THE MANDATE OF BIBLICAL INERRANCY:
EXPOSITORY PREACHING

John F. MacArthur, Jr.
President and Professor of Pastoral Ministries
The Master's Seminary

The special attention of evangelicalism given to the inerrancy of Scripture in recent years carries with it a mandate to emphasize the expository method of preaching the Scriptures. The existence of God and His nature requires the conclusion that He has communicated accurately and that an adequate exegetical process to determine His meaning is required. The Christian commission to preach God's Word involves the transmitting of that meaning to an audience, a weighty responsibility. A belief in inerrancy thus requires, most important of all, exegetical preaching, and does not have to do primarily with the homiletical form of the message. In this regard it differs from a view of limited inerrancy.

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The theological highlight of recent years has without question been evangelicalism's intense focus on biblical inerrancy. Much of what has been written defending inerrancy represents the most acute theological reasoning our generation has produced.

Yet, it seems our commitment to inerrancy is somewhat lacking in the

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1This essay was initially given as a response at the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, Summit II (Nov 1982). It was subsequently published under the title "Inerrancy and Preaching: Where Exposition and Exegesis Come Together" in Hermeneutics, Inerrancy, and the Bible (ed. by Earl Radmacher and Robert Preus; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984) 801-831. It has been updated to serve as the foundational article for this inaugural issue of The Master's Seminary Journal.


3Paul D. Feinberg, "Infallibility and Inerrancy," Trinity Journal 6/2 (Fall 1977), p. 120, crisply articulates critical inerrancy as "the claim that when all facts are known, the scriptures in their original autographs and properly interpreted will be shown to be without error in all that they affirm to the degree of precision intended, whether that affirmation relates to doctrine, history, science, geography, geology, etc."
way it fleshes out in practical ministry. Specifically, evangelical preaching ought to reflect our conviction that God's Word is infallible and inerrant. Too often it does not. In fact, there is a discernable trend in contemporary evangelicalism away from biblical preaching and a drift toward an experience-centered, pragmatic, topical approach in the pulpit.

Should not our preaching be biblical exposition, reflecting our conviction that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant Word of God? If we believe that "all Scripture is inspired by God" and inerrant, must we not be equally committed to the reality that it is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work"? Should not that magnificent truth determine how we preach?

\[\text{2 Tim 3:16-17. Scripture quotations in this essay are taken from the New American Standard Bible (La Habra, CA: Foundation, 1971) unless otherwise noted.}\]
Paul gave this mandate to Timothy: "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction." Any form of preaching that ignores that intended purpose and design of God falls short of the divine plan. J. I. Packer eloquently captured the pursuit of preaching:

Preaching appears in the Bible as a relaying of what God has said about Himself and His doings, and about men in relation to Him, plus a pressing of His commands, promises, warnings, and assurances, with a view to winning the hearer or hearers . . . to a positive response.

The only logical response to inerrant Scripture, then, is to preach it expositionally. By expositionally, I mean preaching in such a way that the meaning of the Bible passage is presented entirely and exactly as it was intended by God. Expository preaching is the proclamation of the truth of God as mediated through the preacher.

Admittedly, not all expositors have an inerrant view. See William Barclay's treatment of Mark 5 or John 6 in The Daily Study Bible Series. It is also true that not all with an inerrant view practice expository preaching. These are, however, inconsistencies because an inerrantist perspective demands expository preaching, and a non-inerrantist perspective makes it unnecessary.

Putting it another way, what does it matter that we have an inerrant text if we do not deal with the basic phenomena of communication, e.g. words, sentences, grammar, morphology, syntax, etc. And if we do not, why bother preaching it?

In his much-needed volume on exegetical theology, Walter Kaiser pointedly analyzes the current anemic state of the church due to flock-feeding rendered inadequate because of the absence of expository preaching:

It is no secret that Christ's Church is not at all in good health in many places of

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5 Tim 4:1-2, emphasis added.
7 D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Preaching and Preachers (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971) 222.
The world. She has been languishing because she has been fed, as the current line has it, "junk food"; all kinds of artificial preservatives and all sorts of unnatural substitutes have been served up to her. As a result, theological and Biblical malnutrition has afflicted the very generation that has taken such giant steps to make sure its physical health is not damaged by using foods or products that are carcinogenic or otherwise harmful to their physical bodies. Simultaneously a worldwide spiritual famine resulting from the absence of any genuine publication of the Word of God (Amos 8:11) continues to run wild and almost unabated in most quarters of the Church.8

The cure is expository preaching.

The mandate then is clear. Expository preaching is the declarative genre in which inerrancy finds its logical expression and the church has its life and power. Stated simply, inerrancy demands exposition as the only method of preaching that preserves the purity of Scripture and accomplishes the purpose for which God gave us His Word.

R. B. Kuiper reinforces this mandate when he writes, "The principle that Christian preaching is proclamation of the Word must obviously be determinative of the content of the sermon."9

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I would like to begin the main discussion with these logically sequential postulates that introduce and undergird my propositions (as well as form a true basis for inerrancy).  \(^{10}\)

1. God is (Gen 1:1; Pss 14, 53; Heb 11:6).

2. God is true (Exod 34:6; Num 23:19; Deut 32:4; Pss 25:10; 31:6; Isa 65:16; Jer 10:8; 10:11; John 14:6; 17:3; Tit 1:2; Heb 6:18; 1 John 5:20, 21).

3. God speaks in harmony with His nature (Num 23:19; 1 Sam 15:29; Rom 3:4; 2 Tim 2:13; Tit 1:2; Heb 6:18).


5. God spoke His true Word as consistent with His true Nature to be communicated to people (a self-evident truth which is illustrated at 2 Tim 3:16-17; Heb 1:1).

Therefore, we must consider the following propositions.

1. God gave His true Word to be communicated *entirely* as He gave it, that is, the whole counsel of God is to be preached (Matt 28:20; Acts 5:20; 20:27). Correspondingly, every portion of the

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\(^{10}\) See Norman Geisler, "Inerrancy Leaders: Apply the Bible," *Eternity* 38/1 (Jan 1987) 25, for this compact syllogism:

- God cannot err;
- The Bible is the Word of God;
- Therefore, the Bible cannot err.
Word of God needs to be considered in the light of its whole.

2. God gave His true Word to be communicated exactly as He gave it. It is to be dispensed precisely as it was delivered without altering the message.

3. Only the exegetical process which yields expository proclamation will accomplish propositions 1 and 2.

Inerrancy's Link To Expository Preaching

Now, let me substantiate these propositions with answers to a series of questions. They will channel our thinking from the headwaters of God's revelation to its intended destination.

1. Why preach?

Very simply, God so commanded (2 Tim 4:2), and the apostles so responded (Acts 6:4).

2. What should we preach?

The Word of God, i.e., Scriptura sola and Scriptura tota (1 Tim 4:13; 2 Tim 4:2).

3. Who preaches?


4. What is the preacher's responsibility?

First, the preacher needs to realize that God's Word is not the preacher's word. But rather,
He is a messenger, not an originator (εὐαγγελίζω [euaggeliz]).
He is a sower, not the source (Matt 13:3, 19).
He is a herald, not the authority (κρυστάω [kruss]).
He is a steward, not the owner (Col 1:25).
He is the guide, not the author (Acts 8:31).
He is the server of spiritual food, not the chef (John 21:15, 17).

Second, the preacher needs to reckon that Scripture is Λόγος του Θεού (ho logos tou theou, "the Word of God"). When he is committed to this awesome truth and responsibility,

His aim, rather, will be to stand under Scripture, not over it, and to allow it, so to speak, to talk through him, delivering what is not so much his message as its. In our preaching, that is what should always be happening. In his obituary of the great German conductor, Otto Klemperer, Neville Cardus spoke of the way in which Klemperer "set the music in motion," maintaining throughout a deliberately anonymous, self-effacing style in order that the musical notes might articulate themselves in their own integrity through him. So it must be in preaching; Scripture itself must do all the talking, and the preacher's task is simply to "set the Bible in motion."

A careful study of the phrase Λόγος του Θεού (logos theou, "the Word of God") finds over forty uses in the New Testament. It is equated with the Old Testament (Mark 7:13). It is what Jesus preached (Luke 5:1). It was the message the apostles taught (Acts 4:31; 6:2). It was the word the Samaritans received (Acts 8:14) as given by the apostles (Acts 8:25). It was the message the Gentiles received as preached by Peter (Acts 11:1). It was the word Paul preached on his first missionary journey (Acts 13:5, 7, 44, 48, 49; 15:35-36). It was the message preached on Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 16:32; 17:13; 18:11). It was the message Paul preached on his third missionary journey (Acts 19:10). It was the focus of Luke in the Book of Acts in that it spread rapidly and widely (Acts 6:7; 12:24; 19:20). Paul was careful to tell the Corinthians that he spoke the Word as it was given from God, that it had not been adulterated and that it was a manifestation of truth (2 Cor 2:17; 4:2). Paul acknowledged that it was the source of his preaching (Col 1:25; 1 Thess 2:13).

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11 Packer, "Preaching" 203.
As it was with Christ and the apostles, so Scripture is also to be delivered by preachers today in such a way that they can say, "Thus saith the Lord." Their responsibility is to deliver it as it was originally given and intended.

5. How did the preacher's message begin?

The message began as a true word from God and was given as truth because God's purpose was to transmit truth. It was ordered by God as truth and was delivered by God's Spirit in cooperation with holy men who received it with exactly the pure quality that God intended (2 Pet 1:20-21). It was received as *Scriptura inerrantis* by the prophets and apostles, i.e., without wandering from Scripture's original formulation in the mind of God.

Inerrancy then expresses the quality with which the writers of our canon received the text we call Scripture.

6. How is God's message to continue in its original true state?

If God's message began true and if it is to be delivered as received, what interpretive processes necessitated by changes of language, culture and time, will ensure its purity when currently preached? The answer is that only an exegetical approach is acceptable for accurate exposition.

Having established the essential need for exegesis, the most logical question is, "How is interpretation/exegesis linked with preaching?"

Packer answers best:

The Bible being what it is, all true interpretation of it must take the form of preaching. With this goes an equally important converse: that, preaching being what it is, all true preaching must take the form of biblical interpretation.

7. Now, pulling our thinking all together in a practical way, "What is the final step that links inerrancy to preaching?"

*First*, the true text must be used. We are indebted to those select
scholars who labor tediously in the field of textual criticism. Their studies recover the original text of Scripture from the large volume of extant manuscript copies which are flawed by textual variants. This is the starting point. Without the text as God gave it, the preacher would be helpless to deliver it as God intended.

Second, having begun with a true text, we need to interpret the text accurately. The science of hermeneutics is in view.

As a theological discipline hermeneutics is the science of the correct interpretation of the Bible. It is a special application of the general science of linguistics and meaning. It seeks to formulate those particular rules which pertain to the special factors connected with the Bible. . . . Hermeneutics is a science in that it can determine certain principles for discovering the meaning of a document, and in that these principles are not a mere list of rules but bear organic connection to each other. It is also an art as we previously indicated because principles or rules can never be applied mechanically but involve the skill (techn) of the interpreter.13

Third, our exegesis must flow from a proper hermeneutic. Of this relationship, Bernard Ramm observes that hermeneutics, . . . stands in the same relationship to exegesis that a rule-book stands to a game. The rule-book is written in terms of reflection, analysis, and experience. The game is played by concrete actualization of the rules. The rules are not the game, and the game is meaningless without the rules. Hermeneutics proper is not exegesis, but exegesis is applied hermeneutics.14

Exegesis can now be defined as the skillful application of sound hermeneutical principles to the Biblical text in the original language with a view to understanding and declaring the author's intended meaning both to the immediate and subsequent audiences. In tandem, hermeneutics and exegesis focus on the Biblical text to determine what it said and what it meant originally.15 Thus, exegesis in its broadest sense will include the various disci-

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14 Ibid. See also Jerry Vines and David Allen, "Hermeneutics, Exegesis and Proclamation," *Criswell Theological Review* 1/2 (Spring 1987) 309-34.
15 This definition has been adapted from John D. Grassmick, *Principles and Practice of Greek Exegesis* (Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1974) 7.
plines of literary criticism, historical studies, grammatical exegesis, historical theology, biblical theology and systematic theology. Proper exegesis will tell the student what the text says and what the text means, guiding him to make a proper personal application of it.

Interpretation of Scripture is the cornerstone not only of the entire sermon preparation process, but also of the preacher's life. A faithful student of Scripture will seek to be as certain as possible that the interpretation is biblically accurate.\(^\text{16}\)

**Fourth**, we are now ready for a true exposition. Based on the flow of thinking that we have just come through, I assert that expository preaching is really exegetical preaching and not so much the homiletical form of the message. Merrill Unger appropriately noted,

> It is not the length of the portion treated, whether a single verse or a larger unit, but the manner of treatment. No matter what the length of the portion explained may be, if it is handled in such a way that its real and essential meaning as it existed in the light of the overall context of Scripture is made plain and applied to the present-day needs of the hearers, it may properly be said to be expository preaching.\(^\text{17}\)

As a result of this exegetical process that began with a commitment to inerrancy, the expositor is equipped with a true message, with true intent and with true application. It gives his preaching perspective historically, theologically, contextually, literarily, synoptically and culturally. His message is God's intended message.

Now because this all seems so patently obvious, we might ask, "How did the church ever lose sight of inerrancy's relationship to preaching?" Let me suggest that in the main it was through the "legacy of liberalism."

**THE LEGACY OF LIBERALISM**

**An Example**

Robert Bratcher is the translator of the American Bible Society's *Good*

News For Modern Man, a former research assistant with ABS, and also an ordained Southern Baptist pastor. As one of the invited speakers to a Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, he addressed the topic "Biblical Authority for the Church Today." Bratcher was quoted as saying,

Only willful ignorance or intellectual dishonesty can account for the claim that the Bible is inerrant and infallible. No truth-loving, God-respecting, Christ-honoring believer should be guilty of such heresy. To invest the Bible with the qualities of inerrancy and infallibility is to idolatrize [sic] it, to transform it into a false god.18

This thinking is typical of the legacy of liberalism that has robbed preachers of true preaching dynamics. I ask, "Why be careful with content which does not reflect the nature of God, or with content whose truthfulness is uncertain?"

False Notions

Bratcher and others who would subscribe to "limited" or "partial" inerrancy are guilty of error along several lines of reasoning.19 First, they have not really come to grips with that which Scripture teaches about itself.

Benjamin Warfield focused on the heart of the issue with this inquiry: "The really decisive question among Christian scholars . . . is thus seen to be, 'What does an exact and scientific exegesis determine to be the Biblical doctrine of inspiration?'"20

The answer is that nowhere do the Scriptures teach that there is a dichotomy of truth and error nor do the writers ever give the slightest hint that they were aware of this alleged phenomenon as they wrote. The human writers of Scripture unanimously concur that it is God's Word; therefore it must be true.

Second, limited or partial inerrancy assumes that there is a higher...

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19 These arguments have been adapted from Richard L. Mayhue, "Biblical Inerrancy in the Gospels" (unpublished paper; Winona Lake, Indiana: Grace Theological Seminary, 1977) 12-15.
20 Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, rpt. 1948) 175.
authority to establish the reliability of Scripture than God's revelation in the Scriptures. They err by \textit{a priori} giving the critic a place of authority over the Scriptures. This assumes the critic himself is inerrant.

Third, if limited inerrancy is true, then its promoters err in assuming that any part of the Scriptures is a trustworthy communicator of God's truth. An errant Scripture would definitely disqualify the Bible as a reliable source of truth.

Presuppositions are involved either way. Will men place their faith in the Scriptures or the critics? They cannot have their cake (trustworthy Scripture) and eat it too (limited inerrancy). Pinnock aptly noted, "The attempt to narrow down the integrity of the Bible to matters of 'faith' and its historical reliability is an unwarranted and foolish procedure."\textsuperscript{21}

If the Bible is unable to produce a sound doctrine of Scripture, then it is thus incapable of producing, with any degree of believability or credibility, a doctrine about any other matter. If the human writers of Scripture have erred in their understanding of Holy Writ's purity, then they have disqualified themselves as writers for any other area of God's revealed truth. If they are so disqualified in all areas, then every preacher is thoroughly robbed of any confidence and conviction concerning the alleged true message he would be relaying for God.

\textit{The Bottom Line}

G. Campbell Morgan, hailed as the twentieth century's "prince of expositors," was a messenger widely used by God. There was a time in his life, however, when he wrestled with the very issue we discuss. He concluded that if there were errors in the biblical message, it could not be honestly proclaimed in public.

Here is the account of young Campbell Morgan's struggle to know if the Bible was surely God's Word:

For three years this young man, seriously contemplating a future of teaching and ultimately of preaching, felt the troubled waters of the stream of religious

controversy carrying him beyond his depth. He read the new books which debated such questions as, "Is God Knowable?" and found that the authors' concerted decision was, "He is not knowable." He became confused and perplexed. No longer was he sure of that which his father proclaimed in public, and had taught him in the home.

Other books appeared, seeking to defend the Bible from the attacks which were being made upon it. The more he read, the more unanswerable became the questions which filled his mind. One who has never suffered it cannot appreciate the anguish of spirit young Campbell Morgan endured during this crucial period of his life. Through all the after years it gave him the greatest sympathy with young people passing through similar experiences at college experiences which he likened to "passing through a trackless desert." At last the crisis came when he admitted to himself his total lack of assurance that the Bible was the authoritative Word of God to man. He immediately cancelled all preaching engagements. Then, taking all his books, both those attacking and those defending the Bible, he put them all in a corner cupboard. Relating this afterwards, as he did many times in preaching, he told of turning the key in the lock of the door. "I can hear the click of that lock now," he used to say. He went out of the house, and down the street to a bookshop. He bought a new Bible and, returning to his room with it, he said to himself: "I am no longer sure that this is what my father claims it to be—the Word of God. But of this I am sure. If it be the Word of God, and if I come to it with an unprejudiced and open mind, it will bring assurance to my soul of itself." "That Bible found me," he said, "I began to read and study it then, in 1883. I have been a student ever since, and I still am (in 1938)."

At the end of two years Campbell Morgan emerged from that eclipse of faith absolutely sure that the Bible was, in very deed and truth, none other than the Word of the living God. Quoting again from his account of the incident: "... This experience is what, at last, took me back into the work of preaching, and into the work of the ministry. I soon found foothold enough to begin to preach, and from that time I went on."

With this crisis behind him and this new certainty thrilling his soul, there came a compelling conviction. This Book, being what it was, merited all that a man could give to its study, not merely for the sake of the personal joy of delving deeply into the heart and mind and will of God, but also in order that those truths discovered by such searching of the Scriptures should be made known to a world of men groping for light, and perishing in the darkness with
no clear knowledge of that Will.22

May God be pleased to multiply the tribe of men called "preachers" who, being convinced of the Bible's inerrant nature, will diligently apply themselves to understand and to proclaim its message as those commissioned of God to deliver it in His stead.

OUR CHALLENGE

One of the most godly preachers ever to live was Scotland's Robert Murray McCheyne. In the memoirs of McCheyne's life, Andrew Bonar writes, It was his wish to arrive nearer at the primitive mode of expounding Scripture in his sermons. Hence when one asked him, if he was ever afraid of running short of sermons some day, he replied "No; I am just an interpreter of Scripture in my sermons; and when the Bible runs dry, then I shall." And in the same spirit he carefully avoided the too common mode of accommodating texts' fastening a doctrine on the words, not drawing it from the obvious connection of the passage. He endeavoured at all times to preach the mind of the Spirit in a passage; for he feared that to do otherwise would be to grieve the Spirit who had written it. Interpretation was thus a solemn matter to him. And yet, adhering scrupulously to this sure principle, he felt himself in no way restrained from using, for every day's necessities, all parts of the Old Testament as much as the New. His manner was first to ascertain the primary sense and application, and so proceed to handle it for present use.23

The expositor's task is to preach the mind of God as he finds it in the inerrant Word of God. He understands it through the disciplines of hermeneutics and exegesis. He declares it expositorily then as the message which God spoke and commissioned him to deliver.

John Stott deftly sketched the relationship of the exegetical process to expository preaching:

Expository preaching is a most exacting discipline. Perhaps that is why it is so rare. Only those will undertake it who are prepared to follow the example of

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the apostles and say, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the Word of God to serve tables. . . . We will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word" (Acts 6:2, 4). The systematic preaching of the Word is impossible without the systematic study of it. It will not be enough to skim through a few verses in daily Bible reading, nor to study a passage only when we have to preach from it. No. We must daily soak ourselves in the Scriptures. We must not just study, as through a microscope, the linguistic minutiae of a few verses, but take our telescope and scan the wide expanses of God's Word, assimilating its grand theme of divine sovereignty in the redemption of mankind. "It is blessed," wrote C. H. Spurgeon, "to eat into the very soul of the Bible until, at last, you come to talk in Scriptural language, and your spirit is flavoured with the words of the Lord, so that your blood is Bibline and the very essence of the Bible flows from you."  

Inerrancy demands an exegetical process and an expository proclamation. Only the exegetical process preserves God's Word entirely, guarding the treasure of revelation and declaring its meaning exactly as He intended it to be proclaimed.  

Expository preaching is the result of the exegetical process. Thus, it is the essential link between inerrancy and proclamation. It is mandated to preserve the purity of God's originally given inerrant Word and to proclaim the whole counsel of God's redemptive truth.

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25 See 1 Tim 6:20, 21 and 2 Tim 2:15.
26 These central truths about the inerrant Bible, hermeneutics, exegesis, and preaching reflect the heart of The Master's Seminary curriculum and the faculty's commitment to prepare faithful expositors of God's Word for the 1990's and into the twenty-first century.
THE SIN UNTO DEATH

Irvin A. Busenitz
Associate Dean and Professor of Old Testament
The Master's Seminary

The "sin unto death" in 1 John 5:16 has provoked widespread discussion. The correct meaning revolves around the nature of the sin and the nature of the death referred to. The context and word selection point to the conclusion that the individual "committing a sin not unto death" is an unsaved man who professes to be a believer, but who is, in actuality, in need of salvation. On the one hand, John refers to one who is sinning but is not doing so to the point of the impossibility of being granted eternal life. The apostle encourages intercessory prayer for such an individual, that God may grant to him eternal life. On the other hand, he asserts that if a man does sin to such an extent that repentance and forgiveness are impossible, it would be "unto death," spiritual death in the sense that his condition is irrevocable (cf. Matt 12:31-32).

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Diversity of opinion has abounded concerning the interpretation of the problematic portion found in 1 John 5:16 where the apostle John writes,

If any one sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death.

There is a sin leading to death; I do not say that he should make request for this.1

The OT frequently mentions specific sins which merit punishment by death. Num 15:30-31 indicates that the one who willfully and defiantly sins "shall be cut off from among his people." The sin of coming near to the tent of meeting was punishable by death (Num 18:22). Ps 19:13 suggests the same penalty for presumptuous

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1Scripture quotations in this essay are taken from the New American Standard Bible unless otherwise noted. "Sin unto death" in the essay title and used frequently throughout the essay is phraseology derived from 1 John 5:16 in the King James Version.
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The NT has similar examples, the most prominent being that of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10). Other examples include that of Herod (Acts 12) and those who had taken the Lord's Supper unworthily (1 Cor 11).

There are two notable differences between the other passages and this one, however. First of all, in the above cases, the sin which led to the punishment is more or less evident; in this instance, it is not revealed. Secondly, the exact nature of the death penalty is ambiguous here, while elsewhere it is not. So the problem encountered here is unique.

Two basic questions call for a response in this passage: (1) What is the nature of the sin? And (2) What is the nature of the death? The answers to these will essentially answer a third, namely, can the sin be committed today by Christians?

\textbf{THE CONTEXT}

\textsuperscript{2}Also cf. Lev 4:2; 5:15; Num 14:2-4; 20:12; and 1 Sam 2:25. This same philosophy was continued in the Qumran Community, as the Manual of Discipline gives evidence (1QS 8:21-9:2). During the first centuries A.D., this concept was taken even further: “Tertullian went a stage further and listed the grosser sins (including murder, adultery, blasphemy and idolatry) as beyond pardon” (John R. W. Stott, The Epistles of John [Tyndale's New Testament Commentaries, ed. by R. V. G. Tasker; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976] 187).
The entirety of 1 John deals with tests of life, tests designed to give assurance of salvation to believers (cp. 5:13 with 1:4; 2:12-14) and to expose those who are not really believers: "We shall know by this that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart before Him" (1 John 3:19). The fact that one is or is not a believer is not always obvious; rather, continuation in the truth is a test which will ultimately reflect the validity of the profession.

In the preceding verses (5:14-15), John speaks about prayer and the confidence a believer may have concerning the acceptance of that prayer before God and the granting of the request. In verses 16-17, he gives a specific illustration and limitation within which the prayer of a Christian may be benevolently and effectually employed, namely, in rescuing a brother from death.

It is not now a case of petition, but of intercession. The assurance of eternal life which the Christian should enjoy (13) ought not to lead him into preoccupation with himself to the neglect of others. On the contrary, he will recognize his duty in love to care for his brother in need. . . . The future tense he shall ask expresses not the writer's command but the Christian's inevitable and spontaneous reaction.

Thus it is that when one comes to the throne of God in prayer, the standing of his brother is immediately brought into focus. This connection has led Cameron to remark, "Our holiest hours of prayer and worship should be marked by benevolence toward our brethren."

THE NATURE OF THE SIN

Various attempts in satisfactorily resolving the difficulties regarding the character of the sin have been made. Some of the many interpretations include: (1) the sin against the Holy Spirit, (2) any great

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4Cf. 1 John 2:19 where some who professed Christ and were a part of the local body of believers were ultimately exposed by their departure.
5Stott, Epistles 186.
sin, such as murder or adultery, (3) rejection of Christ as Messiah, (4) deliberate and willful sins, (5) apostasy, and (6) post-baptismal sins. The most significant of these will be examined.

Mortal sins

The Church of Rome has consistently maintained that the "sin unto death" is a grave, post-baptismal sin. This sin is commonly referred to as "mortal" sin, as compared with the less significant sin which is called "venial." Although the designations are not specifically named in Scripture, it is asserted that the distinction between the two types of sin is clearly affirmed. In general, mortal sins are said to be those which exclude the offender from the kingdom (e.g., Eph 5:5; Gal 5:19-21) and venial sins are those which do not (e.g., James 3:2; 1 John 1:8; Eccl 7:21). Additional proof for such distinctions is given by Dens, as quoted by M’Clintock and Strong:

"It is, moreover, certain," says Dens, "not only from the divine compassion, but from the nature of the thing, that there are venial sins, or such light ones, as in just men may consist with a state of grace and friendship with God; implying that there is a certain kind of sin of which a man may be guilty without offending God."

A more specific basis for these definitions is provided by Aquinas. Describing the distinctiveness of the two types, he explains, The difference between venial and mortal sin follows upon a diversity of

8Deadly sins committed prior to the time of baptism are said to be cleansed at the time of that sacrament (James Gibbons, Faith of Our Fathers [Baltimore: John Murphy, 1905] 303 ff.). For this reason many have waited until their deathbed to be baptized.
disorder inherent in the concept of sin itself. This disorder is twofold: the one
involves the abandonment of the very source of order, the other only involves
departure from secondary elements in that order. . . . Hence, when the soul is so
disordered by sin that it turns away from its ultimate goal, God, to whom it is
united by charity, then we speak of mortal sin. However, when this disorder
stops short of turning away from God, then the sin is venial.11

Venial sins, therefore, do not make one the offender of God;
they do not cause a diminution of sanctifying grace. Though they
constitute a violation of God's law, they are too small and insignificant
to divert one from his ultimate goal, God. Mortal sin, on the other
hand, constitutes an act in which the offender deliberately chooses
"some created good as a final end in preference to the Supreme Good,
with a consequent loss of sanctifying grace."12

The NT does teach that sins differ in magnitude (cf. Matt 10:15;
11:22, 24; Luke 10:12, 14; 12:47, 48). Nevertheless, holding such an
interpretation as set forth by the Roman Church entails several diffi-
culties. First, the definition of venial and mortal is imprecise,
essentially destroying any real distinction between the two. Because
their general definition of sin specifically states that "sin is a deliberate
and voluntary act, . . . an act marked by a want of conformity with the
law of God,"13 they are forced to make some fine differentiations and
to conclude that venial sin is "imperfectly deliberate" while mortal sin
is "fully deliberate."14 Such terminology makes a distinction virtually
imperceptible. Furthermore, the definition is untenable in light of
certain scriptural examples. Paul persecuted the first century
Christians in ignorance (1 Tim 1:13), yet he designates himself as the
chief of sinners (1 Tim 1:15). Eve was deceived by Satan (1 Tim 2:14)
but bore the consequences of mortal sin.

Secondly, Scripture teaches that every offense is deadly and

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11Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae (XXV, trans. by Timothy McDermott; New
13Ibid.
14Ibid.
subject to the claims of divine justice. Thus Ezek 18:20 declares, "The person who sins will die." Likewise Rom 6:23 asserts, "The wages of sin is death." The malicious motivation behind the sin, or the lack of it, makes no difference, as James 2:10 indicates: "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all." On the other hand, the Bible explicitly and implicitly declares that no sin is too great to be beyond the scope of God's forgiveness (cf. 1 Tim 1:15).

Thirdly, that the kind of sin does not determine whether its punishment is temporal or eternal but merely results in greater or lesser punishments is illustrated by the appointed sacrifices of the OT. Different sins demanded different sacrifices; nevertheless, "without the shedding of blood there was no remission" (cf. Heb 9:22). Though sins differ in degree, the essential character of sin does not vary.

The classification of sins as adumbrated by the Roman Catholic Church has no basis in Scripture, neither in 1 John nor elsewhere. The NT gives no precedent for such a practice nor does it warrant such an arbitrary conclusion.
Apostasy

Some authors have suggested that the "sin unto death" refers to total apostasy, exemplified by the renunciation of the faith. Brooke, a proponent of the view, maintains that the sin is a deliberate rejection of Christ and His claims, for such "was probably the most prominent in the writer's thought." That this is so, it is contended, is evident from 1 John 2:18-19 where the false teachers are reported to have left the fellowship of believers.

Brooke further explains that since apostasy exhibits itself apart from any specific act of sin, this conclusion dovetails with the fact that no specific sins are mentioned here. He concludes that "in the author's view any sin which involves a deliberate rejection of the claims of Christ may be described as `unto death.'" Lenski concurs with this assessment:

Since ἀθανασία (ἀθανασία) "life eternal" (v. 13), which, as we now "have" it, is spiritual, "death" must be its opposite, namely the loss of spiritual life, which is spiritual death. Once having been born from God (2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:4, 18) into the new life, "death" means that this life has been lost.

The major difficulty with this conclusion, however, is the fact that Scripture nowhere teaches that the genuinely regenerated person can apostatize. This same writer in his Gospel contends that the believer is secure (John 10:28, 29). Elsewhere in this Epistle, he

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16Heb 6:4-6; 10:26-29 are usually associated with this view and are frequently employed as proof of its veracity.


18Lenski, St. Peter, St. John, and St. Jude 535-36.
reiterates that the one who is born of God does not habitually sin (1 John 3:9; 5:18). Scholer elaborates,

There is no reference to apostasy. This is made very clear in 1 John 2:19. . . . After stating that many antichrists, already present and active (2:18; cf. 4:1-5), have come from the Christian community (2:19), the statement is modified in such a way as to negate it. In actuality the antichrists were not from the Christian community, for if they had been they would not have left it. The fact that antichrists left the community was a good thing; it showed conclusively that they were never real members of it in the first place; they had been pretenders only.19

The fact that they were never regenerated is also indicated by John's use of the imperfect verb san (san, "they were") in 2:19:

The imperfect tense, used twice, indicates that those who depart were not real Christians in the past. This agrees with the use of the perfect tense in the epistle to indicate that a man's life reflects evidence whether he has or has not been born of God in the past.20

Furthermore, the preposition ew (eis, "in, into") is usually employed by John when referring to entrance into the new life in Christ (John 5:24; 1 John 3:14). The same preposition could be expected if he had in mind a reversal of that act. Rather, prw (pros, "toward, unto") is used here, indicating motion toward. Brooke explains that prw unaton (pros thanaton, "toward, unto death") must, of course, denote a tendency in the direction of death, and not an attained result.21

Passages within the Johannine corpus, as well as many references outside it (cf. Rom 8:29; Phil 1:6; Jude 1), lend strong evidence that the Christian will not apostatize, but will persevere in the faith.

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21 Brooke, Johannine Epistles 147.
Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit

A third view suggests that John is referring to the "unpardonable sin" spoken of in Matt 12. Sawtelle explains,

It is a sin that John has terribly marked again and again in our Epistle, that of willfully rejecting the testimony of the Holy Spirit as to the true nature and Messiahship of Jesus, the denying of Christ in his true nature. That it is a sin which connects itself with one's treatment of Christ is a fair inference from the doctrine of ver. 12.22

Stott embraces this view also, contending that the one who is depicted in Matt 12:31-32 as deliberately and willfully rejecting known truth is also referred to here. "In John's own language he has 'loved darkness rather than light' (Jn. iii.18-21), and in consequence he will 'die in his sins' (Jn. viii. 24). His sin is, in fact, unto death."

Support for this conclusion is obtained primarily from the polemic of John which is evident throughout the Epistle and especially in the context of the fifth chapter. The apostle frequently expresses the necessity of recognizing and believing that Jesus is God in the flesh (1:1-3; 2:22-24; 4:2-3, 15; 5:1). In chapter five, he specifically notes how the Holy Spirit bears witness to this very fact (5:6-10). Consequently, the argument proceeds, John's comments regarding the witness of the Spirit may have been intended to recall the warning against

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24 Stott (Epistles 188 ff.) contends that both parties in 5:16 are unbelievers while John Murray maintains that only the one who commits a sin unto death is not a believer, citing John 9:41; 15:22; 1 John 4:2-3; 5:1 as proof. Nevertheless, they both agree as to the nature of the sin unto death, namely, "the denial of Jesus as come in the flesh" (John Murray, "Definitive Sanctification," Calvin Theological Journal 2:1 [April, 1967] 11).
blaspheming the Holy Spirit recorded in the Synoptics. This interpretation has much to commend it and is certainly a possible solution. However, the view has some problems. First, the passage really does not connect itself with the "unpardonable sin" of Matt 12. It contains no concrete evidence that such a connection was intended by the writer.25 Second, the one who had committed the "unpardonable sin" would not be considered a "brother" in the local fellowship. Willful and deliberate rejection of the work of the Holy Spirit, as described in the gospels, would be difficult to disguise. One guilty of such would hardly be accepted as a brother. Such open antagonism could not be masked and go unnoticed by the others in the fellowship.

Habitual sinning

A fourth possibility is that the "sin unto death" refers to one who persists in committing sin. He habitually practices sin to the extent that his character and lifestyle ultimately show others within the local body of believers that he is not a believer. The main thematic thread of the Epistle supports this contention, for the true believer does not practice sin (2:1; 3:4, 6, 8, 9). The immediate context supports this conclusion also, for the following verse reiterates the same fact. This teaching is not limited to the Johannine corpus, for such a teaching is also found in Gal 5:21; 6:8; and Rom 6:21-23. Although there may be occasional sins, the believer's life will not be characterized by sin as a lifestyle.

The NT elsewhere teaches that those who are immoral, covetous, idolatrous, revilers, drunkards, and swindlers shall not inherit the kingdom (1 Cor 5:9-13; 6:9-11; Gal 5:19-21; Eph 5:5), for their works are the works of the flesh (Gal 5:19; so also 1 Pet 4:3-5; 1 John 3:15; Rev 21:7-8; 22:14-15). Continuation in and habitual pursuit of such activity is inconsistent with a believer's life in Christ. An isolated act does not necessarily deny one an inheritance in the kingdom of

25 Brooke, Johannine Epistles 147.
The major difficulty which this view faces is the fact that 1 John 5:16 refers to a sinning "brother." Scholer, for example, asserts that the above argument "breaks down completely because of the use of the present tense of *hamartanein* in 5:16 with reference to the sinning of a believer as well as the use of the present tense in 1:8. 26

However, neither 1:8 nor 5:16 furnish conclusive evidence that the one sinning is definitely a saved man. In fact, the designation of "brother" may also include one who has only professed but does not actually possess eternal life. This kind of brother is inferred in 2:9, 11, and 3:15, for "the one who hates his brother is in the darkness until now" (cf. 4:20). It is not uncommon for the Scriptures to speak to professing believers when addressing the church, such as in 1 Cor 5:11; 2 Cor 11:26; and Gal 2:4. Even the unregenerate of 1 John 2:19 were most probably called brothers. 27

Furthermore, the use of the present active participle *martanonta* (*hamartanonta*, "sinning"), suggests that John has an unsaved man in view, for he consistently employs the present tense to refer to the sins which characterize the unsaved (3:4, 6, 8; 5:18). 28 Other evidences of an unregenerate heart in 1 John are spoken of in the present tense, such as loving the world (2:15), not keeping the commandments (2:4), hating a brother (2:9, 11; 3:10, 14 ff.; 4:8, 20), walking in darkness (1:6; 2:12),

26Scholer, "Sins Within" 231. Scholer, with Murray ("Definitive Sanctification" 11), contends that when John speaks of the believer as not sinning, he is not speaking of habitual sinning; rather, such references refer to the fact that the believer does not sin unto death, i.e. he does not and cannot deny Jesus as come in the flesh. The believer may, however, sin sin not unto death (246). Also cf. Henry W. Holloman, "The Meaning of 'Sin unto Death' in 1 John 5:16-17" (paper read at Far West Section of the Evangelical Theological Society, Apr 23, 1982) 1-6.

27Cf. Stott, Epistles 189-90, for a helpful discussion.

28Scholer ("Sins Within" 246) and Murray ("Definitive Sanctification" 11) seek to answer the Johannine use of the present tense by suggesting that the believer does sin (present tense) not unto death but does not sin (present tense) unto death. But 5:18 says nothing of the believer not sinning unto death; it merely says that the believer does not sin (present tense).
lying (1:6), and denying that Jesus is the Christ (2:22 ff.).

Those who hold to the "believer" view attempt to circumvent this clear indication by attributing a "one time occurrence" to the punctiliar action of the aorist subjunctive ἰδ, "sees"). But the punctiliar action of the aorist does not rule out the idea of continual, ongoing occurrence; it cannot be restricted to a "one time occurrence/once for all" idea. To hide behind the screen of a "particular occasion of practicing sin" greatly obscures and even negates the obvious Johannine practice of employing the present tense to denote continuing, ongoing, characteristic-of-life issues. Furthermore, even if the "seeing" were conceded to be point action, the "sinning" is still clearly habitual and ongoing, a fact demonstrated by John's repeated use of the present active participle to denote durative action. At best, the aorist subjunctive only indicates that the ongoing practice of sin was not actually observed on a continual basis.

In light of the above evidence, the most plausible explanation for the sin which leads to death is that it refers to habitual and continual sinning of a professing brother. The apostle probably has no particular sin in mind, for the present participle, ἁμαρτανόντα, denotes not an act of sin but a continuing state.

**THE NATURE OF THE DEATH**

The second issue which confronts the interpreter in 1 John 5:16 is the nature of the death which results from the sinning described by John. The apostle states that the sin either is not πρῶς ἀνάτονα or is πρῶς ἀνάτονα (πρὸς ἀνάτονα, "toward, unto death"). Virtually all grammarians and commentators maintain that the πρῶς (πρὸς, "toward, unto") does not denote "until," for it nowhere has this meaning in the NT. Rather, it designates that which eventuates in or tends toward death.

The Greek (ἁμαρτία πρῶς ἀνάτονα, [ἁμαρτία πρὸς ἀνάτονα, "sin unto death"]) would mean properly a sin which tends to death; which would terminate in death; of which death was the penalty or would be the result, unless it were

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arrested; a sin which, if it had its own course, would terminate thus.

Although many different views have been propounded, there are basically two views held by present-day scholars regarding the nature of this death.

**Physical death**

Probably the most common interpretation is that the death refers to the physical death of a believer. It is a physical punishment or chastisement which God executes as a result of sin in the believer's life.

The sin unto death means a case of transgression, particularly of grievous backsliding from the life and power of godliness, which God determines to punish with temporal death, while at the same time he extends mercy to the penitent soul. The sin not unto death is any sin which God does not choose thus to punish.

The major support for this position is the interpretation of "brother." "The text is explicit. It refers to a 'brother,' which term is never used of the unregenerate, and declares definitely that a Christian may sin in such a way that the chastisement of death may fall upon him." Thus it is concluded that since a believer cannot apostatize, John must be speaking of physical death and not spiritual death. However, as was noted earlier, the term "brother" cannot be so restricted; rather, it may be used sometimes to refer to one who is only...

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30 Barnes, Barnes' Notes 249. Lenski concurs: "John says twice that in these cases the sinning is 'not unto death'; prw is used as it was in v. 14 with the meaning not facing death as the inevitable result" (St. Peter, St. John, and St. Jude 535).
31Cf. Barnes, Barnes' Notes 348-49, for a list of additional interpretations.
33Lewis Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947) III, 310. Cook similarly contends, "The implication is, however, that 'sin unto death' will sometimes lead to untimely physical death despite our prayers because God knows that chastisement, not forgiveness in this life, is the best thing" (W. Robert Cook, "Hamartiological Problems in First John," BSac 123:491 [July-September, 1966] 259).
professing to be a believer, for John does employ the term at times in a more universal sense.

Another proof used for this view is the fact that other passages suggest that sin does sometimes result in the believer’s physical death. The most prominent incident is noted in 1 Cor 11:30, where Paul indicates that the partaking of the Lord’s Supper unworthily (11:27) has been the reason that “many among you sleep.”

It is granted that the physical death of a believer may be in view in 1 Cor 11. However, this does not prove that physical death of a believer is in view in 1 John 5:16. In addition to the fact that “nothing in this part of 1 John indicates that ‘sin leading to death’ must be understood as sin punished by fatal bodily illness,” there is significant evidence that suggests otherwise.

**Spiritual death**

A second view maintains that the death referred to in 1 John 5:16 is spiritual death. This interpretation hinges primarily upon John’s use of zwn (zn, “life”) and, by comparison, unaton (thanaton, “death”), for these two are natural opposites and must correspond when in antithesis to each other. If physical death is being referred to, then the life must be physical life; conversely, if spiritual death is in view, then the life must be spiritual life. One cannot “mix-n-match” and still maintain a natural understanding of the death-life antithesis in the passage. If correspondence is maintained, then proponents of the physical death view are faced with the difficulty of explaining why one should pray that God will give the sinning one in 5:16a extended physical life when in fact he is committing sin not leading to

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34 A number of other biblical examples have been cited, such as Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10), Korah and his sons (Num 16), Achan (Josh 7), the disobedient prophet (1 Kgs 13), and Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5). However, these accounts are somewhat ambiguous concerning the actual spiritual standing of the individuals before God.

35 Stephen S. Smalley, 1, 2, 3 John (vol. 51 of Word Biblical Commentary; Waco, TX: Word, 1984) 297.
premature physical death.

First of all, it should be noted that the apostle significantly employs *bios* (*bios*, "life") (2:16) and *psuch* (*psuch*, "life, breath") (3:16 twice) to refer to physical life, but reserves *z* to refer to spiritual life elsewhere in the Epistle. The nominal form is used eleven times elsewhere (1:1, 2 [twice]; 2:25; 3:14, 15; 5:11, 12 [twice], 13, 20), always meaning eternal or spiritual life. The verbal form, *za* (*za*, "I live"), is used only once (4:9), also with the same meaning. This fact strongly suggests that John has spiritual life in view in 5:16 also. Furthermore, this trend characterizes John's Gospel, for *z*, the term used in 5:16, always refers to eternal life, and the verb *za* designates eternal life in all but three (John 4:50, 51, 53) instances. While John does use these terms to refer to physical life in Revelation, the predominant usage is in reference to spiritual life.

Second, John's use of *thanatos* in the Epistle lends additional support. Apart from its use in the phrases under discussion in 5:16-17, the term occurs only in 3:14. In this passage, John employs the term twice to denote spiritual death: "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death."

Consequently, if physical life had been meant by John in 5:16, it is most likely that he would have used one of the other two terms he employed earlier to refer to physical life. And, since it is likely that *z* refers to spiritual life, then *thanatos*, following its usage in 3:14, must have reference to spiritual death. It is conceded that while all persons are born spiritually dead, they certainly are not confirmed in that state. However, following the apostle's teaching here, there may come a time prior to their physical death when their condition becomes irreversible, when divine forgiveness is no longer available to them (cf. Matt 12:31-32).\footnote{The difference between the case described in Matt 12 and the one found in 1 John 5 appears to be that those in the former instance are guilty of open, blatant opposition and rejection of the work of the Holy Spirit, while in the latter instance, the action appears to be more covert and disguised, occurring among those who profess to believe but in reality do not (cf. 1 John 2:19). In both cases, however, the result is...}
Third, the immediate context offers important credence to this conclusion, for both before and after the sixteenth verse, \( \varepsilon \) is used to refer to eternal, spiritual life (vv. 11, 12, 13, 20). Says Cameron, "If a different kind of life were meant, it would be natural to expect him to indicate it by the use of a different word, elsewhere used for natural life." 37

CONCLUSION

The apostle John appears to have in view an unsaved man who professes to be a believer, but who is in actuality in need of salvation. On the one hand, John refers to a man who is sinning but is not doing so to the point of the impossibility of being granted eternal life; he has not yet come to the place where the possibility of divine forgiveness has been revoked. In such cases, as a result of the intercessory prayer of a "brother," God would grant spiritual life. On the other hand, the apostle asserts that if a man does sin to such an extent that repentance and forgiveness is impossible, it would be "unto death" spiritual death, spiritual death in the sense that his condition is irrevocable (cf. Matt 12:31-32). Thus the sin can be committed by a Christian when "Christian" is used in the broader sense to include those whose Christianity is merely a matter of profession, but it cannot if "Christian" means one who has actually been regenerated.

It is clear that "brother" in Scripture normally refers to a saved individual, but John's usage of the term implies that in some cases there will be a difference between what is professed and what is actually true.

Furthermore, experience has vividly illustrated the power of God to regenerate the most reprobate of sinners, and therefore the believer should be careful not to judge the status of another too quickly. Nevertheless, John asserts that the habitual practice of sin

the same, an irreversible, confirmed condition in which divine forgiveness is no longer available.

37Cameron, First Epistle 243.
does indicate the spiritual state of a man (cf. Gal 5:21). Consequently, while the believer is to pray for this sinning brother until God reveals otherwise, John reminds him that the efficacy of his prayer may not extend to that person and that the believer's confidence should not be diminished thereby.

This is not an adumbration of the Roman Catholic doctrine regarding mortal sin, for which the consequence is spiritual death (unless it is reversed during this lifetime through confession and penance or after this lifetime while in purgatory through the efforts of relatives still alive). On the contrary, it only maintains that, in keeping with the Johannine theme, persistent sin in the life of anyone who professes to be saved indicates that he is not saved, and that the ultimate end of such is spiritual death. Although acts of sin do not cause one to die spiritually (man is born spiritually dead), the habitual practice of sin may lead to an irreversible state, a condition in which forgiveness will be no longer available. The limitation has only to do with the unbeliever, however, for the believer's full forgiveness was procured by the death of Christ at Calvary.
A NEW LOOK AT 1 CORINTHIANS 3:12-
"GOLD, SILVER, PRECIOUS STONES"

James E. Rosscup
Professor of Bible Exposition
The Master's Seminary

The six materials in 1 Cor 3:12 are arranged to denote a descending scale by moving from a unit of three good qualities to a unit of three bad ones. The verse uses pictures to represent what Paul calls "work" in vv 13 and 14. Paul's main point is to encourage building with quality materials that will meet with God's approval and receive eternal reward. Interpreters sometimes restrict the meaning of the symbols either to doctrine, to people, to activity, or to character. The conclusion is that Paul in the symbols combines several things that lead to Christ's good pleasure and a believer's reward. These are sound doctrine, activity, motives and character in Christian service.

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Paul's context that leads into and away from the picture of "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw" is filled with spiritual qualities. He says much to distinguish the wisdom of God from the wisdom of the world. He sees a vast difference between the mind-set of the "natural man" and the mind of believers, "the mind of Christ." He distinguishes sharply between the "spiritual" person and the "carnal."  

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21 Cor 2:16. English translations are from the New American Standard Bible (La Habra, CA: Foundation, 1971) and from the King James Version.

3Either of two main interpretations fit the view that becomes evident in this study on 1 Cor 3:12. Some see the τέλειοι (teleioi, "mature") (2:6) as the saved who have grown to spiritual maturity (so S. Toussaint, "The Spiritual Man," BSac 125 [1968] 139-46; C. C. Ryrie, "What is Spirituality?", BSac 126 [1969] 204-13). A second view is that teleioi and πνευματικοί (pneumatikoi, "spiritual") are all the saved (so P. J. Du Plessis, Teleios, The Idea of Perfection in the New Testament [Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1959]). All the saved are perfect and spiritual ideally and provisionally in view of "the plenitude of salvation . . . and the consummate
Then, in 3:5-8a, he focuses on the great common privilege that all those who serve God share. They, in common, are all totally dependent on the grace of God for anything of value that they accomplish. Paul is quick to qualify this lest any should leap to an erroneous conclusion that he is teaching that God sees no differences in those who serve Him. Those who depend on the grace of God and ascribe the glory to Him are individually distinct. God takes notice of the difference in their individual labor and also will make legitimate distinction in the particular reward that He deems suitable for each worker (3:8b).

Having made this point, Paul then portrays the church under two figures: "God's tillage" and "God's building." His "building" picture blends with that of the "temple" in vv 16-17. The "building" also prepares for the figure of Christ as the "foundation" (vv 10, 11). We read Paul's caution to any worker who builds upon that foundation: let him build carefully! Paul, who refers so often to himself as an example, is an example here. He himself built "as a wise [skilled] architect," wise, that is, in the wisdom of God which he mentions in bounty of redemptive gifts bestowed . . . " (184).


So F. F. Bruce, 1 and 2 Corinthians (London: Oliphants, 1971) 44-45: in vv 16-17 the building of v 9 is "more closely defined as a sanctuary . . . for God to inhabit." Gärtn er equates "building" and "temple," since "foundation" (v 11) and "building" (v 9) make it "perfectly justifiable to regard these more general expressions in the context of temple symbolism" (pp. 57 f.). Cf. also Gordon D. Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 140-41.

Cf. 4:16; 11:1; Phil 3:17; 1 Thess 1:6; 2 Thess 1:6; 2 Thess 3:9.

Architekön, "architect") is used only here in the NT. Ancient texts are not highly definitive as to the duties it denoted. In 2 Macc 2:29 an architect has comprehensive responsibility over all particulars of a building work. This is in contrast to an architect who must be concerned only with one phase of work such as adorning a building. Isa 3:3 (LXX) links the Architekön, "architect") with positions requiring expertise. Sirach 38:27
chapters 1-4. He was careful to build consistently with the standard, God's grace. He became a good model of dependence on that grace that others should imitate.

Paul is concerned that others build in a way that is consistent with the spiritual quality he has modeled. Any work they do is to be done in a manner that corresponds in nature to the foundation, Christ, and to the standard set by Paul. To be sure, work on both the foundation and the superstructure must be imbued with God's wisdom and grace. It needs quality imparted by the Holy Spirit through the person who works; it must be done by a person who is "spiritual," a worker who has "the mind of Christ" (2:15, 16).

I. THE MATERIALS OF VERSE 12

Now Paul comes to our verse. A person who works on the foundation may build with "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw..." The list of six words joined without connectives is a construction known as asyndeton. We probably register the effect that Paul intends if we understand that the words represent a descending scale. The first three are pictures of a broad category of qualities that distinguishes him from a τέκτων (tektōn, "artisan"). Paul intends a wider meaning than today's "architect" who is only a designer of blueprints. For Paul has personally done the construction work, "laid the foundation." In that he combines the word with σοφός (sophos, "wise, skilled"), his emphasis is on being an "expert" or "highly qualified workman." Cf. examples where the term denoted a person of special expertise in J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament: Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963) 82.

Asyndeton also occurs in 1 Cor 13:4-7, which relates to the excellencies of love, with one connective, δέ (de, "but"), and in Gal 5:22-23 which lists the fruit of the Spirit, among other instances. As A. T. Robertson says, connectives may be left out "as a result of rapidity of thought as the words rush forth, or they may be consciously avoided for rhetorical effect" (A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934) 427, 1177-78). Asyndeton in 1 Cor 3:12 is probably intended for rhetorical effect (cf. n. 8).

are good. The last three combine as a broad category that is bad, in contrast to the first. These two categories reappear in Paul's direct contrast of 2 Cor 5:10 when he refers to all believers being manifest before the judgment seat of Christ. There, every one will receive the things done in his body, things "good or bad." As 1 Cor 3:13-15 clarifies, "gold, silver, precious stones" are symbols representing good materials. On the other hand, the "wood, hay, straw" are pictures of work that is bad in the sense of worthless, φαῦλος (phaulos, "bad") as 2 Cor 5:10 describes it.  

II. IDENTIFICATION OF THE MATERIALS WITH THE "WORK"

The six materials of v 12 are symbols for the same thing that is called "work" in vv 13 and 14. This is logical for two reasons.

(1) Both the materials and the "work" are tested by "fire." In

intended a word-by-word diminuendo does not necessarily follow from his order of listing the symbols. Silver sometimes is put before gold (Acts 3:6; 20:33; 1 Pet 1:18), sometimes after it (Acts 17:29; 2 Tim 2:20; Jas 5:3; Rev 9:20; 18:12).

10Some see "wood, hay, straw" as only inferior work, not bad work. William Barclay, in The Letters to the Corinthians (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956) 36, refers them not to building up "wrong things" but "inadequate things . . . weak and watered down; a one-sided thing which has stressed some things too much and others too little . . . out of balance; a warped thing. . . ." The two categories of 1 Cor 3 could still correspond with the two in 2 Cor 5:10, the "good or bad" (ἀγαθὸν [agathon] or φαῦλον [phaulon]). Φαῦλος (Phaulos) means "worthless," but in this context not a third category, not really good, not really bad. It is rather the opposite of ἀγαθὸν (agathon, "good"), and so it is bad, sinful. Reasons that suggest this are: (1) Forms of phaulos do mean "worthless," but often in a both/and way, worthless in the sense of bad or bad in the sense of worthless. In its five other uses in the NT, phaulos refers to evil, as E. Achilles says ("phaulos," The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology [ed. Colin Brown; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975] I, 564; also John A. Sproule, "Judgment Seat, or 'Awards Podium'?," Spire, Grace Theological Seminary, 13 [1984] 3). The bad works of the unsaved are phaulos (John 3:20). The evil deeds of the unsaved are contrasted with the good (phaulos agathos, John 5:29). Jacob and Esau before birth had not committed good (agathon) or evil (phaulon) in Rom 9:11. (2) The OT (LXX) has phauloi as opposite to δικαιοί (dikaioi, "righteous") (Job 9:23), and phaulê for an evil woman (Prov 5:2). (3) Is it legitimate to assume a meaning that necessitates three categories in 1 Cor 3:12-15 and 2 Cor 5:10 when both texts list two units and can be explained reasonably with two? (4) The previous context of 1 Cor 3:12-15 has a contrast in 3:1-4 between attitudes that are spiritual and those that are carnal.
this case "fire" is a symbol for Christ's probing, all-searching judgment that scrutinizes every aspect.¹¹ Many Roman Catholics have interpreted the "fire" to picture a purging fire that the worker must encounter in an alleged purgatory.¹² Some Catholics have not followed this view.¹³ However they differ, it is not convincing that purgatory is the idea Paul intends in his picture of fire.¹⁴ The thought is that of the worker's being tested to be approved, not punished to be improved. And the thought of direct punishment to the saved person does not appear to be

¹¹Christ's judgment will have to be more probing than fire if all whom He judges are to "receive the things done in their bodies" (2 Cor 5:10). Paul's idea is similar to that in Rev 1:14 and 2:23 where Christ's eyes are like a flame of fire and He "searches the minds and hearts."


¹³Johannes Gnilik surveys 3:10-15 at length in the Eastern and Western churches. He thinks 3:15 does not teach purgatory. The fire is God's glory when He comes for the last judgment. Gnilik's denial here does not mean that he sees no evidence anywhere for purgatory ("I Kor 3, 10-15 ein Schriftzeugnis für das Fegefeuer?" [Dusseldorf: M. Triltsch, 1955], 128).

¹⁴Certain factors are against purgatory in 1 Cor 3:15. (1) The purpose of the "fire" is not to purge but to test for reward. The saved were already cleansed through Christ's blood. The "fire" that tests the "work" is not aimed at "improving the character" (Norman Hillyer, "I Corinthians," New Bible Commentary Revised [London: IVP, 1970] 1056). (2) No punishment is in view. Christ bore all of our punishment (Rom 8:1). His judgment of the saved is to reward for good and diminish reward, not condemn, for bad. "Fire" here affects all who do work on the true foundation; it is not exclusively for work that is worthless. (4) The text does not teach explicitly or implicitly a remission of sins at this testing. It does not deal with changing a person's lot but revealing it (cf. v 13). There is no suggestion of a later improvement after death in a purgatorial fire. (5) J. F. X. Cevetello, arguing that 1 Cor 3:15 may mean purgatory "at least indirectly," makes a concession: "In the final analysis, the Catholic doctrine on purgatory is based on tradition, not Sacred Scripture" ("Purgatory," New Catholic Encyclopedia [15 vols.; New York, 1967] XI, 1034). This is significant, though, as John Townsend says, most Roman Catholic scholars see purgatory in 3:15 "in one form or another" ("I Corinthians 3:15 and the School of Shammai," Harvard Theological Review, LXI [1968] 500).
(2) The materials are symbols that equate with "work" because they have the same result. Whether the description is "gold . . . straw" or "work," they "remain" (v 14) or "burn up" (v 15). Although "work" that a man has built on Christ the foundation may "burn," Paul makes it very clear that "he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire" (v 15). The purpose of the test is to give an examination of the worker as to the nature of his "work," not a condemnation of the worker as to his person. His salvation is secure, but the man will experience some kind of "loss."

It is reasonable to understand that loss, in a context dealing with work and its reward, as a loss with respect to reward. The worker loses (is reduced, diminished in some fitting degree) in reference

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15 ζημιώω (zemioō) means "to set someone in a disadvantageous position." The disadvantage was "loss," opposed to κέρδος (kerdos, "gain") or "damage," synonymous with βλάβη (blabē, "harm"), as in loss of money or goods (A. Stumpff, "ζημία (zemía), zemioō," TDNT, ed. G. Kittel, II [1964] 888-92; W. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature [Cambridge: University Press, 1960] 339). Context may help decide the idea. The meaning can be "ruin," as by homosexuality (Stumpff, "zemía" 889) or "punishment." The latter sense is possible in Prov 22:3[LXX], "fools [the naive] . . . are punished"; cf. also 27:12; or 19:19, "A malicious man [man of great anger] shall be severely punished" or else "bear the penalty, be fined," which is a loss to him. Exod 21:22 has a man being punished by being fined, penalized, not destroyed as a person. Matt 16:26 refers to a man's losing his soul, a statement with zemioō, just before referring to the Son of Man rewarding every man according to his works (v 27). The works are not to merit salvation, but manifest the reality of it. Loss of special reward but not salvation is in view in 1 Cor 3:15, but loss of the soul (eternal damnation) in Matthew. Luke 9:25 combines two words for loss: "if he gains the whole world but loses (ἀπόλεσας [apolesas]) himself or suffers loss (ζημιῶθείς [zemiotheis])." Apparently zemioō in such a connection can be another term for the loss of eternal salvation. Paul's use of zemioō in two other texts besides 1 Cor 3:15 does not refer to eternal punishment or forfeiture of the soul. In 2 Cor 7:9, Paul rejoiced that the Corinthians did not "suffer loss" by some adverse reaction to his letter (v 8). He probably meant a setback in their spiritual experience. And in Phil 3:8, Paul had "suffered loss" in all things for the sake of Christ and salvation in Him, that is, his sense of the value (Stumpff, "zemía" 890) of things on which he might rely for God's acceptance (vv 5, 6). The word is also used for loss (diminishing) of cargo and tackle from a ship but not the loss of people's lives (Acts 27:10, 21). Cf. Jay Shanor, who cites 4th-century-B.C. Greek building contracts where ζημιώω (zemioō) means "to fine" for not completing a job or for taking too long ("Paul as Master Builder: Construction Terms in First Corinthians," New Testament Studies 34 [1988] 469-71).
to the measure of potential reward he might have received for the burned "work" had Christ appraised it as work that "remains."16

As in v 8, God distinguishes each servant in the varying capacity of eternal reward that He judges equitable to that servant's particular degree of faithfulness (cf. 4:2). This is consistent with Jesus' teaching about degrees (capacities, positions, gradations, stations, roles) of reward. In His Parable of the Pounds (Luke 19:12-27) it is clear when one servant receives reward in terms of a capacity over ten cities and another over five cities.

III. THE MAIN POINT IN THE MATERIALS OR "WORK"

Gold, silver and precious stones appear often in the OT. They are in different combinations, either all or two of them being together, or one of the three occurring alone. In some instances, as when gold and silver together are refined by fire, the main objective is to separate the pure metal from the dross, for retention. They contrast sharply to the waste materials that the refiners dump on a disposal heap. One

16In view of Paul's usage (cf. n. 14), his idea in 1 Cor is more probably "be assigned loss." Cf. Fee, First Corinthians 143. He might mean that the worker is faced with loss of his "work," which burns. But this is redundant. Paul has just stated that the "work" is "burned." However, due to the close continuity between a Christian's "work" and his "reward" for it (cf. 1 Cor 3:8), diminishment of one leads to reducing. The subject of reward allows the statement in v 15 to be parallel with that of v 14, but to state the other result, to round out a contrast. The man whose work is of the quality that "remains" will receive reward; the man whose work is faulty and "burns" will be assigned loss with reference to the reward in the measure of it he might have had potentially (cf. Barrett, First Corinthians). The μισθός (mishon, "reward") (v 14) is relevant to v 15 and reasonably suggests an accusative of relation with respect to "experience loss" (Stumpff, "zēmía" 890; Robertson and Plummer, First Corinthians 65). The passive zēmioō might be read, "he shall be reduced" in respect to reward (so Robertson and Plummer, First Corinthians 65). This is because: (1) the man himself receives reward in v 14, and so v 15 probably conveys the other side of the picture, also relating to the man himself; (2) in 2 Cor 5:10, a man himself receives the things done in his body, both good and bad. The things are presumably the fitting reward and the loss of reward that are in continuity with the work (Barrett, A Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973] 160). (3) The αὐτός (autos, "he himself") can be adequately explained. It may be that the person is diminished in respect to his capacity for special reward. Paul contrasts with that the fact that the man himself will be saved, and will be within the general sphere of blessedness/reward, which is the realm of eternal life, glory, the kingdom, the saints' inheritance, etc.
such example is Prov 27:21: "The crucible is for silver and the furnace for gold, and a man is tested by the praise accorded him." This idea fits 1 Cor 3 in some degree.

However, metals in the OT also can focus on value. In 2 Chr 32:27 they are included in a list of examples describing King Hezekiah’s great wealth in treasured things. The verse says, "Now Hezekiah had immense riches and honor; and he made for himself treasuries for gold, silver, precious stones, spices, shields and all kinds of valuable articles. . . ." Then v 29 adds, "For God had given him very great wealth." The emphasis on value is clear. The theme of value also is quite suitable to 1 Cor 3. The things of a worker that survive Christ’s discerning appraisal are aspects in the "work" that Christ judges to be valuable. They are the "gold, silver, precious stones." But both OT ideas, retention and value worth retaining, fit naturally with 1 Cor 3. With this in mind, the bottom line is, "Build with value that will last!" Each servant’s work will draw Christ’s verdict answering the question, "what sort is it?" i.e. what is its real quality in His true sense of value? (v 13)

IV. THE DEFINITION OF THE MATERIALS

Scholars have come to different conclusions on what the six symbols and the "work" are in a co-laborer’s life and work. It can be helpful to see how these writers define Paul’s terms. After this articulation, the object will be to support the explanation that is the most probable.

17Cf. also Job 23:10; Ps 66:10; Zech 13:9; Rev 3:18.

18Other examples include the following. Gold, silver and precious stones may be combined to stress value (Job 28:15-19; Dan 11:38; cf. Rev 18:12). Or, only gold and precious stones occur (1 Kgs 10:2; 2 Chr 9:1; Prov 3:14, 15; Ezek 27:22; cf. Rev 17:4; 18:16; 21:18-21). Or precious stones appear alone (Exod 28:17-21; 1 Kgs 5:17; 6:7; Isa 54:11-12; Ezek 28:12-15). Or only gold and silver are listed (Gen 13:2; 24:35, 53; 44:8; Exod 3:22; Ps 119:72; cf. Acts 3:6; 2 Tim 2:20, 21). And gold can occur alone (Ps 19:10). Naturally, these valued objects were used early to build religious things men held to be of great value, whether false gods (Ps 115:4; Prov 3:14) or God’s dwelling places (often in the Tabernacle, Exod 25-40, and Temple, 1 Kgs 6-7).

19This is, first of all, each official minister who leads in the church, and then other Christians who do work according to the example of the leader’s model, whether good quality or bad.
1. Some have been persuaded that Paul uses the symbols to portray doctrine. Often those who adopt this view limit the meaning only to doctrine, regarding this as a natural conclusion.\(^{20}\) The main reasons are fairly evident.

(1) This explanation recognizes a correspondence between Paul's own work as an example and the work that others do. When Paul laid the foundation at Corinth, he preached the truth about Christ, making clear that doctrinal truth about Christ is the foundation for men's faith (cf. 1 Cor 3:5). Similarly he "planted" or "sowed" the gospel seed in people whose hearts were fertile, receptive soil for the truth. The recipients, products of but distinct from Paul's message itself, became "God's tillage" and "God's building." So when Paul cautions another person in v 10 to be careful how he builds, Paul refers to work that consists of giving doctrine that is consistent with the sound indoctrination Paul has given. Along this line, Meyer reasons: "The εποικοδομέων (epoikodomein, "to build upon") takes place on the persons through doctrines. . . ."\(^{21}\)

(2) A second reason adduced in support of the doctrine interpretation is also near in the context. The "gold, silver" etc. depict the wisdom of God in contrast to the wisdom of this world (3:18-20). A good antidote to false thinking (doctrine) is good wholesome doctrine, the truth. The ideology or philosophy of the world that originates from man's thinking is met by giving God's perspective or set of values. Job 28:15-19 places the value of wisdom from God above the preciousness of gold, silver and all precious stones. This theme is frequent in the Proverbs. Paul, consistent with this essential thrust, could use the same OT symbols to depict the value of God's wisdom as expressed in pure doctrine.

(3) If the materials represent converts (people) who will "remain" or else "burn" (worthy materials = the saved, unworthy = the unsaved), there is difficulty. How can the builder so mislead people that they, his products, finally burn in eternal lostness while he himself attains


\(^{21}\)Meyer, Corinthians, I, 94.
final salvation in 1 Cor 3:15?"22

Some interpreters complicate the picture further by explaining the materials or work to be doctrine. They ingeniously think up their own exact meanings for each of the six symbols in v 12. Such imagined meanings appear to be arbitrary, contrived and subjective, imposition into the Word rather than exposition of it. One claim is that gold means preaching the truth of Christ's deity, silver Christ's redemptive work, etc. The notions vary with the interpreter, and reveal more about the advocates' imaginations than about Paul's intention.

2. Others have the materials symbolize people. Why people?

(1) The foundation itself is Christ, a person, so the superstructure that His co-laborers build upon Him can be other persons, "God's building."

(2) People are built together into the church in Jesus' figure of Matt 16:18, Paul's in Eph 2:12-21 and Peter's in 1 Pet 2:4-10. In Eph 2, the saints are "built upon" the foundation (v 20) and the building consists of Jews and Gentiles "built together" (vv 21, 22; cf. 1 Pet 2:5, "being built"). If it is people that comprise the work of God in the other passages, it can be people that Paul means in 1 Cor 3:12-15.

(3) The materials of 1 Cor 3:12 are put to the test of fire, which suggests OT verses where people are pictured by gold and silver being tested by fire (Job 23:10; Ps 66:10).23

(4) Paul in 2 Tim 2:20, 21 uses "gold and silver" vessels to depict people. These vessels, which are symbols of people in v 21, are set in contrast to vessels of "wood and earth." There are possible links with 1 Cor 3. The use of gold and silver is one of these, occurring in both texts. Another connection may be the "house," which some take to represent the church (though some view it as the world). One big difference is that the materials in 2 Tim 2 are vessels, whereas 1 Cor 3 refers to building substances. Still, as 2 Tim 2 uses the symbols to draw a distinction between people, Paul may intend the same thing by employing "gold, silver, precious stones" in 1 Cor 3.

(5) Paul sees the Corinthian believers as "my work in the Lord" (1 Cor 9:1). Paul had begun the work at Corinth, being the converts' "father" in the faith (4:15). If people are his own "work," people can


23 Cf. also Prov 27:21; Zechariah 13:9; Mal 3:3.
be the "work" of those who continue building on the same foundation.

(6) The problem that those favoring the doctrine view sometimes raise against the people view could be resolved. It is the difficulty of viewing the worker himself as saved (3:15) if people who are his "work" finally burn up in God's judgment. Granted, it is hard to grasp how a man can really wind up saved himself if he has so misled the people who comprise his unworthy work and this kind of work burns. Yet salvation is God's unadulterated gift, based on Christ's work and purchase (cf. 1 Cor 6:20; Eph 1:7). In Eph 1:7, it is based on Christ's blood, not any merit of the Christian. It is a boon grounded in redemption, not the co-laborer's results (work) in the lives of others. A person can be saved, do work ostensibly for Christ, yet have some ideas that are misguided; or he can be, at times and in some aspects, a poor example that blights, misleads, and discourages others to turn away, even to hell. Later, he himself may "straighten up and fly right," but be unable to go back, locate all of those he caused to spurn Christ and the Christian way, and so undo the damage done through his past unworthy work.

And even if an interpreter insists on the doctrine view, imagining that his view avoids this problem, it has not necessarily done so. The same problem applies to the doctrine view. How may a worker himself finally be saved (1 Cor 3:15) if in some inconsistent instances his work of teaching has misled some persons to their eternal detriment? Actually, whether an interpreter favors the people view or the doctrine view of the materials in 1 Cor 3, the final recourse must be to God's amazing grace which reaches beyond the grasp of finite minds in cases of human failures.

This may or may not ease the view that the six materials are symbols of people a worker has placed upon the foundation or helped through ministry. The people view has still other difficulties, whether it is valid in 1 Cor 3 or not. For example, an interpreter does not follow a true analogy to 1 Cor 3 when he adduces proof from OT passages where gold and silver depict people tested by fire. Such texts do not combine two things: first, people who build with materials, and second, the materials themselves representing other people.

For the people view, a problem also attaches to the 2 Tim 2 argument. That passage explicitly equates persons with the gold and silver; 1 Cor 3 does not. Also, the "work" that burns in 1 Cor 3 is not so easily identified as people in the fire of God's wrath, hell. One reason for this is that the saved are those who are tested in the fire with which 1 Cor 3 is dealing. This fire relates to both good work and
bad. But elsewhere where Scripture refers to fire in which the unsaved are judged, none of the saved go into that fire. It is indicated that they have an altogether different treatment (Matt 13:42, cf. v 43; 2 Thess 1:7-9, cf. v 10; Rev 20:11-15, cf. v 15a).

3. Others think that the materials symbolize character. Kennedy put 1 Cor 3 with passages that refer to "the hidden realities of human character." 24

4. Many see the materials as incorporating a combination of things. Such interpreters do not mention simply one thing, as doctrine or people. They specifically include two or more of the meanings this discussion has surveyed. For example, Gärtners says that Paul's warning not to destroy God's temple (vv 16, 17) is directed against a worker's having both "false doctrine and a life in conflict with the will of God." 25 Godet saw the materials as "The spiritual life of the members . . . [which] is, in a certain measure, the teaching itself received, assimilated, and realized in practice." 26 Hanson writes that Paul's conception of the work of the ministry as preaching the gospel "is not limited to speaking alone; the minister must preach the gospel by living the life of Christ in the world." 27

Robertson and Plummer favor seeing fruit in character combined with or in persons, "... for the qualities must be exhibited in the lives of persons." 28 Pesch observes that the κόπος (kopos, "labor") and ἔργον (ergos, "work") that lead to the reward (3:8, 13-15) occur elsewhere under other images such as a worker's καρπος (karpos, "fruit") or a στέφανος (stephanos, "crown") comprised of his converts (1 Thess 2:19). To Pesch, 2 Tim 4:8 reflects the Pauline idea in its


25Gärtners, The Temple 60.

26Godet, First Corinthians I, 183-84.

27A. T. Hanson, The Pioneer Ministry (London: SCM Press, 1961) 85. The same essential view appears in Jay Shanor, "Paul as Master Builder, Construction Terms in First Corinthians" (paper read at Far West Section of the Evangelical Theological Society, April 13, 1985).

reference to a "crown of righteousness." Pesch phrases this as "Christian life-conduct" or "work." Other scholars see still different combinations within the content of the materials that lead to reward or loss of it.

5. A proposed larger combination. Those who view the materials as symbols for a combination of Christ-pleasing things appear to be moving in the stream of Pauline evidence. The work involves the building of further doctrinal truth upon the foundation that is Christ. This is in the lives of people who corporately comprise the "building." The process of instilling truth in people entails work in its many aspects of activity. The doctrine and the activity correlate in unity with work in terms of Christlike character which exhibits the doctrinal message and validates itself in lives of inward and outward practicality.

The focus of this discussion now turns to prove that Paul saw the "work" as fruit in attitudes, motives and other elements of character, not just doctrine and/or activity. Since many interpreters limit the materials or the "work" narrowly, or appear to, it is necessary to develop evidence in detail. Hopefully this will show the consistency of Paul's concept by correlating it in a variety of ways. Much evidence is from 1 Cor 1-4, which demonstrates the point effectively since these chapters are the context of 3:10-15.

(1) One clue to the content of the materials is reflected by Paul's exhortations. What elements are crucial to him for those who receive the epistle? He exhorts them to a spirit of unity (1:10), centered in the wisdom and the power of God. He wants them to glory in the Lord (1:29, 31), not in man (3:21); desires that they not deceive themselves, evidently by putting their confidence in the world's wisdom (3:17-19); seeks that they view the apostles as ministers and stewards accountable to God for faithfulness (4:1, 2), apparently in the way they minister (as Paul in 3:10), that is, how they do it in God's wisdom and

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30 W. Beardsley thinks "work" in 1 Cor 3:13-15 is both activity in preaching/teaching to build up the church and the product, fruit by the power of the Spirit as in 2:4-5 (*Human Achievement and Divine Vocation in the Message of Paul* [London: SCM Press, 1961] 52-60). A. C. Gaebelein, an older Bible expositor, says "work" is service which manifests Christlike character, i.e. fruit (*Romans-Ephesians*, *The Annotated Bible* [9 vols.; New York: Our Hope, 1916] 99).
power; longs that they follow him (4:16) in a life-style characterized by elements of spiritual life (4:9-13). The aspects which are vital in Paul's exhortations suggest those he is concerned with in their "work."

(2) Paul's purpose clauses reflect the things he regards as crucial. In chaps. 1-4 he uses eight (or nine, if 1:7 is seen as a purpose idea) purpose clauses. The point for 3:12 is his attention to qualities of life experience. This suggests that the materials are symbols of content, not doctrinal but making up the Christian life that infleshes that doctrine. This embraces the spiritual dimensions, attitudes, character and values of the Christian life. It refers to the life empowered by God to express the operation of God's kingdom, which Paul longs to find the Corinthian believers demonstrating (4:20).

(3) Paul is warning in 3:10-17. Values reflected in warnings in this context may be clues to discovering what men should seek and shun in the "work" that prepares them to receive reward. Paul uses three other warnings in chapters 1-4. In 3:19, he warns against this

31In 1:7a the ὑστερείσθαι (hóste, "so that") + μὴ ὑστερείσθαι (mê hysteréisthai, "you do not lack") could denote purpose, but probably means that having no lack in any gift is the result of the rich endowment in vv 5, 6 (Barrett, First Corinthians 38; Godet, First Corinthians I, 54; Meyer, First Corinthians I, 19). The emphasis is on what God has given to outfit saints for spiritual experience in church life, corporately or individually. They have been enriched in terms of gifts in "all speech and all knowledge," both of which Paul relates directly to edification, building up other saints, in chapter 14. Paul thinks of each gift as a "manifestation of the Spirit" and in close relation to its effect in experience, that of ministering "profit" (12:7), and so its exercise with a spirit sensitive to building up the church. Whether purpose or result, 1:7a is relevant in an inquiry into how Paul defines the materials for building in 3:12.

32The eight purpose clauses apart from 1:7a are: 1:28, ὑνα (hina, "so that") + καταργῆσῃ (katargēsê, "he might render inoperative"); 1:29, ὅτι ὅπος (hopôs, "so that") + καυχῆσεται (kauchêsetai, "he might boast"); 1:31, ὑνα (hina, "so that") + καυχάσθω (kauchasthô, "let him boast"); 2:5, ὑνα (hina, "so that") + ἐστι (ἐστι, "it might be"); 2:12, ὑνα (hina, "so that") + εἴσδομεν (eidômen, "we might know"); 4:6, ὑνα (hina, "so that") + μάθητε (mathète, "you might learn"); 4:6, ὑνα (hina, "so that") + φυσιοῦσθε (phusiousthe, "you might be puffed up"); and 4:8, ὑνα (hina, "so that") + συμβασιλεύσωμεν (sumbasileusômen, "we might reign together"). The point from these that bears on 3:12 is Paul's recurring focus on characteristics of life experience. This points toward viewing the materials and the "work" of 3:12-15 as including the content of the Christian's life.
world's wisdom, which he may connect with "wood, hay, straw" seven verses earlier. In 4:6-17, he warns against a proud, self-exalting spirit in contrast with the apostles' humility in their hardships. He wants believers to follow his example (v 16), as he faithfully follows Christ (v 17; 11:1). The heart of his concern is a product consisting of truly Christian character and attitude. Finally, 4:18-21 warns with regard to a Corinthian "puffed up" attitude in the Corinthian church. Paul may decide to visit them with a "rod," i.e. in discipline. He will look for evidence of the power of God's kingdom at work in their lives. Their speech may betray an absence of spiritual power and give evidence of carnal elements such as "envy" and "strife" in 3:3. If the power is conspicuously present in them for God's apostle to see when he comes to "judge," it will facilitate their approval in the test of the greater judgment by the apostle's God in the future day. The Lord Himself will search each builder's materials looking for the "power"!

(4) Paul's words about the materials occur within a contrast. It seems valid to seek the nature of the materials by looking into other contrasts in the context. There are about thirty contrasts in chapters 1-4. In many Paul speaks about elements of the spiritual life or of doctrine and the life that is consistent with it. Omitting the contrasts in our immediate passage (3:11, 12, 14-15), about twenty-seven remain. Of these, at least thirteen pertain to the spiritual life, to fruit that pleases Christ or its opposite, based on doctrine. Some other contrasts relate to doctrine or to communicating it. But even these, in Paul's thought, may be closely united to spiritual experience with its enlivened character, activity and attitudes. An example is 1:17a. God did not send Paul to baptize but to preach the gospel. Is this preaching

33In 4:19, "I shall know," as Godet says, is "the language of a judge proceeding to make an examination, ... a forewarning of the judgment about to follow (ver. 21)" (First Corinthians I, 236). To the same effect, cf. Robertson and Plummer, First Corinthians 92.

34The thirteen are: unity, not disunity (1:10); gloriing in the Lord, not in the flesh (1:29, 31); speaking in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, not in mere human speech, wisdom and power (2:1-4); faith in God's power, not in man's wisdom (2:5); no one knows the Lord's mind, but we have the mind of Christ (2:16); not as to spiritual but as to carnal (3:1); "I judge not myself, but the Lord judges me" (4:3, 4); "we are fools, but you are wise" (4:10); "we are weak, you strong" (4:10); "we are despised, you honorable" (4:10); not to shame but to warn (4:14); not the speech but the power (4:19); the kingdom is not in word, but in power (4:20).
in word only, or by word in the context of an exemplary life?

One contrast especially suggests the content that is the essence of the materials, giving them quality or the lack of it. It is spirituality and carnality. At their core both involve attitudes, such as unity or disunity (1:10-12; 3:3, 4). Paul's counsel in 3:5-9, which leads into the context under discussion, is a direct antidote to the carnality in vv 3 and 4. Since the contrast is in attitudes, the solution (God will reward for good materials rather than bad) must contrast the same spiritual or carnal attitudes.

(5) Paul introduces the context of 3:12 by beginning with the vital ingredients of his own example (v 10). This suggests the kinds of elements he would desire of others who follow his example. In his own work, he preaches Christ's cross as the power and wisdom of God (1:18, 24; 2:1-4). The true wisdom (2:6-10) is made up of things the Spirit of God reveals. Persons who are "mature" or "spiritual" can receive these (2:6, 12-16; 3:1). In 3:3, 4, carnality involves inability to receive spiritual realities from God but also characteristics of life-style that manifest the lack of these. These unspiritual dispositions are exemplified by "envy" and "strife" in exalting human leaders competitively and fostering disunity. Paul does not see doctrine in isolation but in relation to spiritual attitudes. Again, in 3:5-9 Paul trains his spotlight on the matter of attitudes. He emphasizes God's grace and giving the credit to God for any increase He grants.

(6) Paul relates what "remains" or "burns" in a builder's work to the necessity of holiness in vv 16 and 17. Holiness must impregnate work valued by God and appraised as "gold," etc. Believers corporately comprise God's "temple." God's temple, as God Himself, is holy. "Holiness befits thy house..." (Ps 93:5; cf. "glory" in 29:9). So work that scores well in God's test of believers consists in elements with the same nature as God's nature, holiness. The indwelling Spirit and spiritual content with Christ-pleasing value are vital. In terms of what Paul says about believers and the Spirit in 2:1-3:4, the work that Christ will approve for reward will be in harmony with the Spirit, a reflection of His own nature and power. The work should, therefore, be fulfilled "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (2:4), power that God alone, not man, can supply (2:5). And it must involve receiving and exemplifying in word or deed things that the Spirit has revealed, elements that express "the mind of Christ" (2:9-16).

(7) The close unity of 4:5 with 3:10-15 offers a means of defining the content of the materials of 3:12. Both texts speak of the same future judgment. This is reasonable in light of factors that tie the two
together. The Lord is the judge in both; both refer directly to a time of Judgment, "the day" (3:13) and "the time" (4:5). A striking resemblance links "the man's work shall be made manifest" (φανερώσαι [phanerōn, "manifest"] 3:13) and the Lord "will make manifest (φανερώσει [phanerósei]) the counsels of the hearts" (4:5). Also, both use ἐκαστὸς [hekastos, "every man"]]. The significance is that the materials Christ will examine at the judgment (4:5) reach inwardly, even to the "counsels of the hearts." This naturally leads one to perceive that in the judgment of 3:12-15 the materials consist of elements that go beyond doctrine and outward activity per se. They also incorporate inward attitudes and motives. Grundmann discerned this. To him, 4:5 and Rom 2:16 show that the "work" involves inward dispositions that each worker must have interwoven in his ministry, as in Phil 1:15, 16 and 2:20, 21.35 This leads Grundmann to see the worker's life-work or produce of 1 Cor 3:12 as "fruit for God," involving both inward dispositions and converts.

(8) Paul connects "gold . . ." etc. with a building and the colaborer's work that builds. Passages where he uses this figure or words pertaining to building provide evidence of the content he sees in the materials. The word "edify" (οἰκοδομέω [oikodoméo]) is his word in the building figure. He adds the prefix, ἐποικοδομέω [epoikodoméo, "I build upon"], to describe building upon Christ the foundation (3:10, 12). In passages where he employs the "building" language, Paul emphasizes strongly the qualities of a Spirit-influenced life.

One example is 1 Cor 8:1, "love edifies [builds up]." Paul contrasts love to being "puffed up" in pride, the carnal attitude found in 3:3 and 4:6, 7. Another instance, among several,36 is Rom 14:19. Paul exhorts the saints to pursue dispositions which promote peace and "build up" each other. The introductory ὅτι (oun, "therefore") shows that v 19 follows logically from previous considerations. These considerations are twofold, marked out by an explanatory γάρ (gar, "for") that begins v 17 and again v 18. Before that, Paul says that a person is not to exercise his freedom to eat meat if this would destroy another person for whom Christ died. For in such a case what the believer thinks he is at liberty to do may be spoken of as evil. It is not

35Grundmann, "Die Ubermacht" 69-70; also "Paulus" 286-87.

36Other examples: 1 Cor 10:23; 14:3, 4, 5, 12, 17, 26; 2 Cor 10:8; 12:19; 13:10; Eph 2:19-22; 3:17; 4:1-16; 1 Thess 5:11.
worth insisting on practicing one's freedom where serving his own interests would harm another. At this point, Paul gives the two explanations why a person ought not to insist on asserting his freedom. First, "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink (these are not the decisive concerns of blessedness in the kingdom), but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." These three may bear their ethical, subjective sense, i.e. denoting experiential characteristics, or be taken in their forensic meaning. In either case, experiencing such realities can be closely related to and flow from the forensic facts. Living in the practical good of these not only benefits a person's own spiritual life, but furnishes him in "things of the building up of one another" (v 19). His work has the ingredients that Christ judges to be of value.

The Christian should set a high priority on these because he seeks the profit of his brother above his own freedom in such cases. Since these values are of crucial importance, Paul adds a second explanation (v 18): "... he that in these things serves Christ is well-pleasing to God and approved by men." These are marks of good quality in the work of building which win favor of both God and men. In view of these reasons for devoting one's life to the advantage of brothers (vv 17, 18), Paul's "therefore" in v 19 is natural. Since the qualities God deems of worth in His kingdom are "righteousness, peace, and joy," believers ought to "pursue after the things that promote peace." The words that follow "peace" in v 19, "and things of building up one another," give warrant to understand not only "righteousness" and "joy" immediately from v 17, but even Paul's more expanded cluster of fruit (Gal 5:22, 23). In the Rom 14 context, peace in particular is most fitting in view of the potential lack of peace among Christians in vv 1, 3, 10, 13a, 15, 16, and 20. Believers provoke tensions with one another by exercising a spirit that harps on criticism. They censor and castigate others over differing convictions and practices.

Paul sees the work of building others in Rom 14 expressing itself in the fruit that the Holy Spirit produces. This appears in the context with a sobering reminder. Christians must realize that all will give an account before the judgment seat of God (vv 10, 12). The building work, the fruit, will be subjected to the test of Christ's evaluation. This should "therefore" (v 13) prompt a believer not to judge another in a

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harmful and carnal sense. It ought to direct him toward preventing another from falling (v 13) and helping build him up in areas valued by Christ (v 19).

6. Conclusion about the materials. The lines of evidence converge on a broad definition of the content of the six building materials. Work on the building has more than doctrine and activity per se interwoven within it. Fruit in the worker’s motives and character also give quality to work that is true to Christ the foundation. This is the work that will elicit the approval of Christ when He judges (v 13). It is the kind of work that will continue to lead to the reward that Christ deems equitable for it. For each worker will receive his own reward according to the standard of his own labor (v 8).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is that the materials contrast three qualities that are of such a nature as to bring reward from Christ with three qualities whose nature is such that they will diminish the degree of one’s reward. It is best in defining the materials not to limit the meaning to doctrine, people, activity, or character. Paul more probably intended to depict a combination of things in service that Christ can appraise as fitted for reward. These, in the power of the Holy Spirit, are sound doctrine, activity (effort), motives and character.
BIBLE TRANSLATIONS:
THE LINK BETWEEN EXEGESIS
AND EXPOSITORY PREACHING

Robert L. Thomas
Professor of New Testament Language and Literature
The Master's Seminary

Expository preaching presupposes the goal of teaching an audience the meaning of the passage on which the sermon is based. Two types of Bible translations are available as "textbooks" the preacher may use in accomplishing this task. One type follows the original languages of Scripture in form and vocabulary insofar as possible without doing violence to English usage. The other type is not so much governed by phraseology in the original languages, but accommodates itself to contemporary usage of the language into which the translation is made. It is possible with a fair degree of objectivity to measure how far each translation deviates from the original languages. The greater degree of deviation inevitably reflects a higher proportion of interpretation on the translator's part. Regardless of the accuracy of the interpretation, the preacher will at times disagree with it and have to devote valuable sermon time to correcting the text. The best choice of translations on which to base expository preaching is, therefore, one which more literally follows the original languages and excludes as much human interpretation as possible.

*   *   *   *

English versions of the Bible can be classified in different ways. They can be classified in regard to historical origin, in regard to textual basis, in regard to theological bias, and in regard to usage of the English language. These areas of consideration are not without relevance to exegesis and expository preaching, but for purposes of the current study, a fifth

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1This essay was originally presented at the Thirty-fifth Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in Dallas, TX, in December 1983 and has been updated for incorporation in this issue of The Master's Seminary Journal.
classification will be examined, that of the philosophies of translation used in producing Bible versions.\footnote{For a summary of all five areas in which translations may be classified, see Robert L. Thomas, \textit{An Introductory Guide for Choosing English Bible Translations} (Sun Valley, CA: author, 1988).}

This category of analysis is chosen because of its very close connection with exegesis and exposition. In such an investigation as this these two terms, exegesis and exposition, must be clearly defined. "Exegesis" is the critical or technical application of hermeneutical principles to a biblical text in the original language with a view to the exposition or declaration of its meaning. "Exposition" is defined as a discourse setting forth the meaning of a passage in a popular form. It is roughly synonymous with expository preaching. In a comparison of these two it is to be noted that exegesis is more foundational and more critically and technically oriented. Exposition is based upon exegesis and has in view a more popular audience. The exposition under consideration here is public and spoken exposition rather than written exposition.
In the practice of exposition or expository preaching it is assumed that the preacher's goals include the teaching of his passage's meaning to the audience. Such teaching points out items in the text which are obvious, but may never have been noticed. It also calls attention to items which may be completely hidden from the reader of an English translation. It will, in addition, explain passages which are difficult to interpret. In the process of imparting new teaching the expositor will remind his listeners of truth previously learned too. Based on all this instruction, the preacher will apply the principles of his passage to listeners with a view to producing spiritual growth and transformation in their lives.

It is obvious that the above aims are much more attainable if the congregation has an English version of the Bible in which to follow the sermon, preferably the same translation as that used by the leader of the meeting. The question to be addressed in the following discussion is, with what type of translation can the minister of the Word best accomplish his goals? In other words, what kind of connecting link between exegesis and exposition is the most desirable? Stated still another way, what type of textbook is most advantageous for use in the practice of expository preaching?

TWO PHILOSOPHIES OF TRANSLATION

In search for an answer to this question about the kind of version needed, it is necessary first to understand in some detail, features of the two major philosophies of translation.

One philosophy focuses most attention on the original text or the source of the translation. This is called the literal or formal equivalence method of translation. The other is more concerned with the target audience of the translation. This is referred to as the free or dynamic equivalence method of translation. A literal translation seeks a word-for-word


\footnote{Glassman suggests that “target” is no longer acceptable to designate the language into which a translation is made, because it suggests shooting a communication at a target and treats communication as a one-way street instead of expecting a response. He prefers “receptor” to stress the fact that a language has to be decoded by those to whom it is directed (E. H. Glassman, *The Translation Debate: What Makes a Bible Translation Good?* [Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1981] 48).}
equivalency, trying also to retain the grammatical structure of the original insofar as the destination language will permit. A free translation aims for communicative effectiveness or an effect upon the reader in the receptor language comparable to that produced upon the original readers and listeners.

According to dynamic-equivalence advocates literal translations, which are, for the most part, the traditional and older ones, have not allowed adequately for cultural and social factors which affect readers of a translation. The formal-equivalence advocate responds that the translator of a free translation has not shown sufficient respect for the inspired text.

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5 J. P. Lewis, *The English Bible/From KJV to NIV* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981) 279; S. Kubo and W. F. Specht, *So Many Versions?* (rev. and enlarged ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983) 341-43; F. F. Bruce, *History of the English Bible* (New York: Oxford, 1978) 233. J. P. M. Walsh ("Contemporary English Translations of Scripture," *TS* 50/2 [June 1989] 336-38) finds the motivation behind dynamic equivalence laudable: a zeal for souls and a desire to make the riches of Scripture available to all. Yet he notices a troublesome underlying premise, that there is a message which "can be disengaged from the concrete, historically and culturally determined forms in which it was originally expressed, and gotten across to readers in other forms, equally determined by history and culture, which are different from those of the original text. . . . The truth of the Bible exists . . . in a certain embodiment, but that embodiment is of no real importance." He feels that this premise of dynamic equivalence carries almost a "gnostic" aura.

6 J. Van Bruggen, *The Future of the Bible* (Nashville: Nelson, 1978) 69. Some are so avidly committed to the dynamic equivalence approach that they are extravagantly critical of formal equivalence. They deny its ability to communicate anything to the average person. Glassman is typical of this extreme when he writes, "Every example I could give of formal correspondence translation would simply reinforce the point that, for the most part, it does not communicate to the ordinary person today, if indeed it ever did" (Glassman, *Translation Debate* 50-51). This picture of formal equivalence is grossly misleading. To represent this approach as non-communicative is to erect a "straw man" that does not resemble the actual situation even faintly. Kohlenberger is also guilty of painting such a distorted picture of literal translation (J. R. Kohlenberger, III, *Words about the Word: A Guide to Choosing and Using Your Bible* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987] 63). Carson joins the others in crass exaggeration, if not outright error, when he writes, "There is widespread recognition of the dismal inadequacy of merely formal equivalence in translation, butressed [sic] by thousands and thousands of examples" (D. A. Carson, "The Limits of Dynamic Equivalence in Bible Translation," *Notes on Translation* 121 [Oct 1987] 1, rept. from *Evangelical Review of Theology* 9/3 [July 1985]).

7 Van Bruggen, *Future* p. 81.
Translating freely is not a new idea. Jerome who produced the Latin Vulgate at the end of the fourth century purposed to translate the sense, not the words of the original whenever translating anything other than Scripture. John Purvey, an associate of John Wycliffe, expressed much the same sentiment in the late fourteenth century when he said that the unit in translation cannot be the word, but at the very least the clause or sentence. Yet the degree of freedom advocated by these scholars is inapplicable to many modern English versions. Jerome did not apply these standards to the Vulgate, and the second edition of the Wycliffe version in which Purvey was most influential, would now be classed as a literal translation. A major breakthrough in free translating came at the very beginning of this twentieth century with the publication of the Twentieth Century New Testament. Though translated by those of a basically non-scholarly orientation, this project paved the way for a flow of scholarly works geared more to modern English practice than to the precise wording of the original text. These have included undertakings by Weymouth, Moffatt, Goodspeed, and Knox as well as the New English Bible and the Good News Bible.

In connection with the last of these there finally developed a philosophical rationale for what the free translator had been doing for many decades already. It was at this point that the title "dynamic equivalence" was applied to the practice. Many of the principles of modern communications theory were then integrated into translation practice.

Side-by-side with the newer emphasis in translation, the traditional philosophy of literal translation, labeled "formal equivalence" and then "formal correspondence" by the theorists of the American Bible Society,
continues to present its candidates: the Revised Standard Version, the Modern Language Bible, the New American Standard Bible, the New American Bible, and the New King James Version.

Among English translations the roots of this philosophy are deep. The first English translation done by associates of John Wycliffe was a very literal translation, corresponding word-for-word whenever possible with the Latin text on which they based their translation.\[14\] The principle of literality was observed so scrupulously in the Douai-Rheims version that the English product is unintelligible in some places. The goal of the King James Version translators was to be "as consonant as possible to the original Hebrew and Greek.\[43\]

The contemporary preacher is thus faced with a choice between these two types of English translations. The reaction of some might be to question whether there is that much difference between the two. They would want to know whether the differences are measurable. Of interest also is the nature of the differences and how they affect expository preaching.

MEASUREMENT OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FREE AND LITERAL TRANSLATIONS

Evaluations of translations in regard to the philosophies of their translation techniques have usually been general in nature, such as "The NEB is a free translation, tending to paraphrase and, in some instances, to wordiness.\[16\] "The NIV is also too free in its translation.\[17\] "The NASB is a literal approach to the translation of the Scriptures.\[18\] "The NAB is more faithful to the original than is either the JB or the NEB.\[19\] The Modern Language Bible sought to avoid paraphrase, and so is a "fairly literal"
General appraisals such as these are helpful as far as they go, but are at best vague in their connotation and at worst open to question as to their accuracy. Can they be made more definitive and defensible? In other words, can tests of dynamic equivalence and formal equivalence be applied to various versions so that equivalency of effect and conformity to the original can be measured? The answer in the case of dynamic equivalence is a qualified "no," and that in regard to formal equivalence is "yes."

Testing the communicative effectiveness of translations and thereby determining their degrees of dynamic equivalence is a very inexact task. According to Nida, a translation should stimulate in a reader in his native language the same mood, impression, or reaction to itself that the original writing sought to stimulate in its first readers. This is an unattainable goal and one that can be only approximately achieved. Impressions of different people will vary widely after reading the same biblical passage. Also "equivalent effect" is difficult to quantify, because no one in modern times knows with certainty what the effect on the original readers and listeners was. To assume that a writing was always clear to them as is frequently done is precarious. Yet tests have been devised to measure how well modern readers comprehend what they read. One of the most successful of these is called the "Cloze Technique." It consists of reproducing portions of literature with words intentionally omitted at regular intervals. A representative group of people who are unfamiliar with the literature are given these portions and asked to insert the missing words. On the basis of their success in doing so, statistical data are compiled on the readability of the literature in question. By using comparable sections of different English versions, one can formulate an estimate of the comparative communicative effectiveness of

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20 Kubo and Specht, *So Many* 92.
21 Nida, *Toward a Science* 156, 164.
22 Kubo and Specht, *So Many* 174-75.
23 Van Bruggen, *Future* 112.
24 Nida, *Toward a Science* 140; Wonderly, *Bible Translations* 203-5. Kohlenberger mentions other tests that have been used to measure read-ability, one a battery of language comprehension tests prepared by Dwight Chappell during the 1970s and the other called the Fog Readability Index (Kohlenberger, *Words* 60-61).
these versions.

The limitations of this test are several. They center in the difficulty of assembling a sufficiently representative group of people. Vocabulary aptitudes vary widely even among members of the same family. Backgrounds and experiences differ to the point that members of the same socio-educational group reflect wide discrepancies in scoring on such a test. Devising a pattern of meaningful results is next to impossible because of the extreme subjectivity of the quantity or quality being tested.

The test of formal equivalence is more successful, however. It is a test of "deviation values." First formulated by Wonderly, this procedure consists of five steps.

The first of these steps is to take a passage of suitable length, say from thirty to fifty Hebrew or Greek words, and number the words consecutively.

Secondly, each word is translated into its nearest English equivalent, in accord with standard lexical tools. This stage, known as the "literal transfer," is carried out without rearranging the word order. In cases where alternative English renderings are possible, both possibilities are included. The consecutive numbers from step one remain in their proper sequence. Of course, the result of this step is incomprehensible English. Nevertheless, this is an important intermediate stage.

The third step consists of changing the English word order and making any other changes necessary to produce a readable English format. Changes thus made are kept to a minimum, being only those absolutely necessary to make the sense of the English comprehensible. This process is known as the "minimal transfer." In this rearrangement each word or phrase retains its original sequential number, the result being that the numbers no longer fall into their previous consecutive sequence. The result of this step is called the "closest equivalent" translation. This closest equivalent constitutes a standard to which various published translations may be compared.

The fourth part of procedure for determining deviation values of

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25 Wonderly, *Bible Translations* 204-5.
27 Wonderly's approach has been altered slightly so as to facilitate a more detailed analysis, as will be explained in step four below.
English versions is the comparison of these versions, one by one, with the closest equivalent translation in the section of Scripture under consideration. Such a comparison will reflect five types of differences: changes in word order, omissions from the text, lexical alterations, syntactical alterations, and additions to the text. Each time a translation differs from the closest equivalent, an appropriate numerical value is assigned, depending upon the degree of difference between the two. When the values for the five kinds of differences are totaled, a deviation value for the section is established. From this deviation value for the thirty to fifty words is extrapolated a deviation value per one hundred words.

The fifth and last step is to repeat the whole process in other passages, until a sufficient sampling of the whole book is obtained. The deviation values from all the passages are then averaged together to obtain a single deviation value per one hundred words for the whole book. This can be done for each book of the Bible in any selected version.

The deviation values obtained through this test have no significance as absolute quantities, but when the value for one version is compared to that of another, the versions that are closer to the original text can be identified, as can the versions that differ more extensively from the original.

From such relationships as these a diagram can be constructed to reflect the profile of each English translation in relation to the others. A range of deviation values for literal translations, free translations, and paraphrases can also be established to show in which category each

28 Wonderly has one category, "structural alterations," in place of the two categories, "lexical alterations" and "syntactical alterations," which are suggested here. It is proposed that this further division encourages a more definitive examination of the differences that are of this nature. Lexical and syntactical matters are somewhat distinct from each other.

The above discussion views translations as deviating from the text of the source language in varying degrees. Glassman represents a group who see the two approaches to translation, not from the perspective of relative closeness to the original text, but from the standpoint of being two approaches to translation which are entirely different in kind (Glassman, Translation Debate 47-48). He appears to be saying, in other words, that dynamic equivalence makes no attempt to represent the individual words or syntactical constructions of the original. The dynamic-equivalence translator rather interprets the meaning of the text and proceeds to express that meaning in whatever words and constructions may seem appropriate to him.

Beekman and Callow refrain from using "paraphrase" to describe the results of their
translation belongs and how it compares with other translations within the same category.

[See Figure 1.]
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A comment is needed about the dividing point between literal and free translations and about that between free translations and para-phrases. These are somewhat arbitrary, but not completely. The NIV is taken as the bottom of the range of free translations because of its own claim to follow the method of dynamic equivalence. Yet it is more literal than other versions which are also based on the dynamic equivalence principle. Phillips Modern English is taken as the bottom of the range of paraphrases because Phillips' initial purpose was not to produce something that would be scrutinized as closely as a translation.

The advantage of this test is that it lends a degree of objectivity to general evaluations of the various versions. For example, when Lewis says that the Jerusalem Bible is rather paraphrastic in nature, we would take issue with him on the basis of its difference from Phillips. While the JB is one of the freest of the free translations, it is not so free as to be called a paraphrase. We would likewise question the propriety of Kubo and Specht in calling the New English Bible "paraphrastic." Though these reviewers may be correct about some of its renderings, the translators claimed to have refrained from para-phrase, and an application of the deviation test places the NEB well within the category of free translations.

On the other hand, when Lewis says that the NIV uses "dynamic equivalence" renderings in a number of places or that the NEB is a free translation or when Kubo and Specht say that the New American Standard

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31 "Preface," *New International Version* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978) viii; cf. R. G. Bratcher, "The New International Version," *The Word of God* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1982) 162. Kohlenberger seems to classify the NIV as a "basically F-E" (i.e. formal equivalence) translation (Kohlenberger, *Words* 93), while at the same time referring to its "fluid D-E style" (Kohlenberger, *Words* 92). His appraisal is puzzling. Probably the NIV should be classed as D-E because its translators sought to convey "the meaning of the writers" which they deem to be more than a "word-for word translation" which retains "thought patterns and syntax" of the original.

32 Kubo and Specht, *So Many* 80-81.

33 Lewis, *English Bible* 206.

34 Kubo and Specht, *So Many* 211.


Bible Translations: The Link...

Bible and Modern Language Bible are literal translations, the accuracy of their words is borne out. Lewis is also correct when he says that the New American Bible is more faithful to the original than the Jerusalem Bible or the New English Bible.

Bruce is almost correct when he states that the NASB retains the precision in rendering that made the ASV of such great value as a handbook for students. A comparison of deviation values for the two reflects that actually the ASV is more literal than the NASB, but that the NASB still falls low in the range of deviation values set for literal versions. In other words, Lewis' opinion is confirmed: the NASB is relatively literal, but is not entirely free from paraphrasing. Van Bruggen is also proven correct when he notes the distinct difference in literality between the King James Version, Revised Standard Version, and New American Standard Bible on the one hand, and the New International Version, Good News Bible, and the Living Bible on the other.

Deviation values can be used in a variety of ways to detect translation trends. For example, a comparison of deviation values for different books reflects differing degrees of deviation within the same version. When a different translator is assigned to each book, subsequent reviews by committees notwithstanding, there is a good chance that a given version will vary from book to book in its deviation values. The Jerusalem Bible is a case in point. In Romans it is close to the top in deviation value among free translations, but in 1 Corinthians its value locates it at the bottom of that range.

[See Figure 2.]

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37 Kubo and Specht, *So Many* 92, 230.
38 Lewis, *English Bible* 222.
39 Bruce, *History* 259.
40 Lewis, *English Bible* 182-83.
41 Van Bruggen, *Future* 192.
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<td>low</td>
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DEVIATION VALUES IN 1 CORINTHIANS
Kubo and Specht are right when they observe that it is not a homogeneous translation.\textsuperscript{42} The same observation applies to the Modern Language Bible when comparing deviation values in the two books.

Another point to be made is that a line between literal translations and those that are free cannot be precisely drawn. Therefore, there is not a great deal of difference between a translation at the top of the literal range and one at the bottom of the free range. For example, the philosophy behind the RSV is not radically different from that of the NIV even though the former is classed as literal and the latter as free. On the other hand, there is significant difference between a translation in the lower range of literal, such as the ASV, and one in the lower range of free translations.

Of further interest are the deviation values of versions in the Tyndale tradition.

[See Figure 3.]

\textsuperscript{42} Kubo and Specht, \textit{So Many} 161.
DEVIAITON VALUES IN ROMANS

Figure 1   TYNDALE (1526)

GREAT BIBLE (1539)

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<tr>
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< literal translations >< free translations >< paraphrases
Tyndale’s work was near the top of the literal translation range, but subsequent revisions moved closer and closer to the zero base, until the twentieth century. Since then, they have increased.

**INTERPRETATION AS A FACTOR IN TRANSLATION**

The above discussion of degrees of deviation from the form of the original text raises a question about what factor or factors account for the higher deviation of some versions in comparison with others. In more general terms, what are distinctives of free translations and paraphrases that set them apart from literal translations?

The largest single distinction lies in the area of interpretation. To be sure, some interpretation must accompany any translation effort. In this connection Barclay is right, and the editor of the *Churchman* is wrong in saying that translation and interpretation must be kept rigidly separate. For example, one cannot translate 1 Cor 7:36-38 without adopting a view as to whether the passage is referring to the virgin’s father or to her male companion. Still, the largest difference between translations of a relatively low deviation value and those of a high value lies in the quantity of interpretation behind the renderings. In free translations and paraphrases this element is, as a rule, substantially higher.

This highlights a difficulty inherent in free translation and para-phrase. The translator must choose one interpretation from the possible alternatives, thus leaving the English reader at the mercy of his choice. The translator of a literal translation can often retain the ambiguity of the original text and thus allow the English reader to interpret for himself.

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44. Kubo and Specht, *So Many* 163.
45. Ibid., 170.
46. Ewert, *Ancient Tablets* 259. The step of translation where the interpretation of the translator is incorporated is called "analysis." He is responsible to perform a thorough exegetical examination of the passage to be translated to discover what it meant to the ones who first read and heard it (Glassman, *Translation Debate* 59-61). Properly fulfilled, this responsibility entails the implementation of the grammatical-historical method of interpretation. Having accomplished this, he transfers the meaning to the receptor language and restructures it in the form that he conceives will be most palatable to the recipients in the new language.
47. Lewis, *English Bible* 133.
48. Ambiguity is studiously avoided in the dynamic equivalence approach. The translator’s responsibility is viewed as one of giving intelligible meaning to everything he translates, even passages over which the best
For example, the reader of Gal 5:12 in the New King James Bible will need the help of a commentary to understand the verse. What does it mean, "I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off"? The readers of free translations and paraphrases will not need a commentary, however, because translators have interpreted for them. In the GNB, NIV, JB, and NEB "cutting off" is interpreted as referring to a deprivation of the male reproductive glands. In the PME and the LB, a different interpretation is adopted. The statement is made to mean separation from the Christian assembly.

The added responsibility of a dynamic-equivalence translator is made apparent by this comparison. He has also become a commentator. It is to this added role that some have objected. Without acknowledging that he has done so, such a translator has attached his own personal interpretation to the text, thereby excluding from the reader a consideration of the other possible meanings of the text. A literal translation can, on the other hand, often leave the same obscurity in the English text as is found in the original.

Similar dilemmas arise in numerous passages. Which interpretation is right in 1 Thess 4:4, the one which says that Paul speaks of control over one's own body as in the JB, NEB, NIV, PME, or that which says that he speaks of taking a wife in marriage as in the LB, RSV, and GNB? Or should the translator shun the responsibility of making a choice as in the KJV, the NKJV, and the NASB?

Does 1 Tim 3:2 prohibit appointment of an overseer who is a bigamist, as strongly implied by the NIV, LB, PME, and the GNB through the addition of the word "only"? Or does it forbid appointment of a man who is a divorcee, as the JB indicates? Perhaps the verse speaks of the quality of faithfulness without dealing with marital history, as is the choice of the NEB? But maybe the decision in this matter should be left to the expositor or the English reader, as indicated by the noncommittal rendering of the KJV, NKJV, RSV, and NASB.

Kubo and Specht and Lewis are among those who seriously question whether a translator has the right to read his own interpretations into the text. They would be joined by many in this objection when the translator's interpretations are blatantly wrong. Such is the case when the GNB refers to Christ as "the great descendant of David" rather than "the root of David" in Rev 5:5. The NEB commits the same error in calling Him "the Scion of exegetes have struggled for centuries (Glassman, Translation Debate 101-11; cf. Carson, "The Limits" 7). The alleged need to do this stems from a low estimation of the English reader's ability or motivation to study the passage for himself. It becomes a sort of spoon-feeding approach to translation where nothing is left to the initiative of the user of the translation.

Actually a further refinement in meaning between the renderings of this group of versions lies in whether they adopt the English rendering of "castrate," "emasculate," or "mutilate." The last of the three is the most severe, involving the whole body, and the first is the least severe, involving only the reproductive capability. A precise interpretation of the text entails a determination of which of these was in Paul's mind as he wrote. E.g. Van Bruggen, Future 105-9.

Kohlenberger recognizes the problem of the excessive-commentary element in versions such as the Amplified Bible, the Living Bible, and Wuest's Expanded Translation (Kohlenberger, Words 66-67), but he is apparently oblivious to its presence in the NIV.

David." Both of these renderings preclude a reference to Christ's pre-existence that is latent in the Greek. In John 1:1 Moffatt's "the Logos was divine" and the GNB's "he was the same as God" both miss the point that the verse intends to teach the Deity of the Word.55

Some translations have evidenced an awareness of the problem of excessive interpretation in succeeding editions of their works. For example, the RSV in earlier editions gave "married only once" in 1 Tim 3:2, but in the 1959 edition they changed back to "the husband of one wife." Phillips has also removed some of the extreme interpretive elements in a more recent edition of PME.56 The 1978 edition of the NIV is more literal and less interpretive than the 1973 edition.

THE EFFECT OF INTERPRETIVE VERSIONS ON PREACHING

It is time to answer the question of what type of translation is the best basis for expository preaching. For some the communicative effectiveness of a free translation or paraphrase is very important. This advantage should not be underestimated.58 Yet if the ultimate goal of the expositor is to teach the meaning of his passage as the foundation for applications to his congregation's practical experience, he is seriously hindered if he uses a version with excessive interpretive elements. It is a cop-out to use a free translation or paraphrase under the pretext that all translations are interpretive. The fact must be faced that some versions are more interpretive than others, and a choice must be made in this light.

Upon encountering an interpretation different from his own, as he is bound to do,59

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55 Bruce, History 169, 233.
56 Kubo and Specht, So Many 82-83.
57 Ibid., 253-54.
58 Communicative effectiveness is especially advantageous when using the Scriptures for evangelistic purposes. No one can debate the conclusion that the interest of non-Christians is gained much more quickly through the use of a free translation or paraphrase. This is the advantage developed by Glassman when he criticizes Christians for the high "fog index" of their terminology when dealing with people who are unfamiliar with theological language (Glassman, Translation Debate 49-50; cf. H. G. Hendricks, Say It with Love [Wheaton: Victor, 1972] 32-33).
59 E.g. G. D. Fee, "I Corinthians 7:1 in the NIV," JETS 23/4 (1980) 307-14. Fee takes issue with the NIV's translation of gynaikw ptesuai (gynaikos haptesthai) by the word "marry" rather than by the more literal "touch a woman." the expository preacher must tell his listeners that the meaning is not what their Bibles say it is. This is a procedure quite different from explaining an ambiguous statement. It will assume the character of a reversal of what the translation says. This practice, when repeated too frequently, maximizes confusion and reduces pedagogical effectiveness.

The situation is analogous to teaching a subject in the classroom with a textbook that expresses viewpoints opposite to those held by the teacher. The class time is consumed with refutations of what the textbook teaches. Such an unsound teaching technique greatly diminishes the success of the learning process, especially in the situation where people are led to believe they hold an authoritative book in their hands. They have been taught that this is the "Bible," not a commentary on the Bible.

It is far more advantageous to use and encourage the audience to follow in a more literal translation, one where the translator has transmitted the original in such a way as to
give the church an accurate translation on which to do its own exegesis, and not one which subjects the church to limitations in the translator’s understanding of what the text means. Van Bruggen, *Future* 106. Dodd calls this approach of avoiding interpretation whenever possible "a comfortable ambiguity" (Dodd, "Introduction" viii). He acknowledges that free translation is impossible without eliminating this ambiguity. See also Fee, "1 Corinthians" 307, who calls it "the safe route of ambiguity." Dodd and Fee portray the dynamic-equivalence practitioner as a courageous scholar who does not shy away from hard choices. It is the job of the expositor, not of the translator, to explain the meaning of the passage under consideration. When a servant of the Lord imposes on the people of God his personal interpretation, he is morally obligated to clarify his role, that it is one of an expositor, not a translator. In any work that is precisely called a translation, interpretation should be kept to a minimum. Otherwise, the role of the expositor is usurped, and the work becomes a commentary on the meaning of the text, not a translation into the closest equivalent of the receptor language.

Byington has reflected this view of translation:

To say in my own words what I thought the prophet or apostle was driving at would not, to my mind, be real translation; nor yet to analyze into a string of separate words all the implications which the original may have carried in one word; the difference between conciseness and prolixity is one difference between the Bible and something else. So far as a translation does not keep to this standard, it is a commentary rather than a translation: a very legitimate and useful form of commentary, but it leaves the field of translation unfilled. S. T. Byington, "Translator's Preface," *The Bible in Living English* (New York: Watchtower, 1972) 5.

Commentaries are much needed, but it is a mistake to assume that a translation can function in that role without ceasing to be a translation. Preaching from an interpretive free translation or paraphrase is almost tantamount to preaching from a commentary, not from a translation. It is not the translator's job to mediate between God's Word and modern culture as the commentator or expositor does. Van Bruggen, *Future* 99.

This is why a strong consensus exists that free translations and paraphrases do not furnish English texts that are suitable for Bible study. Lewis, *English Bible* 116, 156, 260, 291; Kubo and Specht, *So Many* 80, 150, 242, 338; W. LaSor, "Which Bible Is Best for You?" *Eternity* 25 (Apr. 1974) 29. This is why the general recommendation to follow a literal translation for study purposes is widespread. Kubo and Specht, *So Many* 230, 338; Lewis, *English Bible* 116, 222; Bruce, *History* 259.

CONCLUSION

While it must be granted that a sermon is not the same as a classroom lecture, it is still similar to it in that edification of sermon-listeners takes place only when learning takes place. To this end, insofar as philosophy of translation is concerned, it is proposed that the best link between exegesis and expository preaching, the best textbook to use in public exposition of the Word, is a literal translation of the Bible, one in which the interpretive element is kept to a minimum.

The final choice of a translation must not be based on translation techniques alone. It must take into account historical origin, textual basis, theological bias, and usage of the English language also. Among these, however, the philosophy followed in the translation process remains a major factor for consideration in the choice of a version on which to base effective Bible exposition.
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A widely-known defender of biblical inerrancy has added this substantial work to many others about alleged discrepancies. Archer is a longtime Professor of Old Testament and Semitic Studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, IL. He is the author of such books as The Epistle to the Romans, The Epistle to the Hebrews, and Survey of Old Testament Introduction, as well as many articles in scholarly journals.

The pages measure 6 x 9-1/2 inches and most are set up in two columns, making the book more lengthy than the 476 pages might suggest. The work includes good indices of persons, subjects, and Scripture references.

Archer believes that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God. He holds that the right approach to it is one of humility, patience, and waiting on God with a surrendered heart and mind (p. 15). He advises careful use of context, recognizes that the same word may have several meanings and suggests using the best commentaries, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and concordances. These solve most of the problems. He points out that some difficulties result from inadvertent copyist slips, and advocates an openness to believe that the Bible can be right even if other ancient sources disagree. He reasons that Christ as God cannot err, that Christ believed the Hebrew Bible to be completely accurate in all details of science and history, and that we ought to embrace Christ's view as correct (p. 20). Jesus regarded as factual the historicity of Adam and Eve, the events of the Noahic flood, the giving of manna, the story of Jonah, etc. Rom 5:12-21 assumes the historicity of Adam, his sin, and its results just as it assumes the truth of Jesus' substitutionary death and justification through Him (p. 22). Archer contends that if the Bible errs in history or science, which can be tested, it could err and be untrustworthy in areas where it cannot be tested. Nowhere, he argues, does Scripture indicate a distinction between historical or scientific truth and doctrinal, metaphysical truth (p. 24).

Old Testament authors were just as convinced that the Israelites
crossed the Red Sea as the New Testament apostles were of Christ's atoning sacrifice.

The author has a section on why inerrancy is crucial. He reasons that early orthodoxy believed in inerrancy, and this view prevailed until the rise of rationalism and deism in the eighteenth century. Early in the twentieth century, critical scholars and liberals rejected inerrancy, but evangelicals defended inerrancy. Since about 1950, a group claiming to be fully evangelical denies inerrancy. Many seminaries now hold that intellectual integrity forces them to accept errors in history and science (pp. 19-20).

Among Archer's opening discussions are four answers to the criticism that without the original autographs it is only theoretical to argue inerrancy (pp. 28-29). Archer then moves through the Bible from the Pentateuch to Revelation. Some problems are more interpretive and even inerrantists disagree about them, for example, the meaning of the 144,000. Others are matters which some have argued are errors, e.g. contradictions or moral, historical, and scientific inaccuracies.

At times Archer uses logic from the perspective of his interpretation rather than logic found in the passage itself. In Gen 1:27, for instance, Adam and Eve were both created on the sixth day. Archer then states that 2:18 assumes "a considerable interval of time" between the creation of Adam and that of Eve. The latter verse to him "clearly implies" that Adam had been working for a long time. But why? The verse could reasonably fit a twenty-four-hour-day view, understanding that God did not need to wait beyond a twenty-four-hour day to see man's need for a wife. He foresaw the need of man and could have met it immediately, within a twenty-four-hour day. Adam also could have sensed the need quickly, and in a short time named the few dozen main groups (phyla) of animals then existent. The multitudinous species of today could have developed since then. Many who hold inerrancy will not assume, as Archer does, that views other than his are unreasonable (p. 60). Unfortunately, he omits the arguments from the words of Gen 1 for the naturalness of twenty-four-hour days of creation (cf. H. C. Leupold, Exposition of Genesis, and Henry M. Morris, The Genesis Record, for these arguments).

Archer's fine discussion of Gen 2:4 ff. shows how the section supplies details of creation (that of man in particular) not covered in the account of Gen 1. Not all will agree that the "sons of God" in Gen 6
are human believers rather than wicked angels, but many scholars are on both sides of this issue. Other views are also possible. Archer helps to understand how God can "repent" (Gen 6:7), the case for a universal flood, how God could allow Abraham to lie and yet become rich, that Melchizedek was a historical human being, a possible meaning of Shiloh (Gen 49:10), how the Israelites were justified in borrowing from the Egyptians without bringing the items back (Exod 3:22), how Moses could have written Deuteronomy with another writer appending the account of his death, and how Jephthah could have kept his vow by offering his daughter to perpetual virginity. Different views on Jephthah's act can be ably defended.

The author proposes 3,000 rather than 30,000 chariots in 1 Sam 13:5 because of a similarity in Hebrew words, 3,000 being miscopied as 30,000. He sees God as just in commanding extermination of the Midianites (Num 31). Midianite seduction to fornication and idolatry was a great threat to the purity of Israel and her ability to conquer the promised land. Drastic action was justified as resolute surgery is to deal with cancer. On 1 Kgs 6:1, Archer devotes about eight pages to discussing early and late dates of Exodus, ca. 1446 and ca. 1290 B.C., accepting the former one as correct. In Ps 5:5 and 11:5, God is consistent in hating the wicked in relation to sin but loving them in relation to repentance and trust (p. 242). In Dan 9, Archer locates the sixty-nine weeks from 457 B.C. to A.D. 26, with an A.D. 30 crucifixion and the seventieth "seven" yet future. Some who hold inerrancy will agree; others will favor another dating, as 444 B.C. to A.D. 33 (cf. Harold Hoehner, Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ). Archer discusses the pertinent question, "Doesn't the Old Testament present a different kind of God than the New Testament?" He emphasizes the presence of God's mercy and love in the Old Testament as in the New and His wrath in the New Testament as in the Old, yet the cross in the NT was the highest revelation of God's love (pp. 309-310).

In Matthew, Archer supports the mustard seed as the smallest in Palestine in the days of Jesus, since the smaller seed of the orchid was not grown there and hence not relevant to the hearers. Judas died by hanging (cf. Matt 27:3-10 with Acts 1:18), and also fell and burst open since the branch could have broken, especially in the earthquake. Four-and-a-half pages prove the Bible's teaching of the Trinity (pp. 357-61). In John 14:28, the Father is greater than Jesus when Jesus speaks as a man; however, as deity Jesus is equal with the Father. In
Acts 9 and 22, according to Greek words, those with Paul heard a sound but could not distinguish the words of the message. As to baptism for the dead (1 Cor 15:29), Archer takes one of several views possible for an inerrantist. New converts fill up the ranks of believers who die, being baptized "for the sake of the dead" (pp. 401-402). In three-and-a-half pages, Archer answers "yes" to the question, "Are the heathen really lost?" (pp. 385-388). On 1 Pet 3:19, he concludes that Christ preached to men in Noah's day through the Holy Spirit via Noah, "a preacher of righteousness" (p. 423). Many inerrantists agree with this view; on the other hand, many ably see a reference to Christ's preaching in Hades after His death. But, as Archer says, it cannot mean a second chance for salvation after death.

Archer's work often points to plausible answers to problems where some assume errors. On some points more knowledgeable persons will agree on inerrancy but prefer better resolutions to the problems. This would be true no matter whose view is expressed, however. One does not always sense that Archer is fair to other views, even those held by inerrantists. An example is his discussion of the 144,000 in Rev 7. With many he holds that these are both Jewish and Gentile missionaries of the future tribulation period. Archer devotes only about one-ninth of his space to a bare mention of the dispensational view that the 144,000 are only Jewish. He does not give his readers the valid hermeneutical grounds that put the dispensationalist view in a much more natural light for many (p. 434). That the 144,000 are from "the sons of Israel" and the listing of specific tribes go unmentioned. In addition, various natural distinctions between Jews in 7:3-8 and the multitude from all nations in 7:9 ff. are quite evident.

Any such book by a competent scholar will help at some points more than others, depending on the reader's perspectives. All in all, Archer provides sensible comments on most passages and issues. The book will hopefully help give the Bible a fairer hearing with some, provided they are open to reasonable evidence. Those who hold the Bible suspect or think it wrong until proven right, Archer may encourage to consider the Bible right until proven wrong. He expresses his conviction on p. 210: "Up until now, so far as this writer is aware, there is no biblical record that has ever been proven false by any evidence exhumed by the excavator's spade." And, as Archer develops this conviction, no Bible text has been proven definitely wrong. The Bible is inerrant, and there are reasonable ways to resolve

This most recent book by the late Peter Craigie is designed as "a basic introductory study for undergraduates." Its four parts treat general introductory concepts (such as languages and canon, background studies of the Old Testament period), brief introductions to the individual books, the history and religion of Israel, and Jewish, Christian, and academic perspectives on the study of the Old Testament. It contains an annotated bibliography and an index of Old Testament references.

Craigie gives a very helpful discussion of OT textual transmission and the place of the OT in studying the humanities and how the OT helped shape Western culture. His statement about the necessity for understanding the setting of the Psalms in the life of Israel is quite good. Chapter 2 on "The Civilizations of the Ancient Near East" provides a solid overview of this topic while showing its importance for OT studies. Craigie writes clearly and gives many examples, some contemporary. Occasionally he also includes entertaining details, such as the nickname "Muhammed the Wolf" for the Bedouin teenager who discovered the first of the caves containing the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Pastors will find some help from this book but must read it critically. Much of the information, though, will be found elsewhere in greater detail. The book does not replace important works such as Gleason Archer's *Survey of Old Testament Introduction* or Leon Wood's *History of Israel*, neither of which is in Craigie's bibliography. Furthermore, it probably is not suitable as a textbook for an introductory course at a conservative Christian college. Though the author occasionally claims to lean towards a "conservative" viewpoint, he has a disturbing propensity to devalue the seriousness of the debate. His conclusions about Moses and the Pentateuch, for example, stress that faith in the inspired character of these writings is somewhat
independent of critical discussions. Moreover, where Craigie does indicate conclusions, he sometimes seems less than "conservative." Thus he concludes that Daniel is "apocalyptic" (a way of understanding history) rather than prophetic, though he clearly admits that the NT calls Daniel a prophet. Craigie also leans too heavily on the outdated theory that the threefold division of Law, Prophets, and Writings represents the way the canon actually developed. Craigie indicates repeatedly that he is trying to be sensitive to both Jews and Christians. But he tries too hard to be "objective." In reality his biases show through quite clearly.

Some corrections in the text are needed. The chart on p. 26 strangely omits Aramaic. In Figure 20 "PESIA" should be corrected to "PERSIA." "Okney Islands" at the bottom of p. 81 should be "Orkney Islands." Figure 23 shows a picture of Akkadian cuneiform, not Ugari- tic. The headings for "PART I" are inconsistent. The reference to "Figure 14" on p. 158 should apparently be to "Figure 29." Likewise "Figure 19" on p. 278 should read "Figure 34."


The author is Associate Professor of Apologetics and Systematic Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Escondido, California. This book is his textbook for a course called "The Christian Mind," a course introducing theology and apologetics. Frame has at least two purposes for this volume: to show those of other theological orienta-tions an orthodox, Reformed position "from the inside" (p. xv) and to provide a reference text (p. xvii). The latter goal is especially well achieved because of the large amount of useful information included.

This book dealing with epistemology or the doctrine of knowledge is in three parts: "The Objects of Knowledge," what we know; "The Justification of Knowledge," the right we have to believe what we do; and "The Methods of Knowledge," how we obtain knowledge. Interwoven throughout each part are three perspectives, regarding
which Frame notes, "These perspectives are not distinct 'parts' of knowledge. They are 'perspectives'; each one describes the whole of knowledge in a certain way" (p. 107). The three are the normative, the situational, and the existential, or knowledge viewed from the perspectives of law or criterion, of the world, and of self-knowledge, respectively. Part I deals with the "objects" of knowledge, that is, knowledge from the "situational perspective." Part II discusses the justification and criteria of knowledge and focuses on the "normative perspective." Part III concentrates on the "methods" of knowledge, how we as subjects go about knowing the "existential perspective" (p. 107). Frame avoids a clear-cut distinction between the three perspectives by noting that neither one is ultimate, and that they are mutually dependent, equally ultimate, and equally important (p. 163).

The book is not about the subject of lordship, as its title seems to indicate, nor does it treat the topic of "lordship salvation," although there is data relevant to that current discussion. Several statements reflect Frame's definition of lordship: "We may define divine lordship as covenant headship" (p. 12). It is a "Creature-creation relation" and a "Lord-servant relation" (p. 13). He identifies three "lordship attributes" to summarize the biblical concept of divine lordship. They are, "control, authority, and personal presence" (p. 17). His concluding statement on this subject is excellent: "Knowing God is knowing Him as Lord, 'knowing that I am the Lord.' And knowing Him as Lord is knowing His control, authority, and presence" (p. 18).

Frame's work has many strengths. The first is his basic apologetic position of presuppositionalism, which more than any other system harmonizes apologetics with all areas of systematic theology. An analytical outline at the beginning shows clearly the organization of the book and enables the reader to follow its argument easily. A topical index at the end is very thorough, making the material readily accessible. Another strength is Frame's warm and interesting writing style. He clarifies language that some may find ambiguous with careful explanations of terms and phrases such as the incomprehensibility and knowability of God, which he summarizes as our knowledge of "God in Himself" (pp. 32-33). His transitional paragraphs between major parts of the book are helpful. These are a good summary and review as well as a guide for the reader in following the connected discussions.

Another strong point throughout the book is Frame's repeated
reminders that meaning and application are near synonyms. In this reviewer's opinion, this is the key to making systematic theology immensely practical and interesting for every Christian. Frame writes, "Knowing the meaning is being able to use the sentence, to understand its implications, its powers, its application. . . . Knowing the meaning, then, is knowing how to apply. The meaning of Scripture is its application" (p. 67). "I have argued that meaning and application are near synonyms" (p. 148). "Meaning is application and application is meaning" (p. 198). "The meaning of any text, then, is the set of uses to which it is suited" (p. 199).

Frame's section on language as a tool of theology provokes deeper thought about the various features of language than most have previously entertained. For example, after declaring that "communication occurs, not on the word level, but on the sentence level," Frame concludes that "the crucial thing is not what words are used, but what they are used to say" (p. 222). Therefore, "theological criticism ought not to be a critique of someone's vocabulary; it ought to be a critique of what he says with that vocabulary" (p. 236).

Additional strengths include footnotes with additional relevant material and other sources for further study. The book also has a section on logic and twenty-one kinds of fallacious arguments often used in theological writings. This is good to help understand and identify the ways in which theological arguments can fail (p. 278).

Appendices E and F alone are worth the book's price. These were written especially for the seminary student (p. 369). Appendix E is "Evaluating Theological Writings." Here Frame lists nine criteria to evaluate the quality of any theological writing. He also has three unsound criteria that should never be used (p. 370). Appendix F is "How to Write a Theological Paper." He makes eleven excellent points here.

This book does not have many weaknesses. Equating Israel of the OT with the church of the NT (p. 270) is one. Another is his use of infant baptism to illustrate various points. He will not convince many Baptists, although they should not reject otherwise valid points because of poor illustrations (pp. 270, 276, 279).

Often Frame refers to other parts of the book, particularly Part I, where he initially establishes a principle or idea similar to the one currently under discussion. Thus, the book "holds together" remarkably well. Yet page numbers rather than just analytical outline
references would have aided in locating other parts more quickly.

It is clear that Frame's book deals with his favorite subject. His own personal interests and convictions about the subjects under examination are obvious. This gives the book an intensity that sustains attention and provokes interest.

Future related books anticipated by this author include the Doctrine of God, the Doctrine of the Word of God, and one more about inerrancy to show that the theological rationale of liberals and others for abandoning inerrancy is inadequate (pp. 317-18).

This valuable book is well worth reading. I believe the author has gone beyond his purpose and made significant contributions to epistemology and apologetics. We anxiously await his future publications.


Paul and the Torah is a compilation of essays written by Lloyd Gaston over a period of ten years beginning in 1977. He is currently the professor of New Testament at the Vancouver School of Theology, having studied Systematic Theology under Karl Barth and NT under Oscar Cullmann.

Gaston advances the thesis that the apostle Paul was not anti-Law or anti-Judaism. To prove this, he seeks to demonstrate that any anti-Judaism inherent in the Christian tradition has no Pauline support. He holds that the inclusion of Gentiles among the elect of God through their incorporation into Christ does not mean a displacement of Israel.

While the reader might at first glance think Gaston is corroborating the dispensational "future for national Israel" viewpoint, such is not the case. The author does correctly note the distinction between Israel and the Church in Pauline writings (p. 6), but he makes a biblically unwarranted distinction between Christos and "Messiah," claiming that "Jesus is then for Paul not the Messiah. He is neither the climax of the history of Israel nor the fulfillment of the covenant, and
therefore Jesus is not seen in relation to David or Moses. For Paul, Jesus is the new act of the righteousness of God in the inclusion of the Gentiles" (p. 7). To Gaston, Jews can have an elect status with God without accepting Jesus as the Messiah.

He sets forth two reasons why Paul has been generally understood as opposing Judaism: (1) "the early church thought it could claim its own legitimacy only by denying that of Judaism . . . ; (2) it is based on a false assumption concerning the composition of the early churches, . . . the Romantic notion of the unity of the primitive church, the `church of Jews and Gentiles'" (p. 8). To rectify the historical misunderstanding of Paul, the author exhorts the readers "to take more seriously than is usually the case Paul's description of himself as Apostle to the Gentiles" (p. 7). This dominant focus of Paul's ministry becomes the unwarranted watershed of Gaston's theses, leading him to conclude, "It is in any case clear that Paul's converts were all Gentiles" (p. 8).

To reach such a conclusion, Gaston limits the number of NT books attributed to Pauline authorship. He contends "that the portrait of Paul to be found in Acts and the Pastoral Epistles is to be put resolutely to one side" (p. 5), and restricts his discussions to 1 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Philemon, Galatians, and Romans (p. 5). Except for Acts, which he calls a secondary source, he gives no basis for this limitation other than to assert that the limits are "simply assumed in company with many other scholars" (p. 5).

The author labors diligently to establish his premise that Judaism is not heresy to Paul (p. 33); Paul is merely trying to present a justification for Gentile Christians (p. 32). He misses the significance of Gal 3:28 when he asks, "Is there room in Pauline thought for 'two religions, two chosen people?' The one who said, 'I wish that all were as I myself am' (I Cor. 7:7), probably hoped that all Jews would come to share his faith. But he does not explicitly say so, and the absence of Jesus from Romans 11 may give hint in another direction. Paul also says that in Christ 'there is neither Jew nor Greek' (Gal 3:28). That means that in Christ there is both Jew and Greek" (p. 33). The author is confusing here, for earlier he maintains that salvation for the Jew has no connection with Jesus Christ (cf. the third paragraph above).

Gaston frequently talks about the "displacement" theory, the idea that the church has somehow effectively displaced Israel as God's people. He strongly maintains a future for Israel, but fails to distin-
guish between a future for national Israel compared with Judaism as a religion. "It is my conviction that the Hebrew Bible can speak with its own voice to the Christian church when the church acknowledges the full legitimacy of Judaism and that when this happens, and only when this happens, does it become possible to understand the New Testament in continuity with the Hebrew Bible and parallel to Judaism rather than in opposition to them" (p. 45).

Most of the book deals with various NT texts which are crucial to his thesis. In Rom 4, the author argues that Abraham should not be understood as the type of later believers but as the father of later believers, Jews and Gentiles (pp. 45-63). He interprets Gal 2 and 3 not as negating the law (in the sense of a covenant made with Israel) as it relates to the Jews but as speaking of Gentiles who need to be redeemed from the law (i.e. released from the burden of becoming a Jew) (pp. 64-79). Regarding Rom 9 and Gal 4, Gaston asserts that Paul is not quarreling with his fellow Jews about Judaism but about a Jewish understanding of Gentiles (pp. 80-99). The focus, he claims, is not on the exclusion of Jews and their understanding of the Torah but on the inclusion of the Gentiles (cf. pp. 116-134). Paul "really does not, in Romans 9-11 or elsewhere, charge Israel with a lack of faith or a concept of works-righteousness" (p. 99). Using Rom 11:28, the author concludes that "God is faithful to his promise to Israel, that the word of God has not lapsed, that all Israel will be saved, and that all this has to do not with human doing or believing but with the grace and mercy of God" (p. 150).

Paul's repeated statements that no man is justified by the works of the law, Gaston argues, have in view only those who are outside the covenant with Israel (i.e. Gentiles). The "work of the law" for Gentiles speaks of "Sin"; they were a "law unto themselves" (Rom 2:14-15) and therefore any works associated with such law would obviously bring wrath (Rom 4:15). The apostle, he contends, is not speaking of Judaism and the law of the covenant (pp. 100-106).

Paul and the Torah is well-documented and easy to follow. The author's "Retrospective Introduction" (pp. 1-14) furnishes the presuppositions and motivations for writing the book and provides a chapter-by-chapter analytical overview of the basic tenets. This helps a reader to understand more fully from the very beginning the author's flow of argument. Extensive indices of authors, subjects, and references, both biblical and extra-biblical, are also included.
However, the location of footnotes at the end of the book significantly limits their contribution.

This book does not represent an evangelical approach to an inerrant biblical text. Consequently, it offers no exegetical value for the evangelical. In an effort to demonstrate that Paul is not anti-Judaistic, the author has twisted, misinterpreted and impugned the integrity of Paul's words. Although his stated intent is to prove exegetically that Paul is not anti-Judaistic (p. 2), the book is an apologetic attempt to show that OT Judaism, apart from any fulfillment in the atoning work of Jesus Christ, is the biblical, God-ordained means for a Jewish individual to have eternal life. Therefore, according to Gaston, there are two ways of salvation. Just how he would deal with Jesus' explicit words in John 14:6 is left to the reader's imagination.


Several principles on which The Discovery Bible, New Testament is based are commendable:

(1) It recognizes the special capacity of the Greek language to "express thoughts with beautiful accuracy" (p. xiii). This language of the NT "has an unrivalled power to express shades of meaning" (p. 521). A trend in recent years has been to undervalue this uniqueness of the Greek language.

(2) It recognizes the value of translating into English every translatable word of the Greek text (p. vii). In recent years this too has been overlooked in many circles.

(3) It recognizes the importance of comparing NT synonyms (pp. ix, 521 ff.). Some contemporary scholarly resources tend to blur important distinctions between similar words that were quite clear to the original writers and readers.

With this impressive foundation Gary Hill and Gleason L. Archer have set out to accomplish what many others in the past have sought to accomplish: to impart some understanding of the Greek of the NT to those who have studied no Greek. The objective is noble,
but the practicality of achieving such a goal is in doubt. In fact, attempts to attain the goal are fraught with dangerous implications because a superficial knowledge of the Greek NT can be very dangerous, when placed in the wrong hands.

Illustrations of this danger are significant considerations in an appraisal of how well The Discovery Bible has accomplished its purposes. The first purpose is to identify in the "discovery color" (i.e. russet) which English words represent emphatic words of the Greek text. Many of the words identified as emphatic are so identified on the basis of "word-order norms" and "canons of judgment" for determining word order emphasis enumerated in Appendices 2 & 3. While generally valid, several of these norms and canons are questionable. For instance, norm #6 says that Greek subjects precede their verbs (p. 550), and for this reason canon #7 concludes that subjects following their verbs are emphasized words (p. 551).

Respected grammatical authorities (some of which are listed on p. 553 of The Discovery Bible), on the other hand, state that the normal position of the verb is immediately after the coordinating conjunction that begins the clause, with the subject following the verb (Blass-Debrunner-Funk, par. 472; Turner, III, p. 347). To cite a single passage, in 1 Cor 7:14 this Bible's emphasis upon the two occurrences of "sanctified" is unjustified if these standard grammars are correct, because the verb translated "sanctified" occupies the normal position immediately after the coordinating conjunctions of each clause.

The second purpose of The Discovery Bible is to identify "the colorful and vivid action conveyed by the different Greek verb tenses" (p. ix). An explanation of the tenses and their symbols is given on pp. xv-xix and on a fold-out page at the end of the volume. The identification of the tenses within the Bible text is accurate, but the unequipped reader is left to make his own choice among several possible connotations for each tense. For example, what criteria does the English reader have for deciding whether "do not be conformed to this world" (Rom 12:2) means to "stop being conformed" or to "go on refusing to be conformed." One who is conversant with Greek grammar realizes that the former idea is much more probable, but most English readers will simply choose the alternative that suits his or her own inclination at the moment. This response has been demonstrated repeatedly by English readers when faced with a similar choice in their use of The Amplified Bible.
The third purpose of the The Discovery Bible is to identify the Greek synonyms and show distinctions in meanings that cannot be reflected in English translations (p. ix). While it is heartening to see attention given to NT synonyms, it will be easy for abuse of them to arise. The introduction to the "Selective Glossary of the Synonyms of the Greek New Testament" (pp. 521 ff.) is an oversimplified analysis of synonyms. Sometimes when used in isolation from each other, similar words have overlapping meanings that are not provided for in this explanation. The result will be to discern distinctive meanings in some contexts where the writer never intended them. Without noting this, one could conclude that God's love for Jesus' followers (John 16:27) is a friendship based on common interests, or that "the disciple whom Jesus loved (φίλε [philē, 'I love'])" in John 20:2 is different from "the disciple whom Jesus loved (ἀγαπάω [agapē, 'I love'])" in John 21:20 or that a different kind of love is referred to in the two expressions. Failure to allow for this overlap in isolated contexts is especially surprising in light of the special provision made for a similar overlap when the two words for "love" occur together in John 21:15-17 (pp. 538-539).

The three purposes of this work are worthy, but because of the brevity of explanations about how to use the work, The Discovery Bible must be used with great caution. Even then, however, the use of it cannot begin to compare with the value of knowing and using the Greek text itself.


The author, Academic Dean of Talbot School of Theology since 1986, wants to help those who have no confidence in prayer or have serious difficulties in prayer. The attractive and readable book does well in meeting this need. The brief carefully-written chapters relate to common struggles Christians often lose. Discussion questions are at the end of each chapter. An appendix lists biblical passages relevant to prayer, though it is not as complete as Herbert Lockyer's All the Prayers of the Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959). End notes at the con-
clusion of the volume have extensive information and frequent helpful clarifications.

Prayer, Hunter writes, is not a way to get God to fulfill your desires, but "a means God uses to give us what he wants" (p. 12), as dictated by His nature and attributes. "God does not respond to our prayers. God responds to us: to our whole life... what we think, feel, will and do" (p. 13). A prayer life that works is largely a life of getting "to know him as the desire of our hearts" (p. 13).

Our prayers need to be consistent with God's holiness. Hunter defines this holiness as a separation to positive goodness, and separation from wrong is a result of this. Patience is the key in pursuing this holiness. An impatient leap for satisfaction in prayer, a quest for a "quick fix," as it were, cannot replace cultivating personal appreciation for His holiness. Being clear about God is crucial.

One of the better chapters to this reviewer is called "Sovereign: Can Prayer Change God's Mind?" Believers freely pray as they wish, yet the desires that are right in God's sight are prompted by God with a view to accomplishing His will. Hunter uses T. C. Hammond's illustration: A young monkey, clinging to its mother's neck, goes where the mother goes, yet goes because it also wants to go. Only prayer according to God's will is granted (p. 60). Hunter discusses Ps 106:13-15, where Israel prayed for things selfishly and God gave them what they requested, but also sent leanness into their souls. In such cases, God gave what they insisted on "so that they could learn what he knew was best" (p. 62). There are some excellent practical suggestions for learning God's will for purposes of more effective prayers (pp. 63-65).

On the question, how can we pray to a God who lets people hurt? Hunter rephrases it to ask, "Can we pray to a God who died for people who hurt?" (pp. 91-92) There are good chapters on being thankful to God, prayer in chastisement, loving others by praying for them, and forgiving other sinners because of gratitude to God for forgiving us.

The book is very practical at times. For example, "An older car, a less trendy wardrobe, reupholstered rather than replaced furniture, a littleless [sic] meat on the table changes like this [these?] could reduce the need for so much income and perhaps provide for time for prayer" (pp. 189-190).

Some statements are difficult to understand. One relates to Hab
"Day in, day out we operate on the supposition that it is good that God is sitting on his throne in his holy temple: it keeps him out of the way and lets us get on with our lives" (p. 36). Some never heard, read, or even thought of things that way before. The statement in the very top paragraph on p. 38 seems overdrawn. Also the last sentence of the fourth paragraph on p. 38 is worded so as to mislead some. Good emphasis is made on "the prayer of faith," but it is disappointing that one of the relevant key verses on "the prayer of faith," James 5:15, is not explained. The author merely mentions the verse in a question at the end of the chapter (p. 167).

Praying "in Jesus' name," Hunter defines, is praying "in accordance with his will" (p. 198). God will grant such a prayer. In the apparently unlimited promises of the Synoptics, Jesus assumes what John says He made explicit in His Upper Room Discourse. This is that "his true disciples would not desire to ask anything which is outside the will of their heavenly Father" (p. 199). If the emphasis here is on "desire," this is understandable in a general sense. Some readers will probably wonder about a practical problem that does not appear to be dealt with. Granted true disciples ideally may not desire to be found asking contrary to God's will. The problem is that since God's people are so limited, how do they live up to the ideal standard of never asking for anything that is contrary to God's will? Jesus never erred from praying according to the will of the Father. But what about His disciples and their failures? Practical advice on how a Christian's mind can be absolutely one with that of Jesus would be very helpful in this final chapter. "All distinctively Christian prayer is offered in Jesus' name" (p. 198). While God cannot fail, how does this unconditionally gain its answer if Christians fail to ask properly? To answer this is one reason the book was written. Perhaps the author intends for readers to answer for themselves based on earlier parts of the book. Still, a summary of how everything fits would greatly increase the book's clarity.

All in all, the book is recommended as very helpful in doing what Hunter has sought to do: organize facets of prayer within the context of the whole Christian experience (p. 13). The reader will come away refreshed and instructed about how to pray more effectively.

Longman maintains that "a literary approach to the Bible is possible because its texts are obviously self-conscious about form" (p. 9). At the outset he emphasizes the need to make literary interpretation part of exegesis by citing several passages whose exegesis requires an understanding of genre identification, poetic parallelism and metaphorical language. He then gives a twofold purpose: to survey the literary nature of the Bible and to acquaint the reader with the research that is being carried out on the Bible by literary scholars.

The book divides almost equally into two parts: the first half, consisting of three chapters, deals with the theoretical aspects of literary interpretation, and the second focuses on its practical application to biblical studies. Chapter one is a guide to the interaction between various literary theories and their applications to biblical studies. The author presents each literary approach as it has chronologically come to interface with biblical studies, and as it falls rhetorically into one or more of the three categories of the literary communication process, author, text and reader. Because the Deconstruction theory questions the grounds of these categories, it does not match the pattern of other theories and is treated separately.


"Pitfalls" include the contradictory nature of different literary approaches, the frequent obscuring of literary theory, the imposition of western concepts on ancient literature, elimination of the author by secular theory, and contemporary theory's denial of referential function to literature. "Promises" include the discovery of the conventions of biblical literature through literary theory, the stress upon whole texts by literary theory, and literary theory's focus on the reading process.

One particular focus of this chapter, which is typical in the whole book, is the relationship between the historical and the literary dimensions of revelation. Longman observes that Bible scholars
polarize on this issue by focusing either on the literary or on the historical, but seldom seeking a balance between the two. Those concentrating on literary criticism, he cautions, "We must resist the suggestion by contemporary literary theory that we deny or downplay historical reference of the biblical text in the face of its literary artifice" (p. 151). Those who gravitate toward the historical method, which concentrates on rediscovering the author's intention, he warns, "Many of our interpretations will be highly probable to the point of being nearly certain, but we must always return to a certain level of humility in our interpretations because of our inability to read the mind of the author of a text" (p. 64).

Some scholars see a major paradigm shift in methodology from an historical critical to an almost exclusively literary critical emphasis, but Longman argues to the contrary: literary analysis is not a methodological shift, but "one perspective among many by which an interpreter views a text" (p. 151). In other words, he does not dispute a trend towards literary analysis, but the notion that historical and literary interpretive dimensions are mutually exclusive.

In chapter three, the author presents his own eclectic approach, which uses the best of each literary theory. His presentation is "low on jargon and high on results in exegesis" (p. 4).

Several statements the author makes are troublesome. For example, in reflecting on Augustine's disappointment after finding that the Bible viewed as literature is not on a plane with the classics, Longman says, "The intellectual must be willing to accept the idea that the Bible is inferior literature and must still believe the message" (p. 14). This pejorative judgment seems unnecessary. James Kugel correctly notes that for purposes of classification we must not compare Scripture to later Western literary conventions but to literary canons of its own locale and day, say for instance Ugaritic poetry. This should be the basis for judging literary quality also.

While the author approaches the issue of authorial intention with a measure of skepticism, he still finds it to be a theoretically sound and useful practice. Yet Longman uses the term "author" in an unconventional manner "to refer most pointedly to the final shaper of a canonical book," focusing on "how and for what purpose the final author uses his source" (p. 65). In his model, Ideological viewpoint provides an intersection between literary criticism and redaction criticism. Since the narrator is the literary device by which readers are guided in their interpretation of the events of story,
the analysis of the ideology of the narrator leads to a determination of the theological tendenz of the passage, one of the goals of redaction criticism (pp. 105-6).

The author classifies parable as a type of extended metaphor. While some argue that all figures of speech fall into one category, metaphor, parables generally come closer in classification to extended simile. If the distinction is valid, allegory is extended metaphor.

Dr. Longman's common-sense explanations make literary studies feasible for most students interested in the literary dimension of Scripture. While on the one hand, he has completely avoided neither the technical jargon nor the inescapable theoretical complexities of the literary approaches, on the other hand he has offered the interested interpreter a foothold for gaining entry into a highly specialized field.

The reviewer found the book refreshing in that it discusses the role of literary analysis in biblical exegesis and is written from the perspective of one whose interests focus on historical referents as well as their literary expression.


Morris, 74, in his retirement has completed one of the best exegetical works of his productive career. This commentary is quite thorough in most places and will undoubtedly be one of the most consulted treatments of Paul's epistle, useful to professors, pastors, and other serious students.

Morris demonstrates a mature and profound grasp of issues that need to be resolved and a wide awareness of literature helpful in viewing Romans from various angles, and then makes many perceptively judicious comments. He writes from the perspective of Reformed theology.

The work includes endorsements by Philip E. Hughes and Donald Guthrie on its dust jacket. It uses the New International Version but sometimes furnishes the writer's own renderings, and has a plethora of long and short footnotes dealing with Greek words, grammar, and other types of issues. He mentions, for example, an
estimated population of Rome at the time of writing, A.D. 55. Additional excurses on the righteousness of God, truth, the law in Romans, justification, judgment, and sin appear in the body of the commentary.

Some samples of Morris's views are the following. In 1:4, Christ was "declared the powerful Son of God" by the Spirit of holiness, i.e. the Holy Spirit. He looks at the question of the identity of "the Spirit of holiness," reflecting good awareness of proposed answers. Yet he does not provide as full evidence for other views as he might. The "obedience of faith" (1:5) means "the obedience which springs from faith," or "faith's obedience," i.e. salvation through faith is "with a view to obedience." In 1:17, "from faith to faith" means "faith through and through" or "faith first and last." It refers to complete reliance on God's sufficiency, "ceasing all assertion of the self" and making place for God's initiative. In 1:18-32 Paul indicts Gentiles but not, as some believe, exclusively; it is rather all mankind (cf. v 23 with Ps 106:20; Jer 2:11, where Jews are in view). The ones seeking glory, honor, and immortality, reaching ultimate eternal life, (2:7) are those looking toward heavenly things, not to gain merit or as trusting their own achievement, but as marks of trust in God for eternal life that is a gift.

Morris takes the view that all men except Jesus Christ sinned in Adam according to 5:12, the point not being that they sinned personally or have inherited sin, though Morris does not deny these. He sees an analogy with Christ's one act gaining our salvation. That believers "died to sin" (6:2) means that they died to, or are free from, the dominating power of sin in practice as a fundamental characteristic of their lives. In 6:3, baptism in the Spirit is the idea but the language allows a reference to water baptism in the background. To "have fruit" (6:22) is a mark of every Christian in some degree. Morris has a very good discussion of arguments for the regenerate and unregenerate views of 7:14-25. He favors the regenerate view. The struggle is there, though "most of the time and characteristically the believer is on top, victorious over evil and at peace."

The "you [emphatic], however" of 8:9 represents Paul's change in thought from the worldly life of the unsaved to the life of a saved person. All true Christians are in view in 8:14, as Morris views "the leading of the Spirit as a distinguishing sign of God's sons, but not as making us sons." Paul includes chaps. 9-11 as part of the unity of chaps. 1-11, vitally related, i.e. "part of the way he makes plain how
God in fact saves people." After chap. 8 ends with strong assurance for the person who believes, readers might wonder about that assurance since God gave the Jews assurance as His elect, yet most Jews had rejected the Messiah.

Some will not be satisfied with statements on 2:14, where Morris seems to believe that if the heathen are loyal to the good they know, God will accept them, even though the "if" is a big one. The reader is given the suggestion that a person who lived before Jesus came and had no opportunity to hear the Christian message "will be judged by his fidelity to the highest that it was possible for him to know." Morris is not as clear here as usual. On 2:26, he does affirm that Paul does not teach salvation by good works, for God's law (will), as the fuller revela-tion of the gospel shows, is the way of faith that responds to Him (cf. on 3:21, 31). Morris is also fuzzy in 11:26. Vagueness surrounds the meaning of "all Israel shall be saved." His brief discussion lacks the clarity and fullness of passages with which premillennialists correlate the statement, connecting it with Israel's regathering and Messiah's coming. But then Morris is an amillennialist. He does not defend his view; he states it, and quite briefly.

In 12:1, readers are not told whether offering the body is once-for-all or continuous, and how this relates to experiences that Christians have. Verses 1-2 are discussed as if all the saved automatically maintain this ideal or, if they do not, "what a tragedy, then, if they conform to the perishing world they have left."

Still, most of his discussions are quite good or at least adequate. All in all, this commentary is worthy of a place on the shelf alongside works by C. E. B. Cranfield, William Hendriksen, and John Murray.


Reviewed by James E. Rosscup, Professor of Bible Exposition.

Sixteen main papers and two responses to each paper appear here. The International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, Summit II, met in Chicago on November 10-13, 1982. Four appendices accompanying the forty-eight papers are the Chicago Statement on Biblical Herme-
neutics, Norman Geisler's explanation of the hermeneutics in that statement, J. I. Packer's "Exposition of Biblical Hermeneutics," and Carl Henry's "The Bible and the Conscience of Our Age."

This treasure of essays by defenders of inerrancy is rather definitive, at least up to 1982. For example, readers can move from "Theories of Truth" by John Feinberg, to statements on inerrancy and exposition by John MacArthur, and finally to the sixteenth section, where Mark Hanna responds to the subject "The Role of Logic in Biblical Interpretation." Also Robert Saucy responds on "Presuppositions of Non-Evangelical Hermeneutics," and Paul Feinberg on "Adequacy of Language and Accommodation."

Response papers offer critiques and added insights. Plainly, there is commonality on many basics of the hermeneutics of inerrancy, but not all concur on every biblical text. Bruce Waltke's discussion on "Historical Grammatical Problems" has some help on the reality and dangers of an interpreter's presuppositions. An interpreter may cast the text in the mold of his own thinking just as an artist from Japan may picture Mary as Oriental, one from Mexico as a Latin, and one from Africa as a Negress, none portraying a Jewish woman. Waltke has a good discussion of context, whether linguistic, literary, cultural, situational, scriptural, or theological. Kenneth Barker firmly disagrees with Waltke's view that Gen 1-2 presents two originally independent accounts of creation. As a later qualification, Waltke finally admits a unity. Barker holds to one account originally from one writer, Moses. Gen 1 gives the general sweep of creation as a whole and Gen 2 supplementary detail on man in particular. Allan MacRae has a three-point rebuttal to Waltke's use of the "P" and "J" designations for his alleged two accounts (pp. 145-152). MacRae writes, "Most of the divisions among Christians are not the result of problems in using the grammatical-historical method, but rather of failure to use it" (p. 151). He thinks it unwise to quote writers of the new hermeneutic to support the idea of prejudgment (i.e. presuppositions in coming to a text) because of the following two reasons: first, that which they say in the measure in which it is valid should have been recognized throughout the history of interpretation; and second, these men's vision is blurred by denying the Bible's claim to inerrancy, leading them to stumble into many pitfalls (p. 153).

Walter Bradley and Roger Olsen write on the "Trustworthiness of Scripture in Areas Relating to Natural Science." They argue that an
age-day view in Gen 1 fits with scientific data. They briefly survey biblical factors and scientific data. To them, 'bara (bara, "I create") and 'asah (asah, "I make") in OT usage point to a combination between a miraculous creation and a very long process. They interpret asah from such texts as Zech 10:1 (God's making storm clouds), holding that this proves a long process in Gen 1-2. They lean firmly on outside word-usage to prove their view in Gen 1-2; then on yom (yom, "day") they argue quite differently. First, they acknowledge that yom used with a number in the OT always denotes a twenty-four-hour day, as "evening and morning" does also. Then they set aside such usage as irrelevant on the ground that the creation context is "unique." Is this a proof or a convenience?

Gleason Archer and Henry Morris respond. Archer agrees to age-days. In concluding he refers to many collegians who turned from the Bible because of the twenty-four-hour-day limitation. But is this not arbitrary? Have not large numbers turned away from the Bible because it teaches any number of things such as its own inerrancy, Christ's deity, a God of wrath, the virgin birth, bodily resurrection? Are we to attempt to conciliate some who turn away by offering alternate views that they may find more palatable? In the other response, Morris says that the way Bradley and Olsen deal with the Genesis terms is not the normal, proper way to interpret the Word of God (p. 337). OT uses of yom with a number and "evening and morning" do support a twenty-four-hour day, he reasons. Nothing in the context necessarily supports long ages; he even argues that the events of the sixth day, which the authors say could not all occur in twenty-four hours, could indeed occur, and he describes how (p. 342). He is disturbed that the claim to inerrancy is wedded with a switch of biblical terms from their normal meaning to accommodate a view of geological ages.


John Davis writes on "Kinds of Unity" in the Bible: the thematic, historical, prophecy and fulfillment, Christological (pp. 647-650). He
aptly surveys "Challenges to Unity"—imprecations, an unmerciful God, and Jesus's alleged corrections of the OT (pp. 651-654). James Boice adds to Davis's remarks some great emphases that show unity, e.g. repentance/faith and sanctification/service.

Roger Nicole's paper on "Patrick Fairbairn and Biblical Hermeneutics as Related to the Quotations of the OT in the New" is refreshing. He summarizes Fairbairn's high view of the legitimacy of these citations. Ronald Youngblood surveys examples in Matt 1-2, four in which he agrees with Fairbairn (2:6; 2:15; 2:18; 2:23), and one in which he disagrees. Fairbairn defended the view that Isa 7:14 is fulfilled only in Matt 1:23, but Youngblood briefly, yet carefully, defends the view that one fulfillment came in the near context (Immanuel of Isa 8:8) and this was a typological prefiguration of Jesus the Immanuel in Matt 1 (pp. 785-86).

John MacArthur's treatment of the relation of inerrancy to exposition is quite helpful. MacArthur deals with "the link between affirming truth and confirming people in truth through proclamation," the capstone to all careful use of God's Word and God's purpose in revelation. He says, "The only logical [response] then to inerrant Scripture is to preach it expositionally." He calls for a use of the true text, sifted by textual criticism and interpreted with proper hermeneutics. Exegesis should flow into expository preaching, making plain the mind of God in harmony with the overall context of the inerrant Bible and applying the principles so derived to people's needs (p. 825).

One comes away with a sense that MacArthur brings the discussion to its appropriate goal to compliment the opening words of Packer. Packer says, "Biblical authority is an empty notion unless we know how to determine what the Bible means," and MacArthur focuses on getting the true message of inerrant Scripture all the way to the man in the pew via exposition with its accompanying application.


The writer, a former InterVarsity Christian fellowship staff
worker, is concerned over world-conformist Christianity. Many believers are being squeezed into molds cast by unbelievers (e.g. materialism) and forget who they are and whose they are (p. 9). Basically the book looks at the ways believers are ignoring Paul's admonition in Rom 12:2:

Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its mold, but let God remake you so that your whole attitude of mind is changed (Phillips).

"Just as the pressure to conform is a constant process, so the renewal of our minds is a constant process" (p. 23); therefore, "by studying the trends of our times, we explore what it means to be transformed rather than conformed" (p. 23).

Superficiality, the topic of chapter 2, characterizes our "junk age," an age in which "quality becomes lost in a plethora of quantity" (p. 26). But more significantly, the way Christians approach the material realm, pursuing the fast, cheap, trivial, and disposable, easily carries over into the realm of their relationships. The results? We settle for junk marriages, junk parent-child relationships, junk friends, and in essence, junk people. Regrettably, even the church takes "its view of sexuality from 'the Love Boat,' its view of society from People Magazine, and its view of the future from The National Enquirer" (p. 29). Christians sacrifice quality, elegance, and depth on the altars of fear, pride and pointless habit. The unifying theme of the rest of the chapters "is authentic integrity, the deep simplicity of a pure heart, soul, mind and strength singly committed to our Lord" (p. 33).

Chapter 3 notes that evangelicals have not found their way around the trap of individualism. In our society autonomy has become a virtue at the expense of real relationships. "A paradox of our times is that the generation with the most mediums of communication and interaction has become perhaps the most alone in history" (p. 38). Evangelicals have not escaped. We sometimes treat the church as an ensemble of individuals "trying to learn to be nice to one another" (p. 40). Rather we should recognize "we have been baptized into one body" (p. 40). Such an identity begs personal involvement which, defined biblically, requires vulnerability, spontaneity, and accountability in relationships (p. 42). A major detriment to such a relationship is another spin-off of both individualism and of superficiality, the cor-porate structure. Sad to say, many Christians have imposed, whether consciously or unconsciously, the corporate model on their relationships. The author cautions, "Don't make the error of lonely executives and socialites'organization is not
community. Our churches have and need organization, but they are to be caring communities" (p. 45).

Problems of materialism, the focus of chapter 4, do not stem from the inherent nature of wealth. One need not be rich to be caught in the throes of our materialistic society, for from ghetto to penthouse suite man embraces the credo "I consume; therefore I am" (p. 52). "In products" with frightening consistency win our consumption; but other products do as well. Advertisers know what makes people itch: pride and fear. In a success-oriented world "it's easier to buy than to become, to consume than to create" (pp. 52-53). People, we tend to think, will respect us for what we have even more than for what we are. The pride addiction gets a quick fix. But perhaps the sharper prod toward purchasing used by advertisers is fear. Is my mouthwash working? Could that be a flake of dandruff I see on my shoulder? What is the guy next to me thinking about my "vintage" car when we are stuck in traffic? Because materialism dulls our sense of delight as well as our sense of need, we become the bored generation (p. 55). But more seriously, materialism "commands our allegiance and cripples our faith" (p. 59). How shall we overcome? The author suggests we pursue several goals: freedom from advertising ploys, contentment in and sharing of what we possess, creativity in producing for ourselves, good stewardship of our possessions, and generosity towards the needs of others.

Chapter 5 observes that our generation is both rushed and stressed. Our frantic pace is reminiscent of what Thoreau referred to as "lives of quiet desperation." And predictably, the Christian church has not escaped. "If our faith is only one more addition to our hurried, cluttered lives, then it will only increase our stress; but if that faith stands at the very center of our being, then it provides the integrating point about which all else can take its place in harmony" (p. 74). Sernau offers several suggestions: Evaluate all activity in terms of its importance and dispose of the unnecessary. Commit your time to necessary tasks, but allow for interruptions. Watch people "who are active rather than just busy, those who have a knack for getting things done and yet always having a spare moment for people" (p. 84).

Ironic as it might sound, the rushed and stressed generation is also extremely bored. "Never before has a society glittered with as much diversity and variety, but never before has this variety seemed so uninspiring" (p. 92). We "use the expression 'bored to death' but the
bored die young, no matter when they're finally buried" (p. 92). Turning to the church, the author indicts Christians for feeling comfortable with and generating boredom, an offense he describes as "an orthodox form of blasphemy" (p. 93). The solution? Observe what God is doing in the world and anticipate what He will do in your own life. Serve God faithfully. Discipline yourself to keep moving and growing. Finally, celebrate God's goodness.

Ours is an age of cynicism and proudly so: "to be optimistic is naive; to be informed is to be cynical" (p. 105). And "what is a cynic but a man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing" (p. 106)? Cynicism surfaces anywhere, but perhaps most visibly in the media and the trend is on the upswing: "Only old Walt Disney movies have happy endings; in adult movies the hero bleeds to death in the sewer" (p. 109). A cure for this malady? Hope in Christ is the only true antidote for cynicism (p. 110).

Finally the author asks how to survive an age of hype. "We look to pop singers as our social commentators, fashion models as our newscasters, actors as our national leaders and football players as our theologians" (p. 126). The major problem is society's expectations: these people do not need to be "leaders, heroes or geniuses; only celebrities" (p. 126).

This reviewer suggests several changes in this book: in spite of the fact that the author repeatedly uses "the world" as the source of wrong patterns, the book is very American-specific and more particularly urban American. Believers in rural settings will find it difficult to relate to freeway-traffic illustrations. In addition, the author distinguishes the Greek words γῆ (gē) and κόσμος (kosmos), which he translates "physical earth" and "pattern" respectively, but the word translated "world" in Romans 12:2 is αἰῶν (aiōn), commonly translated "era" or "age." The author has either incorrectly identified the word for world in Rom 12:2 as κόσμος (kosmos), or his logic is confusing.

The discussion of the text behind the book title, Rom 12:2, is another source of potential confusion. After a very effective presentation of the need to avoid being "squeezed" into the world's mold, the reader wonders who or what does the transforming. In his introduction Sernau attributes this work to "the transforming touch of our loving Lord" (p. 10). But no clear explanation is offered as to the relationship between the believer's responsibility and God's. In fact, the reader cannot help getting the impression that the responsibility to
avoid falling prey to the "world patterns or trends" rests on his shoulders.

There is one editorial oversight. Page 125 ends with a period, yet p. 126 begins with the word "success" followed by a period.


The general director of the "Back to the Bible" broadcast shows where the church has failed in a day of scandals. Church people need to examine themselves and say, "Lord, is it I?" (p. 13). Personal and organizational integrity are imperative in reaching the world with the gospel. The church cannot afford to go along with the scandal and reproach that is throughout society, but must have integrity (p. 16).

The church has always had hypocrites and hucksters, tares amid the wheat. This will continue until the Lord returns.

Integrity means to be whole, hiding nothing, fearing nothing, having lives that are open books, pursuing devotion with singleness of heart, mind, and will in obedience to Jesus (Matt 6:19-24). We need to avoid the duplicity of preaching but not practicing, of praying insincerely, and of the mere pretense of doing. We should become sensitive to this as sin (pp. 23-24). We need the passion of the "one thing I have desired" (Ps 27:4) and the "one thing [that] is needed" (Luke 10:42).

Wiersbe deplores flattery that conceals greed (1 Thess 2:5). Some of the substitutes that have robbed the evangelical church of integrity are:

1. Depending on "Christian celebrities" (such as Hollywood stars, athletes, and politicians) to promote Christ, as opposed to being filled with the Spirit, having a burden for souls, and letting God have the glory (p. 43). Good statistics are often emphasized more than character. If large crowds come, God is said to be blessing.

2. Competing to have the biggest church or Sunday school. Publishers have cooperated by producing books by church growth experts without regard to the accuracy of the theology (p. 46).

3. Financial excesses of television evangelists. Many preach a gospel of health, wealth, and prosperity, a gospel of good feelings, and take advantage of people's gullibility (p. 47). "To turn Calvary into a
sanctified credit card that gives us the privilege of a hedonistic shopping spree is to cheapen the most costly thing God ever did" (p. 54). Even Jesus Himself was not an economic success (p. 54).

The solution? The right message needs to be wedded with motives of pleasing God rather than selfishly exploiting people (p. 55). Right methods need to replace manipulative deceit. Intercessory prayer must be a priority. Spiritual leaders ought to intercede as Moses did (chap. 8). We need much time alone with God and His Word, with devotional guides as a secondary resource. Our prayers should be based on God's character and covenant, and be accompanied by a zeal for His glory. Wiersbe summarizes the solution in his final chapter: revival. This involves repentance, a return to high biblical aims, a ridding ourselves of all that is against these aims, rejoicing in the Lord, praying for revival, a moratorium on Christian competition, loving one another, speaking the truth in love, practicing humble submission (Phil 2:3), and a willingness to obey God (John 2:5).

The strengths of the book are many. Wiersbe's writing style is full of life. He has many choice remarks. He reflects a refreshing spirit that points to attitudes that glorify God. He excels in his summaries of various biblical themes. He uses Moses, Nehemiah, and Jeremiah to illustrate ministries of integrity. An arresting thought comes from a church father: the church, while guilty, is still better than the world. It is something like Noah's ark were it not for the judgment on the outside, you could not stand the smell on the inside (p. 11). A notable citation from Theodore Epp is, "Our job is not to give people what they want. Our job is to give them what they need but try to make them want it" (p. 53).

Wiersbe feels that saved people will have a change in their lives and fruit as evidence of salvation (p. 31). He cites Matt 7:21-23 in connection with unsaved people in the church who hypocritically pursue a sinful way of life (p. 25). He cites 1 John as teaching that the saved do not habitually sin (p. 31).

A few aspects in the book may trouble some. Wiersbe seems clearly enough to favor the idea that the genuinely saved manifest a pattern of God-pleasing fruit. But he confuses the issue by using a saved person (Lot) as an example of the pattern he is against. If Lot is such an example, then how does the failing life of a believer relate to the failing life of an unsaved person? This is not explained.

The concept of worship could be explained more clearly.
Wiersbe says that the church is to worship, then go out to witness and do good works (p. 47). This sequence is a problem. A church meeting is only one part of the worship that should characterize our lives at all times. We do not worship there, then go do something good that is not worshipful. Hopefully, Wiersbe understands it this way, but he could have been clearer. Later, on p. 119, he cites William Temple, who defines worship as applying to all of life, although neither Temple nor Wiersbe explicitly spells this out. At times Wiersbe seems to relate Temple's idea to the church meeting (pp. 119-20), thereby confusing the issue. Still, this reviewer believes that Wiersbe sees worship as permeating every aspect of life.

In chapter 9, the author opposes the use of television for ministry. His reasons are: those present at the meeting are participants, but TV viewers are only spectators; things on TV are not always a norm since people are prettier and programs more potent than the normal church; TV preachers raise funds by claiming they can reach the unchurched, but 1984 surveys show that only 1/13th of the viewers (a million people) were unchurched (p. 100); TV develops a fan-club mentality (p. 101); TV encourages some to limit themselves to TV as their only exposure to religion (p. 101). Wiersbe feels that even reliable TV preachers could see more fruit with the same amount of money invested in other types of ministry (p. 102).

Much of Wiersbe's chapter on television is quite sobering. Yet some, as this reviewer, will see Wiersbe's arguments as arbitrary rather than compelling reasons. For example, in light of the great value of salvation, even though only a few viewers are unchurched, why not use TV to reach them? As to the pathetic fan-club mentality, is not this a fault with local churches also? Is it the vehicle or the methods and motives that need to be avoided? One can also cite many examples where TV viewers were not simply spectators but were brought to true salvation or Christian worship by the Holy Spirit.

All in all, the book is stimulating and usually well-thought out. It certainly trumpets well the call to repent, cling to the true gospel, have a God-glorifying concept of success, and bear genuine fruit with integrity.
Wiersbe leaves no doubt at all here that worship is to be expressed in every act and moment of life, a concept similar to that of John MacArthur in *The Ultimate Priority* (Chicago: Moody, 1983). This is proven by such statements as "worship is at the center of everything that the Christian believes, practices, and seeks to accomplish" (p. 17); "preaching is an act of worship and . . . my message must be a sacrifice placed on the altar to the glory of God" (p. 18); "worship involves attitudes (awe, reverence, respect) and actions (bowing, praising, serving)"; "it involves mind, emotions and will motivated by love and leading to obedience that glorifies God" (p. 21); "worship is the adoring response of the whole person to God with proper motives, in view of His worthiness, the person responding in intellect, will, emotions and body to all that God is, says, and does" (p. 27); "a Christian does this by God's transforming power from within" (p. 31).

Other relevant comments of Wiersbe prove his wide perspective of worship. Worship involves being transformed (2 Cor 3:18) and being transformers, not conformers (Rom 12:1, 2). In private devotions, in daily work and in corporate worship of the church we are to cultivate the attitude of worship (p. 47). Worship and service are inseparable, as in Matt 4:10. "Service is worship if we are serving the Lord and giving Him our best" (p. 72), apparently service by the Spirit as he explains earlier. In Gen 22, Abraham saw the greatest of his trials as an act of worship (p. 72). Our times of experiencing pain, too, can be ministrations of worship, and worship transforms suffering into glory (p. 73).

Worship includes celebration (witness to the Lord), edification (witness to one another), and proclamation (witness to the world) (p. 97). "We do not go to church to worship, because worship ought to be the constant attitude and activity of the dedicated believer. We go to church to worship publicly [sic] and corporately" (p. 97). When we meet for worship we can worship in giving ourselves, praise, prayer, service, giving our money, and having a broken heart as in Ps 51:16, 17 (pp. 99-106). Prayer, as an example of this, can be set before God as incense, as an evening sacrifice (Ps 141:2; cf. Rev 5:8; 8:3, 4). Christian service pleasing to God is an act of worship (Phil 4:18) (p. 104).

Preaching and receiving the preached Word is a part of worship.
if the heart attitude is right. Luther said, "When I declare the Word of God I offer sacrifice" (p. 121). "When the minister's study turns into a sanctuary, a holy of holies, then something transforming will happen as the Word of God is proclaimed" (p. 128). Worship is also expressed in battle (Exod 17:8-13). Jehoshaphat led his people in worship, resulting in victory against the invading enemies (2 Chron 20).

Some unqualified comments may mislead. On p. 125, "When Jesus wanted to help people stop worrying, He did not lecture on Hebrew and Greek words. Instead, He talked about birds, flowers, and robbers." As if it cannot be both! A lecture on words could clarify what Jesus meant in some situations. And not all will agree with Wiersbe's interpretation of Matt 16:18 that the "gates of hades" are gates of bondage in this life, which believers are to storm so as to deliver the lost from bondage (p. 154).

Wiersbe sums up by saying that to engage in true worship, we must (1) begin with ourselves in our time of devotions to God (p. 163) and (2) get rid of excess baggage of activities and associations that we frantically endeavor to maintain. We are even to say goodbye to some good things that stand in our way, sapping us of time and energy needed to be better worshippers of God.

Every person is a worshipper; the only question is what he worships, or who (p. 165).

Appendix 1 answers twenty-one popular questions about worship, and Appendix 2 is a good, brief list of books on worship.

In summary, Wiersbe is very clear that worship is to permeate every act of life. This is a helpful discussion to keep in mind because he is not this clear in his book The Integrity Crisis. And it reveals his true concept of worship, a refreshingly genuine one.


Ziefle, Professor of German at Wheaton College, has provided a text aimed at helping English-speaking students to translate readings from the German Bible and selections from German theologies. It is very profitable for those entering doctoral programs that require inter-
action with biblical and theological works in German. Passages selected from the German Bible are Matt 3:1-17; Luke 18:18-43; John 1:1-18; Acts 9:1-25; Rom 5; 2 Cor 4; 1 John 2; Gen 1, 3; Ps 90, 103; Isa 54:1-17; Ezek 37; and Dan 6:15-29. On each two-page spread the German Bible text is on the right and a German-English dictionary of relevant hard terms and idioms is on the left. After each passage is a multiple choice exam including translation and several questions to answer. After 146 pages of Bible texts, pages 149-252 give selections from theologians, each also followed by exercises. A biographical summary on the author precedes each extract. Finally, pages 253-283 contain an extended German passage from Ziefle's book, Eine Frau gegen das Reich, (One Woman Against the Kingdom), followed by questions and then an English translation of the section.

To date, this is one of the most practical books for English students seeking to learn theological German. In 1971 Eerdmans published J. D. Manton's Introduction to Theological German, A Beginner's Course for Theological Students. This work has twenty readings beginning with brief and simple ones and progressing to longer and harder ones. It includes lists of vocabulary meanings and grammatical explanations and a 23-page vocabulary section at the back. Another exceptionally helpful work is Cecil V. Pollard's The Key to German Translation (Austin: University Co-op, 1960). Pollard, Associate Professor of Germanic Languages at the University of Texas at Austin, patiently explained eleven rules for analyzing even the most complex sentences and arriving at a meaningful English translation. As the student works through Pollard's many examples, he finds that the system is effective. Via many illustrations he learns how to cope with inserted elements in a German sentence, how to find troublesome words in a dictionary, how to find the subject of a sentence, and how to handle various other situations. Both books are immensely beneficial.

Ziefle's book is longer and offers greater variety in theological German. On the page across from the German text, there is help with the vocabulary, gender, and plural forms of nouns as well as the auxiliary and principal parts of verbs. The German text is large, has good spacing between lines, and is easy on the eyes. The fact that biblical passages come first will aid many readers since they can work through content that is already familiar before tackling the theologians' writings.
The work is not a boon only to students engaged in PhD study. It is valuable as a "refresher course" to sharpen those whose German has become rusty and who wish to consult German scholarship more regularly. Ziefle has provided the best overall work of this type this reviewer has seen, and is to be commended.