across the United Methodist Church are having second thoughts about the validity of pluralism. The 1984 General Conference’s call for a new Doctrinal Statement is most significant in this regard....” *The Problem of Pluralism,* p.7.

20. There are four foundational principles for biblical hermeneutics which for simplicity in this paper are placed under the heading of *sola Scriptura.* *Sola Scriptura* means the Bible and the Bible only is the sufficient and final norm of authority for interpreting Scripture, and for testing related knowledge or experience. *Sola Scriptura* includes *tota Scriptura,* that views the totality of Scripture as God’s Word, so that the entire Bible is the Word of God rather than merely containing the Word of God. *Sola Scriptura* includes *analogia Scripturae,* that views a unity and harmony throughout Scripture because inspired by the same Author Holy Spirit. *Sola Scriptura* includes *spiritualia spiritualiter examinatur,* which means that the interpreter is as dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit to understand God’s thoughts as the prophet was to receive them. In this paper these terms are not used in the Fundamentalist or extreme biblical inerrancy misuse of the Reformer’s focus.

21. *Catechism of the Catholic Church,* (Liguori, MO: liguori, 1994), p. 34 (2.4.120). Even though humans decided which writings would form the canon, they were guided by the self-authentication of the writings themselves, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.


23. *The Documents of Vatican II,* pp. 234 (4.36), 265 (2.59) and *Catechism of the Catholic Church,* p. 74 (283).
24. See chapter 9, “The Ecumenical Movement” in *Christ is Coming!* pp. 112-126.


26. Charles Colson (Prison Fellowship), Juan Diaz-Villar, S.J. (Catholic Hispanic Ministries), Avery Dulles, S.J. (Fordham University), Bishop Francis George (Diocese of Yakima, Washington), Kent Hill (Eastern Nazarene College), Jesse Miranda (Assemblies of God), Msgr. William Murphy (Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Boston), (Richard John Neuhaus (Institute on Religion and Public Life), Brian O’Connell (World Evangelical Fellowship), Herbert Schlossberg, Archbishop Francis Stafford (Archdiocese of Denver), George Weigel (Ethics and Public Policy Center) and John White (Geneva College and the National Association of Evangelicals).

27. William Abraham (Perkins School of Theology), Elizabeth Achtemeir (Union Theological Seminary--Virginia), William Bently Ball (Harrisburg Pennsylvania), Bill Bright (Campus Crusade for Christ), Robert Destro (Catholic University of America), Augustine DiNoia, O.P. (Dominican House of Studies), Joseph P. Fitzpatrick, S.J. ((Fordham University), Keith Fournier (American Center for Law and Justice), Bishop William Frey (Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry), Mary Ann Gledon (Harvard Law School), Os. Guinness (Trinity Forum), Nathan Hatch (University of Notre Dame), James Hitchcock (St. Louis University), Peter Kreeft (Boston College), Matthew Lamb (Boston College), Ralph Martin (Renewal Ministries), Richard Mouw (Fuller Theological Seminary), Mark Noll (Wheaton College), Michael Novak (American Enterprise Institute), Cardinal John Joseph O’Connor (Archdiocese of New York), Thomas Oden (Drew University), J.I. Packer (Regent College, British Columbia), Pat Robertson (Regent College), John Rodgers (Trinity Episcopal School of Ministry) and Bishop Carlos A. Sevilla, S.J. (Archdiocese of San Francisco).


33. “If it is not Rome that has altered its position in favor of the gospel, then it must be the other partner that has moved from its earlier position.” Michael Horton, foreword to R.C. Sproul, *Faith Alone: The Evangelical Doctrine of Justification*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1995), p. 12.


35. Christ exhorted listeners to hear the Scriptures (Luke 16:29), that they are sufficient to lead to salvation (Luke 16:30-31), that they keep readers from error (Mark 12:24,27). He quoted Scriptures in his temptations (Matt 4:4,7,10; Deut 8:3; 6:16; 6:13), and throughout His ministry (eg. Matt 12:3-5; 19:4;
21:16, 42; 22:31-32; Mark 10:2-3; Luke 20:17; John 8:17; 10:34) and showed disappointed disciples on the Emmaus road who He was through Scripture, and not through a personal manifestation (Luke 24:25-32) and claimed that Scripture bears witness to Him (John 5:39). Throughout the Gospels Christ shows a deference for Scripture as God’s revelation to mankind.

36. Throughout Scripture the writers convey Scripture as God’s revelation (2 Tim 3:16; Amos 3:7; Rom 1:2; 2 Pet 1:20-21; 2 Pet 3:16; 1 Cor 7:40; 14:37; 2 Cor 3:5-6; 4:13).

37. Some include R. Albert Mohler, Jr. President of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Louisville, Kentucky; Stanley J. Grenz, Pioneer MacDonald Professor of Baptist Heritage and Theology at Carey Hall/Regent College, Vancouver, British Columbia; Dan R. Stiver, Associate Professor of Christian Philosophy, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; William E. Brown, President of Bryan College, Dayton, Tennessee; John A. Sims, Professor of Religion, Lee College, Cleveland Tennessee, and Thomas C. Oden, Henry Anson Butz Professor of Theology and Ethics, Theological School and Graduate School, Drew University, Madison, New Jersey in The Challenge of Postmodernism: An Evangelical Engagement, ed. David S. Dockery, pp. 84, 101, 248, 321, 336, and 402 respectively.


46. It is true that God works for those who have never seen Scripture, and hence outside the church (John 1:9). Hick goes too far in making other religions God’s means for salvation, rather than seeing the Holy Spirit as the agent. When Scripture is removed from its unique status among books, then its only a step to making Christianity just one among all religions that lead to salvation.

SERVANT SCHOLARSHIP AND THE CHURCH:
SOME THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF REVELATION 14:7c

John T. Baldwin, Ph.D.
Theological Seminary, Andrews University

Introduction

Recently, three academic voices from within Adventism have focused our attention upon important dimensions of the relationship between responsible servant scholarship and our religious community. Not only in his, “Schooling for the Tournament of Narratives: Postmodernism and the Idea of the Christian College,” but also in a stirring piece characterizing sound servant scholarship entitled, “The Unembarrassed Adventist,” Chuck Scriven calls us to discover and adopt responsible, well-reasoned theologically partisan views enthusiastically. He cautions that our theology “should not be blindly or arrogantly partisan, but, without embarrassment and without apology, it should both build and brace the circle of disciples.” His point is well-taken. It is indeed appropriate to stand responsibly and solidly for something which does not run against the grain of Scripture and the present teaching of the Holy Spirit. The pressing point, he observes, “is not whether to be partisan, but how.”

Echoing this sentiment in a keynote address presented at the Science and Faith Conference held at Andrews University in August of this year, Rick Rice encourages Adventist theologians and scientists to adopt the research method of Imre Lakatos. This approach, endorsed by Fuller Theological Seminary’s innovative theologian and philosopher Nancey Murphy et al., envisions a “hard core” center of non-negotiable concepts ringed by a cluster of “auxiliary truths” open to revision as new data may be discovered. According to Murphy the hard core contents of a “research program” along the lines of the Lakatos vision include, for example, “one’s non-negotiable and most general understanding of God and God’s relation to the created order.” Importantly, for purposes of this study, this claim means that addressing the sense in which God is creator of life forms on earth constitutes a hard core issue, not an auxiliary one. God’s relation to the created order can be construed in a variety of contrasting senses such as: in pantheistic terms, according to theistic evolution, by progressive creation, in a six-day creation perspective, or along the lines of some form of process theology, to cite a few well-known methods. The method selected can make a profound difference in the kind of God one worships showing why the issue properly belongs to the non-negotiable hard core of one’s research program. Because the “research program” endorses the existence of some form of central, essential, enduring notions, the program supports the basic concept of ideological partisanship.

Third, commenting in July, 1998, on the future shape of the Adventist ministry, George Knight offers the following sobering analysis and evaluation:

[M]ore and more conference administrators are sponsoring ministerial candidates at evangelical seminaries in the name of economy and convenience. The threat here is that even though the evangelical degrees may be convenient, they cannot by their very nature prepare ministers who have a deep grasp of the unique identity and prophetic role which has made Adventism a vibrant movement. In short, Seventh-day Adventist insights could very well be lost in the wake of pragmatic concerns.

With these challenges in mind, it is a truism that Seventh-day Adventist ministerial education stands at a crucial crossroads as the church and its worldwide mission field enter the new millennium.

Here Knight effectively joins Scriven and Rice in highlighting the need and validity of being theologically and morally partisan in a responsible fashion.

In view of these trenchant, convincing calls for Adventist scholars to stand unashamedly for something, a practical question for servant scholarship in the church seems to be: For what shall we stand and why? What are the assumptions and concepts which we should consider as representing the essence of what it means to be an Adventist today? At this crucial crossroads in our church, what Adventist ideas might we be willing to characterize as non-negotiable, and for what reasons? In other words what epistemological assumptions, what beliefs, life style practices, and attitudes, shall we as Adventist Christian scholars place into our hard core center of a research program patterned after the Lakatos method?

Conversely, which concepts might best be considered to be auxiliary and subject to change? What criteria shall we use to determine what goes into the center and what attaches to the outer cluster of concepts? Moreover, are the so-called “non-negotiable” hard core concepts of a research program along the lines of the Lakatos vision open to basic
revision? A related question asks: Should we place mutually exclusive ideas, assumptions, worldviews, theories of knowledge, theories of language, and the like, into the hard core center which serves to describe what it means to be an Adventist today? If so, would this situation constitute a house divided against itself with its fall being inevitable?

The questions presented above are rendered all the more pressing in light of the fact that our religious community has come of age biblically, theologically, philosophically, and scientifically to mention just a few fields. This means that we do our academic work in the light of and by evaluating carefully the research presented by scholars outside our community in these, and other fields, as they relate to the Bible such as textual criticism, documentary criticism, form criticism, redaction criticism, reader response criticism, literary criticism, rhetorical criticism, archeology, analytic philosophy, postmodernism, paleontology, sedimentology, glaciology, evolutionary biology, astronomy and many more. In this daunting context, how indeed, shall we be partisan in a fashion that remains true to the teachings of Scripture as a whole, and to the leading of the Holy Spirit? This paper proposes that responding to questions like the above may constitute a portion of what servant scholarship in the church may mean for us at the present time.

As a case study dealing with the sorts of questions listed above, this paper investigates the potential of Revelation 14:7c in addressing the quest for characterizing responsible Adventist theological and ethical partisanship.

Possible Role of Revelation 14:7c as a Guide to Servant Scholarship in Discovering What Concepts May Be Essential to Adventism: An Overview

In a recent exegetical study, New Testament scholar, Jon Paulien examines a direct verbal parallel between the words of Revelation 14:7c “... made the heaven, and the earth and the sea,” and the words of Exodus 20:11 “made the heavens and the earth, the sea.” According to Paulien, this parallel, along with thematic and structural parallels, shows that the latter portion of the First Angel’s Message constitutes a clear allusion to the fourth commandment of the Decalogue within the broader context of a worldwide call to worship the only true God. This allusion and its implications are not minor matters. Rather, they acquire distinctive importance as integral parts of the high point of the second half of the book of Revelation. The following discussion analyzes and evaluates eight possible theological, scientific, and spiritual implications resulting from this significant exegetical insight. These implications may be helpful to servant scholarship in the church in the quest for unity and responsible Adventist partisanship.

Revelation 14:7c: An Endorsing, Definite Allusion to Exodus 20:11

Four distinct verbal parallels existing between Revelation 14:7c and Exodus 20:11 help to show that the New Testament passage is a definite allusion to the fourth commandment of the Decalogue. The first verbal parallel is between the verb “made” in Revelation 14:7c, and the same verb “made” in Exodus 20:11. The next three verbal parallels involve three specific nouns “heaven,” “earth,” and “sea” which appear in both passages not only as the same three specific nouns, but also in the same specific order as shown in the Introduction above. Along with the thematic and structural parallels identified by Paulien, the striking verbal parallels establish that Revelation 14:7c constitutes a definite allusion, not merely an echo, specifically to the cosmogenic (origin of the earth) portion of the fourth commandment as articulated in Exodus 20:11.

Two considerations indicate that Revelation 14:7c endorses the items to which it alludes in Exodus 20:11. First, the allusion is made in the context of listing particular divine acts identifying the One whom human beings should worship, thereby clearly affirming these divine creative acts as the approved identifiers of the true God. Second, having established that the creative acts are biblically considered as approved or good acts, then when the Revelation
passage alludes to identical acts mentioned in Exodus 20:11, the allusion thereby endorses the items mentioned in Exodus 20:11. Accordingly, this conclusion results in eight far-reaching implications.

**A First Century Biblically Endorsed Six-Day Creation Worldview**

A first and basic implication of the allusion noted above indicates that a six-day creation cosmogony, or worldview, is imbedded by implication into the First Angel’s Message. Because Revelation 14:7c points with approval to the portion of the fourth commandment stated in Exodus 20:11, the Revelation passage constitutes an approving allusion to the seventh-day Sabbath, and thus to the partial reason for its divine selection indicated in Exodus 20:11 with the words, “For in six days the Lord made . . .” This means that Revelation 14:7c by implication endorses the whole of Exodus 20:11. Thus, it affirms the indispensable disclosure of the Sabbath-related time unit specified. These considerations show how Revelation 14:7c implies an endorsement of the phrase “in six days” found in Exodus 20:11 even though the Revelation passage does not explicitly use the words, “in six days.”

The exegetical research of New Testament scholar, C. H. Dodd, underscores the conclusion that the few words of Revelation 14:7c alluding to Exodus 20:11 do so not only with approval to the specific creative acts recorded in Exodus 20:11, but indeed to the wider context, for example, to the fourth commandment as a whole and thus to the concept of a creation in six days. In According to the Scriptures, Dodd indicates that the use of the Old Testament by New Testament writers like Paul and John was based upon a widely accepted Old Testament “sub-structure.” According to Dodd, this means that these writers were not “bringing together isolated ‘proof-texts,’” but were using key portions of passages as pointers to “whole contexts.” Thus, for example, when with deep thankfulness Paul says “Death, where is thy sting?” he is not “employing a casual literary reminiscence [proof-text level], but referring [alluding] to a passage already recognized as a classical description of God’s deliverance of His people out of utter destruction” as found in Hosea 13:14. Allusions of this sort are intended to send the first-century hearers back to the original Old Testament context for reinforcement and illumination of “certain fundamental and permanent elements in the biblical revelation.”

Applied to Revelation 14:7c, Dodd’s research and language indicate that the allusion by the first angel to Exodus 20:11 is not a casual literary reminiscence, but is an allusion to a whole textual context, viz., to the fourth commandment already recognized as a classical description of God’s will for His people, thus endorsing the concept of creation in six days. This crucial exegetical conclusion carries implications for a biblically endorsed first-century worldview of creation in six days as suggested below.

Knowing that Revelation 14:7c implicitly endorses the concept of creation in six days, an exegete, theologian, scientist, or lay reader is authorized hermeneutically, when interpreting the passage, to take the temporal “in six days” concept of Exodus 20:11 and to insert this key notion into Revelation 14:7c where its approved presence is implied as follows: “. . . worship Him who, in six days [implied by an approving allusion to Exodus 20:11 in total], made the heavens, and the earth and sea.” The following diagram in Figure 1 illustrates this endorsement.
Figure 1

The above sections containing exegetical analyses and the diagram establish the most important exegetical thesis of this essay, namely, that Revelation 14:7c constitutes a divinely intended first-century endorsement of a six-day creation worldview. In other words, if it were possible today for the reader of Revelation 14 to ask the first angel how long God took to make the heavens and the earth and sea and springs of waters, the messenger would probably say, “I just directly alluded to an Old Testament passage which explicitly answers your question—it took six days.” Because in this discussion of Revelation 14:7c no categories foreign to the cultural setting of the text are imported into or overlaid upon the passage by a reader who might be considered in some sense as a so-called “co-author,” the conclusions drawn from Revelation 14:7c in this section are not those resulting from the application of conventional reader response theory. Rather, the conclusions represent straightforward, exegetical implications or insights.

If the messenger in Revelation 14:7c offers an implied endorsement of a six-day creation cosmogony, then should such an endorsement also invite the readers of the late twentieth century to accept, contra reader-response theory, the biblically implied worldview as historically valid today? The next section discusses whether the First Angel’s Message in general carries additional indicators implying that the biblically approved first-century worldview is to be accepted as historically valid today.

A Twenty-First-Century Biblically Endorsed Six-Day Creation Worldview

Equally crucial for purposes of this essay, a second implication of the allusion involves the response to the question whether the biblically endorsed worldview implied in Revelation 14 has current relevance theologically and scientifically. This concern introduces the specifically systematic theological, interdisciplinary aspects of the question. An end-time location and relevance of all three messages of Revelation 14 seems to be suggested by three contextual pointers outlined below.

The Apocalyptic End-Time Sweep of Revelation 12-14

In Revelation 12, viewed in light of historicist principles of interpretation noted below, a dragon persecutes a woman (the church) for 12 centuries some time after the ascension of Christ. After the same dragon empowers two beasts in chapter 13 to enforce a global system of false worship, three angels deliver, in chapter 14, God’s final warning to humanity against participation in this false worship, and passionately call everyone to worship the only true God. This indicates the end-time relevance of the first message of Revelation 14.

The Contextual Location of 14:7c Within Revelation Chapter 14

Within Revelation 14 itself the messages presented by the three angels are linked to and appear textually
immediately prior to a striking description of the second coming of Jesus. This contextual location suggests that the three messages constitute the divinely crafted end-time messages to be shared globally with humanity in an unashamedly strong partisan fashion just before the termination of secular history caused by the return of the risen Lord.

**An End-Time Relevance of the Phrase, "The Hour of His Judgment Is Come"**

In the third place, one method of addressing the issue of the contemporary relevance of the concept of a creation in six days implied in Revelation 14:7c is to ask whether the basic message of the first angel in Revelation 14 contains elements which may indicate that the implied worldview of creation in six days is to be taken permanently for all time as historically accurate even in what now is termed a postmodern era.

The answer to the question raised above depends largely upon the kind of apocalyptic interpretive principles an exegete brings to the text. For example, different answers are obtained depending upon whether the interpreter applies preterist, futurist, historical-critical, or historicist presuppositions and hermeneutical principles to the passage. It would seem, for example, that interpreted from either a preterist, or a classical historical-critical method, the idea of a six-day creation in Revelation 14:7c represents a cosmogony from the past which has little or no current relevance in terms of representing historical reality in the present scientific sense.

However, an altogether different and intriguing answer with profound implications develops when the reader understands the text from a particular apocalyptic historicist perspective. According to this interpretation, the precise temporal, end-time commencement of the first message of Revelation 14 is signaled by the phrase “the hour of His judgment is come” (Rev 14:7b), which according to this historicist interpretation begins in the mid-nineteenth century. Viewed in this light, these three messages comprise, among other things, divinely designed end-time messages representing God’s final gospel appeal to humanity. Because these messages constitute end-time messages in the very form in which they now appear before us in the text, their contents are consequently to be taken as wholly reliable historically and scientifically in all their teachings and implications not only in the time they were written by the apostle, but precisely in the end-time when they become particularly relevant as “present truth” in the early nineteenth century and to the end of secular history. These historicist assumptions and interpretations, and the other two contextual pointers analyzed above suggest the following central thesis of this paper. The cosmogony of creation in six contiguous, creative, twenty-four hour days implied in Revelation 14:7c is to be viewed as God’s intended worldview to be accepted as historically and scientifically true by all people groups living in the neo-Darwinian and postmodern era. This claim is clearly the most important theological, regulative, far-reaching thesis with interdisciplinary significance addressed in this essay.

Based upon these assumptions, this conclusion suggests that the resurrected Lord Himself not only helps to unite both Testaments by embedding an endorsed six-day cosmogony into the First Angel’s Message of Revelation 14 that is identical to the six-day cosmogony deeply held in the Old Testament, but also currently endorses the genuine historicity of this worldview which both Testaments hold in common. The correctness of the remaining implications discussed in this piece clearly stands or falls depending upon the contemporary truth value of this central thesis.

**An Objection Evaluated**

Before turning to an analysis of some of these additional implications, it is helpful to consider an objection which may arise at this juncture in the form of the following question. Does the absence of the explicit words “in six days” in Revelation 14:7c invalidate the conclusion stated above, and rather suggest that God is in some way implying that a six-day worldview is, in fact, no longer to be taken as historically true in the end time? Otherwise, would God not have explicitly said “in six days” in the First Angel’s Message? Four considerations indicate that such a conclusion is clearly unwarranted biblically.

First, the short answer is that the implication makes Jesus contradict himself. In 1 Cor 10:4 Paul states that it was Christ who followed the Israelites in the deliverance from Egyptian slavery. Theologically, this suggests that it is the pre-incarnate, second person of the Godhead, the Logos, who speaks the fourth commandment from Mt. Sinai, saying that “in six days the Lord made heaven, the earth, and the sea . . .” If in Revelation 14:7c the resurrected Lord is said, from an exegetical point of view, to imply that the six-day creation event is no longer historically true simply because the words “in six days” are not explicitly recorded in this New Testament passage, Jesus is thereby made to contradict directly his former words spoken from Mt. Sinai. 48
Second, the fact that Revelation 14:7c is indeed an approving allusion to Exodus 20:11 means that it is an endorsing allusion not only to the seventh-day Sabbath, but by implication to the textually stated basis for the divine selection of the seventh day as the Sabbath, namely, to the concept of a creation week composed of six working days. In other words, without the divinely stated six-day creation reason for God’s selection of the Sabbath of Exodus 20:11, an important aspect of the basis for keeping the seventh-day or Saturday Sabbath is destroyed. These considerations indicate how the approving allusion of Revelation 14:7c, far from constituting a basis for denying the truth of the six-day creation, is in fact an important divinely inspired confirmation of the continuing significance of the six-day creation worldview. Thus, the concept “in six days” is approved by Revelation 14:7c, even though the specific words are not stated in the passage.

Third, a main benefit of a biblical allusion is that it enables God to use an economy of words. With a few select terms the writer of Revelation can adequately allude to a biblical passage without using all the words in the particular biblical passage under consideration. This means that the absence of some words in a passage making an allusion to a text containing the missing words does not necessarily signal God’s disapproval of these missing words. On the contrary, the divine use of the approving cryptic allusion can be God’s wise shorthand method of endorsing an entire passage, and thus, in the case of Revelation 14:7c, to the endorsement of the concept stated in the phrase “in six days” even though the explicit words do not appear in the passage in Revelation.

Fourth, to suggest that the absence of the explicit words “in six days” in Revelation 14:7c means that God somehow suggests that in these last days the concept of creation in six literal creative days is no longer historically true, means that a latter portion of scripture contradicts a former portion of scripture, an eventuality clearly rejected by the Word of God. For example, Paul states that the “spirits of prophets are subject to prophets” (1 Cor 14:32). The text means that truths which have been revealed originally will not be contradicted by revelations which occur subsequently. In addition Isaiah 8:20 significantly states: “To the law . . . If they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no light.” This passage implies that Revelation 14:7c must be judged by the law which would mean in the case of the allusion to Exodus 20:11 nothing less than precisely the ten commandments of Exodus 20. Thus, the absence of the words “in six days” in Revelation 14:7c does not imply today that a worldview of creation in six days is no longer true. Rather, the truth is that by the cryptic approving allusion in Revelation 14:7c to Exodus 20:11 John implies just the opposite conclusion, namely, that even in today’s post-modern, evolutionary era, a six-day creation worldview remains the truth in the mind the One who created life on our planet in precisely this fashion.

In this context it may be useful to note that the activity of divine Revelation is progressive in the sense that successive revelations provide wider and deeper understandings of that which has been revealed in the past. However, subsequent revelations do not contradict the substance of the previous revelations. The notion of “present truth” does not imply that there was past truth which now is replaced by the “present truth.” On the contrary, the idea of “present truth” implies, for instance, the current existence of concepts whose time and relevance have arrived according to the prophetic time clock, but these concepts do not contradict former revelations. We turn now to a discussion of some additional implications of the conclusion that Revelation 14:7c establishes a worldview of creation in six days to be taken in all eras and in all scholarly disciplines as historically true.

Macro-Evolutionary Theory Addressed

As a third implication, if the historical six-day creation worldview embedded in Revelation 14:7c is taken as historically accurate today, the passage speaks directly to the Darwinian macro-evolutionary worldview in a most timely and cogent fashion. Toward the end of July 1844, Darwin completed a famous 189-page handwritten manuscript of his theory on the origin of the species entitled by scholars as “Darwin’s 1844 Sketch.” Like the subsequent Origin of Species (1859), this essay hypothesizes the development of species by a fortuitous evolutionary process involving millions of years. However, according to the apocalyptic historicist interpretation referred to in this essay, God raised up, in the summer of 1844 in North America, a proclamation of the First Angel’s Message of Revelation 14 as present truth intended for all people groups. Thus, when Darwin states in 1844 that species are developed over millions of years, the Lord raises up in the same year an earnest and caring message with the potential of telling people in all ethnic groups, and hence to Darwin, that God intentionally created the basic life forms of earth in six days, and not through a process of millions of years. Only by means of a historical six-day concept of creation can one adequately address Darwin’s idea of macro-evolution and its related concepts of progressive creation and theistic evolution both requiring millions of years. Apart from the corrective idea of a creation in six days, some form of macro-evolutionary
theory will ineluctably be integrated into Christian theology, as it has been incorporated at the present time.

A Global Flood

A fourth implication resulting from the assumption of the historical actuality of the implied six-day creation worldview in Revelation 14:7c may be somewhat surprising. A six-day creation worldview, if historically true as indicated in this New Testament passage, requires that an event of a global flood must also be historically true. A six contiguous creative day creation week necessarily places all the newly created animals onto essentially the same surface or geological strata together at the same time at the end of the creation week. This conclusion means that with the entrance of death after Adam’s sin, the animals at the time of their death would be buried on essentially the same surface or geological strata along with human beings. This geologic situation considered by itself, and without reference to any other biblical data, means that no multi-strata animal-sorted fossiliferous geologic column thousands of feet deep should exist today because of the following consideration.

Given the fact that all created organic forms would be living and dying together on essentially the same strata subsequent to the creation week and the Fall, no known naturally occurring sorting and depositional process, slow or rapid could produce a column of such magnitude and nature even given millions of years for the process to work. What natural geological forces known today could sort and bury animals into different groups at different levels in the geologic column when originally all the animals existed on the uppermost surface of the earth at the same time together? No such natural forces currently exist. Thus, if a contemporary reader takes into account only the biblical Creation and Fall narratives, the investigator may properly make the claim that no geologic column should exist.

However, the stark truth is that an animal-sorted fossiliferous geologic column thousands of feet deep does exist. According to contemporary geologic theory, the column formed relatively slowly by many local catastrophic spurs over 540 million years of successively burying newly evolved animals as they lived and died. How does the believing Christian account for the existence of the present geological column? For such an individual, the current geological state of affairs renders the biblical narrative of God’s flood vitally important. The geological implications of a six-day creation outlined in this essay call for some catastrophic aquatic event of global proportions, intervening between a recent creation and the present time. A catastrophe of such magnitude could both create the basic portion of the fossiliferous geologic column globally and rapidly, and at the same time sort and bury organic forms many thousands of feet deep into this portion of the column after the sin of Adam.

An event of this colossal magnitude is described in Genesis 6–9, to which Christians may turn in order to account for the present geologic column. This shows why a theory of a local flood cannot be adopted, because a local flood cannot produce the global geologic column which exists. Only a global flood can rapidly produce a global geologic column. Although discussing the scientific evidence for a planet-wide flood is not the purpose of this essay, the geological field data for that which would be expected in a flood of global magnitude is very encouraging indeed, even in light of weighty criticisms to the contrary by contemporary geology and paleontology.23

This analysis indicates how the last part of the First Angel’s Message requires a global flood to be accepted by readers today as a scientifically valid event. This conclusion constitutes a fourth reason that Revelation 14:7c can serve as the basis for a new, unparalleled theological and scientific Christian unity, given the fact that most mainstream Christian denominations no longer believe that the biblical flood was a historical, global event.

A Possible Significance of the Surprise Phrase, “and Springs of Waters”

Before turning to a fifth basic implication resulting from the worldview of creation in six days embedded in Revelation 14:7c, and having just discussed the idea of a global flood as implied by the same worldview, the reader may find it useful to consider a possible biblical connotation of the striking final phrase of the First Angel’s Message. In alluding to Exodus 20:11, the messenger of Revelation 14:7 unexpectedly uses the phrase, “and springs of waters,” rather than the familiar Exodian fourth commandment language, “and all that is in them” (Ex 20:11). Having followed the lead of Exodus 20:11 virtually word for word in specifying what God has created, the messenger in Revelation surprisingly deviates from the parallel listing by specifying a single class of items existing among “all that is in them” for the reader to consider. Does the reference to “springs of waters” signal something of importance? If divine intentionality is the root cause for the specification “springs of waters,” why does Jesus have the messenger break the parallel listing of things mentioned in Exodus 20:11? Why does God specifically mention “springs of waters” and not some other class of created things such as trees, birds, fish, or mountains? What is the criterion or basis of the
specificity? Taking the context into consideration may be particularly helpful in responding to these questions.

Because the reference to “springs of waters” appears in the context of a divine announcement of the arrival of a unique time of divine judgment, perhaps the reference is intended to lead the reader’s attention to another time and form of divine judgment for important reasons. The wide range of meanings of the phrase “fountain of waters” and the use of the Greek and Hebrew form of “fountain” may assist in forging a link between “springs of waters” and another kind of divine judgment. First, the general biblical usage of the concept “springs of waters” includes all springs or fountains and hence the famous “fountains of the deep” referred to in Genesis 7:11. The book of Proverbs informs us that the fountains of the deep were created by divine wisdom (Prov 8:24, 28). Above all, these fountains of the deep, according to the book of Genesis, were broken up at the time of the biblical flood which was a divine judgment against intractable human sin. Thus the expression “springs of waters” in Revelation 14:7c may be used intentionally to connote another form and time of divine judgment when God washed the earth of its corruption.26

Second, the Greek word for “springs” used in Revelation 14:7c is a form of ἄγαθον which is the same Greek word used in the LXX for the Hebrew term for “fountain” (מֶזֶח)27 used in “fountains of the deep” appearing in Genesis 7:11, and in Proverbs 8:28. This usage of the term “springs” in the original biblical languages permits the reader to grasp a possible connection between “springs of waters” (Revelation 14:7c) and the “fountains of the deep” (Gen 7:11), and hence to the time when the “fountains of the deep” were broken up at the time of God’s divine aquatic judgment against human sin. Thus, the reference to “springs of waters” in Revelation 14:7c may be a divinely intended suggestion to another time and form of divine judgment, namely, to God’s flood which was a divine judgment in response to human iniquity.

If the connection mentioned above is correct, perhaps God intends that the link to the flood is to underscore the truth that He is indeed a God of judgment, as well as a God of everlasting faithfulness and graciousness as also evidenced in the narrative of the Genesis flood. If so, the personal and spiritual implications associated with the phrase “springs of waters” might be to encourage the reader to take seriously the momentous arrival of a new, end-time process of divine judgment relating to individuals as announced by the first messenger of Revelation 14. If the concept “springs of waters” as used in Revelation 14:7c may properly be interpreted to connote God’s previous act of judgment in the Genesis flood, the phrase constitutes another divinely intended endorsement of the ontological historical reality of the biblical flood. This possible implication shows again the importance of the First Angel’s Message as a basis for Christian theological and scientific unity in the end time. We turn now to a key implication of the six-day creation week and global flood implied in the Revelation 14 passage.

Testifying to God’s Goodness

In the fifth place, one of the most significant spiritual and theological contributions made by the last part of the First Angel’s Message is its support of the goodness of God in view of what can only be characterized as a pernicious, demonic god, if the creator in fact uses the evolutionary process as His method of choice for creating life forms. As Holmes Rolston III rightly indicates, the process of evolution is extraordinarily wasteful and cruel and is filled with “randomness, blindness, disaster, indifference, waste, struggle, suffering, death.”28 In this setting Rice reminds us that “God is responsible only for the possibility of evil,” not its actuality.29

In this context, Philip Clayton recently pinpoints the problem for the character of God if the hypothesized macro-evolutionary processes are understood as guided by God: “A God who allows countless billions of organisms to suffer and die, and entire species to be wiped out, either does not share the sort of values we do, or works in the world in a much more limited and indirect way than theologians have usually imagined.”30 This perceptive quotation shows that if Christians accept the macro-evolutionary view of a disease-ridden, wasteful process laced with suffering and death as God’s method of choice in creating life forms, then God is clearly rendered demonic in nature.31 In other words the geologic column, if interpreted as the product of millions of years of organic evolution guided by God, actually portrays the way a demonic power would create life forms, not God. In light of these profoundly negative theological implications resulting from accepting a macro-evolutionary process as God’s method of creation, Hutch Ury perceptively asks, “Is this the God before whom David would rejoicefully dance?”32 Revelation 14 helps to resolve this weighty challenge to the beneficence of God.

The good news is that the momentous historical events referenced by Revelation 14:7c namely, the six-day creation week and global flood, directly safeguard the goodness of God by removing the responsibility from God for producing life forms through the evolutionary process. As noted earlier, a literal creation necessitates a global flood to produce
the geologic column after the entrance of sin. Assuming the historical reality of these two events, the Christian may correctly conclude that God, in fact, did not use the macro-evolutionary process to create life forms, and that the divinely, reluctantly initiated global flood was the mechanism by which the present fossiliferous geologic column was constructed. Thus, God is not subject to the charge of creating life forms in the malevolent method indicated here.

It is important to point out in this theodical context that in the biblical narrative, the flood event is not a capricious act on God’s part. The totality of divine grace is present and active. The narrative implies that God’s spirit is striving to bring everyone to repentance (Gen 6:3). In addition, God is in the deepest anguish over the breakdown of human relationships (Gen 6:6). Moreover, through the preaching of Noah for 120 years, God warns his created humans of coming destruction and provides a way of escape (Gen 6:3). Even in the account of the flood, a high point in the narrative is reached with the statement “God remembers Noah” (Gen 8:1). Here, even during the storm there is divine grace in abundance showing that the loving character of God functions in full strength during the darkest moments of earthly tragedy.

This discussion shows why interpreting the geologic column as a record of God’s preferred method of creation diminishes and even demonizes God. Such a god would be a pernicious deity wholly unlike the compassionate biblical God weeping over recalcitrant people He comes to seek and to save (Luke 19:10, 41), and caring when one sparrow falls (Matt 10:29). By contrast, the last part of the First Angel’s Message convincingly responds to the issue of theodicy. Through its implications of a six-day creation and a global flood, the First Angel’s Message provides the geological basis for the encouraging truth that God’s character is everlastingly benevolent and fair, thus identifying Him as truly worthy of our love, trust, worship, and praise. The geological, spiritual, and theological implications of the Revelation passage are indeed far-reaching. This shows again how important a six-day creation and global flood are to our understanding of the kind of God we worship and serve. We turn now to perhaps the most practical and exegetically regulative implication of our passage.

Hermeneutics

A sixth implication of Revelation 14:7c is its capacity to illustrate how God desires the Bible to be interpreted. The passage clearly implies the need to return to a distinctive biblical hermeneutic divinely intended to be adopted as normative and a blessing in the end time. Such a hermeneutic requires, for example, that the reader interpret Genesis 1-11 literally.

Interpret the Bible Literally, Historically When Called for by the Text

Revelation 14:7c implies, by means of an approving allusion to Exodus 20:11, a worldview of six literal, contiguous days of creative endeavor and a global flood as historically, ontologically real events. An exegesis is, therefore, led to interpret Genesis 1-9 in a literal, straightforward historical sense in order to obtain a view of creation in six days and the idea of a historical global flood from the narratives of Genesis. Thus, the presence of such a worldview and flood embedded by implication in the message of the first angel of Revelation 14:7c implies the assumption or functioning in the text of a crucially important method of biblical interpretation: Interpret the Bible not only literally, but as an authoritative account of real history when called for by the text. Hence, the ground for a distinctive end-time biblical hermeneutic is embedded into the text itself of Revelation 14:7c. Moreover, because this hermeneutical principle is found in a New Testament text alluding to an Old Testament passage, the principle is one which overarches into the Old Testament showing us how the New Testament interprets Genesis 1, thus rendering the hermeneutical principle outlined doubly significant.

In addition, since, according to the text, it was Jesus who appeared to John with the visions recorded in Revelation (Rev 1:1, 10, 12, 17, 18), it seems that the resurrected Lord Himself interprets Genesis 1 literally and historically in Revelation 14:7c. If so, this may illustrate Christ’s preferred post-resurrection, contemporary method of Bible interpretation which can become a hermeneutical model for us today. Viewed in this way, it would seem that we would do well to interpret the Bible literally and historically when called for by the text, just as Jesus seems to have done as illustrated by this passage. Thus, according to these implications of Revelation 14:7c, is it reasonable to interpret the early chapters of Genesis—and by extension the Bible as a whole—literally and as a reliable record of actual events in history may be the divinely intended hermeneutic for the end time.

Addressing the Distinction Between “What the Text Meant/What the Text Means”
Implying that a six-day creation is to be understood today as an historically true event in the neo-Darwinian, postmodern era, Revelation 14:7c effectively dissolves one interpretation of a widely applied hermeneutic principle which vigorously distinguishes between "what the text meant and what the text means." According to this concept, many post-enlightenment and post-modern exegetes approach the biblical text by assuming that a worldview and cultural break of colossal magnitude exists between what was held by biblical writers to be true, and what is believed to be historically factual by contemporary evolutionary science. This cultural divide is thought to be so great that many of the claims of scripture need to be passed through a hermeneutical filter which says that such and such is indeed what the Bible teaches and meant in the first century to be true, but the first-century meaning cannot be what the text means for us today.

By striking contrast, the second implication of the allusion is that Revelation 14:7c implies that what the text meant in the first century is also essentially what the text means for believers in the twenty-first century. In this sense the passage from Revelation dissolves the distinction between what the text meant and what the text means. This conclusion in no way lessens the importance of taking cultural aspects into consideration when interpreting the Bible. It does mean, however, that what the Bible meant in principle then is what the Bible means in principle for the last days.

A hermeneutic which suggests an acceptance of a six-day creation worldview by the Christian academic communities as scientifically valid for today indicates how Revelation 14:7c can constitute the basis for unparalleled theological and scientific Christian unity. For example, the emphasis in this cosmogonical context focuses on the length of creation, not so much on the "when" of creation. Regarding origins, the chronological question of primary importance is: According to Scripture, how long did God take to create? A second question asks: When did God create according to Scripture? In other words, the crucial question considers whether God intentionally created life forms on this earth in one literal week or over a period of millions of years? The query regarding the "when" of creation can be addressed rather rapidly depending upon the response to the more fundamental question respecting the length of creation. This analysis indicates why the worldview information embedded into the First Angel's Message is so important—it answers the first and most fundamental question about origins. Therefore, most mainline Christian academic, scientific, and theological circles have endorsed a worldview reflecting either theistic evolution, or progressive creation perspectives. However, Revelation 14:7c strongly suggests that this situation needs to change.

Addressing the Issue of Separating the Scripture from the Word of God

With its implications that a six-day creation and a global flood should be understood today as representing actual historical events, Revelation 14:7c speaks to the hermeneutical issue whether the concept "Scripture" needs to be separated from the concept "Word of God." In 1771 the father of the historical-critical method, Johann S. Semler, recommended the separation with the following epoch-making words: "The root of the evil (in theology) is the interchangeable use of the terms 'Scripture' and 'Word of God.'" From the point of view of the traditional historical-critical method, unless Scripture is essentially separated from the concept of the Word of God the method cannot function in the classic sense. According to the classic historical-critical method, the Scripture cannot be freely criticized, altered, or adjusted if, at the same time, it is considered to be the literal, truthful word of God in sentence form. For this reason, practitioners of the classic historical-critical method separate the concept of Scripture from the concept of the Word of God.

However, if the creative events implied by Revelation 14:7c indicated above are indeed true historically, then Revelation 14:7c effectively identifies or equates biblical sentences or propositions with the concept of the Word of God as propositional, and not only as a subjective encounter. In other words, the Revelation 14 passage is communicating historically, ontologically true information in the form of propositions as the word of God. This approach dissolves the separation of the idea of Scripture from the idea of the Word of God. The approach thereby overturns a basic working assumption of the classic historical-critical method which separates the Bible from the concept of the Word of God. This means, in effect, that Revelation 14:7c calls contemporary exegetes and theologians to lay aside this basic working assumption of the classical historical critical hermeneutical method and to return to the hermeneutical method illustrated in Revelation 14:7c which is to join or to equate Scripture (written propositions) with the Word of God. Adoption of this later hermeneutical method can be the ground for unparalleled unity among Christian exegetes, theologians, scientists, pastors, and church members.
Postmodernism

Seventh, Revelation 14:7c responds decisively to the heart of postmodernism which insists, as is commonly known, that there might not be objective truths common to all investigators to be discovered. Rather, classic postmodernism seems to suggest that disparate, unreconcilable, competing frames of reference exist. The result is that groups of individuals live in mutually exclusive worlds of thought.

In contrast, and given the end-time setting of Revelation 14, the verse under consideration postulates as valid for today a single cosmogony which includes a creation in six creative, contiguous, literal, twenty-four hour working days. Such an assumption indicates that a single objective overarching truth, or meta narrative is indeed obtainable in this postmodern era. This suggests that a singular worldview implied by the Revelation passage might well be embraced by scientists, theologians, and lay persons as the objective historical truth in this postmodern context.

Epistemology and Language Theory

Finally, an eighth implication may be observed in connection with the important issues involved in epistemology and language theory relating to religious and theological statements, and to biblical statements, such as those contained in Revelation 14:7c. These issues have a long history of highly sophisticated and complicated discussion which deserves much more attention than can be given in this essay. However, a few preliminary observations may be useful as pointers toward areas of fruitful continuing study and future discussion in this regard. For instance, how might the last portion of the first message of Revelation 14 impact an Adventist account of biblical and theological language theory? Nancey Murphy analyzes two popular attitudes in contemporary philosophy of language in articulating the relations between religion and science which may be helpful in this context. She distinguishes between referential and expressivist theories of religious discourse. The former, often reflected in conservative evangelical theology employing a foundationalist metaphor, refers to the same world as does scientific discourse. This allows for genuine conflict between the accounts they give. On the other hand, the expressivist theory of religious language is well illustrated by Schleiermacher’s definition of Christian doctrines as “accounts of the Christian religious affections set forth in speech,” which effectively historicizes doctrine. An important shift with significant consequences for science and religion has occurred in the nature of the referent of religious discourse as Murphy indicates: “Here religious language expresses religious awareness and may have no reference to the natural world at all, so the very possibility of conflict (or interaction of any sort) with science is foreclosed.” Murphy prefers a form of epistemological holism, informed by Quine’s man-made fabric, field, or web of beliefs metaphor, in which, for Murphy, mutual conditioning of levels of disciplines occurs rendering the whole free of foundationalism.

How might the claims of Revelation 14:7c interact with the accounts of religious discourse indicated above? On the assumption that the implied claim in the Revelation passage—informing us that life forms on planet earth were created during the six days of a single literal week—enjoys the status of ontological truth along the lines of George Lindbeck’s third sense of the term “true,” the passage then does seem to refer to the same world as does scientific discourse. If so, and given the assumption mentioned above, Revelation 14 may support some form of a carefully nuanced referential theory of religious discourse, with the attendant possibility of seeming conflict between the claims of Revelation 14:7c and some interpretations of science. However, in some respects this aspect of an epistemic paradigm for theology may be more holistic and inclusive than Murphy’s model because the former does not distinguish so radically between the referential intent of the text (which may seemingly conflict with science) and the theological interpretation. In any case these brief, initial, and tentative reflections will hopefully serve to encourage discussion of these and additional areas needing further study and open discussion regarding the possible relation between, for example, the last portion of the first message of Revelation 14 and epistemology and theological language theory.

This epistemic paradigm for theology responds to recent criticisms of creationists by Mark Noll in his informative work, The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind. In effect Noll laments that the contemporary evangelical mind has been scandalized by a hermeneutic that attempts to arrive at truth by taking the myths of Genesis 1-11 literally in a historical sense. Therefore, according to Noll, theology must return to the accomodationist positions of Charles Hodge and Benjamin B. Warfield, who, while holding to biblical inerrancy, nevertheless advocated that contemporary evolutionary theory must reinterpret the biblical teaching regarding the length of creation and the origin of humanity except for the immortal soul. However, the implications of Revelation 14:7c, if correct, suggest that just the opposite is the case. In other words, the truth is that the evangelical mind is not scandalized by taking Genesis 1-11 as ontologically true
in the literal historical sense. Rather, the Christian mind can be scandalized by thinking that these chapters are mythological at their core and thus cosmogonically inaccurate in a literal, historical sense, and yet that from this mythological base some everlastinglty true theological meanings are to be obtained. The implications of the message of the first angel of Revelation 14 are indeed far-reaching.

Conclusion

If the historicist assumptions functioning in this paper are correct, at least eight implications result from the definite approving allusion of Revelation 14:7c to Exodus 20:11.\textsuperscript{49} They show how the heart of God’s final appeal to humanity provides a powerful basis for a new, unparalleled Christian unity of several dimensions by offering eight valuable guide lines for responsible partisan scholarship serving the church. In other words, the great creator of the genetic code has created another code. This time it is a divinely intended profound end-time verbal code embedded into Revelation 14 as the high point of the book.

By alluding with approval to Exodus 20:11 the Revelation 14:7c code first implies the reality of a first-century worldview of creation in six days. Second, the Revelation passage implies that a literal six-day creation cosmogony is to be taken as historically true in the twenty-first century. Third, this worldview shows the macro-evolutionary worldview to be the grand myth of postmodernity. Thus, the former worldview is to serve as the single frame of reference for exegetical, theological, philosophical, and scientific research and construction in the end time. Five other implications of the allusion include the need for a global flood, the establishment of the beneficent character of God in response to paleo-natural evil, a hermeneutic which interprets the early narratives of Genesis in a literal, historical fashion, the acceptance of an overarching meta-narrative contra postmodernity, and perhaps some form of a carefully nuanced referential theory of religious discourse.

The conclusions of this study present the evangelical scholarly community with a potentially momentous opportunity. Recognition and application of the eight implications of Revelation 14:7c by this community in a responsible and consistent manner can unify large segments of Christian theology and scientific research in profound and healing ways. The implications of this essay can encourage Christians with the truth that theology and science can be free from contradictory theological and scientific pluralism. Revelation 14 can provide a solid basis for responsible Adventist theological partisanship. For these reasons Revelation 14:7c can be called the cosmological North Star for Christian theological, scientific, and spiritual unity in a postmodern era. This means that the implications of the passage can be a continuing source of the deepest encouragement for fostering Christian spiritual experience and community in knowing, trusting, and worshiping the immeasurably loving God who in six days created the “heavens, and the earth, and sea, and springs of waters.” In this fashion the far-reaching implications of the last portion of the First Angel’s Message may assist servant scholarship in addressing not only the theological, but also the practical, ethical, and spiritual needs of the church we all love and serve.

Epilogue

In a recent Review article entitled, “The Final Deception: An Evil, Counterfeit Trinity is Now Making Ready for War,” Jon Paulien sets, among other things, the messages of the three angels of Revelation 14 against a final apocalyptic tapestry in relation to the three unclean spirits—like frogs mentioned in Revelation 16:13-16.\textsuperscript{50} Three concepts mined by Paulien are relevant to the purpose of the present essay. First, given that the Egyptian plagues provide the immediate backdrop of Revelation 16, the choice of the species “frog” rather than, say, “fish,” “dove,” or some other species, is very instructive. The plague of the frogs was the last plague which the magicians could counterfeit, therefore it was their final deception. Linking this to Revelation 16, Paulien suggests that the visual shape of the evil spirits like frogs is intended to signal to the reader that the messages born by these spirits of demons constitute the final end-time deception.

Second, these utterances not only represent end-time messages, they constitute counterfeit messages directed against God’s three messages in Revelation 14. Paulien characterizes this as follows: “Revelation 16:14 says that these frogs are ‘spirits of demons.’ They are the demonic counterparts of the three good angels of Revelation 14:6-12. Both groups of angels have a mission to the whole world (Rev. 14:6; 16:14).”\textsuperscript{51} In other words, “In the end it will be . . . three angels against three angels; . . . [one group representing] a counterfeit of God’s end-time message.”\textsuperscript{52}

Third, Paulien suggests that the book of Revelation indicates that the end-time encounter between the two groups of ideas will be “a battle between the Scriptures and perception, between reality as experienced by the five senses, and
ultimate reality as revealed by God Himself."53 In fact, "[i]t will be a battle between two truth systems: one will be confirmed scientifically; the other will be confirmed only by Scripture."54

These three notions can helpfully illumine the discussion of this essay for Adventist servant scholars. Applied to the implications of Revelation 14:7c, Paulien's research seems to indicate that both groups of angels might agree that God is the creator. Moreover, they also will probably agree that He created the heaven, the earth, the sea and the springs of waters. However, they differ regarding the length and method of creation. According to the genuine message of Revelation 14, God created these things in six days, which claim, for us, brings with it all the attending scientific challenges indicated in this paper. By contrast, the demonic counterpart claims that God created such things over a period of millions of years through a macro-evolutionary process as described by conventional scientific wisdom. It is the apparent demonic promulgation of this theistic/scientific claim that should be noted with considerable gravity by the evangelical scholar. This sobering conclusion seems to be one of the major implications of Paulien's research, provided the implications of this present essay faithfully represent the teaching of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit.

In this context Paulien's third point noted above, that the final encounter between the two groups of ideas involves the issue of Scripture versus perception by the five senses, can be helpful to the creation/evolution dialogue. It can forewarn us that in the final confrontation of ideas we may not have the full scientific response to the challenges posed, for example, by conventional science toward flood geology and other critically important implications of claiming that the world was created in six days. Thus, in some respects the evidence of the five senses may temporarily point favorably in some instances to the conclusions of conventional science. If so, this suggests that end-time believers are to rely wholly upon the Word of God not only regarding matters relating to items such as the state of the dead, but also to a wider circle of issues including, for instance, the method of creation and the biblical flood. This kind of stance does not ultimately pit science against the Word of God. To the contrary, it encourages believers with the knowledge that when finally presented with the "ultimate reality as revealed by God Himself," a beautiful harmony obtains between the two realms of discourse, fully understandable and acceptable by both theologian and scientist.

ENDNOTES


3. Ibid., 42.

4. Ibid., 43.


6. For an insightful discussion of a helpful approach to theology in the postmodern era based on the Imre Lakatos "research programmes," see, Nancy Murphy, "What Has Theology to Learn from Scientific Methodology?" In Science and Theology: Questions at the Interface. ed. Murray Rae, Hilary Regan and John Stenhouse (Grand Rapids: Wm.B.Eerdmans Pub. Company, 1994), 101-126. According to Murphy the contents of the hard core of a research program along the lines the Lakatos vision includes "one's non-negotiable and most general understanding of God and of God's relation to the created order" (ibid., 106).

7. Murphy, "What Has Theology to Learn from Scientific Methodology?" p. 106.


11. Pauline, ibid., 6. Two other reasons serve to establish further the crucial significance of the allusion of Revelation 14:7c to the fourth commandment presented in Exodus 20. First, according to a particular type of apocalyptic historicist interpretation noted subsequently, the allusion becomes the basis for a proper exegesis of the nature of the mark of the beast mentioned in the Third Angel’s Message of Revelation 14 (Rev 14:9-12). Second, the allusion implies minimally that the fourth commandment within the “commandments of God” mentioned in the Third Angel’s Message, is the fourth commandment articulated in Exodus 20 and not Deuteronomy 5. Thus, when the Third Angel’s Message says, “Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God...”, and if the reader wonders which commandments the messenger has in mind, the logical textual answer is to turn to the commandments alluded to in the First Angel’s Message, namely, to the commandments articulated in Exodus 20 and not to the Deuteronomy version (see endnote 4). These two additional reasons help to show the central importance of the allusion and its implications.

12. Ibid., 7-10. The thematic and structural parallels outlined by Paulien are not discussed in the present essay due to space constraints.
   In this context it is helpful to notice that the Revelation 14:7c allusion to the fourth commandment mentioned in Exodus 20:11 is to be contrasted with the wording of the Sabbath commandment found in Deuteronomy 5:12-14. While Deuteronomy 5 mentions the Sabbath as the seventh day, it does not explicitly designate the time unit of which the Sabbath is the seventh day. This leaves the reader with the question whether the Sabbath is the seventh day of the lunar month, the seventh day of the year, or the seventh day of some other time unit? One needs to refer to Genesis 1 and 2, and to Exodus 20:11 in order to discover biblically that the Sabbath is the seventh day of the weekly time unit established at creation. In light of this consideration it is understandable why in Revelation 14:7c God intentionally focuses the attention people upon the wording of the fourth commandment of the eternal covenant recorded in Exodus 20, rather than upon the Sabbath commandment mentioned in a deliverance setting in Deuteronomy 5.


15. Ibid., 75.

16. Ibid., 76.

17. Ibid., 86, 132.

18. Along with other investigators the general connection between the latter portion of the First Angel’s Message and the language of the fourth commandment has caught my casual attention from time to time. However, not
until recently has the specific, implied endorsement in Revelation 14:7c of a creation in six days dawned in my thinking. Others, I am sure, have seen this profoundly significant biblical endorsement long before the appearance of this paper. Yet the personal discovery of such a connection is a deeply moving experience to say the least. However, this experience is also a little embarrassing for me for having not seen for so long something which now appears so simple and obvious.


22. A “creative” day is to be distinguished from a “revelational” day. The former means that the items associated with any particular day of creation week mentioned in Genesis 1 were actually created by God on that day during the literal creation week. Otherwise, the days of creation could be interpreted as “revelational” days, meaning that on a particular day of the Genesis creation narrative God revealed to Moses some items on that day which in reality God had taken millions of years to create.


24. In a recent dissertation, Yoshio Murakami analyzes the influence which Ellen G. White’s discussion of the Sabbath as presented in the Third Angel’s Message of Revelation 14 had upon the mid to late nineteenth-century America. He argues that her views in this regard were especially relevant to her time because “she emphasized the Sabbath as the memorial of Creation, in face of a surge of evolution theory, higher criticism, geological science, and other modern thoughts of the day” (Yoshio Murakami, “Ellen G. White’s Views of the Sabbath in the Historical, Religious, and Social Context of Nineteenth-Century America” [Ph.D. dissertation, Drew University, 1994], 240-241).

25. The criticisms of a global flood are not to be ignored, but should be placed on the table for honest discussion, as well as the theological implications resulting from a dismissal of the global flood concept. Perhaps the most
trenched and recent discussion of what are considered to be the greatest geological difficulties regarding the idea of a global flood are summarized in the following piece: Donald U. Wise, “Creationism’s Geologic Time Scale,” American Scientist 86 (March-April 1998): 160-173.

For a discussion of striking field evidence consistent with what might be expected to be associated with a global flood, see Ariel A. Roth’s new work, Origins; particularly the four chapters devoted to the geologic evidence for a worldwide flood: Ariel A. Roth, Origins (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Pub. Association, 1998).

Powerful new geologic data consistent with a global flood model and arising from field research discoveries of Elaine Kennedy and Art Chadwick regarding paleocurrents in the Grand Canyon, and trace element studies on the matrix of the breccia underlying the Tapeats Sandstone in the Canyon are discussed in a forthcoming work: John T. Baldwin, ed., Creation, Catastrophe, and Calvary (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Pub. Association, 1999).

A recent special edition of Origins 24:1 (1997) is devoted entirely to a definitive discussion by Harold Coffin and Clyde Webster of the Yellowstone petrified “forests” issue putatively establishing the aquatic transport model.

The following technical article is representative of recent secular paleontological studies concluding that aspects of the geologic column are best explained by appealing to some form of episodic aquatic catastrophes yielding transport of organic forms: Michael Holz and Mario Costa Barberena, “Taphonomy of the South Brazilian Triassic Paleoherpetofauna: Pattern of Death, Transport and Burial,” Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology, 107 (1994): 179-197. The authors conclude that “The catastrophic . . . floods mobilized great quantities of clay and silt. ‘Day-by-day sedimentation’ is not effective for the fossil preservation in the Triassic environment” (ibid., 196).

As an example of a useful technical creationist exploration of issues relating to radiocarbon ages see, Henry F. Pearl, “A Re-Evaluation of Time-Variations in Two Geochemical Parameters of Importance in the Accuracy of Radiocarbon Ages Greater Than Four Millennia” (M.A. thesis, Pacific Union College, 1963). In this work, “Appendix B” presents a valuable exposition of H. W. Clark’s ecological zonation theory. The scientific research by R. H. Brown into radiocarbon dating represents the most extensive work regarding this issue from a recent creation perspective. See his excellent articles published in the journal, Origins.


27. The Hebrew term for fountain, ma’ān, appears to be related to the Hebrew word for eye ‘ān, which, as William Wilson states, is also “a fountain, or orifice through which water comes; or a well, like an eye in the ground” (William Wilson, New Wilson’s Old Testament Word Studies [Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1987]). As Wilson indicates, the Hebrew word for fountain may be likened to an eye in the ground flowing [tearing] with water. If so, there were symbolically a world abundance of flowing “eyes in the ground” when all the fountains of the deep were broken up during the flood (Gen 7:11). In light of Hebrew understanding of the term “fountain” the following question can be raised from a homiletical, figurative, poetic, spiritual, and personification point of view. If another biblical prophet can poetically characterize the mountains as singing for joy (Ps 98:8), might the prophet in Genesis 7:11 use a term poetically capable of connoting the earth as “weeping” in sorrow for the massive destruction occurring during God’s flood?


29. Richard Rice, The Openness of God: The Relationship of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Free Will (Nashville, TN: Review and Herald Pub. Association, 1980), 43. In this work Rice defends human freedom, and the loving character of God in the face of the existence of profound present evil by exploring the epistemological powers of God. Briefly, according to the openness of God paradigm, it was not certain to a God dynamically related to the world that humans would sin and introduce evil, hence God is not responsible for the actuality of evil introduced by beings created with the capacity to sin. In this sense both the love of God and human freedom are preserved.

In what way the issue of deep time and macro-evolutionary theory may impact the question of paleo-natural evil and the character of a loving God construed along the lines of the openness of God perspective seems to await further clarification from its authors.

30. Philip Clayton, “Metaphysics Can Be a Harsh Mistress,” CTNS Bulletin 18:1 (Winter 1998). 18. In this same context Clayton perceptively adds that, “[s]ince revelation rules out a pernicious God, it may ultimately be that one must let go of the idea that God directly brings about the details of the evolving biological world” (ibid.).


32. Hutch Ury, doctoral candidate at the Theological Seminary, Andrews University, is currently writing a Ph.D. dissertation regarding the early nineteenth-century Anglo-American theodical responses to paleo-natural evil in the fossil record as it relates to the interpretation of the character of God. The quotation listed is taken from his dissertation proposal entitled, “The Evolving Face of God as Creator: Early Nineteenth-Century Traditionalist and Accommodationist Theodical Responses in Anglo-American Religious Thought to Paleo-Natural Evil in the Fossil Record,” p. 3.

33. The term “theodicy” represents a combination of two concepts: “God” and “just, right, or good,” and is defined as “the defense of God’s goodness and omnipotence in view of the existence of evil” (Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary).


35. In a helpful and balanced fashion, a recent issue of Adventist Today (6:5 [September/October 1998]) covers the Science & Faith Convention held at Andrews University in late July, 1998. The Journal’s discussion of origins devotes the lion’s share of space to issues surrounding the question: When Was Creation? It would be helpful in another issue of AT to address the question: According to Scripture, how long did God take to create? As indicated earlier, analyses of the latter sort readily contribute to retiring the former question..


38. A foundation metaphor of truth/knowledge stands in contrast to Willard Van Orman Quine’s fabric, web, or field metaphor of truth/beliefs/knowledge introduced in the early 1950s. The web figure now serves as key metaphor in a postmodern accounting of truth/knowledge. Quine, who was professor of philosophy at Harvard University, presented this new metaphor in the following now classic article, “Two Dogmas of Empiricism,” appearing in his From a Logical Point of View: 9 Logico-Philosophical Essays (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993): 20-46, see particularly page 42.

39. Nancy Murphy, “Anglo-American Postmodernity: A Response to Clayton and Robbins,” in Zygon 33:3 (September 1998), 479. This response by Murphy is the latest expression of an helpful, ongoing discussion between her, Philip Clayton, an Associate Professor and Chair of the Philosophy Department at the California State University (Sonoma), Rohnert Park, and J. Wesley Robbins, Professor of Philosophy at Indiana University South Bend.


44. For a brief overview of Lindbeck on truth see, Murphy, Anglo-American Postmodernity, 121-122.


47. Ibid., 133, 188-89, 196, 199.

48. Ibid., 184, 206-208.

49. Other implications of the allusion of Revelation 14:7c to Exodus 20:11 which might be explored were space available include concepts such as: the atonement, ethics, the seventh-day Sabbath, the mark of the beast, the foundation of all three messages of Revelation 14, and the nature of the fall of Babylon and the contents of its intoxicating wine.

51. Ibid., 10.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid., 11.

54. Ibid.
THE CLASSICAL HEBREW PROPHET: A MODEL FOR SERVANTHOOD

J Bjørnar Storfjell, Andrews University
Suseela C Yesudian, University of Sheffield

It is the purpose of this paper to evaluate the classical Hebrew prophet in order to see what characteristics can be found which may help us understand the biblical concept of servanthood. This will require a look at the prophet as a person and the formulation of a definition of prophecy which should reflect the biblical phenomenon. Helmer Ringgren’s observation may serve quite well as a starting point for our consideration. “On the basis of the Old Testament evidence prophecy may tentatively be defined as the proclamation of divine messages in a state of inspiration.”

1 The implication of this is that the prophets of the Hebrew Bible are seen as divine spokespersons delivering messages from Yahweh, usually starting with the introductory formula, “Thus says the Lord.” The grammatical form of speech is first person singular, which through a linguistic argument brings spokesperson and originator of the message together in the declaration of the oracle. The prophet identifies totally with Yahweh who is really the one delivering the message. The prophetic messenger experiences complete integration with the originator of the message. Gerhard von Rad refers to this mode of speech as the “messenger formula.”2 While maintaining this position, one must not take it too far. The prophet always remained a real person with individual style and vocabulary allowing education and background to color the resultant literature. The prophet was never reduced to a mere microphone.3

The Hebrew prophet was not a unique phenomenon in the ancient Near East. The early terminology used was that of the ‘seers,’ and in the Mari texts “prophetic revelation is referred to as ‘seeing.’”4 Ringgren goes on to explain that the term used does not clarify whether the ‘seeing’ was in dreams or other kinds of visions. What is clear is the relationship between the ‘seer’ and the deity; the former is a spokesperson for the latter. “They saw themselves as ambassadors, as the messengers of Yahweh.”5

In later biblical terminology the word prophet, nabi’, is used. This term may be attested to in the Ebla texts from Tell Mardikh in the word nabi’utum.6 It is particularly with reference to the nabi’, since this is by far the most commonly used word for prophet in the Hebrew Bible, that Ringgren’s definition applies although Robert P. Carroll does not agree with Ringgren and does not find any biblical basis for establishing a definition for the Hebrew nabi’.7 Abraham J. Heschel is not quite so pessimistic in his assessment of prophecy. He defines it “as exegesis of existence from a divine perspective.” Then he argues that the only way to interpret the prophets is from this perspective. To


4 Ibid., 3.

5 Von Rad, 19.


do so from the point of view of sociology or psychology would be the same as interpreting poetry from its economic impact on the poet. 1

The essential character of the prophet as divine spokesperson delivering messages from Yahweh creates the field within which we attempt to see the prophet as a model for servanthood. The prophet identifies so closely with the source of the message to be delivered that the form of speech is first person singular. The prophet, while being him or herself, is also the voice of Yahweh. When divine oracles are uttered, to a degree, personal self-identity is absorbed in the source while the prophet retains his or her peculiar linguistic and cultural flavor. The prophet is heard, but Yahweh speaks. The prophet has become a human representative of the divine.

Two recent British scholars have challenged the traditional view of the prophets through the introduction of the hypothesis which Thomas W. Overholt refers to as the “poets not prophets’ hypothesis.” 2 A Graeme Auld and Robert P. Carroll have proposed that the Hebrew prophets were poets who through later community acceptance and individual redactional activity were elevated to the position of prophets, 3 and in the process they put a shot across the bow of the canonical approach to the study of the biblical text.

The canonical reading of a text is very much a process of narrowing down meaning until it is limited to the redactors’ intention and ideology. The original poets were free spirits, poets of the imagination, denouncing the social structures of their own time, but through redactional transformation have become conventional ‘prophets’, a fixed form of institutional activity, and thereby made to serve purposes which they themselves might well have despised (even denounced on occasion)! Such a process deprives them of much of their force because it serves ends other than their own. 4

Overholt in responding to this view of the prophets gives tacit and partial approval even though he opposes the views of Auld and Carroll, by affirming that a prophet is only recognized as such by the larger community in which he or she serves or has served. A prophet is not merely self-proclaimed. 5 This is also an important feature to keep in mind when attempting to see the prophet as a model for religious servanthood. The prophet may oppose or decry the very process which makes him or her a prophet. Theirs was not a self-appointed office but in time it became an institution affirmed by a community which itself had a specific agenda to accomplish.

Thus, Overholt argues that it is clear that prophets are made by the community that accepts them as such, eventually the community which brings into existence and preserves the written texts attributed to the poets now made prophets. Oracles have become literature, and it is through this medium that we know the prophets today. Moreover, any literature, especially biblical literature, requires analysis in order to be understood.

In present day confessional communities with an evangelical and/or fundamentalist palate, little or no analysis of the biblical text takes place. Yet, it is obvious that prophets appear to be not so much “men of the word as craftsmen with words.” 6 Consequently, the most incisive and illuminating analytical methodologies must not be neglected in bringing current understanding to ancient oracles turned into literature.

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1 Heschel, The Prophets, 1: xiv.


3 See the articles by A. Graeme Auld and Robert P. Carroll in Davies, ed., The Prophets. “Prophets through the Looking Glass: Between Writings and Moses,” 22-42, and “Poets not Prophets: A Response to ‘Prophets through the Looking Glass,’” 43-49.

4 Carroll, “Poets not Prophets,” p. 47.


6 Davies, ed., The Prophets.
Since the 1892 publication of Bernhard Duhm’s *Das Buch Jesaia*, it has been common to refer to certain Isaianic passages about the Servant of the Lord as Servant Songs. This presentation of Yahweh as servant is cast as a mantle on the prophet who in the proclamation of the divine message fully identifies with him and becomes a servant in the process of delivering the oracle. It is precisely in this process of speaking on behalf of God that the prophet rises to the summit of servanthood. And here we must not think of the service as the purely mechanical communication of words, but we must more importantly focus on the meaning of the words. The identification of prophet with Yahweh is so complete as to transform the message of the Lord into the message of the prophet. The merging of identities has worked completely in both directions.

The prophetic message is nearly always one which has two distinct aspects to it. First there is the message of judgement which has the characteristics of doom and gloom. The world the prophets is reacting against is one which seems to always be on the very brink of disaster. But the message of judgement is nearly always followed by a message of salvation. Hope and redemption are the mainstay of the activity of Yahweh, the focal point of the intersection of his activity with the activity of mankind. And the Hebrew concept of hope means to wait. In the very vocabulary there is a subtle pointer in the direction of eschatology. While the prophets delivered messages which were of redemption in their present troubled situation, there was always the notion behind the words that redemption was also a future phenomenon.

At this stage we will take a look at two of the biblical prophets in order to discover the nature of their messages both of judgement and redemption. What were the evils which brought about the need for the ‘Word of the Lord’ to be delivered with such pathos and heartrending conviction? In answering this question we realize that the conditions which brought about the prophetic oracles are still detectable in societies, both religious as well as secular, all around us today. The messages of the prophets are characterized by their expectation of an immediate cataclysmic event and yet at the same time they point to a future scene of judgement. The link between catastrophe and everyday general behavior in society is made very clear by the prophetic word. The expected ethical and moral behavior had broken down since religion had become irrelevant. The crisis of the moment was ignored because of the splendor of the past. Religion had been reduced to an heirloom, a curiosity of history. It only spoke in the name of institutional authority and not with the divine voice of compassion, and with that development the message of religion had become meaningless. It had failed to rediscover the questions to which religion itself is the answer. The presence of God, and consequently the moral authority for ethical decision-making, was sought in the institutional presence of Yahweh in the tangibility of the very architecture of the temple. The faultiness of this position was pointed out by Jeremiah in his ‘Temple Sermon’ (Jer. 7, especially verse 8).

A chronological approach will be used in looking at the two prophets, even though there are definite problems associated with this methodology, it will at least give us the semblance of organization in our attempt to trace the work, or perhaps better, the service of the prophets. It is also more convenient to focus on the writing prophets, even though there are numerous other prophets who deserve attention, including several female prophets. At times this section of the study will take on a very homiletical approach which we consider to be in keeping with the intentions of the

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2 Von Rad discusses the dual nature of the prophetic message, present judgement and eschatological judgement in chapter 7, “History Related to Eschatology in the Prophets.”


prophetic word itself.

We will first take a look at a prophet who is generally considered to belong to the eighth century, Amos. A few selected passages will be referred to which will help in the formulation of our opinion regarding the fundamental nature of his service:

When Amos stepped onto the scene in the Northern kingdom of Israel, though he comes from Tekoa to the southeast of Jerusalem, the picture which is painted is one of wealth and elegance in Samaria. Luxury was apparent in summer and winter houses, furniture of opulence, and festivities which flaunted their riches. This wealth had come at a price which the prophet considered far too high. Justice was wanting and the poor were taken advantage of by the affluent to the point of being sold into slavery. All this happened while corrupt judges looked the other way fattened by the bribes of the accusers.

Listen to this, you who rob the poor and trample the needy! You can’t wait for the Sabbath day to be over and the religious festivals to end so you can get back to cheating the helpless. You measure out your grain in false measures and weigh it out on dishonest scales. And you mix the wheat you sell with chaff swept from the floor!

Then you enslave the poor people for a debt of one piece of silver or a pair of sandals. (Amos 8:4-6 NLT)

The prophet is pointing out the actual nature of contemporary business practices. These same kinds of practices are also found in today’s business environment. As corporations move their base of operation or production from a high cost to a low cost location in order to increase their profit margin, innocent workers are left without a stable source of income and workers with even less earning power are exploited. Multi-national corporations defy fundamental issues of human rights in order to show a better bottom line on their quarterly reports. To most of us today this kind of injustice, the exploitation of the poor and the powerless, goes largely unnoticed. To the prophet this kind of behavior was a disastrous injustice to the welfare of the people and seen as a deathblow to their very existence and a threat to the world in which they lived. Our more measured and calculated approach may view them as hysteria-mongers. We have become comfortable with exploitation as an economic necessity and the preservation of our comfortable lifestyles and seldom do we even raise an eyebrow. But in the eyes of the prophets even these ‘minor’ injustices take on infinite proportions. Silent and indifferent they were not.

Our silence and our indifference can be seen as evidence for our generally low opinion of mankind. We seem not to have discovered yet that there is no subject more worthy of our consideration and involvement than the human injustices we heap on one another, especially if found within the religious realm.

I hate all your show and pretense—the hypocrisy of your religious festivals and solemn assemblies. I will not accept your burnt offerings and grain offerings. I won’t even notice all your choice peace offerings. Away with your hymns of praise! They are only noise to my ears. I will not listen to your music, no matter how lovely it is. Instead, I want to see a mighty flood of justice, a river of righteous living that will never run dry. (Amos 6:21-24 NLT)

The words are powerful enough to speak for themselves even as they shatter our preconceived ideas about a God whose justice is measured arbitrarily upon mankind. The basis for the message of doom is a lifestyle which does not allow the dogma of our religion to affect the behavior in the marketplace or the place of worship. Such inconsistency between believing and doing is an affront to Yahweh and cannot be allowed to go unnoticed. But before punishment there is always a warning. “Surely the Lord GOD does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets.” (Amos 3:7 NAS). Our familiarity with this passage as Seventh-day Adventists may prevent us from seeing that:

When the secret revealed is one of woe, the prophet does not hesitate to challenge the intention of the Lord:

_O Lord God, forgive, I beseech Thee!_
_How can Jacob stand?_
_He is so small!_
_Amos 7:2_

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1 The selection and discussion of these passages are primarily based on the work of Abraham J. Heschel in _The Prophets_.

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When the lives of others are at stake, the prophet does not say, "Thy will be done!" but rather, "Thy will be changed."

*The Lord repented concerning this;*

*It shall not be, said the Lord.*

*Amos 7:3*

Here we see, as we are moving from judgement to salvation oracle, that the prophet serves a function far beyond that of being the microphone of Yahweh. The prophet has become changed by the message to be delivered and the result is that the decision of the Lord to bring judgement is challenged.

There is a conditionality associated with a number of the oracles of salvation found among the prophets. The word ‘perhaps’ is used to prefix the promised redemption. “Perhaps even yet the Lord God Almighty will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph.” (Amos 5:15 NLT) In his analysis of conditional oracles of salvation Claus Westermann notes that “this ‘perhaps’ is incompatible with the way the words of the prophets were introduced, ‘Thus says Yahweh.’”

Salvation is relative, conditional, a mere possibility. It is tied to the response to the message of judgement. “There is always a dimension of God’s persuading affection where compassion prevails over justice, where mercy is a perpetual possibility.”

The prophet who can speak with such certainty about the divine judgement is also the same who concludes his book with the words, “‘I will firmly plant them there in the land I have given them,’ says the Lord your God. ‘Then they will never be uprooted again.’” (Amos 9:15). As a footnote to this concluding remark in Amos it should be noted that redemption is not just of the people but also the land in which they are to dwell. Salvation always includes a people and a land. The biblical stories are replete with references to the redemption of individuals such as Abraham from Ur of the Chaldeans and later the Children of Israel from Egypt to settle them in a Land of Promise. In the person of Amos we see the prophet defined, a person who has “compassion for man and sympathy for God.”

Towards the end of the seventh century Jeremiah begins one of the longest periods of prophetic service recorded in the Bible. Historically he started his service in a period of relative stability and deuteronomic religious reform under Josiah and continued through the political and religious turmoil leading up to the final destruction of Jerusalem, including the temple, the house of Yahweh. Jeremiah spent most of his prophetic career pleading with the population of Jerusalem, from the king in his palace to the humblest of worshippers coming to the temple, to repent, to turn around, the Hebrew *sub* which can be so easily visualized, in order to avert the impending destruction coming from the north. The cause of the approaching doom is the religious decay in Jerusalem. Jeremiah follows the example of the earlier eighth century prophet Hosea in using marriage as an analogy to describe the relationship which existed between God and Israel (including Judah).

Chapter 2 of Jeremiah introduces this analogy and it is continued in chapter 3.

The Lord gave me another message. He said, “Go and shout in Jerusalem’s streets: “This is what the Lord says: I remember how eager you were to please me as a young bride long ago, how you loved me and followed me even through the barren wilderness. In those days Israel was holy to the Lord, the firstfruit of my harvest. All who harmed my people were considered guilty, and disaster fell upon them. I, the Lord, have spoken!”’” (Jer. 2:1-3)

This analogy serves the purpose of instructing the people on two different levels: first that the relationship they had with Yahweh was a very intimate and personal relationship which like marriage could suffer if not properly maintained, and secondly Yahweh himself remembers, demonstrating to the people that it was through recollection of past events that their present relationship could be maintained. This is a use of history for confessional purposes.

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4 Ibid., 38.
and, therefore, not the same kind of historical treatment that modern historians expect. The clear reference to the Exodus is not in order to discover whether or not the event happened nor even when it happened, but to remind them of redemption history as they, the people of Jerusalem, were turning away from Yahweh. This is what von Rad refers to as kerygmatic history regardless of how one views the historicity of the event remembered.¹

The oracle of judgement which Jeremiah delivered to Jerusalem is presented in the form of the marriage analogy, or rather the analogy of divorce. The deuteronomic tradition is invoked in order to show the impossibility of Jerusalem’s relationship with Yahweh. With reference to Jerusalem Jeremiah declares, “If a man divorces a woman and she marries someone else, he is not to take her back again.” (Jer. 3:1 NLT). He is speaking about Judah’s departure from Yahweh and the impossibility of her returning to him. The separation from Yahweh is described as a divorce (Jer. 3:8) and it is obvious that the intention is to show the impossibility of salvation for Jerusalem. The oracle of judgement seems to be final and it does not seem possible to follow up with an oracle of salvation. But this is exactly what happens. “Return home, you wayward children,’ says the Lord.” (Jer. 3:14 NLT). Just when an oracle of salvation seems impossible the prophet delivers one.

The prophet had been full of the wrath of God (Jer. 6:11) and faithfully delivered the oracles of judgement. “The ultimate purpose of a prophet is not to be inspired, but to inspire the people; not to be filled with passion, but to impassion the people with understanding for God.”² In delivering oracles of judgement the words of the prophet must burn, sear like a branding iron. The voice must be unmistakable in its denunciation of any kind of wickedness, not just what our society has defined in religious terms as sin. Such denunciation is expected, even today. In addition social injustice, such as taking advantage of the weak and powerless for ones own gain or trampling on the human rights of those who have no voice, was always apprehended by the prophetic word. If the Hebrew prophet is to serve as a model for servanthood we must be allowed to ask whether as a Church we have followed the example of this model. Where has our prophetic voice of judgement been when the powerless have suffered? Or worse yet, have we heaped suffering upon the powerless ourselves? We have found it easy, indeed our responsibility, to deliver the oracles of salvation and have felt that our religious responsibility has been met in doing so. “Why should a worldly virtue like justice be so important to the Holy One of Israel?...Perhaps the answer lies here: righteousness is not just a value; it is God’s part of human life, God’s stake in human history.”³


² Heschel, The Prophets, 1: 115.

³ Ibid., 1: 198.
CONTOURS OF THE SEARCH FOR A FAITH TO LIVE BY:
ADVENTIST SCHOLARS AS SERVANTS IN A CONTEMPORARY QUEST

Iris M. Yob
Walden University

Working on a daily basis with engaged, young people, drawn from a variety of backgrounds, I have accumulated a number of impressions about how they think, what they wonder about, what kind of future they anticipate, their worries, fears, hopes, and concerns, and what might be my role as an Adventist educator in this environment. These impressions have been gained through conversations, observations, assigned journal writings, and an exploratory questionnaire over the past three years at a residential college of Indiana University. In sharing these impressions, I am assuming that while there will be differences in the spiritual journeys of Adventist young people and those I work with (only one of whom claims any connection with the Adventist faith, and then does so in the past tense), neither your students nor mine are totally insulated from similar experiences and the common influences of late twentieth century America. I am further assuming that there are Adventist scholars who already or hopefully will have a role to play in settings other than Adventist ones at some point in their careers.

My first impression is that today's thoughtful young people are serious about their spiritual quest. Only one out of 193 anonymous questionnaires about personal meaning-making gave nonsense responses throughout. To the question: "What are your big questions about life's meaning?" just a smattering of respondents gave cliché answers such as "Who am I?" "Where did I come from?" and "Where am I going?" The greater number by far gave rich and highly personalized answers ranging from "Why is my mother dying of cancer?" to "Is there any real point to hurting through space on this desolate rock?" or, "How can I find balance between simple living and living how I want to them appeared earnest.

These young people, by and large, are not searching merely for sweetness and light. They want to explore the dark side as well as the bright. I see this in the kinds of studies they pursue when they have the freedom to choose. Last semester they put together their residence curriculum with courses titles including "Culture Wars," "The Meaning of Death," "Holocaust Memorials," and "Dystopian Literature of the Late Twentieth Century." Currently they have, among others, "Gothic Revivals" and next semester, "Apocalypse." This attraction to the grotesque and horrific is reminiscent of young children's fascination with fairy tales-they are indirect yet effective ways for children to externalize their inner anxieties and to find ordering images and stories by which to shape their lives." This search, I suggest, continues into young adulthood.

Another impression is that while every quest is individual, some discernable patterns emerge through the successive college years. As one would expect for the question about the meaning of life, responses about purpose, identity, and place predominated (48%), but a significant number asked about the role of faith in their lives and the development of a personal code of values (11%). Responses related to matters of origins (Where did I come from?) do not appear at first to loom large compared with questions about destiny (Where am I going?), but if the responses about the nature of human being, wisdom, evil, and the existence of God are folded in with responses about where everything came from, then many of this group of young scholars can and do think in cosmological terms. Interestingly but not necessarily surprisingly, freshmen and sophomores were more inclined to think globally and reflectively: they considered international peace, the meaning of suffering, ultimate happiness, absolute morality, the spiritual quest, the existence of God, and so on. Upperclassmen men and women were more pragmatic in their responses and more immediate in their focus: "What career will make me content the rest of my life?" "How can I be a better artist?" "Will I ever get a job and leave Indiana?" Senior students were also more preoccupied with the passage of time: "Even though I am almost 22 years old, I am not even sure of my direction or my ultimate goals in life." "What experiences do I wish to have that I haven't already had?" "Am I on the right path or wasting time on what I am doing?" The least substantial answers were offered by juniors, a finding which suggests they may be in transition from the certainty and idealism of the early university years to the realism of graduating students.

There were also some relatively distinct differences between genders. Predictably, questions about relationships (including love and family) were raised 10 times by women to every 3 times by men. While men students were more
inclined than women to give silly answers (e.g., "I've solved the meaning of life" or "I try not have any big questions").

women were more inclined to say that the question was too big to answer. In both cases, I suspect that these students were avoiding the question in their own way: men by bravado, and the women by acting helpless, although I only guess that their reasons for wanting to avoid the question may be its unfamiliarity in this setting, an unwillingness to reflect on it, or a hesitancy to share their thoughts through an impersonal questionnaire.

It was encouraging to discover that approximately 2:1 of the students believed their studies at the university would help them answer the big questions of life, with a higher proportion of women than men expecting this to happen. A wide variety of majors towards this 4 end were specifically mentioned, including religious studies, philosophy, art, theater, literature, geology, education, and history. However, most students added a pre-condition or caveat, such as, "I am fascinated by life and my studies can point me in certain directions," "They will make me more aware so I can find the answers," "Because I think about questions a lot," or "It's up to me." Those who replied negatively argued that the answers could never be known by anybody, or school has never answered the big questions, or college isn't real life, or again, it was up to them and not their studies to find the answers. A fascinating few admitted that they hadn't formulated their big questions yet. Lower division men and women were more sure about the spiritual potency of their studies (9:5) than upperclass students (8:3) with the greatest slump in confidence occurring the junior year, with more than half reporting negatively. Seniors had recovered some of their earlier optimism.

While a majority reported that their studies would help them, the caveats offered placed the responsibility on the students themselves. This was more than borne out in the answers given to the question: "To whom or what would you turn for help in finding answers?" 40% of the students replied, "Myself" "Friends." was a distant second (26%). Seven times as many students indicated not knowing where to turn for answers than those indicating they would turn to religion. Teachers were not as popular a choice as friends or family but they did better than God, although, in almost every case, a qualifier was added, usually, "trusted" teachers.

When asked to identify the big issues their generation must deal with, issues around sex and sexuality—sexual identity, abortion, teen pregnancy, peer pressure, love vs sex, premarital sex, and marriage—were identified most often (32%). Drugs came a close second (30%), followed by health issues, including AIDS and STDs, and cancer (29%); human rights, race and gender issues 5 (24%); environmental issues (22%), crime, especially rape and violence (16%), identity, referring particularly to success, labels, having a voice, and begin independent (11%), international relations (10%), employment and the economy—surprisingly low on the scale (10%), government, especially immorality, lack of trust, and national polarization (9%), the new millennium and its challenges and opportunities (8%), while a few identified the downside of technology, poverty, the generation gap, broken families, materialism, and the media.

Some of the more pessimistic courses chosen a year or so ago, have given way to more heroic course topics, such as "Women as Heroes," which examines the lives and influence of women warriors, and "The Astronaut as Superhero," reflecting, I believe, the transition between the remnants of one millennium and its disillusionments and the beginnings of the next, with its accompanying renewal of hope. Many students also expressed a dissatisfaction with their own generation. 11% of the respondents pointed to the irresponsibility, superficiality, apathy, or as one student called it, "the sloth of soul" of their peer group, and several specifically identified overcoming their GenXness as the issue of their generation and a considerable number pleaded to be taken more seriously by their elders.

While spirituality and spiritual development were largely assumed as a personal and individual responsibility, service to others is clearly evident as a sub-theme in the thoughts and practices of this student group. Service learning courses are always enrolled to the maximum, philanthropic activities and activism around sex issues, social ills, human rights, and the environment are a significant part of the extracurricular program, and an influential core of students is preparing for careers in the non-profit sector. A challenge for this generation lies in resolving the paradox between postmodernism, with its distrust of grand totalizing theories and activism with its universal and dogmatic convictions about rights, oppression, and liberation.

A final set of observations has to do with the relationship of this generation to religion. From my perspective, these young people confront this subject from two distinct directions: they either dismiss religion altogether or they blindly embrace it. Regarding the first of these, I observed the students in the course selection committee become excited by the "Tibetan Buddhism," "Chinese Mythology," and "Hindu Art" courses, but disparage the proposal entitled "Marian Apparitions." That course would not appeal to many students, they argued, because there were not many practicing
Catholics in the college, and besides, they wondered, should courses on religion be taught at a public university. a doubt that didn't enter the conversation when they contemplated the courses on eastern religions. In a similar vein, students happily approved a series of worship services conducted by the Unitarian Universalists, a Passover Seder for all to attend, and a Wiccan ceremony at Halloween, but there was an outcry when a Christmas tree was decorated not with the usual baubles but with ornaments illustrating the birth of Christ. Stephen Carter, author of The Culture of Disbelief, may be right when he claims that for religious people, "the public square can indeed seem a cold, suspicious, and hostile place." However, he is only partly right, as is Warren Nord when he writes, "It is a striking fact that in American public schools and universities students can ... earn high school diplomas [and] college degrees ... without ever confronting a live religious idea." They are wrong if their generalizations are meant to include non-Western and other exotic religions, for my students, at least, actively selected these kinds of courses, but they are largely right if they are commenting about the reception of Christianity. In discussion groups led by peer instructors, I have witnessed denunciations of religion, which when it comes down to it are primarily targeting the Christian tradition which they judge to be hypocritical, polarizing, and overzealous in sharing its particular faith with others.

When asked who they would go to for help with answers to the big questions of life, only a handful of students (10%) indicated religion in some form, and as many said they would consult the Dalai Lama or eastern religious teachings as they would their priest, minister, or rabbi, and almost as many would turn to Buddha as to God or Jesus Christ.

The second religious challenge comes from the kind of responses given by students who openly profess to be Christian. When this group was asked what the big questions about the meaning of life might be, they generally gave responses such as "I don't have any questions-Jesus is the answer," or "I let God answer all my questions." These kinds of answers are also disturbing but for a different reason. Essentially, they exhibit a lack of reflection and take on a dogmatic tone, the very two qualities that Israel Scheffler identifies as signs of "epistemic apathy." These attitudes, he remarks, "are perhaps more accurately described as poses or pretenses, the effect of which is, however, perfectly real-to aid the denial of responsibility for one's beliefs and so to block the possibility of their improvement through the educative medium of surprise."

While these findings are richly provocative as even this brief overview suggests, I would like to focus on just three sets of questions they pose to Adventist scholars whose calling is to serve this generation. These are the "three Rs" that strike me as most significant. 1) Relevance. How relevant are the curricula and programs we offer our young people? Have we asked them recently what their big questions and big issues might be so that we can address them in a fresh and timely way? Are we giving them the critical and creative tools for articulating their own questions and pursuing their own answers? Do we treat our students as a monolithic body or are we sensitive to the new openness and curiosity of freshmen and sophomores, the confusion of juniors, and the immediate concerns of graduating seniors? Do we make room for a wide spectrum of different perspectives and interests, reflecting the diversity of our classrooms along gender (and we might add, ethnic) lines? Have we tapped into the current streams of awareness—the transition into a new millennium, the resurgence in the call to service and activism, the individuality and particularity of the spiritual quest, for instance?

2) Renewal. How can we renew religion in the lives of young people given that religion is preeminently situated to address the big questions of life and empower responses to the big issues of today? Christianity in general (and Adventism in particular I suspect) clearly does not have the cachet with many young people it once had. The renewal of religion requires more than simply exposing its relevancy for this may accomplish little more than ad hoc connections between a tradition and the contemporary situation, a fragmented, randomized methodology at best. A fuller rehabilitation of religion for this generation will have to be deeper and more systemic. How can we reinstate reason in aid of faith for those who are afraid of doubting so they can discover? How can we encourage an active dialogue among the great faith traditions so that Christianity is seen to be patently viable and at the same time rejuvenated by a critical reevaluation? How can we help our students negotiate a path between the dogmatism of the old tribal gods and the diffuse shallowness of too many gods; individual spiritualities and the absolutizing of a tradition's particular values and virtues, the faith of the past and the contextual and personal realities of the present and future? How willing are we to surrender our hegemonic control of truth and facilitate the reinvention of faith and spirituality by those who follow us?
3) Reaching out. How can Adventist scholars and educators reach out to this new generation of spiritual pilgrims, especially those outside of our faith community? Are we willing to be serious about serving this generation in meaningful ways, even though it might mean learning a new language of discourse and finding new modes of being in the world? Are we willing to ask the hard questions and risk exposing our fallibility while rediscovering and reclaiming the foundational essentials of our faith and the source of our spiritual inspiration, for in so doing we might become fellow pilgrims with our youthful contemporaries?

Finding the relevance of religion, renewing religious faith, and reaching out to contemporary searchers for a living faith are not discrete categories but parts of a continuous whole, interdependent, and mutually implicated. Somewhere along this continuum each religious scholar, educator, and pastor has a place and a calling, requiring the utmost in critical and creative capacities applied in the service of the next generation for the new millennium.
Endnotes


3. It is not surprising that the residence curriculum developed by the students has included courses such as "Our Culture Wars," "The AIDs Crisis in America," "The Arab World," "Environmental Activism," "Ancient Greek Men and Sexual Identity," "Art, Sex, and Scandal," "Women in Art," "Families in Crisis," and a raft of service learning courses which integrate community service and academics.


7. Paul Tillich (e.g., *Dynamics of Faith* [New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1957], 43), Mircea Eliade (e.g., *Images and Symbols* [Kansas City: Sheed Andrews and McMeel, 1952], 151-178), and others a generation ago identified the beginnings of this trend. They suggested that the forms of religion, its system of symbols, rituals and methods, once powerfully evocative of hope and trust, eventually become old and tired and lose their potency.

THE ADVENTIST HISTORIAN BETWEEN CRITICISM AND FAITH

Rolf J. Pöhler, ThD
Friedensau University, Germany

The publication in 1892 of J. N. Loughborough’s *Rise and Progress of the Seventh-day Adventists* not only marked the beginning within the Adventist denomination of extended historical retrospection, but it also set the tone for most subsequent attempts by Adventist historians to present a detailed and accurate account of the origin and development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Whether one thinks of M. Ellsworth Olsen (1925), Arthur W. Spalding’s four volumes (1961–62), LeRoy Edwin Froom (1971), or C. Mervyn Maxwell (1976) – they all attempted to combine (though with varying degrees of success) the accuracy and objectivity of the historian with the commitment and missionary zeal of the believer.

1 This approach which may be called ‘confessional history’ is by no means illegitimate, for it serves an important function in acquainting a new generation of believers with the historical roots of their faith and creates an appreciation of the multi-faceted heritage bequeathed to them by their spiritual progenitors. Nor would it be fair to assume that to approach history from the perspective of faith necessarily involves a distortion of factual evidence or leads to a misinterpretation of the sources.

On the other hand, any confessional history will inevitably reflect the particular theological outlook of the writer and his or her denomination. Moreover, it will always try to strengthen loyalty to the church and its teachings precisely with the help of historical findings. In other words, history is here being utilized in the service of faith and theology.

This underlying apologetic motivation, however, carries with it the ever-present temptation of drawing a somewhat one-sided and even distorted picture of the past by focussing on those occurrences that tend to build confidence in the church and strengthen faith in its teachings, while at the same time passing over the darker side of history. In some cases, this may lead to a gross misinterpretation or even manipulation of the primary sources.

1 In the foreword to his four-volume work, Adventist historian Arthur W. Spalding (1961–62, 1:5) gave a concise description of this approach. “A writer on the history of any cause or group should have sufficient objectivity to relate his subject to its environment without distortion; but if he is to give life to it, he must be a confere ... This history of Seventh-day Adventists is written by one who is an Adventist, who believes in the message and mission of Adventists, and who would have everyone to be an Adventist.”

2 The term history is used here as referring, not to the events of the past, but rather to the scholarly study and writing of history.

3 “The special purpose of this work is to acquaint the mature youth and the adults of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with the beginnings and the progress of the cause to which they are committed by birth or choice ... The history of our spiritual forebears is not negligible; for not only are we given the riches of their discoveries, but we are heartened and incited to heavenly emulation by the accounts of their sufferings and deeds.” (Spalding 1961–62, 1:5–6)

4 Something akin to this seems indeed to have happened, if only occasionally, in Adventist apologetics – already in Loughborough’s pioneering work itself. In quoting a statement from Joseph Bates who, in 1847, had spoken of “the closing up of our work for the world in October, 1844”, Loughborough omitted the crucial phrase “for the world” (which reflects Bates’ belief in the so-called shut-door doctrine) and replaced it with three ellipses points (Loughborough 1892, 128). This led D. M. Canright to accuse him harshly of “a deliberate deception” made to “hide, conceal, and suppress” the truth about the early SDA pioneers’ belief (Canright 1919, 165). On the same page, Loughborough also quoted an 1847 statement from James White according to which Ellen Harmon (White) had “given up the midnight-cry, and shut door, as being in the past” by the time of her first vision in December of 1844. Again, Loughborough left out the decisive expression “and shut door” which implied that Ellen White had indeed initially believed in the shut-door doctrine herself. But this Loughborough was apparently unwilling to concede in his book (though she had made this very admission in a personal letter written to him in 1847). Consequently (and in order to save his readers from what
At the opposite end of the spectrum of historical methods and diametrically opposed to the defensive style of confessional history, there is the polemical approach which attacks a particular church and its system of beliefs and tries to demonstrate, again with the help of a historical investigation, its allegedly erroneous, contradictory, or unbiblical nature. Such negative criticism, however, is never purely the result of historical research which, strictly speaking, is not interested in making theological judgments. Rather this type of critical methodology is, in turn, based on a confessional outlook of its own and may, for the sake of contrast, be called 'anti-confessional history'. For it, too, makes history subservient to theology and faith and, consequently, faces the same dangers of misrepresentation and distortion as does the confessional approach.

Both apologetics and polemics share in common a tendency to subordinate the historical investigation to the dictates of a theological perspective or confessional commitment which threaten the objectivity of the researcher and jeopardize the accuracy of his presentation. But it is important to realize that both apologetics and polemics come in varying shades and differing degrees of intensity. An underlying apologetic tendency or polemical stance does not automatically make a work overly tendentious or misleading. Care, therefore, must be exercised in labelling writers as apologists or polemicists, respectively. For these terms are commonly used in a derogatory sense and are associated with narrow-mindedness and dogmatism which, in all fairness, cannot be ascribed to all of those writing history from the (ad-)vantage point of a confession of faith.

With the increasing sophistication of Adventist historians and theologians in recent decades, there has developed still a third approach to denominational history which attempts to meet the most rigorous standards of contemporary historical scholarship by aiming at scholarly neutrality and unprejudiced objectivity. Seeking neither to attack (polemics) nor to defend (apologetics) but simply to understand, this 'non-confessional' approach to history tries to keep aloof from the perspectival bias which characterizes both the confessional and the anti-confessional method. In other words, the scholar's commitment to the facts of history takes precedence over his or her loyalty to the church and its beliefs.

Inevitably, however, this stance leads to a dilemma which Adventist scholars who desire to approach denominational history in an unbiased way cannot avoid. In order to be true scholars they dare not allow their commitment to the facts of history to be compromised by dogmatic (pre-)judgments and beliefs; but in order to be true Seventh-day Adventists, they cannot abandon their loyalty to the denomination and to the teachings which constitute the church's witness to the divine revelation as it has heard, experienced, and understood it. The question that inevitably arises is this: Can Seventh-day Adventists write a critical, non-confessional history of the church without denying their commitment to the community of faith to which they belong? And, vice versa, will scholars who remain loyal to the Seventh-day Adventist Church ever be able to approach denominational history in a truly non-confessional

he considered a false interpretation? he edited the source which seemingly contradicted his preconceived views. As this second quotation did not even contain any ellipsis points to indicate the omission, at least one Adventist minister heavily chided Loughborough for what he regarded as a "most glaring deception"; in defending himself, Loughborough explained that the printer had inadvertently omitted the required dots (Loughborough 1918, 21–26). There is no need to question the sincerity of a loyal and dedicated SDA pioneer; but this incident shows that in spite or, perhaps, because of the best of intentions, a confessional history may, at times, turn into misleading apologetics.

The best known representative of the polemical approach in Adventist history, unquestionably, is D. M. Canright who, after he left the church in 1887, bitterly attacked the latter and its teachings (1889; 1905) and Mrs. E. G. White (1919).

In my view, a fine example of a confessional history which does not compromise the canons of fairness and objectivity is Richard W. Schwarz (1979), a denominational history textbook for Seventh-day Adventist college classes.

The first of these scholarly presentations was written in 1930 by Everett N. Dick (1930). Among later presentations of this kind are Konrad F. Mueller (1969); Ingemar Lindén (1971); Ronald L. Numbers (1976); P. Gerard Damsteegt (1977); Gary Land (1986; 1987); and Ronald L. Numbers and Jonathan M. Butler, eds., (1987). See also Graybill 1977, 29–30; Land 1976, 2–6; 1980, 89–100; and McArthur 1979, 9–14.
way.

It should be noted that the aim of a non-confessional, unbiased study of history is not identical with the outdated ideal of nineteenth-century historicism which came up with the notion of absolute neutrality and demanded of the scholar complete detachment from his subject matter. Contemporary historical scholarship not only recognizes the impossibility of achieving absolute objectivity in matters of history, but it has also come to see that the historian’s involvement with the object of his research is an important prerequisite, rather than an impediment, to true understanding and insight.

Consequently, personal interest and sympathy are not the enemies of objectivity and criticism; instead, together they are partners in the search for understanding and accurate interpretation. Thus, critical empathy, rather than detached neutrality, is the hallmark of fair and unbiased history. It calls for sympathetic criticism, that is, an unprejudiced analysis and non-partisan interpretation of the source material strengthened by a genuine interest in, and empathy with, the subject matter under investigation.

Adventist scholars, therefore, will not have to deny their personal involvement with Adventism in order to claim scientific accuracy and achieve critical objectivity. However, the fact that they are not merely sympathetic spectators and friendly ‘outsiders’ but rather committed participants and involved ‘insiders’ raises further questions to which adequate answers are not easily found.

For example, are critical empathy and well-disposed neutrality a sufficient expression of their commitment to the Adventist faith? Or should we rather expect of them a certain degree of loyalty to the church – critical loyalty, to be sure, but nonetheless one that does not call into question its raison d’être nor its central affirmations of faith? But, then, who decides what constitutes the ‘essence’ of Adventism and whether the boundary line between permissible and unacceptable criticism has been overstepped? On the other hand, is it possible to turn the tension between critical objectivity and confessional commitment into a creative force? Or will those who attempt such a balance sooner or later have to choose between the two and fall back into a, however subtle, form of polemics or apologetics?

These questions demand the careful attention of Adventist historians and theologians in their search for an adequate historical methodology. For they deal with the perennial hermeneutical problem of the proper relationship between criticism and commitment, science and dogma, reason and faith.

To repeat it, is it possible for scholars committed to their profession as well as to their church to live with the

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8 For Van Austin Harvey (1966) for example, the radical autonomy and methodological skepticism of the historian are incompatible with orthodox Christian belief as the former’s will-to-truth clashes with the believer’s will-to-believe. Hans Künig (1968, 193), on the other hand, believes that "geschichtliche Interpretation vermag also Ehrfurcht vor dem Alten mit dem Mut zum Neuen zu verbinden, läßt aus der Loyalität heraus kritisch und aus der Kritik heraus loyal sein." He is followed by Adventist scholar Calvin B. Rock (1980, 1) who challenged his church to "hold in strictest equipoise the twin principles of absolute commitment and rigorous criticism."

9 See, e.g., the seminal study of R. G. Collingwood (1946). Cf. also Heussi 1932; Aron 1962; Becker 1958; and Popper 1957.

10 "No theory of historiography dare be so antiseptic in its definition of scholarly objectivity that it rules out the possibility of an existential reaction to the message announced in the sources" (Pelikan, 1917, 81; cf. ibid., 99–110).

11 Michael Pearson (1990, 12) has succinctly described the strengths and weaknesses of these two approaches. "The 'outsider' may succeed in achieving a certain objectivity but fails to understand the real heart of the movement, in spite of making serious efforts to remedy this ... An 'insider' will have the advantage of having a finger on its pulse, ... but faces two main dangers. On the one hand, out of a perhaps unconscious concern to vindicate a movement with which one’s own identity is inextricably bound up, one may produce research which tends to be apologetic in nature. On the other hand, familiarity may breed contempt, with the result that the analysis becomes unduly cynical."
tension between unbiased objectivity and confessional commitment without succumbing to a subtle form of apologetics hidden under the cloak of descriptive neutrality? And, on the other hand, will historians who aim at a critical and unbiased presentation of the history of their denomination be able to avoid the encroachments upon their research of philosophical and/or theological (pre-)judgments that imply a questioning of basic beliefs held by their church and add to their scholarly work a touch of polemics disguised as critical objectivity?

An analysis of previous attempts by Adventist scholars to present such an unbiased and non-confessional account of the history of their denomination does not suggest that one answers these questions with an unqualified Yes. Indeed, it appears to be extremely difficult, if not impossible, not to let one’s personal attitude (which is never truly objective or neutral) toward the church and its teachings affect one’s professional activity in some way.  

Of course, it must be admitted that the judgment as to whether a work actually reflects an apologetic bias or a polemical tendency is, in itself, a partly subjective enterprise and open to debate and disagreement. Moreover, it should always be remembered that empirical conclusions are only statements of probability, not of necessity, and may well be overthrown when new evidence comes to light.

But though it may be true that our inevitable human subjectivity will not even allow the best scholars to achieve total objectivity in their professional work, this is no reason to despair or abandon the ideal of unbiased research as such. For, as the recent historical studies on Adventism have also demonstrated, the very attempt to avoid inappropriate premises and dogmatic a prioris is well worth the while and constitutes an indispensable presupposition to a deeper and more accurate understanding of one’s denominational past.

Perhaps the best we can do is to become aware of our hidden assumptions, to concede our perspectival subjectivity, and to make room for different scholars to approach Adventist history from various angles without questioning each other’s determination to be as objective as we can possibly be. Should this be an agreeable position, then the best days of Seventh-day Adventist historical scholarship may still be ahead, and we should expect more learned and erudite studies to be published by devoted Adventist historians who are committed to the ongoing search for truth. As one of them has written:

The Seventh-day Adventist historian must frankly recognize that he is not only a historian, he is also a Seventh-day Adventist Christian. As he approaches the past, and particularly the past of his own church, he does so in this dual role – and finds that it is not always easy to keep the two roles separate. Many things he will find easy to explain in terms of human passion, social forces, and psychological ‘insights’. Yet he must also be conscious that his theological beliefs color his selection and interpretation of facts. These beliefs provide, in essence, the ‘glasses’ through which he views the past (Schwarz 1979, 8).

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12 While the dissertations of Mueller and Damsteegt seem to betray an underlying apologetic stance, the works written by Numbers and Lindén reflect a certain polemical tendency instead. However, another more recent attempt to present "a comprehensive, nonapologetic history of the denomination" written by six Adventist scholars has, in my opinion, pretty well lived up to its claim (Land, 1986, viii).
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"PAULIEN EPISTLES, 90s STYLE:
IMPLICATIONS OF AN EARLY ATTEMPT AT DISTANCE EDUCATION"

Jon Paulien
Andrews University

Initial Perspective

In Athens and Corinth Paul faced a problem of "distance education." The Church at Thessalonica was in trouble, but Paul's face was not welcome in town (1Thess 2:17-18). So he turned to the only distance education strategies available to him; correspondence courses (1 Thess 1:1, 5:27; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:14-15) and substitute teachers (1Thess 3:1-5).

These two strategies remained primary until very recent years. But now we are suddenly faced with not only a plethora of opportunities, but perhaps even an imperative to experiment with the new styles of learning as well as the new delivery systems that technology has thrust upon us. Net 98 forces us to think also about the educational task. Is it really possible for the "old, old, story" (New Testament) to be told effectively at a distance?(parable)

Some Questions to Ponder

In a world of information overload, how much will the teaching of the NT be affected? What is basic to any understanding of the NT, and what should be left to individual interest? Is it necessary anymore for students of NT to become repositories of memorized facts? What role is left for the gatekeepers of knowledge when the wall itself is gone?

In what ways can the NT Department at the Seminary work together with NT scholars around North America to improve both graduate and undergraduate education in NT?

What NT topics are best taught on campus? Which are best taught on extension campuses? Which are particularly suited to individualized learning through mail or the internet? Which can best be delivered in lecture mode over satellite?

What kind of teacher is best suited to distance education? What kind of student learns best through distance education? To what degree is distance education an appropriate medium for delivering ministerial education?

What NT topics are particularly relevant in the field right now, and what form of distance education could best deliver each of them?

Distance Education Options

- Extension campuses (traditional, merely change of location)
- By mail (audio and/or video cassettes, CD-ROMS, books and workbooks, individual teacher contact by email, in case of cohorts group contact by list serve)
- By satellite (one way lecture style, interaction by email, live chat, list serve, speaker phone, teacher doesn't see class)
- Interactive classroom (two-way video in two or more classrooms, students see teacher and vice versa by means of monitors)
- Internet (syllabi, course materials, CD-ROMS, etc. downloaded over the net, use of streaming audio and video can facilitate live contact, telephone may make live interaction possible in hundreds of homes at the same time)

**Possible NT Topics**

- Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced Greek
- NT Archaeology
- NT Backgrounds
- NT Text Criticism
- Formation of the NT Canon
- NT Hermeneutics
- NT Exegesis
  - Gospels
  - Acts
  - Epistles
  - Hebrews
  - Revelation
- NT Theology
  - Topical
  - By book
  - By Bible author
  - By contemporary author
- NT Ethics
SCHOLARSHIP AS SERVANTHOOD:
THE MINISTER AS SCHOLAR

Randal Roberts
Loma Linda University

I. Introduction
   A. Defining the terms
      1) Minister
      2) Scholar

II. The Minister as Scholar?
   A. Educational levels
   B. Comparisons to other fields
   C. Continuing education
   D. Continuing scholarship

III. Reasons for Scholarship in Ministry
   A. Inform the church's theology
   B. Credibility of the ministry
   C. Depth in preaching and teaching

IV. Ways to Develop Scholarship
   A. Personal study
   B. Continuing education
   C. Further education

V. Conclusion
THEOLOGY AND CHURCH HISTORY SECTION

Fritz Guy
La Sierra University

Participants

Adams, Roy
Andriamirisoa, Sally
Douglas, Walter
Dwyer, Bonnie
Freed, Anne
Guy, Fritz (convener)
Kennedy, D. Robert
Lee, Changyoung
McGraw, Paul

Morgan, Douglas
Nam, Julius
Parris, Ralph
Poehler, Rolf
Reeve, John
Rice, Richard
Vyhmeister, Werner
Whidden, Woodrow
Zbaraschuk, Michael

Discussion

Question:

Let us suppose we are a commission appointed by the North American Division of the General Conference directed to make recommendations for an Adventist theological agenda for the first two decades of the twenty-first century. What topics would we propose?

Principal response from the group:

Community of faith
What does it mean?
What forms should it take?
What is the role of the Holy Spirit?

Revelation
What is it?
How does it function?

Sabbath

Inter-religious dialogue

Theology
What is the theological task?
How is it accomplished?

Eschatology
Should there be a sense of urgency?
What is the meaning of the nonoccurrence of the eschaton?
SCHOLARSHIP IN THE SERVICE OF THE CHURCH: 
WOMEN IN MINISTRY: BIBLICAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

A Case Study
Nancy Vyhmeister
SDA Theological Seminary

One month after the 1995 vote at the Utrecht session of the General Conference, to not allow the North American Division to go ahead with the ordination of women pastors, several North American Division union presidents came to Andrews for the annual meeting of Seminary faculty and North American Division personnel. As we discussed items of mutual interest, one of them asked how the Seminary could have sent two representatives to Utrecht with such divergent views on the ordination of Adventist women to the gospel ministry. In the ensuing conversation, it became evident that both faculty members and visiting administrators felt that the question of the propriety of ordaining women to ministry had not been carefully studied, much less resolved. Their parting request was for the Seminary to undertake a major study on the topic.

The Dean’s Council discussed the request and during the fall quarter of 1995 decided to constitute an Ad hoc Committee on Hermeneutics and Ordination, with two members appointed by each of the six departments and two students. The departments chose their representatives and during the winter quarter--when my husband and I were in South America, the Dean’s Council appointed me to chair the committee. At our first meeting, the committee appointed Jerry Moon to be our secretary.

The committee first met in March of 1996. From the first meeting we spent time on our knees, giving ourselves and our work to God, worshiping Him, and requesting wisdom for the task. After considering ways to accomplish our assignment, we decided to prepare a many-faceted book on ministry, ordination, and women. By the end of spring quarter--with two-hour meetings every other Monday afternoon, we had decided which chapters should make up the book and who would author them.

After the summer’s break, the committee began to read and critique finished chapters. After discussing some chapters, we asked the authors to rewrite and resubmit. Other times we merely asked for small modifications. No chapter was accepted until the whole committee felt comfortable with its contents and presentation.

These sessions continued the whole school year. By May of 1997 the Ad hoc Committee had become a body, a praying, thinking, talking, loving group of brothers and sisters. We often commented on the beauty of the relationship that had developed. No, we did not always agree. But we learned to love and respect each other. I believe I speak for all of us: What we experienced is unforgettable, a foretaste of heaven.

As often happens, some of our authors were unable to meet their deadlines. Our work spilled over into the following school year. The last chapter to be considered, actually the first one of the book, only came toward the end of the 1997-1998 school year. As editor, on the basis of our shared pilgrimage, I wrote the prologue and epilogue for the book.

After a first editing, the work was sent out in March of 1998 to selected readers outside our own group. We asked them to read carefully and point out flaws in the pieces. Their responses varied. Some were enthusiastic; others were less convinced. I must admit that we did not get the detailed critique we had hoped for. In spite of all, the exercise was worthwhile. We thank the 23 readers for their time and insight. Some of them will recognize modifications made at their suggestion.
Contents of the book

I. Ministry in the Bible
   1. The priesthood of all believers -- Raoul Dederen
   4. The meaning of laying on of hands in the Bible -- Keith Mattingly

II. Ordination through the centuries
   5. Ordination in the early Christian centuries -- Daniel Augsburger
   6. Ordination among early Seventh-day Adventists -- George Knight
   7. Ellen G. White on ordination -- Denis Fortin
   8. A theological understanding of ordination -- Russell Staples

III. Women in the leadership and ministry
   9. Women in leadership Old and New Testaments -- JoAnn Davidson
   10. Ellen G. White on women in ministry -- Jerry Moon
   11. Women in ministry in the late nineteenth century — Mike Bernoi
   12. Recent history and the current situation of women in SDA ministry -- Randal Wisbey

IV. Perceived impediments to women in ministry
   13. Headship: In the Bible -- Richard Davidson
   14. Headship: In Ellen White — Peter van Bemmelen
   15. 1 Corinthians 11-14 -- Larry Richards
   16. 1 Timothy 2:11-15 -- Nancy Vyhmeister
   17. Feminism, women’s rights, and Ellen White — Alicia Worley

V. Other considerations
   18. The issue of justice -- Roger Dudley
   19. Parallels between interpretations on slavery and women -- Walter Douglas
   20. Cross-cultural hermeneutics — Jon Dybdahl

As the book tells you, we do not consider this the final word on the topic. It is simply the best we could do in the time we had. With only a touch of pride I can say that there is no other book that conveys as much carefully researched and written information about ministry, ordination, and women. Yet, this book is only a basis for the conversation that must yet take place. Opinions and convictions need to be aired, tested, discussed—in Christian love, with a view to the advancement of God’s kingdom. This is the task that remains, first of all to the Seminary faculty, but no less to all Adventist scholars.

The response from the church in North America has been generally positive. In fact, the gratitude expressed by church leaders has been most rewarding. Reactions to the hundreds of copies sent overseas through the kindness of anonymous donors have not yet begun to come in. There are negative reactions, but so far they only point to feelings of discomfort, not specific problems.

On the wall in my office hangs a poster. By the image of a person kneeling in prayer are the words: “Even when they disagree, Christians should share the same position.” When we submit our scholarship to God, whatever the results, the church always benefits.

*Women in Ministry* is available from the ABC or Andrews University Press at 11.95.
BEYOND MODERNISM: SCHOLARSHIP AND "SERVANTHOOD"

A. Gerhard van Wyk
Department of Practical Theology
University of South Africa

Introduction: Post-modern or postmodernism?
Progressively more scholars believe that we are living in a post-modern age and our traditional modernistic way of understanding this world is coming to an end.¹ Murphy states that a dramatic change in "thinking strategy" has occurred amongst Anglo-American intellectuals during the last half of the century. This can be described as a "paradigm" shift that has important implications for theology and in particular for conservative theologians that insist on God's special action in the world, as well as for the authority of the Bible.² If these statements are regarded as valid it will challenge us, as scholars, with difficult, but also with creative and even radical new opportunities.

The title of this paper: Beyond modernism: Scholarship and "Servanthood", indicates a serious effort to move beyond modernism.³ By designating the title of this paper, "Beyond Modernism", I indicate that I wish to differentiate between modernity and modernism.⁴ The concept modernism represents a positivistic approach that is characterized by, inter alia, rationalism, empiricism, reductionism and mechanism. In view of the fact that my own vision is still being tinged by the modern world view I have not designated this paper as "beyond modernity" but rather "beyond modernism". By designating my position as "beyond modernism", I actually present a "post-modern", (with a hyphen to distinguish it), approach.⁵ Post-modernity should not, however, be equated with the concept of the postmodernism

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¹ S Toulmin. 1982. Return to cosmology. Postmodern science and the theology of nature (Berkeley: University of California Press): 254 & WE Doll. 1993. A postmodern perspective on curriculum (New York: Teachers College Press): 3. SJ Grenz, 1996, A primer on postmodernism (Grand Rapids: WB Eerdmans): 2, says that we experience a cultural shift that challenges the change from premodernity to modernity. We see the signs of a monumental change in all aspects of contemporary culture, although it is not yet sure what will characterize this emerging epoch. P Cilliers, 1995 in Postmodern knowledge and complexity (Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif vir Wysbegeerte, 14,3): 126, states that a postmodern condition is not merely the result of willful acts by theorists, but it is due to the complexities of the linguistic and social spaces.


³ For a critique on modernism see RA Morrow & CA Rorres. 1995. Social theory and education. A critique of theories of social and cultural reproduction (New York: State University of New York Press): 409. They maintain that modernism has drawn from scientific thought and the pre-eminence of reason to develop specific interpolations like: (1) Abstract work whereby nature and values can be controlled and manipulated. (2) Individualization - with its risk of alienation and estrangement. (3) Liberalism - to link up with positive science. (4) Futurism that is built on the progress of programs based on human reason. (5) Secularization, which avoids the relapse into notions of the sacred and which in turn may lead to faith ruling human affairs.

⁴ Regarding my own position, I am still bound to use the tools of modernity. I do not, however, wish to accommodate a "late modern" position. For a critique on late modernism see E van Niekerk. 1995. Faith, theology and post-modernity. Package 2 (Pretoria: University of South Africa): 1-21.

⁵ WE Doll. 1993. A post-modern perspective on curriculum (New York: Teachers College Press): 57-85. The hyphen indicates that the past (that is modernity, but not modernism) is important; the past, however, needs to be transcended. Modernism means to make modernity into an absolute and final state of affairs.
which changes post-modernity into an absolute and final notion. My "post-modern" position could rather be placed within the constructive post-modern thought than within deconstructive postmodernism. This post-modern vision looks to the past and it transcends it in such a way that the new is built on the old. It will both accommodate and "stretch" the past and modernity. I have thus chosen to speak of a "post-modern" vision rather than of a "model" or even of an "approach".

From premodernism to modernism

Pre-modernity looks at things in an organic way. God was regarded as the center of the world and also of our understanding. Pre-modernity, however, was progressively replaced, to a large extent, by a positivistic view of science. While Plato and Aristotle separated ideas from objects they at least still believed that these notions needed each other. Their thoughts nevertheless anticipated the foundation of the modern positivistic science. Scientists like Copernicus (1473-1543), Kepler (1571 - 1630) and in particular Galileo (1564 - 1642) closed the door of pre-modernity and opened the door to a new world view. They insisted that the world has to be interpreted from a strictly quantitative point of view. This position was strengthened by the ideas of Descartes (1596 - 1650). In his Discourse on Method he establishes the foundations of knowledge by presenting his beliefs vis-a-vis radical doubt. The certainty that remains in confronting

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6 PM Rosenau. 1995. Affirmatives and skeptics (In WT Anderson. The truth about the truth. New York: Purnam Books) :107. He states that post-modernists come in many shapes and sizes - upbeat post-modernists, despairing post-modernists and post-modernists who do not appreciate being called post-modernists. Whereas postmodernism is stimulating and fascinating, it finds itself at the same time on the brink of confusion. See also E van Niekerk. 1995. Postmodern theology (In Faith, theology and post-modernity. Package 2. Pretoria: University of South Africa): 1. He states that although the term "postmodernism" has been used to describe many social tendencies and experiences, there are some recurring themes in the post-modern debate. Some of these are contingency, randomness, lateral networking versus hierarchical oppositions, multi-facetedness and a protest against progress.

7 JW van Huyssteen. 1997. Should we be trying so hard to be post-modern? A response to Drees, Haught and Yeager (Zygon, 32.4) :571. He states that Rosenau tentatively distinguishes between two streams of thought in the current post-modern debate: Affirmative and sceptical postmodernity. "Sceptical modernism is the dark side of postmodernism, (cf. also Lotter 1995, 55), and it offers a pessimistic, negative, gloomy assessment by arguing that the post-modern age, in its complete break with modernity, is an age of fragmentation, disintegration and meaninglessness, with a vagueness or even an absence of moral parameters, a postmodernism of despair (cf. Rosenau 1992, 15). Affirmative postmodernists, on the other hand, although they agree with sceptical postmodernists in their critique of modernity, have a more hopeful and optimistic view of the post-modern age.” This affirmative kind of postmodernism is open to responsible normative choices. See also WT Anderson. 1995. Four different ways to be absolutely right (The truth about the truth. New York GP Putnam’s Sons) :112, 113. He places scholars like Richard Rorty and Thomas Kuhn within a constructivist world view. He designates the second group as those who are “post-modern players”. Their position is more “an attitude” than an “intellectual position”. The third group is the nihilists and they believe that since not all the conflicting beliefs can be true they must all be phoney.

8 J Degenaar. 1996. The collapse of unity (In CW du Toit. New models of thinking on the eve of a new century. Pretoria: University of South Africa Press) :6. He maintains that the pre-modern discourse is characterised by the absence of a so-called critical approach. The pre-modern discourse is structured by the language of the community to which one belongs.


10 WE Doll. 1993. A post-modern perspective on curriculum: 20. Quantifying results became the central technique of the emerging positive scientific enterprise. Galileo believed that God used the alphabet of mathematics to write the laws of nature.
doubt is that the thinking subject is doubting. Therefore the certainty of knowledge rests in the fact that the thinking self is the “first truth” that doubt cannot deny, namely, I think, therefore I am (Cogito ergo sum). He argues “I could receive it without scruple as the first principle of philosophy...”11 This led to a new conception of the human person. Humans are “thinking substances” and “autonomous rational beings”.12 Descartes “rightly conducting reason for seeking truth” had faith in mental reflection and an external order that is expressed in a manner that we can understand and accumulate accurate empirical observation. This enclosed a naïve idealism in human abilities and in the one-to-one relationship between what we think reality is and reality itself.13 Descartes’ four methodological rules for directing reason searching for truth made it clear that there is no dynamic relationship between fact and theory, practicality and imagination. Whatever is true or factual is not “created” by the human mind, but it is “discovered”.14 For Descartes there was not only an external reality that was set up by a rational, “geometrical” God, but this reality was unaffected by our personal activities and prejudices. He even went further and separated reality into primary and secondary qualities. The primary qualities are those of position, size, shape and motion and they are objective and mathematical in nature.15 The secondary qualities are “things” like color, odor, taste, texture and sound and they are less real and are inferior to the primary. Personal feelings and intuitions are thus not a source of knowledge. Descartes’ subject-object dualism made nature and “things” “objects” to be manipulated by “reason”.16

For the next three hundred years philosophers and theologians accepted the primacy of reason advocated by Descartes. His view that the truths of mathematics arise from the nature of reason itself and that they are more certain than knowledge which is derived from empirical observation paved the way for the ideal of “rationality” and “objective knowledge”.17 Doll argues that control was very important for the modernistic paradigm. It was born of both a positive vision and a hidden fear - the fear of “...loosening the tautness of the string of control”.18


13 R Descartes. 1637/1950. Discourse on method. Meditations on the first philosophy principles of philosophy. (London: JM Dent & Sons): 27. Descartes stated: “[There are] certain laws which God has so established in nature... that after sufficient reflection we cannot doubt that they are exactly observed in all which exists or which happens in the world.”


15 I De La Potterie. 1982. History and truth: 89. For Descartes mathematical truth is the model of all truth. He limited the object of metaphysics to distinct and clear ideas. The objects of research must have the proofs of arithmetic and geometry.

16 SJ Grenz. 1996. A primer on postmodernism (Grand Rapids: WB Eerdmans Publishers): 3. He states that the modern person "...can appropriately be characterized as Descartes' autonomous, rational substance encountering Newton's mechanistic world".

17 W E Doll. 1993. A post-modern perspective on curriculum (New York: Teachers College): 113 & 140. Pierre Laplace, Henri de Saint-Simon and Auguste Comte had a vision of a new age - an industrial and technocratic age. Progress did not only seem possible but was regarded as inevitable. Philosophy and the positivistic science had created their own rules in the game of knowledge and allowed only rationalistic knowledge and that knowledge consists in definitions.

18 Ibid: 29.
Newtonian mechanics led to the rejection of the organic view.\textsuperscript{19} Here reality was reduced to basic mechanical elements: every particle is "what it is apart from the other". These particles were regarded as autonomous units and together they formed a machine. They are touching each other in a machine-like way but they do not affect the inner nature of each other.\textsuperscript{20} Armed with this "atomistic" model, modern science and technology attained great triumphs. From Newton's \textit{Principia Mathematica} it is clear that the universe has a simple symmetry. Within this symmetry is a set of linear, causative relations accessible to exact mathematical description. The "natural" order of Newton's universe was both simple and observable.\textsuperscript{21}

Both Descartes and Newton sought to use the power of reason to enhance a theological agenda. People started to speak about this world from a quantitative approach rather than a qualitative approach. Rationalism became the accepted norm and replaced revelation and the perspective of faith.\textsuperscript{22}

\textbf{Modernistic Science}

Descartes' reasoning "I think, therefore I am", Newton's mechanistic world view (\textit{Mathematical principles of Natural Philosophy}), the further developments during the Enlightenment and the "success" of scientific research resulted in an unqualified confidence in scientific inquiry and the deification of specifically technical rationality. "Science" became a dogma instead of remaining just another discipline. It has mastered the art of "control" so well that it was "mushrooming its methods into a metaphysic" and thus creating "scientism".\textsuperscript{23} Modern thought very soon adopted a mechanistic, atomistic and positivistic perspective and this adoration of science led to its deification that reached its heyday in the early 1960's.\textsuperscript{24} Scientists were regarded as people who could produce exact and unambiguous knowledge.

These developments were also influential in giving rise to the so-called "exact" sciences. These scientists assumed that they were dealing with "facts" and "objective" data. These so-called "exact" sciences, also introduced themselves to a large extent, as the ultimate solution. In the year that Charles Darwin published his Origin of Species, Herbert Spencer asked and answered the question: What kind of knowledge is worth the most? His reply was: "science".\textsuperscript{25}

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\textsuperscript{21} WE Doll. 1993. \textit{A post-modern perspective on curriculum} : 27. Philosophers like Voltaire, who took Newtonian mechanics to France, proclaimed this science to be the "messiah" of the world. Doll maintains that the "... dismissal of God as a working hypothesis, which Laplace did so easily, was but the final stop in the march from organicism to mechanism, from inherent essences to mathematical formulae".

\textsuperscript{22} S Grenz. 1995. \textit{A primer on postmodernism}: 57-81.

\textsuperscript{23} W E Doll. 1993 : 2.

\textsuperscript{24} Modern science accepted an epistemology and a methodology that were reductionistic. \textit{Psychology}, and in particular Freud and many of his colleagues, proclaimed that human beings were determined by their biological composition. \textit{Classical Behaviourism} regarded humans as determined by their social context, whereas \textit{Marxism} believed that human beings were merely the product of their labor. \textit{Empiricism} and the \textit{correspondence view of truth} led modern science to believe that truth can be determined in an absolute and comprehensive way. \textit{The theory of evolution} was constructed and empowered by modernism's world view. Modern science with it's "successful" and persuasive technological development empowered evolution: "... our world is progressively becoming better."

\textsuperscript{25} H Spencer. 1859/1929. \textit{Education: Intellectual, moral and physical} (London: Williams & Norgate) : 84-85. gaining a livelihood... Science, for parental functions... Science, for good citizenship... Science, for the enjoyment of art... Science, for the purpose of discipline... Science. Science... is the best preparation for all these orders of
Science, and in particular positivistic science, became the foundation on which the modernist paradigm has been built and it framed our intellectual, social and theological thought. Reason was bound by and defined in terms of scientific technology. This modernist paradigm introduced an understanding of a social, psychological and physical environment in which not only a positivistic science developed but also a generation of scientists who claimed absolute truths from an exclusive stance. This modernistic approach determined our world view, thinking, methodology and the nature of scholarship. Theology developed methodology that accommodated the criteria of these "exact" sciences. Tracy makes this notable conclusion: "Then theology - as in the modern period - becomes obsessed with finding exactly the right method, the irrefutable modern rational argument, the proper horizon of intelligibility for comprehending and perhaps controlling God. To be sure insights continue to occur. Genuine arguments are forged. Brilliant speculations ensue. Better methods, more exact and exacting hermeneutics are developed. All the modern achievements of theology are indeed significant." Tracy, however, then continues and states: "But we are all, willingly or unwillingly, being forced to leave modernity."

Rationalism

Modernism may, in the first instance, be "characterized" by rationalism. Rationalism determined, to a large extent, the "nature" of theology and its reductionistic approach to truth. The enlightenment project was built on the epistemological assumption that the modern "mind" can obtain certain and absolute knowledge. It put an absolute faith in rational capabilities. It is believed that the discovery of more knowledge is always good and the progress in science will set us free from bondage.

After Descartes' knowledge was regarded as a separate and isolated notion, removed from the experiences and wisdom of life, truth was now more and more defined with concepts and revelation and faith were explained by way of activity."

26 WE Doll. 1993. A postmodern perspective on curriculum: 1. He maintains that "...science of this Spencerian type - a modernist adaptation of Rene Descartes' rationalism and Isaac Newton's empiricism - has become for the social sciences, and hence for education and curriculum, a paradigm".

27 P Cilliers. 1995. Postmodern knowledge and complexity (Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif vir Wysbegeerte, 14,3): 128. He maintains that positivistic science shifted from verification to falsification. "...if one cannot add to the grid, you could at least disqualify unwanted members." He concludes that everything that was too complex or contained unpredictability was disregarded. "Subsequently, large parts of the totality of human knowledge are disregarded as unscientific."


29 WT Anderson. 1995. Four different ways to be absolutely right (The truth about the truth). New York: Putnam: 110-1. He argues that there are at least four distinguishable world views, each with its own language of public discourse and its epistemology: (1) The postmodern-ironist who believes that truth is socially constructed; (2) the scientific rational who finds truth through methodical and disciplined inquiry; (3) the social traditional rationalist who maintains that truth is found in the heritage of the Western world and (4) the neo-romantic who finds truth by being in harmony with nature and/or spiritual discovery of the inner self. Anderson maintains that the scientific-rational and the social-traditional approaches are conservative world views that are holding onto the values of a modern world that is "...beginning to look kind of shaky".


31 I De La Potterie. 1982. History and truth: 89. He further states that "...Platonic idealism, with its strong metaphysical structure and its keen sense of transcendence of God, could not survive as such in the modern age that is so profoundly rationalistic and positivistic".

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of propositions.32

Whereas truth was at first separated from history33 it later became, for the modern mind, that which "... passed the test of scientific verification or is guaranteed by solid historical documentation".34 According to the presuppositions of this approach truth is found solely by scientific and historical research and it cannot be found by faith.35 Pure rational truth alone started to dominate the "... confused and uncertain material of sense experience".36 Researchers shifted their emphasis from making "good judgements" to making "accurate predictions".37 The Western world was characterized as a "triumph of the mind" and in this regard as the Cartesian mind. Groome maintains that this "... demeaned the function of memory and imagination in knowing, and excluded the corporeal, the affective, the aesthetic, and the relational". He also concludes that it was a narrow epistemology and rationality that excluded not only many aspects of a person, but most people as well.38

Scholars' desire "to know" became degraded only to a rabid quest for rational certainty and institutionalized reason without also setting it free to other dimensions in life.39 This quest for certainty is mostly in the realm of ideas and not

32 I De La Potterie: 90. He states that this was in particular noticeable in the way theologians spoke of truth.

"Whereas Scripture and the older tradition always used aletheia or veritas in the singular and meant by the term the definite revelation Jesus has made, 19th century theology became increasingly accustomed to using the word in the plural and speaking of the truths of faith; such a practice meant a risk of absolutizing in formulas the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. The language used becomes abstract: 'Ineffable truths proposed by ... divine revelation'. "

33 There is, however, something in common between the views of Plato and the Enlightenment as they both isolate truth from history. See also I De La Potterie. 1982: 90. He says that "... the result is, that here again, but in a quite different sense than in Platonism, Christ, whose divinity is now denied, '... is radically cut off from history with its contingency and servitudes. He comes on the scene as a superman who brings truth that is valid at all times and outside of time... Time and history are in principle completely neutral and irrelevant and set no conditions, truth is universal".

34 I De La Potterie. 1982. Historical truth became the only truth. Only facts that have been documented and controlled by all can be scientific and guarantee the objectivity of history. This paved the way for critical historical methods to give the real picture of the Biblical text. De La Potterie states that these methods can discover only the external aspect of Christ's person; it is unaware of the mystery of His life and thus of His truth.

35 I De La Potterie. 1982: 94-97. He states that truth later became an existential experience under the influence of Max Stirner and Soren Kierkegard.

36 I De La Potterie. 1982. History and truth:89. According to him a similar position was held in Leibniz. Knowledge of truth has nothing to do with common experience. Pure reason only deals with truths independent of the senses. Philosophical presuppositions like this prepared the way for Lessing's axiom at the time of the Enlightenment: "Accidental truths of history can never become the proof of necessary truths of reason."


38 TH Groome. 1997. Religious knowing: Still looking for that tree (Religious Education, 92, 2) : 207 & 208. He maintains that the "... Enlightenment rationality, with its battle cry of 'dare to think' (Kant), has been turned against itself with a vengeance. So much of the critical literature of the post-Enlightenment era has been a devastating critique of its epistemic paradigm - especially of its naive rationalism, exclusivity, individualism, feigned objectivity, and lack of recognition of its own politics and social interest".

39 JD Caputo. 1987. Radical hermeneutics. Repetition, deconstruction and the hermeneutic project (Bloomington: Indiana University Press :229. Caputo asks the question: "Do we not require both?" This means that it is both rational certainty and an openness to other aspects of life. He concludes that we need an undecidable fluctuation between institutional and non-institutional reasoning.
in the sphere of ethics or behavior. "Common sense" wisdom was dismissed and the only knowledge regarded as valid was "scientific" knowledge.\footnote{40} Kant's "pure reason" and the "autonomy of reason" is a dangerous abstraction, "... for reason is always already embedded in systems of power".\footnote{42} Caputo states in this regard that to a great extent reason soon came to mean a kind of logic that supports systems of power which are currently in place, whereas irrationality becomes that which is without power.\footnote{45}

According to Conradie "post-reformed" theology progressively emphasized the cognitive element of faith.\footnote{44} With such an emphasis of knowledge in theology, theology becomes knowledge about God and not knowledge of God. Scripture is regarded as a compilation of eternal and rationalistic truths about God in the Newtonian mechanistic sense of the word. Within this approach theology is assigned to task to formulating truths in an absolute meticulous and accurate way. This, however, is often done within an a-historical context. Theology then falls prey to an intellectualism losing its dynamic moment as a contemporary event. Some late-modern theologies, however, have followed Habermas' conduit method, not allowing any historical or other influences in communication.\footnote{45} This conduit metaphor eliminates all "noises" and regards them as disturbances that is not viable for communication between person and person, or between text and person.\footnote{46}

A post-modern vision questions the rationalistic reading of the Bible assuming that the texts of the Bible were provided by a pure value-free rationalism. This enables us to prescribe either a low view or a high view of Scripture - the Bible contains no difficult challenging statements or it contains many (or at least some!) contradictory statements.\footnote{47} With the assistance of some or other rationalistic and mechanistic tools we can eliminate all the remaining "noises". A rationalistic reading of the Bible is a reductionistic reading and deprive the Bible of its dynamic story of God's

\footnote{40} F.E. Deist. 1991. South-Africanising Biblical Studies (In Scriptura, 37) : 38. He states that "African" thinking does not give "...priority to the idea, but to action, not to theory but to practice. Thus an idea cannot be right or wrong in principle or in abstractive. It can only 'be judged once the idea has materialized in a deed, and the deed can only be called right if its outcome is beneficial...".

\footnote{41} See also PS Dreyer. 1990. Die filosofie van Immanuel Kant en Protestants-teologiese denkstrukture (In Hervormde teologiese studies, 46,4) : 589 & 592. According to him Kant stated that miracles have to be explainable in a rational way, otherwise it cannot be accepted as miracles. He says that Kant changed the Christian religion into a rationalistic philosophical system.


\footnote{43} JD Caputo. 1987 : 229. He states that "... it is of the essence of the power which institutionalized reason exerts that it is able to define what is out of power as 'irrational' ".

\footnote{44} EM Conradie. 1990. Modelle van teologie as handeling (Scriptura S6) : 15.

\footnote{45} E van Niekerk, 1995, Postmodern theology : 9, states that Habermas' conduit metaphor is a "... sealed communicative pipeline from person to person or a multiplicity of individual pipelines between this person and the next one".

\footnote{46} E van Niekerk,1995, Postmodern theology :8, says that according to the conduit metaphor of reading a text must have the "... least intrusions, distortions, interferences and misprints to 'prove' that it is the purest and thus the correct interpretation". This conduit metaphor is based on the Claude Shannon information theory.

\footnote{47} This paper assumes the point of view that the Bible is always reinterpreted by our presuppositions and we should, in a reflexive way, determine these assumptions before we accept a position on the Bible. There is a difference between what we designate as a Biblical view and "our view" of what is meant by a Biblical view.
salvation and liberation. Rationalistic modern scholars need to acknowledge that religion is also about affect, awe, wonder, reverence, guilt, fear and love. Van Niekerk argues that to “... let the divide between the senses and thinking or imagination run in tandem like Bacon is no longer satisfactory... Thinking experience ... is episodic emphatic experience in and through one’s senses in the total bodily sense of the word”. Modernistic scholars often divorce the will from feelings, thinking that Christian people should be “rational” people. Reason alone cannot guide value judgements in an adequate way. Astley says reason is blind in this area. Reason divorced from emotions is no longer human and thus no longer reasonable. Whereas we need to “reason” about our emotions, it cannot and must not replace affective and conative modes. Rationality has to be related to cultural, social and psychological contexts. If it does not my own reductionistic context will determine the nature of my scholarship. Rationality cannot merely consist in intellectual and cognitive consistency, nor be the “fact finding instrument” that David Hume took it to be.

Although this paper is not about a specific view of the Scripture, it may be in order at this stage to make a statement of faith: The Bible is not the Word of God, however, it is a most important pointer to God’s Word, to God’s Heart, to God’s Actions, to God’s Story, to ...., etc. The Bible points beyond itself, beyond our interpretations and hermeneutical tools to a living and dynamic God! We should not reduce the Bible to an “object” through rationalism.

A search for objectivity and absolute truth

48 In the light of van Peursen’s statement that “... the most important change in recent philosophy is that ‘Rationality’ does not function any more as an absolute standard”, this paper assumes the point of view that there are no absolute or final rationalistic standards according to which the Bible can be read. See CA van Peursen. 1991. Ratio and imaginatio (South African Journal of philosophy, 10,3) : 64. It is not, however, suggested that theology can employ an esoteric method. The concept esoteric means a method which employs statements of faith that cannot be questioned and further discussed in a theological debate. Thielicke speaks of “Die nova oobedentia gibt der Vernunft die Freiheit gegenüber den unwissend von ihr getragenen Diktaturen”. See Johan Andre Wolfaardt, Kerklike konfrontasie oorde (Groningen: VRB Offsetdrukkerij, 1971) : 63.

49 J Astley. 1994. The philosophy of Christian religious education (Birmingham AL.: Religious Education Press) : 228. He states that “... despite the risk we run of having emotions, including the risk of these emotions being or becoming irrational, we would not be human without them”.

50 J Astley. 1994. The philosophy of Christian religious education : 228. He argues that sometimes we are at our most Christian “... when we do love ‘too well’, against all reason and ‘despite the evidence’ ”.

51 J Astley. 1994. The philosophy of Christian religious education: 232. He argues that we should reject the personification of “Reason” as an opponent to “Feeling”. They are both aspects of our motives.

52 E van Niekerk. 1996. I [we] believe ... a confession for a proposition, a discovery or a construct, a phrase or a phase, a medication or a mixture, a human condition or a snippet from a theory of faith. (Inaugural lecture) : 14. He argues that “...from the medieval period until the 17th century the main experiential ideas of subiectum and objectum went through an interesting process. Subiectum in that period had to be understood as the topical object of a person’s ‘thinking and action’ and should not be seen as a passive object in the modern sense of the word.... Later the notion of an object became the standard designation for subiectum”. See also SJ Grenz. 1996. A primer on postmodernism : 4. He argues that the Enlightenment project had the assumption that the modern “mind” can determine knowledge in a certain and objective way. Tutorial letter 103/1988 (Biblical Studies, BSA 302-3) : 32 & 34, states that fundamentalists “... maintain that there is such a thing as ‘objective truth’ and that it is possible to establish it. According to this letter one of the founders of fundamentalism is Charles H Hodge. He argued that there is a great distinction between theories and facts. Theories are human constructions and are subjective. Facts are of divine origin and thus objective. There is thus a clear “... distinction between objective and subjective knowledge”. The latter is associated with “... theories, feelings, experience, practical or superficial knowledge; objective knowledge, on the other hand, rests on facts, proof, logic and reason”.

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A second important aspect of modernism after rationalism is its search for absolute and objective truths. Descartes’ *cogito ergo sum* sets a process in motion that created an “objective” world. Rorty maintains that the Western culture has centered itself around this notion of the search for truth and the desire for objectivity. He argues that this tradition ran from the Greek philosophers through the Enlightenment. It has, however, turned away from solidarity to objectivity. With the emerging of the view of the “mind-as-inner-space” science was distracted from the search for wisdom to the quest for knowledge or rationality seen in terms of a correct representation. Tracy describes this modernist view of science as follows: It “...found its apex in the positivistic view of science: her, objective, true scientific knowledge is grounded in empirical facts that are uninterpreted, indubitable, and fixed in meaning; theories are derived from these facts by induction or deduction are accepted or rejected solely on their ability to survive objective experimentation; finally, science progresses by the gradual accumulation of facts.”

Scholars demanding “objectivity” in their research can be associated with a generalized method used in the natural sciences. Van Niekerk notes that the British philosopher Alfred Ayer (in his *Language, truth and logic*) adopted this method: to be scientific meant conforming to the natural sciences. Judged by this criterion, ethics and theology are therefore emotive theories and not scientific. Modernistic scientists saw themselves as researchers who produce exact and unambiguous knowledge, and establish absolute truths. The absolute abstraction and reduction of human nature is, for example, an important characterization of modernism.

Post-modern scholars maintain that the highest ideal for modernistic academics, namely to be objective, is created by default. Being influenced by the Cartesian understanding of objectivity, they have confused this so-called objectivity with relative consensus about matters. This is not only done by supplying so-called proofs from the Bible or from “suitable” empirical research but also what Derrida would designate as “logocentrism”. Scholars try to bypass the figurative “nature” of language and are “longing for presence” hoping to find a privileged position outside language. This will ensure them a position of fixed meanings and a view of reason that is a universal norm of understanding.

**Conservative and liberal presuppositions: An objective and absolute reading of the Biblical text?**

See also A Megill (ed.). *Rethinking objectivity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press). This collection presents two kinds of attacks on the old meaning of objectivity: (1) Objectivity has been used and is being used as a cover by the powerful who are imposing their interest on others; (2) Objectivity needs to be redefined in terms of intersubjectivity.

53 E van Niekerk. 1996. *I [we] believe ... a confession for a proposition, a discovery or a construct, a phrase or a phase, a mediation or a mixture, a human condition or a snippet from a theory. (Inaugural lecture. Pretoria: University of South Africa) : 5.


57 Modernism described the “absolute subject” as one who “thinks therefore he is”, “produces therefore she is”, “I have a certain gender”, or “I have a certain pigmentation” therefore I am. See in this regard E.van Niekerk. 1995. Postmodern theology : 5.

58 R. Rorty. 1996. “Solidarity or objectivity” : 579. He states that “...such institutional backups for beliefs take the form of bureaucrats and policemen, not of ‘rules of language’ and ‘criteria of rationality’ ”.

Both “confessional” and “liberal” scholars, sailing in the same modernistic boat, are seeking for an objective reading of the biblical text. They are still being enslaved by the modernistic communication paradigm: “Religious dialogue was often more than a contest to demonstrate ‘We’re right’.” Tracy maintains that when there is a problem of correlating theos and logos, theology becomes obsessed with finding exactly the “right method” and the “irrefutable modern rational argument” for understanding and even perhaps for controlling God.

Confessional scholars, on the one hand, protest against any information that does not suit their status quo, but on the other hand they are in accordance with the basic points of departure of the modernistic paradigm. Fundamentalists, with an irrational rationality and an ad hoc incorporation of a metaphysics of understanding, the so-called guidance of the Holy Spirit, the verbal inspiration of the Bible and with so-called objective tools, like the grammatical-historical method, or the dicta probantia method, believe that it is the Bible per se that supply them with “proofs” and absolute “Biblical” statements.

“Liberal” scholars, on the other hand, most often accommodate the so-called scientific approach and use these “scientific” tools and positivistic methods, like the historical-critical method, to interpret the Scriptures and to determine what the Bible “really says”.

Modernistic scholars need to be confronted with Deist’s statement, namely that this approach of surrendering all presuppositions to the text of the Bible cannot be done. We cannot make any observation if we do not have a frame of reference. Mannheim’s statement is thus important: it is not only my enemies’ knowledge that tends to be ideological - but all knowledge is socially (and I may add, also culturally) determined and hence ideologically tinged.

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60 R. Rorty. 1996. “Solidarity or objectivity?” : 574-575. He maintains that “...we are the heirs of this objectivist tradition, which centers around the assumption that we must step outside our community long enough to examine it in the light of something which transcends it, namely, that which it has in common with every other actual and possible human community”. See also E. van Niekerk. 1995. Postmodern theology : 8. He states that the modernist position is in a sense both critical and fundamental(ist). “Modern literary criticism, historical criticism and fundamentalist reading of "sacred" texts like the Bible all sail in the same boat.” See also N. Murphy. 1995. Postmodern non-relativism: Imre Lakatos, Theo Meyerling, and Alasdair Macintyre (The Philosophical Forum, xxvi,1) : 30.

Before the reader objects to this categorizing of modernistic theologians, I hasten to point out that whereas many modernistic scholars can be characterized by these positions, others have reacted against these positions, but in ways that share many of the presuppositions of their modernistic times.


63 Tutorial Letter 103/1988 : 32 & 36. Truth is either ascribed to doctrine, God or the Gospel. Doctrine is for many the most important element of Christianity. “Hence the survival of Christianity is closely associated with the preservation of doctrine which has to be defended tooth and nail. Apologetics is therefore a central discipline. In fact, many of the major works by fundamentalists are apologetic in nature.”

64 See also Edgar V. McKnight. 1992. Can we make sense in the aftermath of reception theory (In B. Lategan (ed.). The reader and beyond. Pretoria: HSRC Publishers.) : 269. He states that “...the historical-critical ‘reduction’ of the text is fully satisfying within a world-view which sees meaning in terms of a temporal origin and historical cause-and-effect”.

65 F. Deist. 1982. Bybelinterpretasie en ideologiekritiek. ‘n Hermeneutiese oefening (Theologia Evangelica,xv,20) : 8 & 10. He states that Husserl (Logische Untersuchungen) also believed that one has to surrender all presuppositions and confessional belief only to the text of the Bible. But he soon realized, however, that this was impossible because we cannot make any observation if we have no frame of reference. See also J. Degenaar. 1992. Deconstruction - the celebration of language (In B. Lategan. The reader and beyond. Pretoria:HSRC

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A post-modern vision is taking serious cognisance of Jürgen Habermas’ point of view, namely, that all knowledge is motivated and mediated by “human interests”. Even the knowledge of the natural sciences reflects the interests and voices that are controlled by the production of such knowledge. According to Habermas the statement, “science has proven” and which is expected to end all argument, should be answered by “from who’s perspective and to serve what interest”. Scientific explanations and concepts are provisional human constructs organizing the natural world; they are not independent of human intellectual capacities, social interactions, and contingencies of history. A good deal of the problems of communication with people and the Biblical text is because of a lack of a reflexive approach in theology and thus a failure to take serious cognisance of the role of our “world views” and presuppositions. Wolters believes that “...many apparently philosophical disputes may mask differences on a pre-theoretical level which will never be resolved if they are not recognized for what they are.”

By challenging absolute and objective points of view it is not assumed that there are no “absolutes”, as some postmodernists believe, but it is to challenge the pretentious scholars maintaining a “God’s eye view”. No human or “tool” can abstract the contents of the Bible in pure form. To let the Bible as interpreted by us be a most important

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Publishers) : 208. He states that the task of the scholar is to discover his/her limitations and to stay with them. Deconstruction helps to keep us within these limits.


67 E.W. Doll. 1993. A post-modern perspective on curriculum : 60. According to him the holocaust of two world wars has shattered the sweet dreams of reason for a more just and moral society.

68 E. van Niekerk, 1996, ‘Critical theory in the 20th century : 4, says that Habermas in his, Erkenntnis und Interesse, identified three knowledge-producing interests: “(i) An interest in control, associated with a positivist self-understanding of the sciences and with the world of work; (ii) an interest in understanding, associated with the hermeneutical sciences and cultural processes; (iii) and an interest in emancipation, associated with the critical sciences and progressive social evolution.” See also T.H. Groome. 1997. Religious knowing: Still looking for that tree : 209. “Though there can be a an emancipatory interest to our knowing, and much of Habermas’ work is about making such interest intentional and self reflective, yet the technical and social sciences are driven by the interest of production, control, and maintenance of the status quo.”


71 A. Wolters. 1983. Dutch Neo-Calvinism: Worldview, philosophy and rationality : 115. He says it is impossible to do philosophy in a vacuum lacking worldviews. We communicate with some of those “cards” up our sleeves.

72 Ibid : 577.

73 Tutorial Letter 103/1988 : 63, states that the grammatical-historical exegetical method reflected the influence of Scottish Common Sense Realism. See also M. Ellingsen. 1985. Common Sense Realism: The cutting edge of Evangelical identity (Dialog, 24) :199-200. For Reid, who developed Common Sense Realism, objective, non-perspectival observation of a phenomenon is possible. He states that the Scottish Common Sense Realism can be described in relation to three main emphases: (1) Epistemological Common Sense - this is the idea that our perceptions reveal the world very much as it is. (2) Ethical Common Sense, and (3) methodological Common Sense. The problem that confronts this method is that the ‘historical’ or doctrinal element often determines the meaning of a word.

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pointer to God’s Word, God’s Action, God’s Love, we as scholars need to be servants of this Word, this Action, this Story and this Love. We need to acknowledge that our individual understanding of “reality” and the Bible’s message is to “picture” it in terms of our own thought categories. Not only by interpreting or reinterpreting the Bible do we disturb its “content”, but by the mere act of “observing” the Bible and putting it in a specific content, we disturb its content. By pretending to read the Bible in an absolute objective way we are not uplifting but rather minimizing, to say the least, the message of the Bible. The traditional individualistic “objectivistc” epistemology “...ignores the intentionality and expressivity of human action and the entire complex process of inter-subjective negotiation of meanings. In short, it disguises as given a world which has to be continually interpreted.”

Binary oppositions dictate the “reading” of the Biblical text
Whereas opposing distinctions are not modern inventions, modernism reduced the possibility of differentiation by constructing closed binary oppositions. Western theological tradition became very much constructed on a polar or a dyadic foundation: “Christian theology is repeatedly inscribed in binary terms.” Modernism does not regard these opposites as equal. These binary oppositions represent a firmly hierarchical two-tier structure, “...with one of them - the surface - securely on top, and its deep counterpart as purely in place as the real foundation of what is expressed on the surface”. In this regard the “husk-kernel” or “form-content” opposition does not only demonstrate such a search for an objectivistic and an universalistic content of the Bible, but it may also represent a paternalistic attitude. In a very

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75 F. E. Deist. 1991. South-Africanising Biblical Studies :35. “The mere act of reading the Bible thus disturbs the Bible itself. Therefore there cannot be something like the eternal, unchanging and certain message of the Bible. To state the message of the Bible means to have conceptualized it first. “Conceptualizing implies a process of conception (from the father [the Bible] and a mother [the reader]) which leads to the birth of a third ‘personality’, different form the father and the mother.”

76 M Weber. 1995. Who’s got the truth. Making sense out of five different Adventist gospels. Columbia, Maryland : Calvary Connections). It illustrates something of the predicament of the conservative churches. Modernistic scholars believe that there is only one correct position.


80 E Van Niekerk. 1995. He states that this modern “...two-tier philosophical scheme also functions as the hyphenated inside-outside of human beings and things (mainly since Descartes)”. According to Van Niekerk postmodernity “...seriously questions the modern hierarchical relationship, in which the ‘surface’ of thought or perception is causally linked with the ‘depth, meta-, foundational or basic’ dimension. In the postmodern differentiation spectrum the modern binary dialectic of essence (depth) and appearance (surface) becomes two or more adjacent surfaces”. He concludes: “ Should we not scrutinize in each case the constructed experiential continuum that articulates the oppositional points or limiting values of modern societies and accordingly defer any attempt to master the continuum from either structural term?”

81 E. Van Niekerk. 1995. Postmodern theology : 1. He argues that one of modernism’s tools is the reduction of things to one basic explanatory “essence”.

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subtle way scholars become imperialistic dictators. Scholars, in particularly those from a position of power, always designate and dictate the "core" of the message, whereas others (in Africa and beyond) may decide on the "form" and the "husk". This approach can be taken to indicate that the "core" represents a "pure gospel", which does not really have any implications for the shape of social or cultural life. Stackhouse came to the conclusion that this division obscures the fact that "...various versions of the 'pure gospel' are more contextually influenced than their advocates recognize". He notes how critics of ethnocentrism, sexism, racism and colonialism of Christianity have often pointed out that what has often been propagated in the name of the "pure gospel" seems to correspond to the prejudices of the time, gender, race, and geographical and social location of those who spoke in such spirited terms about the "pure gospel".

A new approach to science and theology

In philosophy, literature, natural sciences, quantum physics and recently in theology, new voices are being heard. A new paradigm has developed which has adopted a post-objectivist and post-positivist position. It is demanding a new approach to metaphysics, epistemology and cosmology. Science, in particular quantum physics, has moved beyond Newtonian mechanics and atomism, Descartesian rationalism and the subject-object bifurcation. Descartes'...
subject-object dichotomy has been replaced by a subject-subject networking approach and atomism with an interrelatedness of things.  

Postmodernism has, in spite of its new forms of reductionism, opened up some important issues that cannot be too easily ignored by theology. Instead of rationality, the importance of language and its deconstruction has been introduced.  

The seeking of knowledge and the search for so-called truth does not exclude the politics of power. Instead of seeking "objective" truths we are challenged to co-operate to construct, in an episodic way, dynamic intersubjective moments of faith.

From Atomism to holism and networking

Newtonian mechanics introduced an atomistic world view. "From the time of the Renaissance on... the chief intellectual instrument - and virtue - of scientific work was, precisely, its single-minded preoccupation with the specific, narrowly defined questions proper to particular scientific disciplines." This modernistic reductionism has, particularly, given a privileged position to the mind.

In contrast with modernism, post-modernity has a thirst for a renewal of the sense of the whole. Humans know the world to some extent, but they know it through feelings and strivings as well as through sense impressions and thinking. This would mean that the scholar consists of the whole human being "...where the cognitive, volitional and affective interact". The affective, cognitive, aesthetic, the personal and social, the spiritual and the ethical, human corporeality and sexuality, memory and imagination, yes, every aspect should be valued as a source of knowing and wisdom. Along these lines Cilliers argues that the self needs to be understood from the perspective of a "'fabric' of relations, a node in a network". We are not atomistic units standing for ourselves or by ourselves; neither can we throw away everything that does not fit into our reductionistic scheme.

The network of relationships is important, engaging all people and the whole person. This is important for at least two reasons: Firstly, scholars should take note of, in a reflexive way, all exclusions and the overabundance of "oppressions at work in the production of knowledge" and should without constraint be committed to real "democracy philosophy is characterized by holism, a use of language instead of reference and anti-reductionism.

87 W.E. Doll. 1993. Newton believed that individual atoms form the ultimate "building blocks" of nature. These particles were seen by him as autonomous units. They are touching each other in a mechanistic way, but each is operating independently.

88 For a differentiated critique on postmodernism see JD Caputo. 1993. Against ethics: Contributions to a poetics of obligations with constant reference to deconstruction (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).

89 Networking aspires to make progress beyond a holistic approach. Although certain properties are not denied by networking, it rather emphasizes the so-called "lines-of-flight", cris-crossing the properties. See in this regard DP Goosen, 1995. Inter-disciplinary studies: an apology for nomadism (Lecture given at the meeting of the Faculty of Theology and Science of Religion, 30 August) : 1

90 S. Toulmin. 1982. The return to cosmology. Postmodern science and the theology of nature: 229

91 T. Peters. 1985. David Bohm, postmodernism, and the Divine (Zygon, 20,2) : 193. According to Peters, Bohm's thirst for wholeness is founded upon the reason that in the world of Newton and Descartes there is a fragmentation, a void of holistic thinking. S.J. Grenz, 1996, A primer on postmodernism : 7, states that postmodernity's emphasis on holism is related to the rejection of the assumption of the Enlightenment, namely, that truth is certain and purely rational. It refuses to limit truth to its rational dimension.


in the production of knowledge”. The “subject” (scholar, researcher) does not manipulate the “object”, but the community of knowers and searchers are marked by conversation, dialogue and reflexive thinking. Instead of an “objective-subjective” position we need to take a relational position. Groome maintains that “...the relational aspect is not only among the knowers but also between the knower and the known. Instead of the subject standing “over against” to “master” the object by knowing it through non-engaged objectivity, there needs to be a relationship between them that brings both knower and known to question each other...” Secondly, scholars cannot be engaged in theological thinking in isolation, analyzing something objectively. Whole people, not only from every nation, tribe and language, but also from every discipline and status, need to communicate and reflect in a reflexive way. Scholars and non-scholars need to make each other aware of the gift and uniqueness of an own context and should also enable each other “…to recognize its sins as well as its graces, to imagine possibilities beyond it, and not to be held bound by the limits of their place and time”.

In this regard Habermas’ “ideal speech situation” may grant us some helpful insights. He argues that our community and “life-world” has been overwhelmed by the “steering media” of money and power. Technical rationality (Zweckrational) must be counterposed to practical rationality (reaching understanding) and emancipatory rationality (self-reflection and emancipation from oppression by systems). Communicative action must be differentiated from technological rationality, from the types of social action and non-social action which are oriented to “success” and to the achievement of ends and goals. For Habermas understanding [Verständigung] is to bring about an agreement [Einverständnis] that leads to a reciprocal understanding, shared knowledge and mutual trust. The ultimate objective of this is to come to an understanding with another person. We can no longer be entangled by a monological perspective of the philosophy of the subject. Speaker and hearer are in a mutual reciprocal relationship. His communicative action is intrinsically dialogical. Habermas thus wanted to overcome the bifurcation between sender and receiver. Rationality cannot be achieved from a transcendental perspective, but it is practically constituted by people engaged in communication free from constraint and coercion. To resolve a breakdown in communication we can move

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95 Ibid : 213.


97 Habermas’ Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns (The theory of communicative action, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), with its more than 800 pages of serious philosophical reading has made a significant contribution towards the theory of communication. Habermas argues that the Enlightenment project, and in particular the idea of universal morality and critical reason, has provided important gains. We cannot abandon them but need to dedicate ourselves to a “radical enlightenment”. The enlightenment is incomplete but not “dead”. In Habermas the modernist project is once again linked with an emancipatory logic (D.K. Mumby 1997. Modernism, postmodernism, and communication studies: A rereading of an ongoing debate (Communication Theory,7,1) : 10). The freedom of intellectual emancipation needs to be extended to all spheres of life. Modernity has “colonized” the “lifeworld” by the “system” and has thus failed to radicalize the emancipation of the Enlightenment. Through his critique of the Cartesian legacy and the reconstruction of social theory he developed a linguistic model of communicative understanding. Habermas’ philosophy culminates ultimately in his analyses of communicative action (D.F.M. Strauss 1994. ‘n Wyserige perspektief op die twintigste eeu teen die agtergrond van die voorafgaande eeuwendinge (Tydskrif vir Christelike wetenskap,30) : 12. “Verstehen ist kommunikative Erfahrung” for Habermas (J. Habermas. 1970. Erkenntnis und Interesse (Frankfurth: Suhrkamp Verlag) : 227). He believes that his theory of communicative action can won back the control of the “lifeworld”. TW Tilley. 1995. Toward a theology of the practice of communicative action [In T.W. Tilley (ed.). Postmodern theologies. The challenge of religious diversity. New York: Orbis Books] : 9.

to a level of discourse and argumentation where we, through the “force of the better argument, reach a consensus”. A conversation that can be regarded as “unlimited” is designated by Habermas as an ideal speech situation in which people are in principle able to participate without domination. In resolving disputes, even the better argument must be open to a rational debate. One can conclude that Habermas is defending a strong “cognitivist” position. His “ideal speech situation”, however, may be, at the most, regarded as a late modern approach still following the “conduit metaphor”.

From a neo-pragmatist perspective, Rorty argues that foundationalists conceptions of rationality destroy our conversation. According to him it imposes restrictions on reason and forces it to an end. The notion of contingency is important as it sustains and encourages conversation. Conversation is characterized by an absence of issues, like fixed goals, lists of acceptable topics, hierarchies of membership, etc. In our conversation different “universes” of communication meet. The plurality of voices and the practices they represent need to be protected against all attempts of “closure”. Foundationalism seriously inhibits such a conversation and thus retards thought, “...which is always set in motion by the encounter with strangeness”. A serious problem is Rorty’s refusal to introduce any external values and criteria within this discourse.

Modern discourse, according to Lyotard, has made itself legitimate by appealing to a coherent meta-narrative that performed a general unifying function. Postmodernism rather wishes to introduce a multiplicity of discourses and many “language games”. They are not externally legitimate but rather locally justified. Lyotard argues for smaller and many more stories that function well within their own contexts. In this regard Cilliers accuses, by implication, conservative theologies. We have developed a nostalgia for grand meta-narratives that unify. This is a dream of Western metaphysics that experiences the postmodern condition as fragmented, characterized by anarchy and thus meaningless. This is not a relativising of knowledge, not an “anything goes” situation. Lyotard’s “connectionist” model is not based on the Newtonian atomism, but the self is understood in terms of a “fabric of relationships”, a “node in a network”. Everyone is always involved through a network of relations with others and this has an importance for and an influence on the total discourse.

Whereas both modernistic and postmodernistic discourses focus one-sided on communication as a rational and logic discourse, a post-modern approach would seek not only to communicate (rationally) but also to have believing, affecting and imagining aspects which encounter each other’s stories as well as God’s Story.

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The Postmodern Scientist: A Participant

Sassower claims that modern scientists have viewed themselves as “spectators”, whereas postmodern scientists regard themselves as “participants” in the study of this world.107 From the year 1600 and onwards science and philosophy pursue a “...rational objectivity” of a kind that could be arrived at only by a detached and reflective observer”.108 Thus for Laplace the scientist must observe, analyse, describe and comment on phenomena (“objects”!) without being drawn into them. The human mind must observe the world but always from outside. This encouraged a particular psychological attitude, namely to investigate specialized science from a detached viewpoint. It has been “natural” for the scientist to work from a psychological distance. In describing the modernistic scientist, Toulmin states, “...too much emotional involvement with his subject matter will not do the investigator’s scientific work good: warm hearts rarely go with cool heads”.109 This called for a second kind of abstraction. Just as the different disciplines were studied in abstraction from one another, so too, the modernistic scientist needs to approach her/his problem with a “cool” intellectual spirit. The problem must be studied in abstraction from all interests and personal concerns. If this is not done research may be clouded and biased by other, nonscientific preoccupations. Toulmin concludes that modernistic disciplinary abstraction within the “...sciences has brought in its train, also, a certain personal abstraction within the minds of working scientists”.110 New scientific developments in the twentieth century reject any assumption that scientists have to adopt a fully detached attitude. Scientists can no longer be spectators: The “...scientist as spectator is dead... Laplace’s ideal of the Omniscient Calculator has failed us, even in the purest and most fundamental parts of physics”. Toulmin states that to insist to subordinate “human” disciplines to the methodology of modernism is to make “...the rational objectivity of the intellectual spectator into an idol”.111 Within the new paradigm scientists become agents and servants rather than merely critical observers.112 A post-modern theology cannot separate practical and theoretical issues, so-called facts and values, cognition and action. The distinction between experts and “lay” persons cannot be seen in terms of a hierarchically structured opposition. It needs to be differentiated on a continuum in terms of more or fewer “readings” of a text. The only difference between a lay and an expert reader of a text is that the expert reader may have more arrangements of different tools and signs of the text than the first.113 A post-modern approach should thus be far more cautious about it’s “study-room-scientific” theories. Du Toit’s statement, that people’s wisdom is a far safer guide than our scientific theories, needs to challenge scholars in the year 2000 and beyond to be far better “listeners”

106 S.J. Grenz. 1996. A primer on postmodernism : 8. “In rejecting the modern assumption of the objectivity of knowledge postmoderns also reject the Enlightenment ideal of the dispassionate, autonomous knower.... The postmodern worldview operates with a community-based understanding of truth.” R. Rorty, 1996, “Solidarity or objectivity” : 574, maintains that Plato developed the idea of the intellectual who is one and in touch in an immediate way with the nature of things. This produces the idea that rational inquiry should “...make visible a realm to which non-intellectuals have little access....”.


110 Ibid : 231.


112 S. Toulmin, 1982, The return to cosmology : 252, states that, “Far from being free to sit in the stands and watch the action with official detachment, like the original theoroi at the classical Greek games, scientists today find themselves down in the dust of the arena, deeply involved in the actual proceedings”.

Wisdom as truth rather than cognitive and objective truths

Rorty states that the Western culture and tradition focuses on the notion of the search for truth. This is the clearest example of where one is turning away from solidarity to objectivity in order to make sense of one’s existence. The idea of “...truth as something to be pursued for its own sake, not because it will be good for oneself, or for one’s real or imaginary community, is the central theme of this tradition”,115 In conservative denominations the unshakable belief in truth, and truth as cognitive truth *per se*, stand out. Most often this search for truth is based on a positivistic approach: These truths can be “proved” either by empirical research or by Biblical texts.116 It is also assumed that these “truths” will protect us against relativism.117

Progressively scholars believe that much of our knowledge has not been “for good” but “for evil” and is inclined to be dehumanizing. They regard the dominant epistemology of the West to be violent, elitist and exclusive. It is naive about its own context and it follows a technical rationality without sound ethical norms; it is exclusive and privatized and it is “...working hand-in-glove with our worst oppressions and most repressive powers”.118 Many, especially confessional scholars, have constructed theologies to a large extent on the possibility of an “absolute truth”.119


116 Tutorial letter 103/1988, Biblical Studies (Pretoria: University of South Africa) :42, states that fundamentalist absolutism stems from the Philosophy of Scottish common sense realism. The Bible is seen as a reservoir of facts and the study of the Bible in this way can afford us with an objective perspective on the world.

117 J Astley. 1995. The philosophy of Christian religious education (Birmingham, AL.: Religious Education Press) : 257. He says that we must distinguish between the debate about relativism and the issues of relativity. The philosophers of the Enlightenment appealed to an abstracted and culture-free notion of rationality. Runzo in his *Reason, relativism and God* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1986), distinguishes between different types of relativistic theses. He defines “relativism” as “...any epistemological position which holds or entails that the correct or incorrectness of judgement about matters of truth or value varies with which individual, or set of individuals ... is making judgements”. He describes this position as cognitive relativism and he makes a distinction within cognitive relativism between “...socially-defined conceptual relativism and an individualistic subjectivism”. He also distinguishes between cognitive relativism and epistemological relativism, and between cognitive relativism and value relativism. Astley also discusses the objections to relativism, *inter alia*, the “self-stultifying” argument - relativism destroying itself. The everyday criticism against relativism is that it leads to skepticism and moral anarchy and it can result in absurd claims.


119 Scholars within the modern paradigm cannot help to fall prey to seeking objective truths. From my perspective E.G. White does not put the same emphasis on truth as absolute objective truth. She speaks of “God’s truth”, “eternal truth”, “Bible truth”, “sacred truth”, “the truth as it is in Jesus”, “present truth”, etc. She does not, however, seem to state that truth is final, absolute, mechanicistic and that it cannot further open up its rich and dynamic dimensions to us. It is certainly not cognitive knowledge. In the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (1892 : 3) she states: “The disciples were put in close connection with eternal, essential truth; for it was laid open to their understanding; but they failed to comprehend it in its fullness, and although the living oracles are in our hands, although we have some understanding of the inspired books of the Old and New Testaments, there is much that even in our day we do not see and comprehend.” White’s designation of truth as, *inter alia*, “present truth” seems to me a viable option that can help us to move beyond mechanistic and static perception of truth. It may also prevent us from falling into the trap of relativism.
has to a large extent become a search for cognitive and dogmatic truth. This “truth” is not only determined by rationalism, instrumentalism and mechanism, but it is also often emptied of love, integrity, commitment and solidarity.

The twentieth century has witnessed the triumph and decline of the notion of truth defined by a mechanistic and reductionistic world-view. Even the natural sciences, the so-called exact disciplines, are now regarded as relative projects, influenced to a large extent by social ideologies and attitudes.120 According to Du Toit we cannot construct theological pointers without seeking “truth”. This cannot, however, be absolute “truths”, but only “important truths”. Rorty does not argue that there is no such thing as truth but proposes that we should drop the idea of truth as somewhere out there waiting to be discovered. “It is to say that our purposes would be served best by ceasing to see truth as a deep matter, as a topic of philosophical interest, or ‘true’ as a term which repays ‘analysis’.121 McKnight urged us to speak of “truthfulness” rather than truth. We, according to him, arrive no longer at a “truth” over against us, but at “... truth which touches us”.122 Truth demands truthfulness.123 Truth is not a metaphysical phenomena; it is influenced by time, culture, tradition, language and society.124

It may be a fruitful endeavour to experiment with Groome’s wisdom metaphor instead of the truth metaphor. Groome maintains that wisdom is more wholistic and a more historically grounded concept than cognition and knowledge. Wisdom refers to our identity and “agency” in the world. Wise people will not only have knowledge of one kind or another, “... but far beyond that such people are wise in their very being, and this includes their thoughts, desires, and choices”.125 The wisdom metaphor seems to be also more in keeping with the Biblical tradition.126 It may help us to transcend the limitations of Western epistemology because it has included and also has moved beyond mere knowledge. An epistemology based on care rather than on rational certainty; an epistemology based on solidarity rather

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121 Richard Rorty.. 1994. From the contingency of language (In Waugh, Patricia (ed.). Postmodernism: a reader. London: Edward Arnold) : 174. Rorty maintains that Nietzsche has caused a lot of confusion by inferring from ‘truth is not a matter of correspondence to reality’ to “what we call ‘truths’ are just lies’. He says that the same confusion is sometimes found in Derrida’s statement that “... there is no reality as the metaphysicians have hoped to find...”. Such confusions make Nietzsche and Derrida liable to charges of self-referential inconsistency - claiming to know what they themselves claim cannot be known.


126 Ibid : 216-218. According to Groome “... wisdom’s locus was always the leb”. Although this term is often translated as “heart”, it in fact refers to the very “core” of a person (Eccl. 10:3). The leb is the intellectual source of thought and reflection (Isa. 6:10), the center of affections (Ps. 4:7) and the seat of volition and conscience (1 Sam. 24:5). Thus, Biblical wisdom, which is situated in the leb, pertains to one’s head, heart, and hands. In the post-Exilic period, the emphasis is on wisdom as an ethical response to God’s revelation and law. Wisdom is a gift of God, but it brings responsibility to so live (Job 28). Wise people do God’s will, and they especially promote justice, compassion, and peace (Prov. 2). Groome says that a focus on wisdom “...would encourage our enterprise to be ontic, to be wholistic and wholesome, to be humanizing and life-giving, to be inclusive ...”.

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than objectivity.\footnote{R. Rorty. 1996. "Solidarity or objectivity?" : 575. He maintains that "... people seeking for solidarity are seeing the gap between truth and justification ... but simply as the gap between the actual good and the possible better. From a pragmatist point of view, to say that what is rational for us now to believe may not be true, is simply to say that somebody may come up with a better idea. It is to say that there is always room for improved belief, since new evidence, for new hypotheses, or a whole new vocabulary, may come along. For a pragmatist, the desire for objectivity is not the desire to escape the limitations of one's community, but simply the desire for as much intersubjective agreement as possible, the desire to extend the reference of 'us' as far as we can".}

Instead of relying on rationalism and empiricism to supply scholars with absolute and objective certainties, faith ensures the certainty of conviction. Faith, however, was progressively given a rationalistic content and later reason was divorced from faith resulting in a divorce of "reasonable" religion from experience. Dupré and Mariña maintain that Kant's philosophy has introduced the end of reasonable deductions about the existence of God.\footnote{I Kant. 1929. The critique of pure reason, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press) : 29.}

In Kant's \textit{Critique of pure reason} he states that he "...found it necessary to deny knowledge in order to make room for faith".\footnote{I Kant. 1929. The critique of pure reason, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press) : 29.}

\section*{Differentiation instead of a critical approach}

Post-modern scholarship is questioning the modernistic hierarchical oppositions of, \textit{inter alia} "surface" and "depth" dimensions of "things". Dualisms such as subject/object, thought/emotion, scientific/common are distorted forms of knowledge. Although post-modernity wants to exceed the conceptual binary oppositions of modernism, it wishes to keep the products of these myriad reductions and scrutinise the experiential "continuum" that articulates these opposing points. From a differentiated point of view these modern binary oppositions of "essence" (depth) and "appearance" (surface) become adjacent surfaces. In this regard Derrida's "différence" is helpful.\footnote{See in this regard J.D. Caputo (ed.).1997. \textit{Deconstruction in a nutshell. A conversation with Jacques Derrida} (New York: Fordham University Press) :96-105 & J. Degenaar. 1992. Deconstruction - the celebration of language (In B. Lategan. The reader and beyond. Pretoria: HSRC) : 197-198. Degenaar maintains that the "... word différencé is derived from the term différencier which means both to differ and to defer, postpone and delay... It designates three aspects of writing: a 'passive' difference which has already been made and available to the subject; and act of differing which produces differences; and an act of deferring which refers to the provisionality of distinctions and to the fact that the use of language entails the interminable interrelationships in signs". According to Derrida: " 'Différence' is the systematic play of differences, of the traces of differences, of the spacing (espacement) by which elements relate to one another."}

Instead of tolerating these oppositions Derrida focuses on difference, the space between two oppositions. He wishes "...to see what indicates that each of the two terms must appear as the différence of the other: the one as the difference of the other, deferred or delayed in the economy of the same continuum".\footnote{E. van Niekerk. 1995. Postmodern theology : 3.} This shows the need for differentiation rather than a traditional critical approach.

\section*{Pointers instead of pillars}

Van Huyssteen states that both modernism and postmodernism have been unable to come to terms with the issue of rationality. He thus proposes a post-foundationist position over against the so-called objectivism of foundationalism and the extreme relativism of non-foundationalism. Post-foundationalism wishes to fully acknowledge the context, the epistemical role of interpreted experience, and tradition and its "...shaping of epistemic and non-epistemic values that inform our reflection about both God and the world". A post-foundational position, however, also needs to challenge
rationalism, foundationalism and progress beyond the local community and its culture. Serres argues that beneath a phenomenon and the information that we have of it, there is an infinite possibility and multiplicity that cause us to conclude that "...what is knowable and what is known are born of the unknown." In this regard it is also imperative to take cognisance of Cilliers’ statement, namely that postmodernism is inherently sensitive for complexity. He argues that the price we pay for this sensitivity is quite high in terms of a conventional approach, because it means the abandoning of seeking for universal criteria of truth and judgement. This may cause an experience of a feeling of loss, but, the nostalgia for absolute criteria has kept us away from being involved with our world in a responsible way. For conservative theology it will be even harder to take cognisance of the "chaos theory". This theory has moved beyond logical positivism and critical rationalism, (to verify or to falsify), and Newtonian mechanism and is in search of a new epistemology and a post-critical philosophy. The chaos theory has demonstrated that things are far more complex than "Scottish Common Sense Realism" pretend them to be. Newtonian science handled chaos in our world by inserting the order and control of God, but where irregularity prevailed led to a "God of the gaps". Modernistic empirical science explained these irregularities with their positivistic approach until finally they stated with Laplace's "God was no longer needed". New science has determined, however, that this world cannot be explained by its own

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134 P. Cilliers. 1995. Postmodern knowledge and complexity: 124. He states that in dealing with complex systems we cannot use traditional analytical approaches, because the "nature" of these systems, like our brain, language or social systems is being “determined” by many elements that interact in dynamic and in non-linear ways.

135 J. Gleick. 1987. The making of a new science (New York: Viking). Three scientist stand out as the pioneers of chaos theory, namely, Edward Lorenz, Benoit Mandelbrot and Mitchell Feigenbaum. See also S.F. LeRon. 1992. A theology of chaos. An experiment in postmodern theological science (In Scottish Journal of Theology). See also A. G. van Wyk. 1997. Methodological challenges facing the Seventh-Day Adventist Theology in the year 2000.: A practical-theological perspective (Paper read at the SEDATA annual meeting, Helderberg College, 13 October 1996): 1-14. Many of the proponents of the chaos theory claim that it is the third great scientific revolution of the twentieth century. Chaos theory came after quantum theory and Einstein’s theory of relativity which dissolved the Newtonian dogma of absolute space and time. The chaos theory has eradicated Laplace’s illusion of deterministic predictability. Shults says that while “...relativity describes the macroscopic and quantum theory the microscopic view of nature, the theory of chaos applies to the study of objects on a human scale, to the world we experience with our senses every day”. Chaotic behaviour has been discovered in systems such as the orbit of planets (Pluto), the rhythm of hearts, (healthy hearts show sometimes more variability than sick ones), and the neural activity of the brain.

136 S F L Shults. 1992. A theology of chaos. An experiment in postmodern theological science. (In the Scottish journal of theology, 45): 233. Shults concludes that although chaos seems to permeate our universe our theology can still be a theology of hope. Out of this "chaos" “...God’s redemptive order will emerge on a higher level and will ultimately be consumed in the eschatological fulfilment of a new heaven and a new earth”.

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intrinsic order - our universe is indeed contingent.\(^{137}\)

These developments are challenging conservative theologies to replace the modernistic metaphor of “pillars of truth” and to speak rather of an episodic “pointer system”.\(^{138}\) This is not to limit the importance of beliefs, but to move beyond Newtonian mechanics and to provide it with far greater potential.

A “Toolmakers” metaphor?

Van Niekerk maintains that the difference between a postmodern and a modernistic approach can be found in the difference between the conduit metaphor and the “toolmaker’s” paradigm.\(^{139}\) He states that in contrast with the conduit metaphor in the “toolmaker’s” metaphor we have “…an immense workplace filled with tools which serve as units of communicative transference both between people and between texts and people”.\(^{140}\) A reading scope is constituted between text and context which provides ample tools, like cultural signs and pointers, words and concepts, meanings and ideas, products and physical phenomena. This entails a complex relationship between text and reader, but it does not matter as the “toolmaker’s” metaphor is regarded as that there can be success without effort. It does not aspire to “the correct interpretation”, but rather to a “good interpretation” for a particular purpose.\(^{141}\)

**Conclusion: A new vision of science and scholarship as a “servanthood”**

Modernism opts for a levelling of differences whereas a post-modern vision prefers a networking negotiation of differences. The “antagonism of identity” needs to be replaced by the “agonism of difference”.\(^{142}\) The principle of the negotiation of differences is imperative. Modernistic discourse privileges a Western rationality, while a post-modern vision wishes to explore the significance of different lifestyles and perspectives and thus warns against imperialism.

The modernistic scholar may be regarded as a “divine overseer” in the sense of the Platonic-divine Theoros. He/she knows what everyone is believing, thinking, imagining and feeling. He/she is the “subject” that knows the “object” in an absolute and objective way. Should we not rather seek for “truth” and “wisdom” as solving a “crossword puzzle” instead of “problem solving” in terms of a critical rationalistic approach.\(^{143}\) The post-modern scholar can be regarded as one who is a participant in seeing, hearing, feeling, “smelling” and “doing” with others of his/her society while

\(^{137}\) D. Tracy. 1994. The return of God in contemporary theology : 42-43. Tracy maintains that postmodernity’s attack on the self-confidence of modernity provided a new opportunity for “…serious contemporary thought on God. … Indeed, postmodernity tends to be suspicious of almost all traditional and modern arguments on the existence of God, all attempts to fit God’s reality into a modern horizon of intelligibility, all of the famous ‘isms’ for God, from deism and theism through panentheism”.

\(^{138}\) E. van Niekerk. 1995. Postmodern theology : 3. These pointers may give access to infinite differentiation, but they are “…under construction for the ‘duration’ of a debate, the ‘duration’ of the composition of an essay, the ‘duration’ of reading a text”.


\(^{141}\) Ibid : 13.

\(^{142}\) J. Degenaar. 1996. The collapse of unity : 19. Antagonism forces one to conquer, while agonism wishes to accept, challenge and accommodate others and different perspectives.

negotiating, confronting, fragmenting, linking and accommodating other discourses episodically.\textsuperscript{144} This seems to indicate that, within a post-modern paradigm the role and task of the scholar are going to change radically.

Instead of being informers about objective “facts”, they will become more like servants, more like “listeners”. They need to overcome the dichotomy that Kant forged between practical and theoretical reason and consequently between ethics and science. Scholars should be conscious about the political power of knowledge. The binary oppositions such as male/female, mind/body, subject/object, thought/emotion, scientific/common, husk/kernel are hierarchically positioned favouring the former over the latter. These distorted forms of knowledge can be destructive for all, even for those in power.

The relations between scholars, students and “lay” people will change. It will be less of a “knowing” scholar informing others, but it will be people who are interacting in mutual exploration of relevant issues. Authority will shift from an external to a communal and dialogue sphere. This movement will focus more on the process and on the patterns emerging as on the course run, without splitting this process nor the course in a dichotomous way. Within the old “machine-orientated” paradigm the scholar was the driver and the students and her/his audience, at best, the passengers, but, at worst, the objects that are being driven. The students or “priesthood of believers” cannot be “removed” from a meaningful interaction with the scholar.

The scholars will become people who are listening to the experience of the total eco-system, it’s wonder, it’s silence, it’s voices, it’s songs, it’s hopes, it’s pains, it’s visions and missions. The scholar as servant will not in the first instance focus on dualistic and mechanistic rules and regulations to make absolute statements. Scholars will be guided by an “epistemology” based on an ethic of care and will construct knowledge that is more humanising and able to touch every aspect of people’s lives.

\textbf{***************}

\textsuperscript{144} E. van Niekerk. 1996. \textit{I [we] believe .... - a confession or a proposition, a discovery or a construct, a phrase or a phase, a mediation or a mixture, a human condition or a snippet from a theory of faith?} (Inaugural lecture. Pretoria: University of South Africa) : 38.
SERVANT PERCEPTIONS OF SERVICE--TO THE POOR

Lael Caesar & Hinsdale Bernard
Andrews University

Introduction

According to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, the word “poor” appears more than two hundred times in the King James Version. These appearances are not all equally interesting. The “poor kine” of Pharaoh’s dream may hold our sympathy for a while. But then we discover, from the NIV, that we are really supposed to despise them: They are really scrawny (Gen 41:19). Again, Christ’s benediction on the poor in spirit gives us some reason to welcome poverty (Mt 5:3) so long as we avoid blurring the distinction between meekness of soul and lack of this world’s goods. As ministers of Christ we officially consider ourselves less as objects of need, and more as servants of the needy.

Our Lord’s own manifesto explicitly justifies our interest in service to the needy. He who has sent us out to do his work describes that assignment in the words of Isaiah (61:1) as an anointing to bring good news to the poor (Lk 4:16-21). His verdict for the sheep and against the goats, in that judgment parable of mixed metaphors, credits the sheep with ministering to him in the person of “the least of these”, the ones on society’s margins. The goats go to hell forever for ignoring Jesus in the person of the poor (Mt 25:31-46). The first administrative question in the primitive church to which the book of Acts gives attention is ministry to the poor (ch. 6). Preferential treatment toward the rich and against the poor exercised the author of the epistle of James (2:1-4). For him such conduct is both absurd and sinful (vv. 6, 7, 9). Any preference that Christians will exercise must be in quite the opposite direction, toward “the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind,” those who cannot reciprocate in kind. Thus runs the counsel of Jesus himself (Lk 14:7-14).

Questionnaire

Servant responses to a recent questionnaire administered in the Lake Union Conference of SDA provide some context for reflection upon these NT articulations. Designed to examine attitudes to Biblical Archaeology, it was distributed among five groups of SDA ministers between January & October 1997. The groups surveyed were ministerial workers in the Indiana (IN), Lake Region (LR), and Michigan (MI) Conferences, as well as faculty (SF) and students (SS) at the SDA Theological Seminary at Andrews University. The 266 respondents represent an overall response rate of 42.7%.1 Responses were measured on a scale of 1-5, with 1 = strongly agree, and 5 = strongly disagree.

Perceptions on Redirecting Resources

In a preliminary report presented at the ASRS national meeting in San Francisco, 19972, a comparison of two of these groups showed that the IN & LR Conferences differed significantly in their responses to the relative importance of Biblical Archaeology and inner-city services. Eight-one percent (17/21) of LR respondents completely agreed with the following statement: “My church needs to be more deeply involved in inner-city services, even if its current Archaeology budget must be cut back.”3 Thirty-one percent (9/29) of IN respondents gave an equivalent reply. Tables 1A through 1E present findings on the “cut back” variable.

Comparison of all groups now shows that LR differs significantly from all others surveyed with regard to this

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1Response ratios for individual conferences were as follows: Indiana--30 of 37 (81%), Lake Region--23 of 50 (46%), Michigan--44 of 96 (45.8%), Seminary Faculty--26 of 40 (65%), Seminary students--143 of 400 (35.8%), for a total of 266. No response was received from the Illinois and Wisconsin conferences.

2See Lael Caesar, “Attitudes Toward Biblical Archaeology Within African-American Ministry: A Comparative Glimpse: Lake Region & Indiana Conferences of SDA,” Papers of the Adventist Society for Religious Studies, November 1997, pp. 93-97. That report, as well as the current study, were supported by Research Grant #11-0740-9591-75-74003, from the Office of Scholarly Research, Andrews University. Data analysis was done by Jerome Thayer, Director of the Center for Statistical Services, Andrews University.

3Hereinafter referred to as “cut back” variable.
question. On a scale where the value of 1 stands for total agreement, and 5, for total disagreement, the LR mean stands at 2.2. Three other groups (IN, MI, SS) all average c. 3.4, while the SF mean stands at 4.3. In effect, SF differs from all groups but MI in their response to this question.

The possibilities of attitudinal differences based on gender, age (20-25 through 46 and over), and household income ($15,000 or less, through over $75,000) were all discarded, though a possible connection between different attitudes and marital status may be later investigated in greater depth. Comparisons based on self-identification did seem to hold some significance. No differences were found between African-Americans (Af-A) and Hispanics (His), or between the latter and either Asian-Americans (As-A) or Caucasians (Cau). The only observable differences appear to exist between African-Americans and Asian-Americans and between African-Americans and Caucasians.

"CUT BACK" VARIABLE

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<th>MI</th>
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<td>***</td>
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***Groups that are significantly different from each other at the p<.01 level

Table 1B. ANOVA TABLE FOR "CUT BACK" BY CONFERENCE

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TABLE 1C. ETHNIC GROUP COMPARISONS—“CUT BACK”

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<th>N</th>
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<th>As-A</th>
<th>Cau</th>
<th>His</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cau</td>
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<td>His</td>
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<td>3.217 (2)</td>
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TABLE 1D. ANOVA TABLE FOR “CUT BACK” BY ETHNICITY

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TABLE 1E. ANOVA TABLE FOR “CUT BACK”–AF-A & OTHER

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<td>477.6774</td>
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Perceptions on Sacrifice

A related issue surveyed by the questionnaire concerned servant perceptions with regard to sacrifice on behalf of the downtrodden of society. Subjects responded to the following statement: “Sacrifice on behalf of the downtrodden of society is always worth it.” Tables 2A through 2E present results on “sacrifice” variable. As with the “cut back” variable, the closest similarity was observed between answers from LR and IN, with the former in both cases being most in agreement with the statement, and the latter being next in line. In the case of the “cut back” variable, IN, though closest to LR, was as significantly different from the latter as were MI, and SF. In the present case LR and IN, as well as SS, all differ significantly from MI. Means for all groups (whether conference, or ethnic) are dramatically lower for the “sacrifice” variable as compared with the “cut back” variable. This would suggest a general commitment to the cause of society’s marginalized or exploited (“the downtrodden”). Whereas the overall “cut back” group mean is 3.39, denoting a more or less noncommittal attitude, the overall “sacrifice” group mean is 2.08, indicating firm, if not absolute, agreement with the idea of sacrifice on behalf of the needy, regardless of circumstances.

*Hereinafter referred to as “sacrifice” variable.

111
### TABLE 2A. CONFERENCE (ETC.) GROUP COMPARISONS—“SACRIFICE”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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<th>SS</th>
<th>SF</th>
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### TABLE 2B. ANOVA TABLE FOR “SACRIFICE” BY CONFERENCE

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### Table 2C. ETHNIC GROUP COMPARISONS—“SACRIFICE”

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<td>Cau</td>
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<td>His</td>
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### TABLE 2D. ANOVA TABLE FOR “SACRIFICE” BY ETHNICITY

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TABLE 2E. ANOVA TABLE FOR “SACRIFICE” AF-A & OTHER

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Possible Significance of Data
This study has been limited in scope to the ministers of three conferences within the Lake Union Conference of SDA, as well as professors and students at the church’s principal training school for ministers around the world. There are 2771 ordained SDA ministers in the North American Division. This study has contacted less than a tenth of that number, and on the basis of accessibility rather than of scientific or proportionate selection. No one is to make too much of its validity. However, responses to these two questions do hint at certain trends. On a general scale, the ministers who have participated exhibit a noteworthy unity of perspective with regard to service to the poor. As mentioned before, there appears to be broad agreement, among the most youthful (20-25 years old), right through to those of middle-age and above, among financially challenged students (under $15,000 per annum), and up to those more adequately provided for (over $75,000 per year—see table 3), on the importance, regardless of circumstances, of ministry on behalf of the exploited of society.

TABLE 3. HOUSEHOLD INCOME COMPARISONS

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<th>MEAN 1</th>
<th>CASES 5</th>
<th>MEAN 5</th>
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No significant difference appears between groups analyzed according to income.

And while the questionnaire has been ministered in America’s heartland, nothing in the wording of its “sacrifice” or “cut back” variables demands that society’s downtrodden be seen exclusively, or principally, as the needy of this country, those 30,000,000 Americans who regularly go hungry. It would be well that the positive attitude of these servants toward sacrifice on behalf of the needy be interpretable as willingness to serve the poor, not only in Benton Harbor or Chicago, but wherever, among the world’s billions, heaven may define our stewardship. Servants who share Christ’s passion for the poor must be aware that the passing millennia have not diminished the need for their ministry. We live among 1, 310,000,000 “desperately poor neighbors” who survive on less than $1.00 per day.  

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billion struggle in near poverty with very little hope for a decent life. I do not say that survey responses constitute assistance. But there is surely more hope for the world’s 15,000,000 refugees and 4,000,000 more “internally displaced” persons because these servants may state, on principle, that sacrifice on behalf of the downtrodden is always right. That said, the results do also expose a certain diversity within that unity. The most consistent trend discernible in this data is the difference in perceptions, first noted in last year’s paper, on the importance of sacrificial service to the poor. While all agree that this service is right, some groups do appear significantly more convinced than others. The contrast between IN and LR on the perceived importance of inner-city work, turns out to be smaller than it is between LR and SF. Elsewhere LR, IN and SS all stand together over against MI on the issue of the perceived importance of sacrificial service to the downtrodden. In every case, the lowest mean is LR’s. The reason for this emerges when the “sacrifice” variable is analyzed against that of ethnic self-identification. Ethnicity being the clearest basis for difference demonstrated by the data, it now appears that among African-Americans a distinct perception exists of the importance of service to the needy.

**Observed Difference Not Atypical**

That African-Americans should be found to have perceptions which differ from the norm is not peculiar to the SDA ministry. The same phenomenon has been shown to exist with regard to other areas of American society and service, including the functions of the police. The constancy of change in modern society and the polyglot culture that is America have not yet succeeded in eliminating either individual or ethnic difference. Survey data strongly suggest this. On the redirection of funds toward ministry to the poor and away from expenditures on Biblical Archaeology, the means for African-Americans and Asian-Americans are more than a full point apart on a scale of 1-5. The same is true between African-Americans and Caucasians.

**Archaeology Apparently Not Related**

Nor is the difference readily explainable in terms of the perceived value of Biblical Archaeology. Virtually no difference exists between groups, whether viewed by conference, or by race, on the importance of archaeology to individuals’ ministry. On that question, the ninety-five percent confidence interval for the mean for all groups falls in a narrow band between 2.18 and 2.37. By contrast, a similar assessment of data on the “cut back” variable shows that the upper level of the range of LR responses is lower than the lower level of the range for any other group. Analyzed according to race, the upper level of the Af-A range is lower than the lower level of that range for CauA responses. The variation by more than two full points on a 1-5 scale between Seminary professors and Lake Region Conference ministers becomes more difficult to explain when it is recognized that all respondents place the same level of value upon Biblical Archaeology within their individual ministries.

**What May Be Done About These Differences**

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Lee Sigelman & Susan Welch, *Black Americans’ Views of Racial Inequality: The Dream Deferred*, (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1991) cite data from ABC News/Washington Post surveys, and the 1985 and 1986 General Social Surveys, to show how black and white perceptions on the issue of racial inequality consistently differ from each other. E.g., in 1989, ABC News/Washington Post polled 69% of blacks, and 46% of whites as agreeing that discrimination was the main reason for blacks having worse jobs, income, and housing than whites. In 1985-6, the General Social Survey found 70% of blacks and 40% of white sharing similar opinions (see p. 91). For differing views on police service, see Terry Jones, “The Police in America: A Black Viewpoint,” *The Black Scholar*, (9:2), October 1977, pp. 22-39. Jones states that “The failure of the social services in general, and police work in particular, are rooted not in their particular shortcomings (not having enough blacks) or specific limitation, but in the fact that they operate in conjunction with and in support of the major economic and social forces of society” (p. 31). Jones is aware that well intentioned whites and blacks who accept being co-opted into the system will have difficulty with his position (ibid.).
The research which has yielded this paper may have started with a simple observation—the absence of black scholars at ASOR meetings. While some social scientist may have been inspired to do a study on why I was present at any of these meetings, I though of doing one on why more Blacks were not. But it takes more than eyesight to observe statistically significant differences. Had it been merely a matter of healthy vision, I would probably have committed my life to the ministry of statistical analysis. I, and many others, find it fascinatingly attractive. I, unlike some others, also find it incomprehensible. Service, by contrast, ministry to the poor, sacrifice on their behalf, I find mandated by Christ regardless of how well I understand degrees of freedom, mean squares, F ratios, and F probabilities. And regardless of the name of my ethnic group or administrative unit. Service may not always tax my brain as much. Yet service sometimes seems harder to do. Sacrifice is not positively correlated with genius, but sacrifice, too, like statistics, sometimes seems incomprehensible:

1) The needs of the world are too great. There are too many complications. There is the economic: Annual GDP per capita growth from 1980-93 was negative in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, and in Latin America and the Caribbean. There is the natural: Mitch goes by and 10,000 die in Central America, and an entire region, already behind, is set back two decades, they say. There is deliberate human evil: In my native country, Guyana, and in Nepal, there was a 241% increase in smoking between 1972 and 1992. That is our distinction. Being the most gullible, the most exploited. Next comes the Cameroon with 174%. Developing countries overall, 60% increase; developed countries, 10% decrease. There is, I say, insidious human evil. What can I do?

2) And there is wholesale self-deception: Vast investment in scholarly research to advance the world’s good, and in military expenditures to keep the world at peace while seventeen million people die every year from infections and parasitic diseases we know how to prevent, and one-third of all America’s homeless are vets. And we think ourselves most generous, while we grow ever more selfish. Those who invested, in 1991, $594,000,000,000 on their military, 3.55% of GNP, spent less than a tenth of that on foreign aid. And the saints of America, meanwhile, whose offerings once amounted to 3.14% of income when U.S. per capita was $9,831 in 1987 dollars (1968), now give 2.48%, when per capita income is $15,148 (1994).

3) Besides, I cannot understand Jesus’ sacrifice. No one has yet attempted to measure it in economic terms, in quantifiable ways, so we could subject it to Jerry Thayer’s statistical analysis. Yet we all know that his is an amazing sacrifice: God’s “unspeakable gift” renders the KJV; “indescribable” states the NASB; “too wonderful for words” exults Taylor’s LB (2 Co 9:15). To judge by Jesus, sacrifice may possibly be evaluated without precise financial calculation. God has given up his Son in sacrifice for us, argues Paul, by which we may be sure that he will freely give us all things (Ro 8:32). Sacrifice, apparently, may be distinguished from things. The ultimate sacrifice, to judge by Jesus, is proof that things, when and if necessary and or possible, would also be shared with those in need.

Further research may help explain the differences my study discloses. It may be that some groups are better informed than others with regard to size, sources and expenditures of Archaeology monies, and for such reason are loathed to advocate their redistribution. Or perhaps it may be the case that some feel more strongly about the needs of the marginalized because their present or past, their ministry, their place of residence, or the location of their church buildings, or the neighborhoods and memberships of their congregations, or any combination of these, brings them into closer contact with such need. African-American sympathy for society’s exploited is hardly a mystifying phenomenon.

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10 Sider, ibid., p. 5.


12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

14 Sider, ibid.: On deaths from preventable diseases, p. 3; on military expenditures, p. 33.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid., pp. 204, 205.
For many of them, it is the fruit and continuing reality of their own American experience. Another possibility may be that instrument variables mean different things to different individuals or groups. The term “sacrifice” may automatically imply for some financial involvement. The survey statement does not mention money, but sacrifice. To the extent that respondents reacted to different ideas, an improved research instrument may later yield more valid results. It may even be that servants of Jesus Christ feel an obligation to be cautious about making sacrifices on behalf of the exploited of the world. Whether or not, let us remain assured that the gospel’s claim upon us all holds exhaustively true, stamped on every vegelink, reflected in every glass of Soy Amazing.\(^7\) And the commission to take that message of love that knows no reserve to all humanity, remains unmodified and unmodifiable by our cultural or professional training or allegiance.

A Specific Application

The SDA church’s progress in North America, administratively, or numerically, cannot be separated from the growth and maturation of its regional conferences. As Delbert Baker puts it, “workers trained in regional conferences have made an inestimable contribution to the world church by serving at every level of the denomination, in North America and around the world.”\(^8\) By way of response, David Williams offers a question: “What credibility can we as Adventists have as Christ’s remnant church if we remain so clearly divided, structurally and institutionally, on the basis of race?”\(^9\) His argument is soundly based: Christ’s high priestly prayer, just before his ultimate sacrifice, is not for separateness, but for unity (Jn 17:21). If rhetorical nuances could be disregarded, one might dare to state that regional conferences both acknowledge the church’s earlier crisis of separateness, and as institutionalize continuing separateness even as they facilitate growth. The catalyst which brought them about was the death of an Adventist woman in consequence of medical neglect and rejection on the basis of race.\(^10\) Equally, resistance to their dissolution finds support, *inter alia*, in the superior efficiency of culture specific evangelism.

In context of our present study, one wonders whether observed differences are merely a reflex of societal norms, or whether the existence of present structures provides a context for the development of divergent views. A comparative study of African-American ministers who serve outside the regional conference structure may provide some test for the validity of this suggestion.

Nevertheless, cloning ought not to be seen as a function of either good church administration or genuine gospel proclamation. Fulfilling Christ’s commission does not require obliterating cultural difference, even though it requires sacrifice. The two are not synonymous. So that while we may not yet be able to explain the differences our eyes observe, and our statistics demonstrate, there are things we all can do, in sacrificial service to the poor of our neighborhood, our country, our world, God’s world. I conclude with a partial, personal, and perfect list of seven.

7 Practical Ideas for Service—to the Poor

1) Forget the universe, the statisticians, and the hypocrites. The size of things will overwhelm you, numbers will confuse you, the actors will deceive you. Look to Christ’s example—this was Paul’s appeal to the Corinthians (2 Co 8:9).

2) Junk your gold ring. The problem with the host is the guest. What will she do if her hifalutin guest acted up when she treated him like people instead of like God. Her conscience bothers her for making so much fuss over one human being, she has none left to spill on the next one. That’s the problem James raises (2:1-4). But if he would throw away his ring, or believe he was people and not some higher order, life would be easier for everybody. Nobody would have to sin so much . . . .

3) Pray for a mountain to move—Ask God for a specific longing: “When a people have an earnest longing to help where help is needed . . . the Lord will impart to these consecrated, unselfish ones a heart to give gladly, as if it was a

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privilege".21

4) Take up your bed and pick up the crumbs. That was Christ’s command against littering, environmental pollution, ecological irresponsibility, and general carelessness. It was also another way of saying Jerusalem comes before “the uttermost part of the world” (Mt 9:6; Jn 6:12; Acts 1:8). Mission trips will still be awesome, even if, for a while, this continent stopped living as though we are too rich to reuse paper bags, too clean to survive on less than 250 gallons of water per household per day, too sophisticated to walk when we have benzes, and too private to travel with the neighbor.

5) Go to hell, or something like it. Don’t give up the mission trips, the Maranatha flights, the Adventist World Aviation outings, or International Children’s Care. Just don’t do it so you can have an experience. People don’t usually brag about going to hell. They don’t feel superior because they went to hell. Dibes was doing everything he could to make sure nobody else he cared about ever came down there (Lk 16:19-31).

6) Plan a trip to hell or heaven and do it—for somebody else, bring somebody to your house, or send your young people to their hovel.

7) Join the one-armed bandits club. You probably belong already. I wouldn’t know. I know you belong to enough clubs already, and sometimes they buy a pair of crutches for some poor, lame, maimed, blind child. Or even an electric wheel chair. They do it so people can know about them. This is like #1, forget the hypocrites. Only different. Jesus says when you do alms you must be like a one-armed bandit. As if the hand doing the giving wasn’t yours. It’s called sacrifice. Not tax break. Neither you nor the IRS knows anything about it. Your Father does (Mt 6:3, 4), and the Master may well prefer it that way (Lk 14:7-14). It’s more like what he did for you.

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THEOLOGY OF WELLNESS AND THE BLACK CHURCH

Andy Lampkin
Vanderbilt University: The Graduate School

The theology of wellness that I advocate is at once theological, Biblical, and practical. It is an inference from Biblical injunctions and the human condition. This theology of wellness is grounded in a Biblical and philosophical understanding of the wholistic nature of human beings. It addresses the whole being of humankind, inclusive of the spiritual, physical, mental, and social well being of individuals and groups. Moreover, this theology takes its departure from the real needs of people. Finally, it advocates the promotion of personal and social health (wellness). Wellness is complete physical, mental, spiritual, and social wellbeing. Wellness takes in both subjective and objective detriments of health. Therefore, a theology of wellness is a biblical theology that is grounded in a concrete understanding of humankind that calls for the promotion of wellness as a religious duty.

George W. Reid, in A Sound of Trumpets, states that “no contemporary theologian has yet dealt with a theology of health”. He goes on to suggest that “curiously, no well-qualified Adventist theologian has as yet given it thorough attention, although the denomination as a whole shares an unsystematized common belief” (127). While he published these sentiments in 1982, I hold that they remain true to a degree. Not withstanding the many papers and articles written which provide clues to an Adventist understanding of a theology or philosophy of health – there is noticeably absent a systematic rendering of the Adventist health message. It has remained just that – a health message.

This project is a preliminary attempt to correct this void in Adventist theological reflection. In this project, I isolate and discuss two theological expressions from which a theology of wellness may be shaped. I hope to provide the preliminary groundwork for an Adventist understanding of the promotion of health as a religious duty. First, I consider a theological anthropology that focuses on issues of embodiment that rejects the body-soul dualism and its insistence on oneness of being. Second, I discuss liturgy as another level of theological reflection that in this context focuses on health as divine worship and the body as the temple of the divine. In the concluding session of the essay, I discuss some pressing health concerns of the African American Community and offer a few clues of how the black church might respond.

Seventh-day Adventist Christians are monotheistic in their faith. They believe in one God and accept that God is one – a unitary being. In this view, God is the creator and sustainer of the universe. God, then, is the ultimate source of our being. Adventists ground this understanding of God in Biblical faith using Genesis 1 and 2. These accounts record the free and creative acts of God, bringing into existence the world and finite beings. Moreover, these accounts provide a worldview by offering an account for the origins of life on our planet. Richard Rice, an Adventist theologian, argues that Genesis 1 and 2 provide “an understanding of God’s relation to all of reality.” That relationship is easy to describe - God is the creator, all else is the creation. One consequences of this understanding is that, as creator, God alone is the source of all that exists. This being the case, God alone is independent. Humanity as created beings, we owe our existence solely to God. God is sovereign over the entire universe. Because of God’s sovereignty, God, and God alone is worthy of worship and our utmost admiration. This view is grounded in an Adventist understanding of monotheism and unity of God’s being (God’s oneness). The oneness of God is fundamental to Biblical faith.

Monotheism is the view that there exists a single divine being, and one reality. This view has many consequences. One consequence is, that natural law is God’s law. Another is that, God’s creative acts are perpetually at work in the universe. Hence, the universe is not self-working. God creates and sustains creation. Ellen White, one of the founders of the church, records:

“The mechanism of the human body cannot be fully understood; it presents mysteries that baffle the most intelligent. It is not the result of a mechanism, which, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats, and breath follows breath. In God we live and have our being. Every breath, every throb of the heart, is a continual evidence of the power of an ever present God” (TC vol. 8 pp. 259,260).

The above quote is an implication of the Adventist understanding of monotheism and the unity of God’s being. God sustains our lives as God sustains the entire universe. This understanding suggests that God’s abiding presence is imminent and perpetually at work in the universe.

Adventist thinkers have emphasized two dimensions of divine activity, horizontal and vertical activity. Jack Provonssha, an Adventist thinker, states that, horizontal activity “refers to those qualities of existence that are ordinary,
repeatable, predictable, natural, common – like heartbeats and breathing..." (11). These make up observable activities that can be the object of empirical investigation. Vertical activities are those actions of God, “that are unusual and extraordinary, involving decisions, intelligence and creativity,” says Provonsha (11). These activities are commonly known as miracles. These activities in many ways are unexplainable and defy normal sense phenomenon. It is within the framework of God’s horizontal activity (natural law) that Adventist built their health ministries. Yet, it is within the context of God’s vertical activity that Adventists hold the possibility for miraculous healings.

Another factor that influences an Adventist theology of wellness is a wholistic understanding of human beings. Human beings are finite contingent beings. This understanding is refracted through the creation account. Early, I discussed humanity’s total dependence on God who sustains the universe. As well, human beings depend on a set of environmental conditions that are necessary for their survival, such as shelter, food, air, and water. Another feature of human beings is that we are corporal beings that exist in bodily form. Human beings are embodied beings, thus limited by time and space. Moreover, our existence is a contingent existence. For example, we did not and cannot choose to exist in a particular historical period, these are pre-givens. The social context in which one is introduced into the world is not of one’s choosing, nor does one choose their primary language.

As human beings, we live and have our being in bodily form. The body is constitutive of being human. Richard Rice highlights an implication of our embodiment suggesting that “because human existence is essentially corporeal, the body is something good. It deserves to be taken care of” (101). He goes on to say “the Bible urges us to attend to our health” (101). I would concede with Rice’s assessment if he means by the "body is good" that it is the locus of our being, the source of all experience, including religious experience. I would depart from this understanding if it were suggestive of an essential nature of humankind. Rice is correct in his assessments that the body deserves care and the Bible urges us to preserve our health. I move one step further in this project and argue that there is a religious duty to attend to and promote one’s health as well as the promotion of health for humankind.

Another implication of this understanding is the absolute rejection of the philosophical dualism of body and soul. Adventists accept the view sometimes known as wholism. This view considers the complex unity that represents a human being. These understandings are based in part on Adventist understanding of conditional immortality of human beings. For Adventist, “human beings have no real, even spiritual, existence apart from the body,” declares Provonsha (12). It is this understanding that leads Provonsha to the conclusion that the body counts. He further suggests that, “human beings are (sic) a complex interaction of mind and body in which everything that happens to any part of them (sic), to any dimension, happens to, in some way, the whole of them (sic). Mind affects body, body affects mind, and both interact with the surrounding environment” (12). Ellen White suggest that, “The brain, which communicates with the entire system, is the only medium through which heaven can communicate to humankind (sic) and affect their (sic) innermost life” (TC2, p. 347).

Adventist Monotheism and wholism both describe the unity of being. Adventist wholism and its requisite rejection of dualism condition the Adventist concern for health. In this understanding there is an emphasis on the whole person, who is worthy of our moral concern. Provonsha is right when he exclaims “the body counts terribly.” The theology of wellness that I offer also hold that the body counts and we indeed should take care of it. I submit, because the body counts and is constitutive of being human, it perhaps should be the locus of our moral concern. Hence, promoting its wellness becomes a social obligation.

In the preceding discussion, the Adventist understanding of monotheism was refracted through the creation account. My discussion of liturgy also takes the creation account as a starting point. To be sure, the sovereign creator and sustainer of the universe is worthy and demands our worship. Worshipers acknowledge their dependence on a source outside of themselves. Once human beings discover their true nature, worship becomes necessary. If this assertion is correct, one fundamental task of worship is to acknowledge the creator and creation. Thus, an element of worship is to show respect for the creation. One cannot wholeheartedly worship God, on the one hand, and neglect, abuse, and disrespect that which God created. It seems to follows then, that humankind is worthy of our attention as a liturgical response to God’s creation. An implication of this understanding is that human beings are important as God’s creation and worthy of our moral concern as is the case of all creation. This understanding is an inference from the stewardship motif that is inferred from the creation record of Genesis 1 and 2. Human beings formed in the image of God, at creations, were given the responsibility to care for all that God created, including their fellow human beings. Based on this understanding, the promotion of health is understood as an act of worship, awe, and liturgical responsibility.

This understanding is further developed in Pauline theology. For our purpose, there are two themes in the apostle’s work that will elevate a theology of wellness. One, Paul’s wholistic concept of human beings. And two, the notion that
the body is the temple of God. Since I previously discussed the unity of human beings, I will suspend that discussion and lend only a few remarks.

The Apostle understands humans as unitary beings. He thus has a holistic notion of sin and restoration. He records "May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thes. 5:23, NIV). Paul places emphasis of the whole person restoration. The Apostle, in Romans 12:1 discusses conversion as a spiritual experience, but also remarks that it results in true worship — offering ones body...as a living sacrifice — "holy and pleasing to God..." (Rom. 12:1). The text also calls for the renewing of the mind in order to know God’s will (Rom. 12:2). True worship of God results in the giving of the whole person as a living sacrifice. Hence, the Apostle’s emphasis on the whole person.

Paul’s discussion of the body temple is often appealed to, by Adventist thinkers, regarding our obligation to promote health. The apostle, engages his hearers in a discussion regarding sexual immorality, the warning that he offers has direct implications for a theology of wellness in its demonstration of concern for the body. This is important because it is a departure from focusing solely on spiritual matters. The sin of immorality is sin against the body. "All other sin," Paul declares "a man commits outside his body, but he who sins sexually, sins against his own body." Paul then declares that "Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit...whom you received from God. You are not your own, you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body" (1 Cor. 6:18-20). There exists a responsibility to care for the body in the Apostle’s thinking. This emphasis on care is a liturgical responsibility to the wholistic needs of a person. Such care is mandated by worship to God. As stewards of God’s creation, human beings have a responsibility to provide wholistic care for the body temple. On that note, the body being the temple of the divine demands special care because God dwells there.

Jesus’ acts of compassion and mercy toward those who needed healing are acts of worship to God. Such activities demonstrate the worth, dignity and respect that should be shown toward creation, particularly humankind. All the Gospels seem to agree that Jesus’ healing ministry is an act of compassion for the suffering and needy. Each of the gospels demonstrates his deep commitment and compassion for those in need. Matthew, for example, discusses instances in which Jesus heals persons who simply call out for mercy.

One Adventist thinker, Tom Shepherd, argues: “Each instance of reference to Christ’s compassion is an expression of His concern for a group, usually a crowd of people, as through the multiplication of the needs, the great numbers of persons with problems, called forth His concern for the people” (55). He goes on to say that: “The Markan focus on miracles often presents the pathos of the human situation, in which persons have suffered for long periods of time. Jesus’ acts of healing relieve the tension built up by the depth of trouble the individuals have faced” (55). I think Shepherd’s suggestions are correct and have deep implication for the theology of wellness that I want to offer. The greater the need, the more compassion needs to be shown. This is an equalizing principle. This has special significance for a population that disproportionately suffers. Many of the people to whom Jesus showed compassion were among the oppressed, outcasts, downtrodden, and neglected by society at large. Here again this has special significance for populations of people who have historically suffered oppression in society.

In the book of Luke, Sabbath healing have special significance. Because of Jewish teaching, Jesus became the center of controversy for healing on the Sabbath. His willingness to risk life and limb and His unwillingness to stop His ministries in this area suggest this is “a proper expression of God’s care for His children,” says Shepherd (55). From Jesus’ example, the Sabbath becomes an appropriate day for demonstrating compassion and mercy.

One final emphasis I will highlight regarding Jesus’ acts of compassion and mercy is found in John. John recounts the healing of the royal officer’s son despite the unbelief of the man (ch.4: 49-50). An inference from the story is that we should reach out to those in need regardless of their belief in our faith and practices. The above discussion has many deep implications for the theology of wellness that I want to offer: A theology of wellness that speaks to the real needs of the whole person.

The Black church is a historical institution that emerged in the North American context that has been committed, from its inception, to the wellbeing of the African American community. The origins of the Black church grew out of the African American experience in North America. As E. Franklin Frazier states, “Barred from full and equal participation in any public institutions of the country and not permitted to develop their own in most realms of life, American Negroes were ‘free’ in an ironic sense — to develop their own family and religious life”(5). The Black church developed in part as a response to their disenfranchised status. This institution has historically sought to move black Americans from one state of existence to another - a better state of existence. The Black church in short has sought to promote African American wellness.
The black theology project, with James Cone as its "unsuppressed representative", attempted to ground its theological musing in the black experiences. Grounding theological expression in experience, in my mind, is a useful departure from the over-dependency of metaphysics that is typical of theological reflection. However, I do find another theme, which is embraced by the black theology project as advocated by Cone, that is helpful for this discussion, namely his focus on liberation. In the context of liberation, Cone grounds his understanding of the church and God's relation to the church. For Cone, God sides with the oppressed. Cone argues that "the church is that people called into being by the power and love of God to share in his revolutionary activity for the liberation of man (humanity)" (67). He goes on to suggest that, "the church's sole purposes is to be a visible manifestation of God's work in the affairs of men" (68). If Cone's assertions are correct, then it follows that the Black church should be active in the promotion of human freedom, inclusive of promoting a theology of wellness, which seeks to promote the wellbeing of individuals and communities.

The African American church has historically been a place of refuge and discourse on social problems for the African American community. As mentioned earlier, embodying an alienated and disenchained people and lacking critical access to civic institutions and discourse, the "black church" emerged as the center for the black community. The black church, as well as some fraternal and benevolent associations became the locus of African American discourse. The church, over these other agencies, possessed a unique advantage when responding to the social/political ills of this population. The church, by its charter, could claim and make the case that their actions in the political and social arena were a part of their religious duty. Today, and since the days of the Civil Rights movement, many African American churches justify their non-activity regarding the political and social arena with religious warrants – by making distinction between this worldly and otherworldly, sacred and secular.

Because of the limited time, I will not explore the functions of the church, but will simply assert my understanding of one its functions, namely that of worship. The understanding of worship that I offer encompasses the elements of service, such as carrying out the sacraments and being stewards for God’s creation. Cone's discussion of the church is helpful – but fails to account for what most believers assume to be its essential function, namely worship. The view I offer, which I argue is consistent with Adventist teachings is that worship is central to the church’s mission and the locus of its activity. Where I disagree with some in Adventist circles is their limited understanding of worship, bound to the divine worship event. I attempted to show early that true worship of God not only acknowledges God’s sovereign power and majesty, but also expresses deep concern and compassion for the handiwork of God, namely creation - especially humankind.

Apart from the philosophical rumblings that seek to navigate between anthropocentric understandings of humanity's place in God's creation and more liberating understanding for environmental concerns – Seventh-day Adventists have maintained that human beings are caretakers of God's creation and have the awesome responsibility of joint management of the creation. A consequence: If one holds, as I do, and Adventists have historically, that we are indeed stewards of the creation, then we are responsible for the preservation and promotion of such. I would submit that this understanding has yet deeper significance for human beings – namely one that grounds our obligation to our fellow human beings in the creation motif. It becomes self-evident that we are indeed our brother, sister, mother, father, and neighborhood's keeper.

The work of Christ as recorder in early Christian literature tells of many miraculous healing and other miraculous events. Those who recorded these events wanted to show that Jesus is indeed the Messiah and Son of God. Adventist thinkers rightly argue that the example of Jesus including his healing work sets the standard for Christian duty and practice. Following the example of Jesus, there exist the need to elevate our concern and activity toward suffering people. Concern for the poor and suffering and the promotion of activities that alleviate their plight emerges as a necessary ethic for the Christian community.

Historically, the Black church has responded to the most pressing concerns of the African American Community. However, that level of participation and commitment perhaps should be raised to another degree when one considers that African American health is perhaps the poorest in the nation. My research indicates that the health concerns, practices, and beliefs of African Americans have been mostly ignored by the health care system in the United States. Little is known about the health beliefs and practices of this group – this void makes providing morally persuasive health care suspect. What we do know is that African Americans’ biological and genetic make-up, as well as their experience in North America encourage certain unique health beliefs, needs, concerns, and practices. Moreover, their cultural practices, including an understanding of health, wholeness, health care, healers, and medicine, all express the unique nature of African American health care issues. Medical science and mainstream medical practices have all but ignored
the unique concerns and needs of the African-American population. Furthermore, medical ethics has been virtually silent on the entire issues of race and medicine. I rehearsed the above to bolster the assertion that African American health is among the poorest in the nation and worthy of our moral concern. When reviewing the health statistics, one quickly discovers that African Americans disproportionately suffer from many ailments in society, which brings about their premature demise.

I lift these considerations to highlight a possible social agenda for the black church. The church can respond because it has credible in the Black community. However, many will question what can the church do regarding these complex social issues. My reprise would be a lot, a whole lot. What follows and by way of conclusion are a few preliminary reflections, which explore possible activities for church involvement. One, the church can advocate a "theology of wellness" that focuses on the whole person and raises the promotion of health and wellness as a religious duty. This will affirm the religious community's commitment to itself and the source of its being, the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. This emphasis will move the church toward action in the promoting of personal and family health as well as the social health of the community. Two, armed with a theological understanding grounding their faith, the church could launch an aggressive awareness program, which targets areas of specific concern. For example, churches may launch programs that respond to issues such as, infant mortality, low birth babies, high blood pressure, nutrition, HIV awareness, and other issues that have regional and national significance. The church and the community will benefit from these efforts to address these issues. Targeted awareness programs work, as indicated by the reduction of HIV transmission among certain targeted populations. Third, churches could build networks with community agencies that presently respond to the health needs of various populations, such as the Red Cross and Department of Health. Being in such relationships allows for the possibility of resource exchange needed to respond adequately to certain health related issues. These relationships would also save the church from having to research the issues that demand attention in their area. These agencies often have access to hard data to show real need. Fourth, churches can do community outreach, from the very simple such as conducting localized health surveys which seek the interests of the community, to large-scale screening and health fairs. Fifth, the church, because its constituency are also the constituency of political leaders can, as an organized body, raise those issues to the forefront that affect the health of their populations and the population they seek to serve. This can happen on a local and a national level. The black church can lobby medical research institutions to look for creative ways to respond to the pressing health needs of the at risk population, both from the research and treatment perspectives. The church can mobilize and advocate for culturally sensitive medical care and increased representation of minorities in the arena of the biomedical sciences.

The above suggestions are in many ways simple options that can make a difference in lives of people. The need for this type of activity is grounded in the shocking health statistics of the black population. The motivation for this type of activity is grounded in a theology of wellness that seeks to promote the wholistic wellness of individuals and communities. The theology of wellness that I offer is conditioned in a Biblical faith and a concrete understanding of human beings. I attempted to show that there are Biblical and theological warrants for the promotion of wellness as a religious duty. By appealing to the example of Jesus, I wanted to suggest that showing acts of compassion toward individuals and groups in need is a necessary ethic for the Christian community. If these considerations are helpful, the case I attempted to make for the churches involvement in issues that affect African American health will necessary follow. I appealed to the historic activity of the Black church suggesting that the church could be helpful in the reduction of needless suffering that confront African Americans. To be sure, a Black church armed with a theology of wellness and committed to social action will be an aggressive social agent in the promotion of African American wellness. Perhaps, the church can reduce the trends of poor health, needless suffering and premature demise that plagues African American populations.

Before concluding, I want to provide a brief discussion on the health status of the African American population and show how the church could respond. What follows is a survey of vital statistics that will help situate our moral concern, by demonstrating the need. When considering mortality – the rate for African Americans is about 60% higher than White Americans. In addition, for most causes of death, mortality is higher in Blacks. On average, the homicide rate among black populations is 6 times higher than whites. If one takes the death rates for injury by firearms for instance, they will discover between the ages of 15-24, there were 170 cases per 100,000 in the black population, 146 of which were related to homicide and 34 per 100,000 in the white population, 15 related to homicide. The only area related to mortality where black males were less a victim was suicide where the rates are lower by one per 100,000 population.
For white males, 17 per 100,000 and black males were 16 per 100,000. Closely linked to general mortality are cancer death rates. Breast cancer, the second leading cause of death for women causes 28 deaths per 100,000 in the population. However, the death rate among blacks is 34% higher than the corresponding rate for white females. Cancer of the prostate incidences is 73% higher in the black male than his white counterpart. Where there are approximately 234 cases per 100,000 among black males and 135 per 100,000 among white males. The five year survival rate for black males is 15% lower than white men 75/90%. When considering heart disease, when compared to their white counterparts, black incidences were 49% higher. The infant morality rate for blacks was 2.4 times higher than white infants. In 1995, the life expectancy at birth was about 76 years. The breakdown is as follows: White females top the chart with a life expectancy of 80 years, black females 74 years, white males 73 only slightly below black females and at the bottom of the scale is the black male at 65 years of life expectancy.

The last statistical area I will discuss is STDs – isolating HIV/AIDS and syphilis. The HIV death rate was 9 times higher in black females than her white counterpart. Among black males, the rate is 4 times the rate of his white counterpart. Whereas many thought that syphilis had been eradicated with penicillin in the 1940s and 50s, in Nashville today, syphilis is of epidemic proportion. Nashville is among the top 3 in reported cases of syphilis in the nation, only Memphis and Boston have recorded more cases. In this epidemic, African Americans represent 90% of the reported cases and yet only represent 25% of the population. Whereas in Nashville, whites represent 73% of the population and only 9% of the reported syphilis cases. The other 1% of the reported cases is represented by other groups. I turn to the syphilis epidemic in Nashville, because I am locally involved in a faith-based effort to help get the epidemic in check.

Because of the time constraints on this project, I will not attempt to full explain and account for the cause of these disparities. To fully account one would have to take a hard look back at this nation’s racist past, and that’s not the focus of this current project. The experience of slavery, Jim Crow and other forms of institutional racism has set into motion ways of being in the world that, for sure, are not conducive to wholeness or wellness. I have isolated elsewhere four factors that account for the above-recorded statistics. 1). Ethnomedical (cultural disposition toward medicine); 2). Epidemiological – considering socio-demographic, and cultural dynamics; 3). Biological and genetic factors; 4). Sociomedical – quality of health care received and access to quality care.

Regarding ethnomedical and cultural disproportion, research seems to suggest that African Americans as a group distrust the medical establishment. This relates perhaps to a history of medical abuse. When considering epidemiological factors, attention should be given to factors such as living and working environment and their effects on wellbeing as well as broader cultural values such as food habits and dietary attainment. Biological and genetic considerations have been emerging to the forefront as the cause of many diseases, but there has been little attention afforded to discussions regarding the effects these considerations have on black health. Such attention is desperately needed. Regarding, sociomedical, there exist some studies to suggest that African Americans are seldom satisfied with the type of care they receive – which raises very real concerns regarding the quality of care this population receives. Many complain of very long waits to be seen by medical personnel for a short visits and rushed care. These concerns may demonstrate compromise care given to African Americans. Many who are in the lower economic status often depend on the resources of free clinics and county hospitals where waits are long and "care" sometimes questionable.

**Eschatology: Watchfulness toward the end**

The final level of theological expression that I offer for a theology of wellness is eschatology. It is well accepted that the Adventist movement by its definition is an epoch movement concerned with time, particularly the end time. Such a concern informs the movement in at least two important ways. One, the movement has a special mission and two eschatological wakefulness. Considering time and the focus of this project, I will limit discussion to eschatological wakefulness. My discussion is an inference from the gospels.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke call for special wakefulness and sober living in light of the end. In the parable of the watchmen, recorded in Matthew and Luke, Christ speaks of the suddenness of the return and the need for preparation. "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (24:36). Jesus recounts the days of Noah, stressing that "people were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark. The people knew nothing until it was too late, - such will be the case at the Second Coming" (24:38,39). Jesus warns, "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day the Lord will come" (24:42). The wicked servant in the parable suspecting that the Master will delay his coming begins to abuse other servants and eats and drinks with drunkards. But when the Master returns unexpectedly, the wicked servant will suffer punishment.
The text is not objecting to the maintenance of the body through nutrition (eating and drinking), nor is the theme an injunction against marriage. The concern is not being ready, or sober, when expecting the return of the Master. The parable of the Ten Virgins is recorded in Matthew stresses the same concern – preparation for the soon return. (Discussion based on Matt. 24:36-51; 25:1-13; and Luke 12:13-21, 35-48).

Expecting the Parousia brings with it special ethical significance. There is expressed concern for the weak, oppressed, needy, and suffering. This understanding is an inference from the parable of the sheep and goats. The sheep and goats will be separated. The ones who follow Christ will follow the ethical example of Christ demonstrate compassion for the poor and oppressed among us. Those who don't will be condemned. Showing acts of mercy become a necessary ethic for the community of believers (chapter 7).

In Luke, food has eschatological significance (13:28-30; 22:28-30). He records there will be feasting in the kingdom of heaven. A part of rewards is sufficiency, the meeting of one’s needs. Luke speaks of food and laughter replacing the sorrow of the hungry. There is also a moral significance on possessions. Those who have abundance and do not share will be condemned. When preparing a feast, do not invite your friends, but rather invite the poor and sick (14:12-14). Two themes emerge. One concern for the needy, poor, sick, etc. The second is the need for watchfulness, particularly in light of the end.

From this discussion, it seems that a theology of wellness is necessary and very much a part of the gospel. To reject such is to bring condemnation; to promote such is to be in the service of God.

Bibliography


SCHOLARSHIP AND SERVANTHOOD: VOICES FROM EMERGING SCHOLARS

John R. Jones
La Sierra University

It has been well said that theological problems and debates do not get resolved; they simply get surpassed. The generation whose thought-categories generate a given set of issues yields in time to a new generation for whom those issues are less self-evident — or simply less interesting. They move on to other ways of thinking, which bring new problems to chew on.

Perhaps we can begin to see something of the next shift starting to emerge in our own circles. None of our speakers in the coming hour would want to claim the responsibility of being a representative voice for the next generation of Adventist scholars. Each is here more to share something of his or her personal story, than to set forth a theological program.

Yet together their stories do begin to help us sketch the contours of the landscape that is before us. It is a landscape that still echoes something of the terrain we have already traversed, and yet is clearly new. The hard-won ground of our recent journey remains; we have gained much. Yet in remaining, it already begins to recede in the face of new territories that beckon ahead. And those territories look only partly familiar to those of us who have "come this far by faith."

Most encouraging is the fact that these younger colleagues are here at all. They do see themselves as engaged in the ongoing pilgrimage of Adventist scholarship, and want to be part of it. If the discourse shifts, it is still a sustained discourse, in which our common allegiance to truth and to the Adventist quest remains definitive.

Given that, it is appropriate to this body's spirit of progressive scholarship that those who are emerging on the scene be increasingly drawn into our common discourse — not simply on one occasion, but the more with each opportunity.

As an initial step in that integrative process, it is a pleasure to introduce four emerging colleagues who are already distinguishing themselves, and defining the tasks that will engage their lifetime energies. They will each briefly sketch, in narrative form, something of their experiences as students and aspiring teachers. They will highlight ways in which their particular stories and social locations intersect with their own self-understandings as both scholars and servants.

First of these is Diana Fisher, currently studying at Fuller Theological Seminary in the area of ethics. Diana will share certain of the insights that have come to her as she has dealt with the tensions inherent in walking in the worlds of scholarly endeavor and of service to the church. That twofold walk has been a source of both inspiration and frustration, as she has sought to work within the limited roles available to her in even the most progressive Adventist contexts. Diana will reflect on what she has learned about servanthood, teaching and God in struggling with these tensions.

Diana will be followed by Rene Dupertuis, who is studying with Dennis MacDonald in New Testament studies at Claremont Graduate University. Rene's concentration on strategies for reading and interpreting the New Testament materials (especially the gospels) grows directly from his own double-rootedness in the Anglo and Hispanic cultures. This vantage-point not only relativizes for him the claims of objectivity asserted by certain traditional approaches, it also impels Rene's desire to empower his students, by fostering their abilities to appropriate the text in ways that re at once critically responsible and creatively pertinent to their own lives.

Anne Freed will follow with her account of the major influences that have shaped her own vision of servanthood as a philosophical theologian. As a student of Nancy Murphy at Fuller Theological Seminary, she reflects on the formative ways in which various communities of faith have contributed to her vocation of servanthood — a vocation faithful to yet reaching beyond the bounds of a given community of faith. Having taught religion courses at both Pacific Union College and Walla Walla College as well as having worked on the campuses of La Sierra and Andrews
University, Anne credits her denominational context with having nurtured her sense of calling, and summoning her to growth.

Finally, Michael Zbaraschuk, who is studying in philosophy of religion with Marjorie Suchocki at Claremont Graduate University, will sketch his "intellectual genealogy" through which influential mentors, inside and outside the denominational educational system, have helped him integrate scholarship and service. Now completing his dissertation in the doctrine of providence, Michael traces providential leadings through the steps of his own development under the tutelage of inspiring teacher-colleagues. With his interest in the meaning of religious language, Michael's focus is on the challenges of "making sense of religion in a secular world." A fifth-generation Seventh-day Adventist, Michael sees his faith heritage summoning him to faithfulness, even while it also gives him courage to grow.

Each of these presenters is hoping for responses in the subsequent discussion time, as well as on an individual level. "We invite challenge or counsel from experienced teachers on matters such as how to use critical scholarship in the classroom, the implications of postmodern thought, the dangers of relativism. We would like to hear these concerns just as much as we would like to be heard in articulating the ways our own experiences have led us to resonate with the various perspectives we are encountering in our work."
THE BIBLICAL SCHOLAR AS A SERVANT

Ruben Rene Dupertuis

Studying the various ways in which the Adventist scholar is a servant is a very important task particularly for those of us who, as scholars-in-training, are still navigating the sea of possible methods, ideas and disciplines. A number of unanswerable questions moved in and commandeered much needed brain space when I took up this topic: To whom am I a servant? To which of the various communities to which I belong am I a servant? To the scholarly community? To the Hispanic community? To the Adventist community only? To my (future) students? What happens when the different communities to which I belong require competing or contradictory things of me—when the presuppositions and goals differ?

As a student of early Christian literature, as a reader of texts (for myself and for others), taking a look at the question of the scholar as a servant is of particular significance. There are many models that can be used to understand the role of the biblical scholar. One of the models I find helpful was suggested by James A. Sanders, who has made a distinction between readers of biblical texts who are traditionalists and those who are traditionists. A traditionalist is someone who takes over the stories and traditions handed down to her/him uncritically and woodenly applies them to her/his situation in life without taking into account the differences in time, location and context. A traditionist, on the other hand, is aware of these differences and dynamically applies biblical answers to her/his situation in ways that are relevant and responsible both to the texts and to her/his community. I find this model a helpful one for thinking about my role as a biblical scholar because it asks me to think about the context from which I am reading as well as the context of the text I am reading. As a scholar/servant I approach texts with questions derived from my own experience, questions derived from living in the United States at the end of the 20th century. Although this is to some degree implicit in Sanders' paradigm, I would stress the importance of the reader or traditionist being conscious of the place from which she/he reads.

The ways in which we approach texts are necessarily shaped by our experiences. It would be more than a little awkward for me to read texts with the assumptions and presuppositions of a 16th century woman. Quite naturally, I read texts as a 27 year old male who was born into an Argentine family, has grown up in two cultures, speaking two languages and has lived and studied in Costa Rica, Mexico, Spain, France and the United States. My being able to move (both geographically and ideologically) between several communities has made me keenly aware of how much the location from which one looks influences what one sees. My experience has made me a reader who is sensitive to the cultural differences in texts, to language as a cultural product and to the ways in which texts draw the boundaries between community insiders and outsiders. I am also sensitive to the theoretical frameworks through which texts are approached. All readings of texts require critical tools and methods. Choosing the method through which to access a text depends largely on the types of questions I am asking. If my concern is verifying the "facticity" or "historicity" of a particular passage or event, the methods I choose will be those that enable me to be as

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1 Sanders expressed this idea in various class lectures Claremont School of Theology classes in 1995 and 1996. For a good example of Sanders' hermeneutical approach to biblical texts, see his Cannon and Community: A Guide to Canonical Criticism (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984).

2 For Sanders, the traditionist functions as a type of mediator between the world of the text and the traditionist's community. The role of the traditionist as an "expert reader" is somewhat problematic and exemplifies the attitude and assumptions of historical critical methodologies, which are increasingly being challenged by biblical scholars. See F. Segovia, "And They Began to Speak in Other Tongues": Competing Modes of Discourse in Contemporary Biblical Criticism" in Reading from this Place, Volume 1: Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in the United States, ed. F. Segovia and M.A. Tolbert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).
historically accurate as possible. If I want to examine the interrelationship between two writings that appear similar in language and themes, the methods I choose will allow me to explore the literary aspects of the texts.

One of our major challenges at the end of the 20th century is finding positive and constructive ways to deal with the "increased" diversity and plurality of experiences in nearly every facet of life.\(^3\) Many of the "newer" methodologies in biblical studies, often classified under the general umbrella title of "postmodernism, \(^4\) have been specifically developed in response to the challenges that the diversity and plurality of our experiences present to traditional modes of biblical interpretation. However worthy of critique many postmodern approaches are, a brief look at a couple of their basic insights/presuppositions can add an important dimension to how we think of scholars as servants.\(^5\)

One of the starting points of postmodern methods is the recognition that everyone reads from a place. Each of us carries our unique experiences into our readings of texts. It is not possible to bracket our identities as flesh and blood readers-for we always experience the world as limited humans. A second major idea is that the place from which we read is never disinterested. For postmodern approaches to texts there can be no such thing as a disinterested, objective reading for the greater good of all human kind. Every reading bears the stamp of the person performing that reading.

So how does this affect my understanding of scholars as servants? Postmodern approaches ask me to recognize my limits as a reader with regards to claims to having definitive interpretations. This is challenging and somewhat destabilizing. However, when I identify the place from which I am reading, the gaps created by differing interpretations can lead to dialogue that can show the ways in which God continues to be a part of each of our lives. This challenges me to be more open and sensitive to other readings from other places. In the same way that my experience "predisposes" me to see certain things in text or to ask certain questions of texts, others' experiences enable them to see different possibilities by which I can be enriched.

\(^3\) The diversity is not new, only the awareness of it.

\(^4\) The various critical stances commonly referred to as postmodern can vary significantly from one to the other. They share, however, a suspicion of the claims to mastery and objectivity made by traditional readings of texts. For a full and interesting discussion on postmodern approaches to the study of the Bible, see The Bible and Culture Collective, The Postmodern Bible (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995).

\(^5\) I do not intend for this to be a wholesale endorsement of postmodern methods. My own interests and research currently lie more in the area of literary historical approaches to early Christian literature-in particular, the ways in which early Christian texts are related intertextually to the literature and traditions of the Greco-Roman world.
THE PHILOSOPHICAL THEOLOGIAN AS SERVANT

Anne Freed

As I reflect on servanthood, I realize that the meaning of this word has both been given to me, and been chosen by me. It was given to me during my years in high school, in college, and graduate school by many leaders who modeled their own vision of servanthood. I remember working at Leoni Meadows Summer Camp and seeing other camp staff serve children. I remember listening to fellow intern chaplains and chaplains employed by Loma Linda University Medical Center describe their service to patients. Throughout my education, I have learned from many admirable role-models the meaning of servanthood in academic and other church contexts. But how did my very specific call to serve the church as a philosophical theologian develop? What led me to study theology, ethics, apologetics, and most recently, religious experience? And how will these studies enable me to serve the church? I would like to respond to these questions by telling you a portion of my story.

I believe that seeds planted during my childhood as well as on-going experiences with my family have inspired my desire to study theology. I am the middle child of three siblings, all very close in age. We all share the same two parents. We went to the same schools and received the same kind of religious education. Yet now that we are all in our thirties, we find ourselves fitting in to Christian communities that operate with different philosophical and theological assumptions as well as worship practices. When we sit down to talk about our religious experiences, we do so with different terminology. Yet every chance we get, we continue to talk. We do so because it is natural for us. We grew up talking or arguing about our differences at family worship services, during our trips together, in the car, on the way to or home from church, and at dinner. Yet, somehow, our talking in the context of our shared life binds us into relationship with one another and often makes real for us God's presence. Even with our many differences, we all value the way our relationships within our family and our religious communities contribute to our experience and understanding of God. We all seek out communities where differences can be acknowledged, where a variety of gifts are recognized and valued, and where our accountability to others contributes to our ability to respond to God and God's purposes. My family then, has given me a sensitivity to and desire to study differences within religious communities. It has also provided me with confidence that God values differences and actually works through our relationships with those who are different to bring us into relationship with God.

Like my family, my roots in Adventism also strongly influenced my vocational path. I am a fifth generation Seventh-day Adventist. I attended Adventist educational institutions from grade school through seminary. This background acquainted me well with the forms of life (in the sense Wittgenstein uses this term) that underlie both liberal and conservative Adventist theology. Also, my graduate studies included work in Adventist history and theology. I was impressed to learn of the different streams that shaped Adventism—both the strong pietist and rationalist roots of Adventist theology. Yet I was also puzzled as I watched Adventists, and later other denominational groups, like the Southern Baptists, struggle to maintain unity amidst the tensions between fundamentalists and liberals. It seemed that liberals and conservatives usually failed to communicate with one another. Their attempts at dialogue most often proved futile, whether over women's ordination, ecclesiology, or the sanctuary doctrine. So, like a good middle child, I set out to serve the Church by getting ready to mediate between these groups, hoping someday to facilitate dialogue.

In the course of my graduate studies I have read philosophers and theologians such as Ludwig Wittgenstein, Alasdair Maclntyre, Thomas Kuhn, Hans Frei, and George Lindbeck. These philosophers and theologians helped me to understand better the "incommensurable" nature of disagreements among different religious groups. At the same time, I began to appreciate theological methods that are non-foundational; i.e., those that do not rely on a single or a few rational or experiential foundation(s) and do not claim to mediate universally valid criteria for truth. This perspective allows me to value the various ad hoc ways that Christians go about justifying their convictions, while challenging me to discern along with others more or less adequate expressions of the faith. As a result of this new perspective, my confidence in my faith commitments has grown. My growing confidence, in turn, prompts me to look for ways to help
people in churches I am involved with to clarify the assumptions and practices that influence their theology, their understandings of the ways we know or experience God, and the dynamics of religious dialogue, in hopes that others may grow in their confidence in the faith of Jesus.

In my current project I am focusing on the relationship between the religious experiences possible in a community and a community's form of life, or the communal practices that constitute a community's rationality. For example, I believe the form of life of a particular Adventist community gives meaning to or interprets Adventist doctrinal teachings. These communally conveyed meanings, in turn, shape or limit the religious experiences possible in a given Adventist community. In the end, I hope to show the integral relationship between religious experiences within a community and the structure of its communal rationality, constituted by, e.g., its doctrinal teachings or worship practices. This, I hope, will point to ways that religious communities may move beyond truncated theologies that focus exclusively on either expressive or cognitive ways of describing our experience God. Further, I hope to show ways that this view of religious experience enables rather than hinders fruitful dialogue among different religious groups.

Considering further how I might serve the church as a philosophical theologian, I believe this vocation does not confine me to focusing exclusively or even primarily on the rifts and controversies within the Church. Rather, I believe a philosophical theologian might also play an important role in the evangelistic mission of the Church. My interest in missions, cross-cultural communication, and apologetics also grew out of early life experiences. With a host of missionaries as ancestors, I grew up hearing stories about and taking trips to other countries. I found myself connecting easily with foreigners during high school, college, and graduate school, even if these aliens had only come from non-Adventist contexts into the tightly knit sub-culture of particular Adventist educational institutions. Since I myself had been a foreigner in a public school context in first and second grade, I felt empathy for these individuals, and wanted to understand what made them see the world differently from me. We began to talk, began to relate, and began slowly to understand and value each other's perspectives. My desire to understand the world and values of those outside the Adventist Church increased as I studied philosophical theology and apologetics. At the same time, my Christian convictions strengthened as I encountered non-Christians. Recognizing the differences of others' beliefs and experiences thus allowed me to find deeper meaning in my particular beliefs and a deeper commitment to them. I began to see that Christians have something of incomparable value to share with non-Christians.

This conviction grew out of struggles over the last ten years to understand ways that the truth of the Gospel becomes accessible to us. I began this struggle with a study of the sanctuary doctrine, which I interpreted at the time as a way to express the church's convictions concerning a needed balance between God's initiative and humankind's initiative or response in the process of justification and sanctification. But I believed this doctrine had often been perverted by an over-emphasis on the church's responsibility to usher in the kingdom of God by achieving corporate holiness or perfection. My concern in this study, then, was to explore ways that Adventists could recover a Christocentric focus, and also recommit themselves to the way of the cross. This, I believed, would enable bodies of believers to incarnate and thus interpret the Gospel in contemporary contexts.

Yet as I learned more about the institutional church during my years in seminary, and visited or participated in various communities in different places, I became aware of how different congregations differently embodied their understanding of the Gospel. For example, the self-supporting community who ran Country Life Restaurant in Paris, where I worked one summer, embodied the Gospel very differently than the Mountain View Seventh-day Adventist Church, where I worked as an intern another summer. These experiences led me to question how communities of faith function as the hermeneutic of the Gospel. I explored this question in my master's thesis on the ways Lesslie Newbigin, a prominent missionary and ecumenical leader, proposed secular, western culture might be confronted by the Gospel. Through the course of writing this thesis and finding "community" with several graduate students at Andrews, I gained a growing sense that the healing and truth promised by Jesus is available in Christian communities.

Later, I found other communities through which God worked to deepen my understanding of the Gospel. At Baylor University, where I began my doctoral studies, I found communities that became "hermeneutical tools" helping me to
understand the meaning of God's grace. Then, returning to PUC to teach for a year, I saw further examples of God's grace among the faculty and students. But I also saw examples through these years of some communities that interpreted the Gospel very differently—they demonstrated that their salvation depended on performance, whether through rigid conformity to a set of rules or through producing certain kinds of religious experiences. Most recently, church communities at Fuller, where I am completing my doctorate, have most fully revealed to me the potential for communities of faith to become powerful interpreters of the meaning of the story of Jesus for our contemporary culture, as well as places to encounter most fully the living Christ.

My conviction about the central role of communities of faith in communicating the truth of the Gospel leads me as a philosophical theologian to seek ways to create bridges between active, living faith communities and the unchurched. This may involve facilitating communication, as well as promoting structures through which communication may take place. Recently, this vision has led me to explore the field of corporate chaplaincy, a newly emerging field in need of sound theological and philosophical development. I want to explore ways that chaplains in such positions might remain connected to the life of particular churches, so that their ministries may grow out of this life.

As you can see, my vision of servanthood has grown and developed in response to my experiences in various religious communities. As my views of the Church and of the ways God becomes known in the world developed, these views interacted with and enriched my vision of servanthood. I am left, at this still early stage of my career, with a vision of servanthood that is best captured by the image of Jesus kneeling down to wash his disciples' feet. Simply put, this image shows me that the Church and the World need each other, liberals and conservatives need each other, and generation X-ers and baby-boomers need each other—that is, if we hope to see the face of God. May we each serve one another by offering our humility, our limited perspectives, and our vulnerability, thus following Jesus in pursuing our different vocational paths.
FINDING PETER PAN
Diana Fisher

When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord.
(The Book of Jeremiah 29:12-14)

And if (my servant) draws nearer to Me by a handsbreadth, I draw nearer to him by an arms length; and if he draws nearer to Me by an arms length, I draw nearer to him by a fathom; and if he comes to Me walking, I come to him running. (A hadith qudsi, divine saying of Muhammad)

As a child, I happened upon God in the innocence of life. I found God through my surroundings; my family, my school and my church. It is in these places and people I found comfort, security, nurture and love.

Now, my search for God and a spiritual path has become more complicated. I find myself in a different place, time and mind-set. As I think about my life situation, three words apply: woman, Adventist, theologian. Being a woman in today's society presents in itself a host of stories. But this is not my story today. As an Adventist woman there are many other issues that give rise to discussion. This is not my story either. As an Adventist woman theologian, the picture becomes more complete and complex. This is my story today.

When I told my Adventist community I was going back to graduate school in 1996 to study theology, I got two different responses. The first response came when I went to a leader in an Adventist conference office. I went for advice, for leadership, for affirmation. Because I have been treated with respect and fairness my whole life growing up in the SDA church, I expected to be greeted with warmth. Instead, I was told the following, "Our constituents are not ready for women in ministry or in religious leadership roles, but we could use a girls' dean." No offense to the wonderful deans of women in our education system, but my vision was to serve in ministry and teaching. I was surprised and frightened. I realized the struggle for women in the SDA church was not over despite great strides for inclusiveness and equality. I feel this experience was an exception to the rule, but it was my experience nonetheless.

The second response was positive, sometimes even overzealous. Many friends, mentors and fellow theological travelers were excited, encouraging and welcomed me with open arms. With appreciation and anticipation, I went forward with my theological inquiry.

With time, I soon realized I did not own my reasons for coming back to school. I was studying theology with an agenda—instead of an open and honest search for God. I was studying because of someone else's intentions. I realized I was falling into the pigeon holes already created by my well-intending community and I was letting this happen. Being an Adventist woman theologian automatically throws me into certain places. Sometimes I am categorized as a "young adult minister." Sometimes a "feminist" for the SDA women's movement; sometimes a "Generation Xer." I began to question my efforts saying, "Am I a mascot for the 'cause,' of the organization, for my church?" Please don't misunderstand, I do recognize the opportunities given to me by some of these titles, but I do not own them. I must embrace my own journey and define it for myself.

When I think about servanthood and scholarship, these questions come to mind: "As I stand in the gap between opportunity and oppression, how do I become a useful servant? Am I truly serving by following the agendas or intentions of my fellow Adventists? What do I really have to offer the SDA church and vice versa? What is my role going to look like as an Adventist woman theologian? Do I own my journey? What does it mean to serve?" I certainly don't have the answers to these questions, only suggest some ideas about serving.

1. Serving is allowing the freedom of discovery.

Rabbi Harold Kushner in his book, "Who Needs God?" talks about the notion of many people choosing scientific truth over religious orthodoxy. Instead of being threatened by this situation, Kushner embraces discovery stating that such searching for truth can be seen as a victory, not defeat for religion. He states,
"That men and women chose to use their God-given intelligence to explore and understand God's world was a religious act. To seek to understand why earthquakes happen and what causes disease is not an arrogant encroachment on God's domain; it is an example of human beings, in God's image, extending God's process of creation by bringing order in place of chaos. To search for truth instead of relying on ancient guesswork is a religious affirmation, not a repudiation. What religion worthy of its name would base itself on the hope that people would be too intimidated to find out how the world really works?"1

Kushner goes on to use an example from chapter 13 of the Book of Job. When Job's friends try to explain the disasters that had happened, Job retaliates. 'Will you speak unjustly on God's behalf? Will you speak deceitfully for Him?... What will happen when He examines you? Will you fool Him as one fools men Job 13:7-9

As an Adventist women seeker, I must not be intimidated by others' agendas or intentions. I must allow myself and others to discover their own spiritual path.

2. Serving is having an attitude of anticipation.

The most exciting learning I have experienced as a teacher and student has been of genuine joy in the knowledge process-no matter where that learning leads. There must be a sharing in the excitement of watching students grow into the truth God is making them to be, NOT what we think God should make them to be—even if this means it hurts us as an organization, as a school, as a church. Sometimes our favorite students quit the ministry or even leave the church. The most important thing is the awakening, the discovery, the growth of those individual students.

3. Serving is encouraging the quest for Truth.

And what do I mean when I say truth with a capital T? Let it be defined by the following quote:

"In any case, what is truth? Pilate asked the question long ago but, fearing the onslaught of a series of philosophical abstractions, had the sense not to wait for a reply. Kierkegaard, faced with the same question, answered, 'It is that which ennobles.' A friend of mine, whilst discussing the ambiguity of all moral action, once asked Father Ronald Knox, "How then do we know truth?" Knox thought for a long time, then said, "Truth is that which makes you a better [person]."2

For me, Truth is not what makes a better organization, a better church, a better school—it's what makes a better person. An organization is not true if it serves itself first. The best thing we as humans can ever hope to do is interweave our lives with others in service. The place I find the purest expression of God is in the interaction of humans with one another. Service is about that interaction.3

I was inspired when I read one minister's experience as he served as a chaplain in a hospital. William Simon describes the interactions with those on their death beds as a discovery of God's work being carried out. These experiences actually strengthened his faith rather than weakened it. Simon describes an experience:

"On one occasion, I was visiting a young man who was dying of AIDS. His body was pitifully thin, racked with pain. As we prayed together, I looked down on this poor soul and remembered Christ's words—whatever you do for the least of my brethren, you have done for me. I've thought about that moment several times since. And I realize that I was not just looking into the face of that young man—I was looking directly into the eyes of Christ."4

As I think back over my experiences of questing for Truth I remember Christy. She was a senior in my youth group. I tried to do everything to reach Christy during my year as the youth pastor in Australia. It seemed like every effort I made to include her did not touch her hard shell. Then I realized something—I was projecting my agenda onto her. I decided that no matter what, I would strive to only be myself with Christy and let go of trying to control the rest. Even though I didn't get her to come to church or youth group once, even though she would barely look at me in the school halls, I kept saying hello and smiling. I gave up my "intentions" of getting her back to church.

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At the end of that year, I said my tearful goodbyes to students and families I had come to know and love. To my surprise, Christy made a speech at the farewell party. "I just want to thank Diana for being my friend, no matter what. She was a real person and didn't give me any bull." Now that was the weirdest but certainly the most rewarding compliment I have ever received. I am sure Christy still isn't going to church, but no matter—we interacted. We connected somehow. I let go of my decision to control and let my humanness, my real self, be seen by Christy.

My own struggles and searching for God have taken me many places. As I embrace my search and take ownership of my spiritual journey, I am learning to let go of my feelings of guilt of possibly failing the expectations of my church or my community's agenda. This has been a hard but necessary part of traveling down my own path of discovery and quest for Truth.

Like the innocence of childhood, the search and discovery of God comes from the heart of genuine anticipation, from the element of surprise, from the observation of beauty in the universe, from the sense of awe of the unknown. Often this discovery comes from the tranquil, yet sometimes painful, interaction with others.

We, as servants, must choose to empower others, to give back the freedom of responsibility for individual and corporate searching for Truth. To be willing to let God truly use our humanness, our interaction with others is to serve. This is how we grow, this is how we learn and discover and find God.

I believe with all my being, that God wants us to poke and probe and question and search in whatever method, using whatever tools an individual or group sees fit in order to get to that quiet spot with Her. Like the Lost Boys in Never-Neverland discovering Peter Pan, we are able to look up into God's face by looking in the faces of others.

And in that moment we say, "Oh, there You are!"

ENDNOTES

1 Kushner states: "The friends have cautioned Job, 'You're saying terrible things about God, and He's going to be very angry at you.' Job replies, 'If God is a God worth worshiping, I have to believe that He respects my honesty more than your flattery. I may be theologically wrong in what I say about God, but I am saying what I think and feel to be true, not what I think God wants to hear, and I have to believe that God respects that.'" Kushner, Harold. no Needs God? (New York: Summit Books, 1989), pg. 20-21.


3 I can't prove to you that a human life is special and of unique value, any more than someone else can prove to you that it isn't. I can only suggest to you that some wonderful and liberating thing (and also some difficult and demanding things) happen to you when you come to see life through the eyes of religious faith. I can only suggest that there is something innate in each of us that responds to the idea that human life is sacred, an instinctive feeling that this is true." Kushner, Harold. Who Needs God? (New York: Summit Books, 1989), pg. 30.

TRUTH, CONTEXT, AND CONCRETE ACTION: HOW TO THINK ABOUT SCHOLARSHIP AND SERVANTHOOD

Michael Zbaraschuk

Does a scholar serve? Who and what do they serve? Who makes the decision about what counts as service and/or scholarship? Like my other colleagues, my own reflections on scholarship and servanthood come out of my personal story, which includes my Adventist heritage and training in the philosophy of religion and theology. As I reflected on how I experience the concepts of scholarship and service, I came to feel that emphasis on three points would help to keep the discussion centered. First, keep the emphasis on truth. Second, always contextualize. And, third, concrete action, not only reflection, is called for.

First, scholarship. My training in scholarship comes from my education at both Walla Walla College and the Claremont Graduate University. In these institutions I learned the various skills that allow one to enter the world of academic scholarship research, reading, writing, etc. However, in addition to technical skills, I also encountered various people who modeled scholarship by their lives. Alden Thompson, at WWC, with his concern for sanctified reason and his publishing of controversial material if he thought it was true and helpful for the community is one example. Another is John Cobb at Claremont, who encouraged students to write dissertations on either topics of existential importance for their own lives or on topics which served an ethical vision for the church or the world, and frowned upon technical, jargon-laced work. These are only two examples among many. All the good scholars who I have known have done their scholarship in the service of a vision of one kind or another. I hold that the vision they have is the vision of truth. Indeed, I would make the claim that the search for truth is the engine that drives the scholarly enterprise. Scholarship is not an end in itself, but a pursuit of truth of some sort, and thus it seems to me to serve a higher ideal.

Now comes the tricky part: the relation of scholarship, with the implicit service of truth that it entails, to service within the Adventist church. For me, the key concept here is service within, rather than to, the church. A scholar serves the truth, and a Christian serves God. (I even find some conflation of the two, for example in the Fourth Gospel, where truth and Jesus, who is pictured as divine, are identified.) Insofar as the church and the scholar serve the same master, their goals will coincide. If there is some conflict (and I say if, rather than when, -- each case needs to be examined on its own merits, and I see no necessary conflict), then it seems to me that the scholar must serve her/his primary vocation that of the truth.

But seeking the truth is not the end of the story. In the modeling I received on how to be a scholar, the people who made the most positive impact on me were those who did their scholarly work with an eye upon their communities, working to effect positive change while serving the truth. Also, I take to heart Paul Tillich’s injunction that the worst thing a theologian (and probably a scholar of any sort as well) can do is answer questions nobody is asking. Thus, while still insisting upon the necessity of holding the truth as the highest ideal, the areas of scholarly endeavor should (and probably will) be determined by the questions of the community in which the scholar finds her or himself. If nobody is interested in the Synoptic Problem, for example, then there is no reason to work out a solution to it. If, on the other hand, it is a source of concern to many people, then it needs to be addressed. This may be stating the obvious, but it seems important to me to be clear about this question. Close attention to the context in which the questions arise and to which they are directed, paired with the insistence upon truth as such can keep the discussion both grounded and

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1 Although this may be hotly debated by some, for example by those who hold that discourse is about power and domination, I think it can be maintained. Even the insistence upon the view that discourse is about power rather than something else presupposes that its view is more compelling, or truer, than another. I have had this discussion with colleagues in other disciplines besides religion, and they seem to see my point, albeit somewhat reluctantly.

2 This is not to say that the scholar will always be right? far from it. However, it does seem to me that s/he needs to stand by what s/he feels to be right.

3 Indeed, perhaps working for positive change, with the concomitant belief that such change is real and possible, is an affirmation of some kind of truth in itself.)
relevant. The insistence upon truth, which is the reason for the scholarly task at all, is thus prevented from the flight into ungrounded abstraction that is the bane of all philosophical reflection which concentrates upon ideals alone. Insisting on truth, but letting the context of the inquiry shape both the questions and the process of scholarship itself, seems to me to be the best way in which a scholar can serve her or his community.

But enough theory! I am by both inclination and training a constructive theologian, rather than a philosopher, and I can only hold myself to theoretical discussion long enough to outline a program for constructive work. So, in what ways can a theologian such as myself serve God and the truth through her or his scholarship in the Adventist community?

In trying to answer this question, I think that my discipline betrays me: I find the most interesting areas for scholarship and creative theological work in the traditional concerns of the philosophy of religion the existence of God, the problem of evil, and especially the question of the meaningfulness (or not) of religious language.

It is in this final question whether or not religious language and the practice of religion has meaning -- that I feel my concerns for the truth and my own context come together in the most powerful way. An illustration: I went to the 10-year reunion of my graduating academy class last spring, and I had a marvelous time. Eight of my good friends and I got a motel room, and we all stayed up late into the night exchanging memories and current stories. It was wonderful. However, in trying to field a group who was willing to give a Sabbath School program, there were hardly enough people who were planning to come to that section of the program to fill the slots. The vast majority of the people who I went to academy with, especially my good friends, are presently unchurched. This is not because of bitterness toward the church, except in a few cases; it is mostly (to my mind) the sheer lack of relevance of religion to their lives. Other concerns a job, a hobby, life in an entirely secular world -- seem more interesting or more meaningful or more honest than the religion we grew up in. One of my friends put it like this: Once you've given up religion, you need something like sports to occupy your time. This is not a statement of explanation as to why or how religion ceased to be meaningful it is an expression of the fact of its meaninglessness and the offhandedness with which it is now regarded. My context is one in which the people with whom I grew up and to whom I feel closest no longer find religion significant. My concern for the truth which can perhaps be positive in this context is to point out ways in which I find religious language and practice to be meaningful which don't fall into the categories which are no longer useful for them, or are subject to the criticisms they hold. This is not that I see myself as a missionary to my acquaintances, but as a friend.

Some other issues which I see as arising from my context of Adventism in North America are: the relation of science and religion; questions about the Bible and its purpose and role (including questions of biblical criticism); questions of social and ethical issues, or how a religious person should live in a world which is seemingly unconcerned with anything except attaining and retaining power; and the question of spiritual practices. Lack of time prevents my going into these subjects in any detail, which is the only way to really go into them, so I will save them for another day and another paper.

Finally, a clarification is in order. I do not see any of these difficulties as being resolved by any sort of purely intellectual process. I may have given the intimation that once things are resolved on a theoretical plane, difficulties will magically fade away. Of course, this is not so. Meaningfulness will only be recaptured by those who have lost it in a context of practices, of which intellectual pursuits are only one type. Intellect can (in the best case) clarify key issues, and point in a direction to go. But in order to find a solution to the difficulties listed above, an experiment of life must take place. I see this happening in communities who make the commitment to do the hard work of seeking the truth in context, and who have the courage to actualize it in their collective lives. Adventism has many elements that could lead it to be such a community, as well as trends that detract from its likelihood. I hope that we can collectively take the risk and do the work of seeking, finding, and concretely acting upon the truth.

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4 Note that I do not think that this will take place primarily in the arena of discussion about these specific questions, but in the holding of a coherent position that is actualized in a life.

5 Then, of course, the process begins again as a new situation arises due to the action of the community. There is no once-for-all answer.
REPORT FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA

Wann M. Fanwar

Greetings from Southeast Asia—the region of the never-ending tropical summer. Permit me to introduce myself. I am Wann Fanwar. By birth and nationality, I am an Indian, but I have been serving the Church in the Far East ever since I graduated from college. I completed my undergraduate ministerial training at Spicer Memorial College, India. After graduation, I was called to be a high school Bible teacher in the Hong Kong-Macao Conference where I served for six years. Upon completion of my service in Hong Kong, I went for my graduate studies at the Adventist International Institute for Advanced Studies (AIIAS), Philippines, where I completed an M.Th. Soon after, I was called to serve in Singapore Mission. For nearly eight years, my wife and I served the Church in that country. I served Singapore Mission in several capacities, as church pastor, departmental director, Church Ministries director, and Ministries Coordinator. During my stay in Singapore, I was also seconded to Southeast Asia Union College (SAUC) where I taught Bible for five years and then served as Chair of the Theology Department for two years. Currently, I am pursuing a doctoral degree at the SDA Theological Seminary, Andrews University.

SAUC and its subsidiary, Southeast Asia Adventist Seminary, was the only college in the Southeast Asia Union Mission (SAUM) for several decades. This morning, I would like to share briefly the form that theological education in the SDA Church has assumed in Southeast Asia.

Southeast Asia Adventist Seminary has, over the years, been responsible for training the pastors of the Union territory, which includes the countries of Singapore, Malaysia (which has three Missions), Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. Today, Thailand Mission has its own college, Mission College, where the Thai pastors are trained.

Over the years, SAUC has produced a number of Bible teachers who have gone on to obtain doctoral degrees from Andrews University, AIIAS, and other universities. Many of these individuals have returned to serve the Church in a variety of positions. Unfortunately, the Union territory has produced only a few individuals with higher degrees in theology and biblical studies. This lacuna often puts a heavy strain upon the work of theological education in this Union.

I would like to focus my report on what Southeast Asia Adventist Seminary has attempted to do. Over the years, the Seminary offered three different degree programs: a B.Min., a B.A. in Religion, and a B.Th. Degree. These programs were accredited with the Adventist accrediting body and with the Association for Theological Education in Southeast Asia (ATESEA), Asia's largest accrediting body for theological education. Many graduates of the Seminary have gone on to obtain higher degrees in different institutions. Currently, two of its more recent graduates are doing their D.Min. at Fuller Theological Seminary.

The Seminary has had to face a variety of challenges in the last ten years and I would like to share some of them with you:

1. Despite covering a fairly large territory, the Union has witnessed a dwindling number of students entering ministerial training or working towards a degree in theology. This is especially significant due to the fact that the majority of the pastors in the Union (with the exception of Singapore Mission) do not even have college education. For the Seminary, this has meant taking theological education on the road. In recent years, the Seminary has played an increasing role in providing Theological Education by Extension to these pastors. College Bible faculty were sent out twice a year to conduct extension school classes. For many of these pastors, the credits they earn at these extension schools can be transferred into a full-fledged college credits.

2. Another challenge that the School has had to face concerns the work of certain Independent Ministries in the Union Territory. These groups have been very aggressive in Southeast Asia and their work has caused no uncertain amount
of turmoil in the churches. The theology faculty has had to conduct a variety of seminars for the laity in an attempt to stem the tide of perfectionist gospel that these groups have brought. Questions as varied as diet, worship style, Bible version, Bible translation and textual criticism have rocked many segments of the Church in Southeast Asia. Conversely, the Church has also felt deeply the inroads of the charismatic movement which is sweeping through Asia. This has altered the members' view about and approach to worship. The Seminary has done what was possible, with its limited resources, to assist the Church in meeting these challenges.

3. A more difficult challenge for theological education in Asia is that posed by the cultural and political environment of the countries that make up SAUM. In Malaysia and Singapore, the Church is not permitted, by law, to evangelize the Malay Muslims. In Communist Vietnam, the Church still works somewhat covertly because local pastors who meet with Union officers get arrested and are interrogated by the country's secret service. In Thailand, the church must contend with a very entrenched form of Buddhism, while in Singapore the Church is challenged by secularism. In all of these countries, there is also a subtle resurgence of the traditional religions which challenge an already difficult task. The Seminary has initiated seminars and papers that were intended to move the Church to a more complete understanding of its mission and the task it must accomplish. A couple of my colleagues have even published articles in the ATESEA Journal in an attempt to develop a more Asian understanding of the Church. The real need in all this is to find a genuine breakthrough into the millions of people in Southeast Asia that are either resistant to the gospel or whom we are not allowed to reach by law. This is the challenge of any future theological endeavor for the Church and the School.

4. In addition, the Church in Southeast Asia is confronted with a cult label that is often taken to extreme by other Christian groups. There is a sense of isolation that the Church experiences. In an attempt to alleviate this problem, the Seminary has, for several years, conducted PREACH Seminars. These attempts have proven somewhat successful since most of the non-SDA attendees have been pastors of other churches, many of whom are subscribers to Ministry.

In March 1996, the Singapore government requisitioned almost all of the land that the Union held in Singapore. This turn of events led to the closure of the Youngberg Adventist Hospital and SAUC, the merger of the two Church-operated high schools, and the relocation of the publishing house. As of September 1998, Southeast Asia Union College and its subsidiary, Southeast Asia Adventist Seminary, no longer officially exist, bringing to an end over half a century of SDA college education in the region.

To offset this loss, the Union has assumed control of Thailand's Mission College and is attempting to build a new Union College in Thailand. My being at Andrews University is part of this reconstruction process. This unexpected dilemma offers both challenges as well as opportunities. Even as we speak, the new curriculum for ministerial and theological training is being made, a process that began months before I came to Andrews University. A new start like this is threatening, on the one hand, and hopeful, on the other hand. Perhaps, this educational reconstruction will allow theological education in Southeast Asia to flourish as it has never done before.

The future calls for visionary and courageous leadership, administratively and theologically. But that is the challenge that the Church must face if the gospel commission is to become reality.
GRACE AND SERVICE

Charles Bradford
Florida

"I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome (Rom. 1:14-15 NIV)."

There is a relationship between grace and service. Grace determines the quality of our service. Grace makes service acceptable. It was Paul's reception of this grace that heightened his sense of obligation. "But by the grace of god I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them--yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me (1 Cor. 15:10 NIV)." He was overcome by it.

Grace is the motive spring. Grace prompts the effort and fuels the flame. It is the matrix that gives birth to all of our acceptable works of service. Further it is grace that gives buoyancy to labor. Grace nourishes and sustains us in this life of service-makes service a delight. But grace keeps us from making service a means of salvation. Obligated? Yes. Fee for service? No.

This grace orientation is sine qua non - our great need.

"O to grace, how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be
Let Thy goodness, like a fetter
Bind me closer Lord to Thee."

It was this outpouring of grace in his life that made the apostle eager to serve. He wanted to go to Rome, to Spain, to the outer regions of earth, to serve all people. He saw no barriers, no ethnic divides, or national boundaries. He is servant of all. Jesus spoke of a well of water springing up, overflowing, lifegiving. Ezekiel saw a river deepening, widening, greening everything it touched. Service in the context of this bursting river, this gushing well is the motif of the Kingdom of God. it is all about abundance. There is nothing penurious about the One who occupies the throne of grace.

What are the indicators that we have been accessed into this grace-that we are really standing in it-being sustained by it? What are the outcomes? What is the fruit? The grace orientation changes our relationship to fellow humans, it also makes us secure in God's love for us. Grace makes us graceful, gracious, merciful, We imitate his "unlimited patience." (NIV) Gratitude is the only appropriate response to our heavenly parent. To have the grace orientation is to feel this deep sense of debt--to God, to others. "I am obligated to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to wise and the foolish. That is why I am so eager..." People of this orientation are outgoing, comfortable with God. They enjoy His company. There is a softening of the countenance and a lessening of tension, stress, striving.

Those who do not receive this grace become either antinomian or legalist. They also become powder dry (no oil of grace) in their religious experience, unresponsive, shut up to themselves, actually unable to respond to God's tender appeals or to human need. They find it difficult to accept forgiveness and impossible to offer it. Their hearts do not thrill at the sound of His footsteps as He approaches. In fact they do not even recognize Him as He passes by. There is no "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17)." What a pity, when it is all there for the asking! "He
who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? (Romans 8:32)."

Let's give this presentation an eschatological thrust--an endtime setting. This earth, and especially the community of faith, is God's theater of grace where He "is making experiments on human hearts" and "Effecting transformations so amazing that Satan" is baffled. (TM p.18) This work of grace is destined to go forward irresistibly. The prophets describe Yahweh's purpose as irreversible. "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea (Habakkuk 2:14)." "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6)." A people will appear in time and history who will proclaim and model the kingdom of grace. "The message of the gospel of His grace (is) to be given to the church in clear distinct lines (Evangelism p.191)." We must not only proclaim it, we must model it.

The preachers used to tell the story of the artist's apprentice who wanted to do a portrait of Jesus. When he had finished he asked the master to look at it and give his appraisal. The old man's terse comment was, "If you loved Him more, you would paint Him better".

It remains for those who drink deeply at grace's fountain to present those living waters to all the people who dwell on earth. Seventh-day Adventists must be in the vanguard, foremost exponents, stewards of His matchless, saving grace. But this can only be as we become the people in whom Yahweh's name dwells, fiercely loyal to Jesus Christ (Revelation 14:12)." God wants to wrap His message up in a people who belong to Him and send that message to the world. They must be a people saved by grace, a people who live in that grace. A people who refuse to boast because they realize that "Divine grace is needed at the beginning, divine grace at every advance step, and divine grace alone can complete the work (TM p. 508)."

"Marvelous grace of our loving Lord,
Grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt!
Yonder on Calvary's mount outpoured--
There where the blood of the Lamb was spilt.

Julia H. Johnston
In Remembrance

Carl D. Anderson

Julia Neuffer

Kenneth A. Strand

Arnold V. Wallencamp
Julia Neuffer
1907-1998

“Only one woman appears among the distinguished scholars, professors, and church leaders whose names grace the title pages of the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary as editors or major contributors—Julia Neuffer.”

Born in Columbia, South Carolina, in 1907, she finished high school in Lake City and graduated from Winthrop College at Rock Hill in 1929. Her major subject turned out to be English, although she had planned on a major in Latin; she had become a Seventh-day Adventist during her senior year and declined to take the final, two-hour course in Latin because it met on Sabbath. She had taken two years of classical Greek, as well as some Homeric Greek and a semester of Hebrew.

Julia’s first years after college were also the first years of the Great Depression, and work was scarce. She did some substitute teaching, and some part-time work hand-coloring stereopticon slides for Adventist evangelists. She went to Washington Missionary College to take some religion courses and qualify for a teaching certificate, and eventually taught church school in Tampa, Florida, for a year. In 1941 she moved to Washington, D.C., and worked for a couple of years as a cafeteria checker and doing other work at the Washington Sanitarium.

In 1943 she began her 30-year career with the Review and Herald Publishing Association—first as a proofreader, then research assistant, and finally assistant book editor. In 1947 she became the first woman to earn a master’s degree at the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary, specializing in archaeology and Near Eastern antiquity. She worked on such projects as Leroy Froom’s Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers and The Chronology of Ezra 7, by Siegfried Horn and Lynn Wood. She spent so much time in the Library of Congress, verifying sources and quotations, that some people thought she was a member of the staff there.

In 1952 she began her work as assistant editor of the Seventh-day Adventist Commentary Reference Series, including the seven volumes of the Bible Commentary, the Bible Dictionary, the Bible Student’s Source Book (which was largely her work), and the Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopaedia (which she co-edited with Don Neufeld). If you wonder why she was listed as assistant rather than associate editor of the Bible Commentary, the answer is that she insisted on it; when F. D. Nichol proposed that she be listed as associate editor, she protested that she didn’t know enough theology to warrant the title.

Julia Neuffer was as meticulous and persistent as she was unassuming. She had a passion for truth in scholarship, and because of her diligence many an Adventist writer has had a better reputation than he would have had otherwise. In the words of Kit Watts, she “spent her life telling the truth—and helping the church she love[d] to do the same.” If we Adventist made a practice of canonizing people, we would call her Saint Julia.

Julia retired from the Review and Herald Publishing Association in 1973, and died 25 years later, on March 15, 1998, at the age of 90. Blessed are the editors who die in the Lord; for their works, mostly unheralded, do follow them.

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2 Watts, 13.