

THE BANTAM REVIEW

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PAPERS AND ABSTRACTS
FROM THE FIRST ANNUAL
COVENANT THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2012

INCLUDING MINUTES FROM MEETINGS
DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2011-212

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Preface

We thought it would be good for archiving purposes to set down a brief history of the genesis of the Covenant Seminary Theological Society, along with a statement on its purpose, that of each of the programs that are hosted by the society, and some of the boundaries we set early on. By this we can leave a more solid legacy to our posterity, and give a surer foundation to our society's continued success in its purpose to minister to those on the Covenant Seminary campus.

In the summer of 2011, Daniel Robbins (MDiv, 2013) and Aaron White (MDiv, 2012) engendered the plan for a group that would be to the edification of those at Covenant Seminary who are seeking to pursue an academic ministry. This group would avoid elitism and pious theologizing at all costs, seeking rather to be a practical and humble group of sinners who seek to encourage each other along in their journey to glorify the Lord through their minds, vocationally. By our discussion, and with the aid of Dr. Robert Yarbrough, we began by laying plans for an annual paper presentation conference, a weekly covenant small group meeting, and a bi-annual lecture series. Later, we settled on the name Covenant Seminary Theological Society (CSTS) so as to give orientation to our mission field, and to avoid any pretentious misgivings of a name that does not represent our heart and purpose. Next, we resolved to make the Rooster our society's logo. The Rooster is an early church symbol for the Apostle Peter and his three-time denial of our Lord. By this logo we remember our purpose, namely that we are sinners in need of Jesus and in need of each other as we seek to glorify God with our work. Finally, we elected to have four officers; two co-chairs, one of a senior rank and one of a junior rank (for leadership legacy purposes), a treasurer, and a secretary. These offices would only be held by MDiv, MA, or ThM students currently enrolled at Covenant Seminary. This is the basic history of origins of the Covenant Seminary Theological Society.

In terms our activities for the year, we were intent on all of them being edifying, helpful and never lost in pointless discussion. We wanted to encourage participation, active wrestling with the issues at hand, and so we asked all the professors who led our group lunches to deal with practical issues in academia of their choosing. We wanted students to have a chance to interact with each other's work in a meaningful way and so we put together our conference. We wanted to interact with some of the larger theological conversations, which our curriculum didn't have room for, and so we invited guest speakers. All of our activity was aimed at facilitating godly and edifying student interaction with the world of academia. We felt all of these were helpful, and would love to see them continue in future years.

One of our main goals in terms of student participation was that the students would be able to benefit from our meetings and various lectures with as little commitment as possible. The amount of time and participation ranged from minimal in group lunches and the bi-annual lecture series, all the way up to a large amount of time preparing for and presenting at the Conference, and reading for our weekly meeting.

The Annual Covenant Seminary Theological Conference

This conference, though seeking to provide some space for Covenant faculty and for visiting students (i.e., from other institutions of higher learning at the masters and PhD level), was primarily aimed at giving a forum for Covenant students to present academic work they have completed in courses or in independent studies. The format of the conference was a paper presentation conference style, with one plenary speaker from the faculty.

The CSTS Covenant Group

Our Covenant Group was a small group of 10-15 students meeting weekly to pray, encourage, discuss and engage one another at the heart and intellectual level to the glory of God. It also functioned as a decision making body for large projects of CSTS. This group was co-led by the CSTS co-chairs and the CSTS faculty advisor.

The CSTS Group Lunch Meeting

The group lunch meeting was a monthly meeting for the entire campus to engage each other on a specific and practical theological, academic career-oriented, and/or devotional topic. The format of the group was a short presentation by a volunteer Covenant faculty member and discussion on this same topic facilitated by the said faculty member. This meeting was not a “ministry lunch”, but a larger meeting of the CSTS.

We asked professors to speak on practical topics relating to academic ministry. The result was a wonderful roster including the following: “Ph.D preparation: The Four Legs of the Stool” led by Dr. Chapman, “UK vs. US Ph.D Programs” led by Drs. Honeycutt and Peterson, “Academia and the Church” led by Dr. Agan, “The Future of Seminary Education” led by Dr. Perry and his guest Dr. Richard Pratt, and “Being an Evangelical in an Academic Ministry” led by Dr. Yarbrough.

Bi-Annual Lectures: The Bantam Lecture Series

This lecture series had the purpose of bringing experts, typically theologians but not exclusively, who engage God in their academic vocation and who are seeking excellence in their field of study. This series sought to engage the Covenant community with a cost-free lecture that provided a forum for response discussion following the presentation. This year our Fall lecturer was Dr. Collins, speaking on his recent book *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist?* (he answered, 'Yes'). In

the Spring we invited Dr. Nick Perrin from Wheaton College who spoke on the history of NT studies. It was wonderful to have two lecturers who were connected to Covenant, though we certainly hoped to have broader interaction in years to come.

Other Miscellaneous Events

Other *ad hoc* events did occur throughout the year. One hot topic that impacted a number of the students of CSTS was Dr. Pratt's comments on seminary education. This precipitated a panel discussion on the same subject with Drs. Guthrie, Dalbey, Doriani and Perry at the end of the year. This event seemed to fit the purpose and goals of CSTS very well.

Finally, we felt very blessed to see as much participation as we did from students and professors alike, and would like to thank them for their cheerful service. We felt that the Lord blessed our efforts more than we could have asked, and certainly more than we originally envisioned. Thus, all glory goes to the Lord! We would also like to thank some by name that helped our society in the many details we needed to tackle to get this ministry afloat. First, we would like to thank Dr. Robert Yarbrough for making this a 'pet project', and adding his wisdom to our dream of forming this group. Also, we would like to give thanks to Jason Robey, Tomoko Steinbach, Jessie Swigart, Nina Walch, and Gerry Reimer for all their behind the scenes efforts with the many things we set out to do this year. This was a team effort, and the Lord blessed it mightily!

2011-2012 Calendar

Bantam Lecture Series:

Nov. 1st – Dr. C. John “Jack” Collins on *The Historic Adam and Eve* (75)¹

March 2nd – Dr. Nicholas Perrin on *Who Wrote the NT?*
(In partnership with the annual *Jones Lecture Series*)

- Including: A lunch time lecture (55) and a two-part evening lecture (45)

MINISTRY LUNCH EVENTS:

May 3rd – A Panel Discussion on *The Future of Theological Education*

- Including: Drs. Perry, Dalbey, Doriani, and Guthrie

1st ANNUAL COVENANT SEMINARY THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

January 23rd

- Plenary Address given by: Dr. Robert Yarbrough on *Bonhoeffer as Biblical Scholar*
- Including papers given by: Faculty, alumni, guest graduate students, and current Covenant students. (attendance 100; 35 papers given)

CSTS GROUP MEETINGS:

Oct. 19th - Dr. Jimmy Agan - *Academia and the Church* (35)

Nov. 30th – Dr. David Chapman - *Academic Prep for PhD: The Four Legs of the Stool* (18)

Dec. 7th – Dr. Mike Honeycutt and Dr. Robert Peterson - *UK vs. US PhD Programs* (20)

March 9th – Dr. Gregory Perry and Dr. Richard Pratt - *The Future of Theological Education* (50)

Mar. 21st– Dr. Bob Yarbrough - *Being Evangelical in an Academic Ministry* (15)

¹ Numbers in parentheses indicate the approximate attendees.

Conference Papers

An Old Testament “Extra Indwelling”

G. Andrew Allen

Introduction

From early on in my theological growth, I have struggled against the idea that OT believer did not experience the regeneration and indwelling of the Spirit.¹ This was due to the mixed bag of theological perspectives that were responsible for forming my early years. My parents were saved when I was 2 years old and their journey moved them from the charismatic, to the Baptist, to the non-denominational, and then into the Presbyterian Church. I had moved from home before they landed in a Presbyterian church, although throughout the denominational migration, I had attended a Bible Presbyterian grade school. By the time I was attending a Baptist high school, I liked to say that I was either a hybrid dispensationalist or a confused Calvinist. I never engaged in open debate over the topic of OT indwelling, yet inside I felt the growing incongruity between my own need for the work of the indwelling Spirit and the idea that OT believers got along just fine without it. The more convinced I become of the impossibility of this idea, the more I began to express my thoughts out loud. In non-reformed circles, this was met with no small resistance.

Enrolling in a Presbyterian seminary did not make the questions any easier. I found that within reformed circles, the debate is not simply whether or not OT believers experienced the work of the Spirit, but to what degree they experienced it. As every new research student quickly discovers, the more research one does is directly proportional to the number of positions on the matter that they will find. As is the case here with the question of the Spirit's indwelling, the conclusion is not as easy as taking a “yes” or “no” position - or even in finding the majority position within the Presbyterian Church of America.

¹ Typically I will employ the title “Spirit” rather than “Holy Spirit.” Hebrew use suggests “Holy Spirit” would have been redundant [John Goldingay, “Was The Holy Spirit Active In Old Testament Times? What Was New About The Christian Experience Of God,” *Ex Auditu* 12 (1988):17.]. (ESV renders 3 OT uses of “Holy Spirit”)

Rather than creating any suspense, I will tell you that from among the multiple positions laid out in Appendix A, this paper argues for the position of “basic” or “complete” continuity² between the activity of the Spirit within believers of the Old and New Testament. The position affirms that believers of all eras are both regenerated and indwelt by the Spirit. The position of “complete continuity” suggests that labeling believers as “Old Testament” and “New Testament” is, perhaps, as unhelpful a practice for nurturing the proper connection with Abraham and other pre-Pentecost believers as subscribing to the view that OT believers were not indwelt by the Spirit. I point this out to highlight a desired application of the paper: The twenty-first century believer should be much less willing than they are, to assume that they possess a quality of spiritual life that is superior to that of Noah, Abraham, Ruth, David or Esther – or for that matter, any unnamed saint who was born, circumcised and lived a faithful life before the face of their covenant God. Along with that application, the paper will attempt to provide the reader with a clearer OT theology of the Spirit.

An argument for complete continuity is not an argument that post Pentecost believers do not have a deeper and fuller revelation of God’s work on behalf of his fallen creation. Even more, I am not suggesting that I would prefer to go back to slaying animals and presenting burnt offerings at the altar. The work of Christ on the cross has accomplished the atonement that the Old Testament offerings were intended to communicate and accomplish as the “guardian until Christ came” (Gal 3:24). But the writer of Hebrews clearly expresses (Heb 10:3) that the work of Christ is the only payment accepted for forgiveness of sins - for believers in every age.

If such an astounding revelation can wait to be delivered more than 1,900 years after God’s first revelation to Abraham, then why are we so quick to accept that the similarly late revelation of the Spirit’s work of regeneration and indwelling merits a drastic change in the way that God saves and sanctifies his people? This is an assumption that needs to be challenged at multiple points. Size limitations require that the paper deals only with OT texts, yet it will not avoid a perspective influenced by the fuller revelation of the NT.

Christopher Wright, in his book *Knowing the Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* suggests five categories for the OT work of the Spirit: The Creating Spirit; The Empowering Spirit; The Prophetic Spirit; the Anointing Spirit; and the Coming Spirit.³ This paper will interact with Wright’s categories, but as his work appears to not support complete continuity, I will suggest that each category should

² I am indebted to James M. Hamilton for providing helpful categorization and a graduated graph on the positions of the Spirit in his book, *God’s Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old & New Testaments*, NAC studies in Bible & Theology (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 23. See a copy of his graph at Appendix A.

³ Christopher J.H. Wright, *Knowing the Holy Spirit Through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 121.

be considered as “extra indwelling.” That is to say, I consider them to stand apart as “in addition to” or “devoid of” the works of regeneration and indwelling. Further, Wright’s categories will be subsumed under Benjamin Warfield’s three spheres of God’s operation: God in the world (cosmical Spirit), God in the church (theocratic Spirit) and God in the soul (individual Spirit).⁴ Lastly, this paper will assume Robert McCabe’s definition of indwelling: “the Spirit’s influence whereby he causes the believer to experience the blessings and operations of divine grace”⁵ - adding only that I assume indwelling to operate specifically within the sphere of salvation.

The cosmic Spirit

The opening verses of the OT make no special effort to introduce or prepare its readers for the concept of the Spirit of God. The Spirit is unannounced and unexplained⁶ as present and “hovering over the face of the deep” (Gen 1:2). Psalms 33:6 creates a connection between the Spirit’s presence in the opening verses of Genesis and his creative activity (by the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the *breath* of his mouth all their host). The English rendering “breath” in this verse is the Hebrew term for Spirit (רוּחַ/ *rûah*) which is also used in Gen 1:2. This connection of the Spirit’s creative work is amplified even more in Ps.104:30 – the Spirit sustains and renews the earth. Sustaining and renewing are also pictured in Job’s reflections recorded in Job 34:14, 15.

Gen 6:3 records the LORD’s declaration of judgment against the wickedness of mankind in Noah’s day, “My Spirit shall not abide in man forever...” All major English translations capitalize Spirit, but the ESV notably uses the preposition “in” (the majority use “with”). As will be seen, the OT does not specifically develop the theological concept of indwelling - though it does not prohibit it.⁷ Gen 6:3 is not a reference to the Spirit’s indwelling (since it was godless activity that God was here condemning); rather it is a reference to the Spirit’s role in giving vitality to mankind. The Spirit works similarly with all “flesh” (man and beast) in Gen 6:17.⁸

A couple of interesting points should be mentioned about the passages referenced above. First, is the lack of consistency among Bible translations in the use of the upper or lower case word “Spirit,” and second is the broad semantic

⁴ Benjamin B. Warfield, “*The Spirit of God in the Old Testament*,” in *Biblical Doctrines*, The Works of Benjamin B. Warfield (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003), 106. Note: The secondary descriptions in parenthesis are also Warfield’s which he uses as section headings.

⁵ Robert V. McCabe, “*Were Old Testament believers indwelt by the Spirit?*” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 9 (2004): 217.

⁶ Warfield, 101.

⁷ McCabe, 216.

⁸ Other verses connecting with the idea of “vitality of life” are found in Job 27:3; 33:4.

range available for the Hebrew word *rûah*. These points provide important clues for developing an OT theology of the Spirit. Regarding the decision whether to capitalize spirit or not, OT scholar John Goldingay suggests that translators cannot always be sure they are doing the text justice by their particular choice.⁹ Regarding semantic range, he points out the “vital broadness and ambiguity”¹⁰ of the English renderings of the OT word for *rûah* – it can be rendered as breath, wind or spirit/Spirit. Wind suggests the invisible and dynamic, breath suggests life in its mysterious nature and origins outside of our control. These terms (wind and breath) are ways that the OT could actually be speaking of the activity of the Spirit, just as references to God’s arm, hand, fingers or eyes can do the same.¹¹ One last consideration is the possibility that Spirit of God may be present and active in an OT text even though he is not mentioned by name.¹² Together, these insights suggest that conclusions about the OT work of the Spirit which are based solely on the word *rûah* cannot be considered comprehensive.

Another question that may arise from the references above is whether the OT writers had the third person of the Trinity in mind, or a simply a power or influence of God. Leon Wood argues that passages such as Ps 104:30 seem to make “a distinction between the Spirit of God and God Himself... in a way to characterize the Spirit as having qualities of personality.”¹³ Benjamin Warfield wrote along similar lines, but more clearly expressed that such qualities do not merit the assertion that the OT writers conceived of the Spirit as “a distinct hypostasis in the divine nature.”¹⁴ Goldingay argues that the OT concept of the Spirit was more a personal liveliness, dynamism, motive power or will.¹⁵ Taking all these perspectives in hand, I suggest that one can concede to an incomplete understanding of the OT writers regarding the personality of the Spirit. However, as Warfield points out, one ought to be moved to awe at the divine inspiration that emphasized Yahweh’s unity (in passages such as Deut 6:4) in the OT, while at the same time skillfully laying a foundation for a NT understanding of the Trinity.¹⁶

Two points will be made in summary of the cosmical Spirit. First, one must exercise care to not put modern theological ways of thinking into the minds

⁹ Goldingay, 17.

¹⁰ Ibid, 15.

¹¹ Ibid, 18.

¹² Ibid, 17. Here, Goldingay provides an OT and a NT example. OT: The prophet Jeremiah avoids mentioning that he was acted upon by the Spirit, but the normative example of prophetic activity, allows the assumption that he is. NT: Jesus refers to “rivers of living water” in John 7:38 and then John explains to his readers that Jesus was referring to the Spirit.

¹³ James Leon Wood, *The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1976), 19.

¹⁴ Warfield, 124.

¹⁵ Goldingay, 15.

¹⁶ Warfield, 127.

of OT authors, while at the same time avoiding the rejection of possibilities that they do not restrict. The value of this point is demonstrated in the Christian doctrines of the Trinity and Christ's work in creation. The OT authors give hints to the development of the third person of the Trinity, but one must rely entirely on the nature of progressive revelation to understand more fully the third person of the Trinity. The same hold true for the creative work of the Trinity. Christ's active part in creation cannot be denied or minimized simply because it is revealed only in the NT (John 1:3; Col 1:16). If this is true regarding the doctrines of the Trinity, Christ's creative role and (as treated above) the effectiveness of Christ's atonement for believers of every age, what makes scholars unwilling to affirm the continuity of regeneration and indwelling?

Second, it should be noted that in some cases, the OT provides more revelation than the NT regarding the work of God. It is in our discussion of the cosmical Spirit that we find this to be true. It is only in the OT that we see the depth of the work of the Spirit in and toward, the wider creation. As has been shown, the OT displays that the Spirit was present and involved in the act of creating and that he continues to be active in sustaining and renewing that creation.¹⁷ Towards an application of an OT theology of the Spirit, the Christian should be warned of the tendency to focus solely on the redemption of humanity and overlook the Spirit's sustaining and redemptive work on behalf of all of His creation. One should pause here, for just a moment, to thank the OT for reminding us to think otherwise.

The theocratic Spirit

Wright's categories of the empowering Spirit, the anointing Spirit and the prophetic Spirit all fit under Warfield's sphere of God's involvement with the church (the theocratic Spirit). Within this sphere, Warfield places all "supernatural powers and activities which are directed to the foundation, preservation and development of the kingdom of God in the midst of the wicked world."¹⁸

Wright places Moses and the judges under "empowerment" and kings such as Saul and David under "anointing." For the purpose of this paper, it is only necessary to see that both categories involve the Spirit's activity to perform a role; therefore I conflate the Spirit of anointing into the Spirit of empowerment. As a category, the Spirit of empowerment is well represented in the OT and many scholars argue that it is the key model for the work of the Spirit in the OT. Wright defines the Spirit of empowerment as "a God-given ability, competence or strength to do certain things for God or for his people."¹⁹ In Scripture, we find many examples of the Spirit of empowerment given to civil administrators, judges and

¹⁷ Wright, 30.

¹⁸ Warfield, 112.

¹⁹ Wright, 37.

even craftsmen. Space restrictions limit our treatment to civil administrators and judges. The concepts of “extra indwelling” can be applied in similar fashion with craftsmen – as exemplified by Bezalel the son of Uri (Ex 35:30).

The Spirit of empowerment upon administrators in the OT could be illustrated by Moses (Num. 11:17), Joshua (Num. 27:18), Saul (1 Sam 11:6) and David (1 Sam 16:13). Of the four, Saul is the only one who lost the Spirit of empowerment (1 Sam 16:14) when the Lord rejected him as king over Israel. Saul allows the discussion of extra indwelling to get off the ground, because in him there is a clear distinction between empowerment and indwelling. Saul could, at the point of losing the Spirit of empowerment, still be indwelt. Or, perhaps it is more likely he never was indwelt (i.e. true regenerate and saved) based upon the patterns of disobedience in his life. It is interesting to note that the biblical record of David receiving the Spirit of empowerment and Saul losing it, are detailed in consecutive verses. It is reasonable to ask whether the author of 1 Samuel intended to signal that empowerment and blessing (not indwelling) for the task of ruling a united Israel could not be “upon” two men at the same time.

One of the most interesting discussions along this line of thinking is found in Psalm 51:11 where David writes “take not your Holy Spirit from me.” In this passage, many scholars debate whether David is pleading that God not take away the Spirit of empowerment - as it had been taken away from Saul, or whether David truly believes that he can lose the Spirit’s indwelling - and the salvation that accompanies it.²⁰ Scholars line up on either side of the question; however, I would suggest that “extra-indwelling” allows both realities to be in play. Could it be that David was both fearful of losing the Spirit of empowerment as his predecessor Saul had,²¹ and that due to the seriousness of his sin he was gripped with the kind of fear that drives a man to repentance? In all likelihood David was not developing a theological construct, but truly fearing that his sin merited both the loss of his position over Israel and the loss his relationship with his covenant God.

In the lives of God’s faithful administrators, the Scripture give no reason to believe that indwelling and the Spirit of empowerment cannot be simultaneous (and distinct) conditions. In fact, if things were going as they should in Israel, this situation would likely be the case. If one approaches the case of Saul or David from the position of “extra indwelling” then one could concede a temporary

²⁰ Wood (footnote 22); McCabe, 261 and others solidly state that indwelling is not the issue in this verse. Charles C. Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*. (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1965), 71. & John F. Walvoord, *The Holy Spirit ... A*

Comprehensive Study of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit (Findlay, OH: Dunham Pub. Co, 1958) 152-153

believe otherwise. A few scholars such as Warfield, 121 seem to intimate both may be occurring - at least as insomuch as David’s Spiritual sensitivity points toward the indwelling of the holy.

²¹ Wood, 51.

possession of the Spirit of empowerment without doing any harm to the concept of permanent / salvific indwelling.²²

Much more could be said regarding the Spirit of empowerment with civil leaders; however, there is still much ground that needs to be covered. What the paper asks of the reader is to consider whether the theory of extra indwelling fits into “what is” and “what is not” said in the OT texts. Under the category of “the empowering Spirit” Wright instructs his readers to observe “...the marks of the Spirit of God in the leadership of Moses... Moses exercised great power, but... it was power without personal pride... jealousy... personal ambition.”²³ This description seems like a confusion of terms if we understand Saul and Moses to have had the same Spirit of empowerment. How does Moses’ Spirit of empowerment become a model of Spirit filled leadership, but Saul’s fail so miserably? It seems best to say that only when accompanied by faith in God (a result of indwelling), can the Spirit of empowerment become a model of leadership worthy to be followed by Christians.

The cases of Israel’s judges seem to be clearer examples that “the Spirit of empowerment for a task” was what the writer of Judges was recording – not indwelling. However, it must be said there is an aspect of ruling justly that must also be implied in the official capacity of judge.²⁴ One judge’s character may be more indicative of Spirit indwelling (salvific) than others, and often there is insufficient OT information provided to truly know the spiritual condition of a judge (although the NT reveals more in Heb. 11:32-33). Here, a brief word regarding how the Spirit’s activity is described in three of Israel’s judges is all that will be attempted. Othniel, Israel’s first judge is said to have “the Spirit of the Lord upon him” (Jdg. 3:9). Regarding Gideon, the scripture records that “the Spirit of the LORD clothed Gideon” (6:34). Samson received the most recorded descriptions of Spirit empowerment, initially “the Spirit of the LORD began to move him” (Jdg. 13:25), and then three more times “the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him” (14:6, 19; 15:14).

The variety of descriptions of Spirit empowerment provides for interesting discussion regarding how the Spirit works upon different characters in the OT. Othniel’s valor had already been recorded in Jdg. 1:13, and when God raised him up as Israel’s first judge, the author simply identifies that the Spirit was upon him. Gideon is first seen working his father’s winepress and the angel of the LORD appears to him calling him “a mighty man of valor” (Jdgs. 6:11, 12). Gideon is later clothed or enveloped by the Spirit; yet following the empowerment comes

²² McCabe, 261.

²³ Wright, 45.

²⁴ C.F. Keil, *The book of Judges, Commentary on the Old Testament*, trans. James Martin (Peabody MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 2006), 214. “we are hardly at liberty to split up the different powers of God in this manner and restrict it operations upon the judges to the Spirit of strength and bravery alone.”

the famous “fleeing” incident. Othniel is recorded as steady, Gideon as reticent and Samson as head strong. True to Samson’s personality the Spirit rushes upon him. One could argue that the writer characterizes the Spirit’s activity coming upon an OT agent in a fashion after his personality. Rather than extrapolating systematic categories from these descriptions, perhaps it is better to see a story of God protecting his nation through particular (flawed) agents of his mission.

Modern Christianity tends to speak of OT Spirit activity after the pattern of a light switch, it was on... and then it was off (and so on at various times and in various ways). What is true about this pattern is that the light (the Spirit’s activity) is at certain times displayed for all to see. What is problematic in this pattern is the idea that the power is gone when the switch is turned off. This pattern does not do justice to our own experience or to the OT witness. Goldingay suggest a pattern that more resembles a volcano.²⁵ This pattern does better service to the Spirit’s work in particular agents (civil authorities, judges, prophets, craftsmen) and to his overarching work for and within God’s community. There is always smoke, heat, or a small flow of lava that can be seen when the Spirit is present in a particular time and place; but at other times, that same smoldering volcano erupts into a fiery display that can be seen for miles. In the case of the judges, perhaps empowerment for the daily wisdom needed in judging was constant, yet it was not recorded because the author was highlighting the Spirit’s work in the preservation of his people against a foreign enemy.

The aim of this paper is to urge the reader to consider a new perspective (extra indwelling) regarding the work of the Spirit on the OT. The OT authors were telling their readers a story, not writing a systematic theology manual. When developing an OT theology of the Spirit, one must observe what particular authors are telling us, but also what they are not telling us. Empowered agents of God’s redemption were given wisdom, ability to lead, bravery, uncommon strength and even uncommon skill in craftsmanship. That is only one facet of the Spirit’s work in the OT and there are other facets visible elsewhere - particularly the OT believer’s conformity to God’s image among wicked men.

Warfield’s model of OT Spirit activity allows for the theocratic and individual spheres to overlap. This pattern is discernible in the stories recorded in the Scripture as well as among believers in the church today. God works to regenerate his people and God’s people - empowered by his Spirit - work to fulfill his mission. Warfield’s model also allows for a percentage of non-overlap. Not all agents of God’s redemption conform to his image through the indwelling Spirit. It is possible that Saul fits into this slice of non-overlap, and some argue that Samson fits as well; however, it is most clear in the person of Balaam who falls into Wright’s category of prophetic Spirit. Balaam was hired by the King of Moab to curse Israel (Num. 22:4-6), yet the LORD would not allow him to do so. As Balaam

²⁵ Goldingay, 25.

approached the camp of Israel “the Spirit of God came upon him and [Balaam] took up his discourse...” (Num. 24:2-4).

The fact that this passage records the prophetic Spirit coming upon Balaam just as it did upon the prophets of Israel²⁶ has been used by some scholars to argue against indwelling in the OT. They suggest that, “in at least two instances... [Samson & Balaam] the Spirit’s activity is not even related to the individual’s character. Balaam was a pagan prophet and Samson was a man enslaved by his own lust.”²⁷ If one cannot separate empowerment from indwelling, I can see the problem; however, extra indwelling allows for activity such as empowering or prophesying “in addition to” or “devoid of” the works of regeneration and indwelling. Within the people of God, one would expect this not to be the case, though apostasy may prove that indwelling was never a fact. Extra indwelling removes the difficulties suggested by the non-continuity school.

Prophets such as Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah and a host of other OT prophets are understood to be under the influence of the Spirit of prophecy, yet are never recorded as having the Spirit come upon them at the time of giving a prophetic message.²⁸ The fact that they either: bore the title of prophet, faithfully carried God’s message throughout their life, were considered to be filled by the Spirit by other characters in the text, or had themselves written portions of Holy Scripture is evidence that that they not only had the prophetic Spirit, but in some cases, were permanently empowered.²⁹ These points are not hotly contested and a further study of the prophetic Spirit will not significantly impact the outcome of the extra indwelling argument. The points do, however, suggest once again, that limiting the activity of the Spirit, or the quality and duration of his work on a particular agent cannot be so tightly identified as one might think.

It can be argued that whether recording the Spirit of empowerment or prophesy, the focus of the OT writers was not to make statements about indwelling. Rather, it was to chronicle the acts of the LORD on behalf of his people. Along the way toward developing an OT perspective on the third person of the Trinity, this paper has attempted to make the case that the OT text allows for the fuller NT revelation of indwelling to apply to faithful servants of God who lived prior to Pentecost. What follows now is a discussion of Warfield’s final sphere of Spirit activity: God in the individual.

²⁶ C.F. Keil, *The fourth Book of Moses (Numbers)*, Commentary on the Old Testament, trans. James Martin (Peabody MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 2006), 778.

²⁷ Gary Fredricks, “Rethinking the role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Old Testament believers,” *Trinity Journal* 1 (Spring 1988): 82. This is Fredricks’ formation of the argument from non-continuity... it is not his own

²⁸ Wood, 44.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 45.

The individual Spirit

Warfield wrote that “the Spirit of God is not merely an immanent Spirit, the source of all the world’s life... and movement; and not merely the inspiring Spirit, the source of His church’s strength and safety and of its development in accordance with its special mission; He is as well the indwelling Spirit of holiness in the hearts of God’s children.”³⁰ All that can be said in response to this strong word is that one good quote deserves another. Warfield also wrote that “The Spirit of God of the Old Testament performs all the functions which are ascribed to the Holy Ghost of the New Testament and bears all the same characteristics.”³¹ One might ask, “If the Scripture never attempts to make strong statements like this, what are the reasons for such strong convictions of this nature from a man like B.B Warfield?”

Should men such as Warfield be written off as being so committed to continuity between the testaments that they blindly supported continuity in the work of the Spirit? Certainly, believing strongly in continuity will affect ones convictions about the indwelling Holy Spirit; however, there is an ever present reality that any theological construct cannot ignore. Scholars on the discontinuity sides of the indwelling debate³² have to concede to at least one major difficulty with their position, and that is reality of total depravity. McCabe writes that according to the doctrine of depravity, every person since the rebellion of Adam “is so pervasively polluted with his [own] internal corruption that every aspect of his being and personality is affected by it.”³³ This doctrine teaches that man will not and cannot please God unless the Spirit changes his mind, will and affections. The reality of the reach of depravity to all people in every place and every time requires a strong presumption that the Spirit must also be working to create and sustain all spiritual life in every place and every time.

The doctrine of total depravity is informed by the NT, but it finds support in the OT as well. In Noah’s day, the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually (Gen 6:5). The Psalmist echoed these words when he declared that the LORD looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. But the fact is that they have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one (Ps 14:2-3). Jeremiah the prophet wrote that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it (Jer. 17:9)? Finally, Jesus declared to Nicodemus that without a new birth from the Spirit, no one could either see or enter the kingdom of God (Jn. 3:3-5). With this solid OT support for total depravity, backed with the declaration of Jesus prior to Pentecost that new birth in the Spirit must precede entrance into the kingdom, one is left with little

³⁰ Warfield, 120.

³¹ Ibid, 124.

³² See Appendix A.

³³ McCabe, 241.

choice but to concede the need for regeneration of pre-Pentecost believers. Wood argues that the most obvious argument for OT people experiencing spiritual renewal is by examining their faithful lives.³⁴

Hamilton suggests that the presence of the tabernacle (and later the temple) inclined the hearts of the people to covenant faithfulness.³⁵ There is no reason not to agree with Hamilton, because Christians today find the same encouragement when they spend a day in the house of the Lord. The obvious difficulty is that if it is not enough for us, then it could not have been enough for believers living prior to Pentecost. More problematic is explaining the faithfulness of Noah, Abraham, and Joseph who lived lives pleasing to God prior to the erection of the tabernacle. Hamilton further suggests that that the tabernacle was the people's means to sanctification.³⁶ Again, I will not quibble with such a statement, but what of men prior to it, or men taken captive like Daniel, or prophets such as Ezekiel exiled in a far off country, or Israelites who took a long journey far from home?

These questions urge readers to consider – to presume - an OT indwelling if the Hebrew scriptures do not conclusively reject it. It appears that in many cases, OT indwelling would be the answer to the questions that have been posed above. McCabe argues that creating a disjunction between regeneration and indwelling would have been “soteriological suicide for an Old Testament saint... If the nature of total depravity unavoidably required the regenerating work of the Spirit to create new life, how could this new life be sustained without the Spirit?”³⁷ McCabe sees the concepts for regeneration and indwelling present³⁸ in Ezekiel 36:25-27, particularly in the phrases “I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you... [and] I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes.”

The final order of business will be to consider whether Ezekiel's words provide reasons to believe that the concepts of regeneration and indwelling would have made sense to believers living before the new covenant. Most commentators place Ezekiel's prophecy as an exclusively future work of the Spirit under the new covenant.³⁹ Block argues that “Ezekiel looks forward to a time when the nation of Israel, comprised of spiritually transformed individual Israelites is restored to their geographical homeland under the terms of the new covenant.”⁴⁰ McCabe stresses

³⁴ Wood, 64.

³⁵ Hamilton 2006, 27.

³⁶ Ibid, 36.

³⁷ McCabe, 252.

³⁸ Ibid, 251.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Daniel I. Block, “The prophet of the spirit: the use of *rw*h in the book of Ezekiel,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 32 (March 1989): 41.27-49.

that this is a future “national level for eschatological Israel,” but not an exclusion of a similar work (at an individual level) in preceding dispensations.⁴¹

The fact is that similar concepts of spiritual birth and indwelling existed among God’s people as early as Moses’ day. Deut.30:5-6 records a prophecy from Moses concerning a future corporate restoration of Israel after their corporate disbelief and disobedience. If the concept of Yahweh “circumcising your heart so that you will love the lord your God” made any sense to the believer then, it surely was due to the fact that the corporate reality Moses prophesied about mirrored an individual reality that was already visible. The text does not exclude that possibility, and the faithful lives of Moses, Joshua and Caleb make it plausible. This same consideration can be made of Ezekiel. There would come a future day when the nation will be gathered to worship and obey its king in the land, however until that time, the individual believer must certainly have relied upon the Spirit to sustain them.

Conclusion

This paper has focused its efforts almost exclusively in the text the Old Testament, and as space limits draw it to a close, much OT ground remains unexplored. What has largely been attempted is to draw out the arguments that: (1) the same OT foundations that prepared for the NT doctrines of Christ’s atonement and the Trinity, serve as permission to presume that the OT also prepares us for the doctrines of regeneration and indwelling. (2) The OT focus on the Spirit of empowerment and prophecy do not exclude the distinct and likely simultaneous work of indwelling (termed here as extra indwelling). (3) The exemplary lives of the OT people of God, and the longstanding OT familiarity with the concepts of regeneration and indwelling point to continuity between believers of all ages.

As tempting as the siren call of the battleground NT passages are, the treatment of them could fill another paper of even greater size. For now, it is enough to be content with the possibility that the arguments from the OT have created room within the mind of the reader for the position of “complete continuity” based upon the concept of extra indwelling. If such is the case, then perhaps the next time you come to a NT text which could be read with “discontinuity” you might be willing: first, to more diligently investigate alternative understandings that fit best in their context, second, avoid reading what is not there, and most of all avoid the troubling position that any believer of any age has ever lacked regeneration or the indwelling of the Spirit.⁴²

⁴¹ McCabe, 252.

⁴² Fredricks, 99.

Appendix A: Positions on the Holy Spirit and Old Covenant Believers						
Position	1. Continuity	2. More Continuity than Discontinuity	3. Some Continuity Some Discontinuity	4. More Discontinuity than Continuity	5. Discontinuity	6. Vague Discontinuity
Definition of Position	Regenerated and Indwelt	Differences acknowledged, but not seen to be fundamental differences	Regenerated, but not indwelt	Operated upon by God, and by his Spirit, but not indwelt	The Spirit had nothing to do with the faithfulness of Old Covenant believers	Indwelling denied, but the question of regeneration is raised
Proponents of Early Church		Augustine		Novation		Origen Irenaeus Tertullian Chrysostom
Reformation	J. Owen T. Goodwin	J. Calvin		M. Luther		
Modern	S. Ferguson G. Fredricks D.P. Fuller W.C. Kaiser J.A. Moyer J.B. Payne B.B. Warfield L. Wood	D.I. Block G.W. Grogan W. Grudem G.E. Ladd	M. Erickson G.F. Oehler J.I. Packer L.D. Pettigrew J. Rea P. Toon W.A. VanGemenen B. A. Ware	L.S. Chafer Blaising and Block D.A. Carson M. Green		C. K. Barrett R.E. Brown G.M. Burge C.C. Ryrie J.F. Walvoord

The History of Credocommunion: From the Early Church Until 1500

Steven A. Nicoletti

I. The Issue

The question of credocommunion vs. paedocommunion has been a contentious one in the Presbyterian Church in America for years. In some presbyteries, exception to the PCA's credocommunion position is allowed in conviction, though not in practice. In other presbyteries, a disagreement with credocommunion can cause one to be considered ineligible for pastoral ministry. Recently there has even been a question at the General Assembly level as to whether an exception to credocommunion strikes at the vitals of the Reformed faith.

While the "supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined" is most certainly "the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures" (WCF I.X), it is also true that the historical positions of the Church can be of great aid in interpreting the Scriptures. In addition, understanding the historical development of doctrines, whether they are doctrines we ourselves hold, or which we oppose, can help us to see them with new eyes and re-evaluate them.

The aim of this paper is to draw a brief sketch of the history of the emergence, growth, and eventual dominance of credocommunion in the Western Church.¹

The first thing we must do is define what we mean by "credocommunion." Leonard Coppes defines the practice he advocates as one which is based on the need for "self-examination" in order to take communion. This view "bars young children from the table and admits only the mature [...] children no earlier than the early teens."²

Cornelis Venema, on the other hand, another modern Reformed credocommunion advocate, makes no mention of self-examination when he

¹ It should be noted that the goal of this paper is not to sketch the emergence and development of paedocommunion, but credocommunion. Perhaps because credocommunion is currently the dominant practice in the West, it seems that most writings on the history of infant communion practice (including among paedocommunion advocates) assume the credocommunion position as a default and so trace paedocommunion (as if it were the historical deviation). This paper however, will attempt to trace the development of credocommunion itself.

² Leonard J. Coppes, *Daddy, May I Take Communion?* (Thornton, Colorado: Loenard J. Coppes, 1988), 11.

introduces the term “credo-communion” but merely says the term “emphasizes that the Lord’s Supper is reserved for those who have publicly professed the Christian faith.”³

Building from Coppes and Venema, our definition of credocommunion for this paper will be: The position that bars baptized children from communion until they 1) have matured enough mentally and physically so that they are able to verbally and reasonably profess the Christian faith, and have done so; and/or 2) have matured enough to be capable of “examining themselves” to the satisfaction of the church leadership.

While the emphasis differs (profession vs. self-examination), key to our survey of the development of credocommunion is that baptized children are barred from the table until they do something which requires some level of intellectual maturity and verbal ability beyond what they possess in infancy.⁴

II. The Practice from the Mid Third to the Twelfth Century

Modern credocommunion advocates appear to concede that from the mid third to the twelfth century there is no evidence of credocommunion in the Church, but rather, the Eucharist was given to all the baptized who were not under discipline, including young children and infants.⁵ Church historians seem to agree.⁶ Even so, it is helpful to take a quick look at two early primary sources showing the practice of the Church in the third through fifth centuries.

The earliest clear document indicating that all the baptized were brought to the table, and that credocommunion was not practiced by the Church, is found in the writings of Cyprian from A.D. 251, in his treatise, *On the Lapsed*. It is a (somewhat odd) story about a little girl from a Christian household who was given over by her nurse to pagan magistrates and brought into an idol worship ceremony. Cyprian discusses what happened later, when the child was returned to her parents and to the Church, and while we would regard much of the story as odd, what is noteworthy is that Cyprian casually describes this child, who was too young to be

³ Cornelis P. Venema, *Children at the Lord’s Table?* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2009), 3.

⁴ We will define the term “paedocommunion” for the sake of this paper, as the position which will admit all of the baptized who are not under church discipline to the table, regardless of age, or mental or verbal ability.

⁵ Coppes, 44; Venema, 15, 16, 18, 20.

⁶ David S. Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1907), 5:724; William Edward Scudamore, “Infant Communion” in *A Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, ed. William Smith and Samuel Cheetham. (London: John Murray, 1875), 1:835,

<http://books.google.com/books?id=1LIPFk6oFVvC&q=Infant+Communion#v=snippet&q=Infant%20Communion&f=false> (accessed on October 13, 2011).

able to speak, being brought forward and receiving the “sacrament of the cup.”⁷ No explanation is given or objection is anticipated. It appears that Cyprian, in A.D. 251, does not expect the absence of credocommunion practice to be a controversial element in his story. Instead, a paedocommunion position is simply assumed by the way the story is told.

In the writings of Augustine, in the early fifth century, we again come across an assumption that credocommunion is not practiced in the Church. In a sermon given in A.D. 418, Augustine speaks of how “believing infants” relate to Christ.⁸ In the midst of this discussion he says “Yes, they’re infants, but they are his members. They’re infants, but they receive his sacraments. They are infants, but they share in his table, in order to have life in themselves.”⁹ It is again noteworthy that Augustine is not making an argument against credocommunion here, but rather he is describing the practice of the Church. In fact, Augustine so assumes the general acceptance of admitting infants to the table that in his sermon he uses the practice as evidence to support a different point. Once again, the assumed practice of the Church for Augustine in the early fifth century appears to be not credocommunion, but paedocommunion.

Above are only two examples of primary sources, but the practice of the Church from the mid third century to the twelfth century on does not seem to be disputed by most scholars or credocommunion advocates. While Christian initiation rites over this period vary in some details (regarding the chrism, or other actions done at the time of baptism), in all known cases baptisms were followed by the reception of communion, usually on the same day and as part of the same initiation ceremony, no matter the age of the baptized (who were increasingly infants).¹⁰

From the mid third to the twelfth century there is no evidence of the practice of credocommunion in the Church.

III. The Practice in the Second and Early Third Centuries

Having seen the agreement on the late third century through the twelfth century, we will now look back to the Church’s practice in the second and early third centuries.

Credocommunion advocates Leonard J. Coppes and Cornelis P. Venema both argue that credocommunion was practiced by the early Church before the

⁷ Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), 5:444.

⁸ His reference to “believing infants” may also shed some light on an issue in the next section below.

⁹ Augustine, *The Works of Saint Augustine*, trans. Edmund Hill, ed. John E. Rotelle, (New Rochelle: New City Press, 1992), III:5:261.

¹⁰ J.D.C. Fisher, *Baptism in the Medieval West*, (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 1965), 1-113.

third century. Between the two of them, they cite five primary sources to support this claim. We will now examine the four strongest sources they cite.¹¹

Justin Martyr (A.D. 110-165)

The second piece of evidence is from Justin Martyr, in the second century. Justin writes in one place that none are to receive the Eucharist except “the man who believes that the things which we teach are true” and who has been baptized.¹² Coppes and Venema take this as evidence of credocommunion in the early Church.

However Coppes, a few pages earlier in his book, quotes Justin as saying that those who received baptism were “As many as are persuaded and believe.” Justin uses the same language about receiving baptism as he does about receiving communion: it is for those who believe. In a footnote, Coppes explains that when Justin speaks this way about baptism, it does not mean that Justin opposed infant baptism, but merely that he was speaking about adult converts. Yet when Justin uses the same language of the Eucharist, Coppes and Venema take it as evidence for excluding infants from communion. But, if that language by itself does not exclude infants in one case, you cannot take it as evidence of excluding infants in another.¹³ This text falls very short of being real evidence of credocommunion in the early Church.

Clement of Alexandria (ca. A.D. 150-219)

The third piece of evidence comes from Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150-219), who in his *Instructor* notes that the taking of the sacraments is to be done “by faith” and in *The Stromata* that individuals should consult their consciences to examine themselves as to whether or not they should abstain from the Eucharist.¹⁴

The statement of it being “by faith” seems inconclusive, especially since (as we noted above) Augustine seemed to be comfortable speaking of “believing infants.” While Clement of Alexandria wrote well before Augustine, Augustine is evidence that we cannot automatically assume that a reference to an individual’s faith in the Patristic period is the equivalent to a reference to that person having made a public profession of faith (since he calls infants “believing” though they could not have made such a verbal profession). To support the idea that the two concepts are taken as synonymous by Clement (which Venema seems to assume), one must do more work to show that this is how people in the second and third century would take the phrase “by faith” (work which Venema has not done here).

The second statement from Clement, on looking to one’s conscience, is clearly addressed to people of an age where they’re able to do so, but what we

¹¹ Coppes’ argument based on Ignatius, in the second century, has been omitted here due to space restraints. In my assessment it is a very weak argument, and it is not an argument repeated by Venema in his later book. Coppes, 40-41.

¹² Venema, 12-13; Coppes, 41.

¹³ Leithart, *Daddy, Why Was I Excommunicated?*, 38.

¹⁴ Venema, 13.

should take away from that is hard to know. Is Clement speaking with an assumption (otherwise undocumented) that the Church excludes baptized infants from the Eucharist until they can consult their consciences? Or is he speaking about people consulting their consciences as they are able to at their individual maturity level? Or is he focusing primarily on the adults within the congregation when he makes this one point?¹⁵ All options seem possible, and it does not appear that Venema has given adequate support that this text points to an early practice of credocommunion.

The Didascalia (Early Third Century):

The fourth quote is from the *Didascalia*:

Honour (*sic*) the bishops, who have loosed you from your sins, who by the water regenerated you, who filled you with the Holy Spirit, who reared you with the word as with milk, who bred you up with teaching, who established you with admonitions, and made you partakers of the holy eucharist of God, and made you partakers and joint-heirs of the promise of God.

Drawing from Roger Beckwith's interpretation of the passage, Coppes points to the sequence given in the text: that reference to the Eucharist comes after teaching and admonition. Beckwith (quoted by Coppes) asserts that this "significant" order shows that one was admitted to communion "in maturity" and "after a long course of teaching."¹⁶

There are several problems with Coppes & Beckwith's interpretation of this passage.

The first is that according to Thomas Finn, when we look at *The Didascalia* as a whole we can see that those coming for baptism in the churches it was written for were "largely pagans."¹⁷ While this does not conflict with the idea that these churches practiced infant baptism, it would indicate that the majority of baptisms taking place were of adult converts. But Coppes & Beckwith's interpretation of the above passage assumes it was written to people where infant baptism was the most common practice. If we take this information from Finn and continue to insist that the order is significant, we end up with a gap between adult conversion baptism and admission to the table (even after the convert had made public profession and was old enough to examine themselves). Such a situation neither

¹⁵ For instance, a pastor may in a sermon speak of how living as a faithful Christian means serving one's employer well, but this doesn't mean that he does not expect homemakers or students to be full members of the Church. He is merely speaking to one segment of his church, and this would be understood even if he made no disclaimer about it.

¹⁶ Coppes, 42.

¹⁷ Thomas M. Finn, *Early Christian Baptism and the Catechumenate: West and East Syria* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 38-41.

supports the credocommunion argument, nor fits with the pattern of Christian initiation as we know it at that time.¹⁸

Leithart points to aspects of the list that do not seem chronological (e.g.: How does being reared on the Word precede teaching?) to argue that the list is not chronological in order.¹⁹

Two other possible interpretations seem more likely than either Beckwith's interpretation (hard chronology over a long span of time) or Leithart's (an entirely non-chronological list).

First, it is possible that the first three items listed (loosed from sins, regenerated by water, filled with the Spirit) refer to rites of initiation (exorcism, baptism, and laying on of hands), while the five items that follow (the Word, teaching, admonitions, Eucharist, and joint-heirs of the promise of God) are part of the ongoing Christian nurture from the bishops.

However, it could also be possible that the entire sequence refers to the unified rite of Christian initiation in the Church at the time. Finn describes the elements and sequence of the rite of Christian initiation as it was practiced in the early church in Syria (the context in which *The Didascalia* was written).²⁰ When we line up some of the primary elements of that initiation rite, in order, alongside the order of elements from the quote above, we see that they line up very closely. The initiation rite included: exorcism ("loosed you from your sins?"), baptism ("by the water regenerated you"), laying on of hands by the bishop ("filled you with the Holy Spirit") and then a communion service which included a homily from the bishop ("word," "teaching," "admonitions"), and the Eucharist ("the holy eucharist of God"), at the end of which the newly initiated were full members of the Church ("partakers and joint-heirs of the promise of God."). It is possible that in this quote *The Didascalia* is referring to the chronological, but unified rite of Christian initiation (all of which the bishop would have overseen, and much of which he would have performed himself), which took place in a very short period of time, rather than a drawn out chronological process over years.

There is a range of ways to understand the order of events in the quote above from *The Didascalia*. In light of the fact that the document was written to a situation where most seeking baptism were pagan converts rather than infants of Christians, Coppes & Beckwith's interpretation seems the least likely, and therefore this text offers no evidence to the practice of credocommunion in the early Church.

¹⁸ Finn, 15-16.

¹⁹ Leithart, *Daddy, Why Was I Excommunicated?*, 40.

²⁰ Finn, 1-16.

Origen (A.D. 235):

The final statement offered to support an early third century practice of credocommunion is taken from Origen, from around A.D. 235:

Before we arrive at the provision of the heavenly bread, and are filled with the flesh of the spotless Lamb, before we are inebriated with the blood of the true Vine which sprang from the root of David, while we are children, and are fed with milk, and retain the discourse about the first principles of Christ, as children we act under the oversight of stewards, namely the guardian angels.

Coppes and Venema argue that while containing symbolic elements, this text is discussing literal children not yet receiving the literal Eucharist.²¹ At first this text appears to have real merit in making Coppes' and Venema's case, but a closer examination brings up a number of questions.

Tim Gallant argues that if we grant that this text is about literal children and the literal Eucharist, then we could also assume it is referring to children who were literally "fed with milk," i.e.: unweaned. This would only indicate that the Church excluded from communion infants who were physically unable to eat bread because they were still nursing. It would not support the continued exclusion of children after they have been weaned (and so is far from Coppes' exclusion of those who had not reached their "early teens").²²

Gallant's proposal for what the text actually means seems unlikely, however it forces us to admit that it is no less likely than the interpretation put forward by Coppes and Venema. Both sides have shown they can pick and choose which parts of this quote to take literally and which to take figuratively in order to make it support their (opposite) arguments. In any case, we are led to doubt that this quote can provide much clear support for either position regarding the practice of credocommunion in Origen's church.

Peter Leithart points out that while a reference to actual young children is possible here, it is also possible that Origen is speaking metaphorically about the difference between the Old and New Covenants. This topic was apparently a favorite theme of Origen, and the language he uses here even seems to draw from language which the New Testament uses to discuss Old Covenant believers (e.g.: Gal. 3:23-26).²³

Finally, it seems possible that Origen could be referring to adult, unbaptized, catechumens as "children," describing their state and status before their full initiation into the Church.

²¹ Coppes, 41-42; Venema, 13-14.

²² Tim Gallant, *Feed My Lambs* (Grande Prairie, Canada: Pactum Reformanda Publishing, 2002), 110-112.

²³ Peter J. Leithart, *Daddy, Why Was I Excommunicated?*, 39.

Though a quote like Origen's may initially give us pause, and while Coppes and Venema's interpretation of it may be possible, it is one of many possible meanings of the text, and it does not seem to be the most likely meaning, let alone so certain of a meaning as to support the likelihood of the practice of credocommunion in the early Church.

It becomes even more unlikely that Origen's quote points to credocommunion when we look at it in light of what followed historically. As was discussed in more detail above, it was only sixteen years after Origen wrote this passage that Cyprian wrote of a child too young to speak receiving the Eucharist as if it were common and he expected no objections. From Cyprian on there is evidence that the Church practiced paedocommunion, but no evidence that it practiced credocommunion. The idea that the Church shifted from credocommunion to paedocommunion in such a short period, with not a word of debate, discussion, polemic or confusion seems highly unlikely. The absence of any evidence of any controversy is striking.

It is therefore unlikely that Origen is referring here to a practice of credocommunion in the early third century Church.

Conclusion

In light of the widespread practice of the third century, the weakness and ambiguity of the evidence provided by Coppes and Venema for an earlier credocommunion, and the total lack of evidence of any controversy over the place of infants at the table in the Patristic Church, it seems we must conclude that the practice of credocommunion (especially any widespread practice of credocommunion) in the early Church is highly unlikely.

As a result, what we see is a continuous practice from the early Church up until the twelfth century. For the first eleven hundred years of the Church's history there is no evidence of credocommunion, but rather it appears that all the baptized, regardless of age or mental capacity, were admitted to the Lord's Table. In the twelfth century, that all changes.

IV. Emergence, Growth & Dominance of the Practice of Credocommunion: One Clear Cause

An Overall Unclear Picture

By the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), credocommunion had gone from non-existence to dominance. Yet the full picture of how that happened is not entirely clear. There were a number of factors that likely contributed to this phenomenon, though in a research project of this limited size, it was not possible to connect the dots well enough to make well-founded claims on the role they all played. Many of the factors (and possible contributors) leading to the emergence, growth, and dominance of credocommunion are listed and explained in Section V below.

With that said, there is one clear contributor to credocommunion for which we can “connect the dots”: the development of the doctrine of transubstantiation and the concerns over profaning the transubstantiated body and blood of Christ. It is clear that this development was a factor leading to the emergence of credocommunion. What is unlikely is that it was the only factor. Thus, to present this element alone would be an oversimplification of the story of how credocommunion emerged and grew (hence Section V, to give a fuller picture).

*The Development of Transubstantiation*²⁴

The eleventh century saw the Western Church move increasingly towards a much more extreme stance on the realistic nature of the Eucharist. Much of the development came as a reaction to Berengar of Tours questioning and challenging the extent to which the body and blood of Christ were really present in communion.

At this time the Western Church began distinguishing the Eucharist from and elevating it above the other sacraments, because it was seen as not “only a sacrament” but also a sacrifice. The Eucharist came to be the most emphasized of the sacraments in this period, seen as even greater than baptism. In discussing the Eucharist, Lafranc (an opponent of Berengar) claimed that the substance present both at Calvary and in the Mass were identical – both being the body “taken from the Virgin,” drawing an extremely strong connection between the human body of Christ and the body in the Eucharist. One statement of the Church’s doctrine in opposition to Berengar was that after the consecration, the bread and wine are “truly the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; that they are truly and physically handled and broken by the priest, not just sacramentally, and are ground by the teeth of the faithful.” While later statements would back off from this language (the true body “ground by the teeth of the faithful”), the doctrinal position remained the same.²⁵ The objectivity of the Eucharist was expanded so that it was believed that even unworthy communicants received the true body and blood of Christ. In the context of this debate, the Church’s emphasis shifted more and more towards an objective and miraculous view of the Eucharist.

Another important development in the realism of the Eucharist (which will come up again below) came from Guitmond, an opponent of Berengar who taught that “the entire host is the body of Christ, but in such a way that each separate particle is the entire body of Christ.” This doctrine would come to be called concomitance, and would set the stage for the later practice of communing people in one kind only (giving them only the wine or only the bread).

²⁴ Unless otherwise noted, this section draws from: Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Growth of Medieval Theology (600-1300)*, The Christian Tradition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 184-215.

²⁵ Timothy Thibodeau, “Western Christendom,” in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, ed. Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 235.

Finally, this strong view of sacramental realism was made official in the Fourth Lateran Council, in 1215, which stated in Cannon 1 that the “body and blood [of Christ] are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine; the bread being changed (*transubstantiatio*) by divine power into the body, and the wine into the blood.”²⁶

While using some of the language from the early church, the development of the doctrine of transubstantiation represents a real departure from Patristic theology, achieved through scholasticism, which, among other things, shifted the emphasis of the Eucharist from the ecclesial community to the object of the Eucharistic host.²⁷

Practice of Credocommunion Grows and then Dominates

Along with the establishment of the transubstantiation came the seeds of credocommunion. The uniform Roman rite of initiation had been established in all the churches of the West by the twelfth century, and these rites maintained that all the baptized were to receive the Eucharist at the time of their baptism, no matter their age. Yet, at the same time, doubts of this practice began to emerge as early as the late eleventh century. The concern that was raised was a direct result of the Realist Eucharistic theology being established at the time. People began to ask: If the consecrated elements of the Eucharist really are the body and blood of Christ, then isn't there a risk of infants or the sick not swallowing them properly, and therefore accidentally spitting it out or vomiting it up, and so profaning Christ's body?²⁸

In the twelfth century we begin to see this concern addressed by giving infants only the wine, and withholding the bread from them (out of concern that they might not properly swallow it.) Paschall II (d. 1118) advocated this practice for both infants and for the sick.²⁹

Scholastic theologian William of Champeaux, in 1121, defended the practice of only communing infants with the cup by appealing to the doctrine of concomitance, arguing that the children “receive Christ entire” in just the wine, and therefore the bread is not necessary for them.³⁰ But even with this change, infants were still communed in some way, and we see both argument and documentation

²⁶ Paul Halsall, ed. “The Canons of the Fourth Lateran Council, 1215,” The Internet Medieval Sourcebook. Fordham.edu, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/lateran4.asp> (accessed October 13, 2011)

²⁷ Thibodeau, 235-236.

²⁸ Fisher, 114-115. Interestingly, Lanfranc, who was such a staunch advocate of the Realist view of the Eucharist, also argued strongly in favor of continuing to commune infants.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 115.

³⁰ *Ibid.* It is interesting to see the argument of concomitance used here first, as a defense for withholding the bread from infants and communing them only with wine, when it will be used in the future as a defense for withholding the wine from all the laity and communing them only with bread.

that newly baptized infants should be communed, even if only with wine. Some documents even describe methods of how best to commune infants.³¹

It was not, however, only infants that the doctrine of Eucharistic Realism affected, but it soon influenced the communion practice of the entire laity. There was a growing movement away from giving the consecrated wine to the laity, for the very same reason why the bread was withheld from infants and the sick: fear of profaning the body and blood of Christ by dropping or spilling it. By the thirteenth century it was increasingly common for the laity only to be given the bread in communion, and for the cup to be withheld from them.³²

With the bread already withheld from infants, and now the cup withheld from all the laity, in many places infants were no longer given the Eucharist in any form. Here we see the spread of the *practice*, though not yet the later theology, of credocommunion.³³

When we reach The Fourth Lateran Council, in 1215, we can assume that admitting baptized infants to the table had largely died out. Canon 21 gave instructions on receiving the Eucharist, and it speaks exclusively of the reception of those who “have reached the age of discretion.”³⁴ The best explanation why the council did not speak of the practice of communing infants appears to be because there was not much of a practice left to speak of.³⁵

Taking more direct action, a number of local councils in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries would go on to require an exclusive credocommunion practice by forbidding young children from being communed until they had reached “years of discretion.”³⁶

As one friend of mine put it, it would seem, in the end, that children were excluded from the Lord’s Table for being sloppy eaters.

V. Other Possible Tributaries to the Emergence, Growth & Dominance of Credocommunion

As was said above, to view the emergence, growth and dominance of credocommunion in the Western Church only in reference to the development of transubstantiation would be to present an overly simplistic picture of what happened. Transubstantiation is the most solid stream of thought and practice that led to credocommunion, but it is not necessarily the only stream, or even the most significant. It is merely the one that can be seen the most clearly from an initial effort of historical research.

³¹ Fisher, 115-116.

³² Ibid, 117.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Paul Halsall, ed. “The Canons of the Fourth Lateran Council, 1215.”

³⁵ Fisher, 117.

³⁶ Ibid, 117-118.

One may think of looking over the development of credocommunion like standing on a tall hill and looking into a valley, which is covered by a fog. That valley is the Western Church in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Out of that valley flows a stream (not the only stream, just the stream we are interested in most at the moment), called “Credocommunion.” Into that valley a number of streams flow. We can most clearly make out that the stream of “Transubstantiation” flows into the stream that will be “Credocommunion” (and this process is described in Section IV above), but as we see other streams flowing into the valley, heading on a similar trajectory as “Credocommunion,” we wonder if and how they might contribute to it. But at the moment a mist covers the valley and we cannot see. Likely, some contribute, while some do not. Some may contribute directly, some indirectly. Some may pool together before contributing. But from our current vantage point, it is not clear.

To better connect the dots, the author needs to do more research. Some of the connections may already exist in the secondary sources. Others may require more examination of the relevant primary sources. In any case, we will have to be satisfied for the moment with the following brief discussion of other streams in the Western Church which seem likely to have contributed to the emergence of credocommunion.

The Disintegration of the Christian Initiation Rite in the West

This is by far the most interesting “possible tributary” in the development of credocommunion (far more interesting than the one outlined in Section IV above), and one which is worthy of more research in its own right. It witnesses the breakdown of the rite of Christian initiation, and in the end sees credocommunion as one (of many) symptoms of that far more monumental shift that took place in the Medieval Western Church.

In his detailed and significant work *Baptism in the Medieval West*, J.D.C. Fisher establishes the unity of the initiation rite leading up to the thirteenth century, its subsequent disintegration, and finally its re-establishment as a number of separate rites spread out over the span of years. His work, along with others, and some conjecture (again – more research is needed) show us the monumental shift that occurred in the Western Church’s classification of young children, which still has huge effects on the Church today.

The shift appears to have taken place over two stages. The first stage happened very early on, with the expansion of the Christian initiation ritual to include things like ceremonial exorcisms, anointing with oil, ceremonial clothing with white robes, and confirmation by the bishop through hand-laying and application of a chrism.³⁷ These additional rites began to take on meaning and content that had originally been seen as part of the baptism itself. So the new rites

³⁷ The process of adding these rites is not discussed by Fisher, but the final result is. Fisher, 5, 14, 20.

did not add new content to the baptism, but rather they acquired their meanings from baptism (but in the process they reduced the meaning of the baptism itself).

For example, the added ritual of anointing with oil was seen as an anointing of the baptized child to the royal priesthood of the Church.³⁸ Peter Leithart has argued quite convincingly that baptism originally contained the meaning of an ordination to special priesthood.³⁹ So it appears that one meaning of baptism (priestly ordination) was extracted from baptism itself and placed in an additional rite of an anointing which was to accompany baptism.

The same process can be seen with other rites that came to accompany baptism – what had originally been baptismal meanings were drawn out of the actual act of baptism and vested in these extra rites. Even so, in this period, those rites were all performed together, and the act of Christian initiation remained functionally unified.

The second step of this process, documented by J.D.C. Fisher, is that those rites began to drift apart in the Medieval Western Church.

Where originally an infant would be baptized, receive all the accompanying rites and then be immediately confirmed (receive hand-laying and chrism) by a present bishop, there soon became a gap between baptism and confirmation, for a number of logistical rather than theological reasons. However, as this gap in time grew and grew, it eventually became the principled practice of the Western Church to delay confirmation for a number of years after baptism.⁴⁰

At this point, baptism had had a sizable piece of its meaning extracted and posited in other rites, and now those rites had been separated in time from baptism itself. The result became that baptism and full Christian initiation had become two separate and distinct things:

Ultimately separated from both confirmation and first communion by (seven or more) years, and, thanks to Lateran IV, by the addition of yet another sacramental rite *before* first communion, the earlier process of infant *initiation* became infant *baptism* alone, a reduced and compressed rite more often than not celebrated in private rather than as part of the public liturgical life of the church. What the earlier churches of both East and West kept together in a unitive and integral rite, the Western Middle Ages, to paraphrase the marriage rite, rent asunder into four separate and distinct sacraments.⁴¹

³⁸ Fisher, 14-15.

³⁹ Peter J. Leithart, *The Priesthood of the Plebs* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003).

⁴⁰ Fisher, 135-158.

⁴¹ Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation*, 2nd ed. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007) 265.

Mark Searle gets at the radical significance in the distinction that was now made between baptism and Christian initiation:

The facts of the story are well known. What is not always recognized is that with this unwitting change of policy, the Western Church gave up trying to initiate infants. Once infant baptism is recognized as a form of clinical baptism – an emergency measure – it has to be acknowledged that, with the move to defer confirmation and first Communion, Christian initiation was in fact deferred until the child was old enough to be catechized. Instead of initiating infants, as had been the universal policy of the first millennium or more, the Church now put them on hold – baptizing them as a precautionary measure – until they came of age. [...] The net result is that, beginning in the late thirteenth century and universally from the sixteenth, the Roman Catholic Church has really only initiated “adults,” even though it continued to baptize the newborn as a precautionary measure within a few hours or days of birth. There is an irony here not often remarked upon: Roman Catholics and Anabaptists were actually closer together in their positions on infant baptism than they thought.⁴²

Understanding this shift radically reframes our historical understanding of the role of young children in the Church. Usually the discussion is focused on the sacraments themselves. Baptists see infant baptism as more “Roman Catholic”, as credocommunionists see paedocommunion.

However, if we frame the discussion in terms of Christian initiation (rather than merely baptism) then the opposite picture emerges. Those who argue for full Church membership of the baptized (including paedocommunion) are in line with the Patristic Church - the more original, unified Christian initiation through baptism alone (for infants). On the other hand, credocommunionists and Baptists are operating on a system derived more from Medieval Roman Catholicism than from the early Church. In fact, Baptists bring the Medieval Roman Catholic delay of full Christian initiation to its logical conclusion (and in doing so they actually re-integrate it). Where the Medieval Western Church baptized infants but did not fully initiate them until they were adults, Baptists merely bring their baptismal practice in line with this Western Medieval understanding of only initiating adults. In a similar vein, paedobaptists who are also credocommunionists continue the Medieval Roman Catholic framework of a separation between infant baptism and full Christian initiation, they just give a more Protestant shape

⁴² Mark Searle, “Infant Baptism Reconsidered,” in *Living Water, Sealing Spirit*, ed. Maxwell E. Johnson (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1995), 370-371.

(confession of faith) to the adult initiation than the more sacramental approach of Medieval Catholicism (confession to a priest and confirmation from a bishop).

The overall history of the relationships between baptism, Christian initiation, and the standing of young children in the Church is an area in need of further consideration.⁴³ It seems that in better understanding the history of how these relationships changed over time in the West, we may also learn a great deal more of how credocommunion emerged in the Western Medieval Church.

Increasing Neglect and Avoidance of the Sacramental Rites by the Laity in the West

We have to acknowledge that whether out of impious neglect, or pious fear, the laity of the Church in the West were actively neglecting and/or avoiding many of the sacraments of the Church during this period of history.

Fisher notes the neglect of confirmation when it became increasingly detached from baptism. The Church urged the laity to have their children confirmed as early as possible, threatening them with church discipline and even civil financial penalties if they did not. Yet still, many young children were not confirmed as early as the Church prescribed.⁴⁴

Similarly, with the development of the doctrine of transubstantiation, we see the laity increasingly avoiding the sacrament. In Cannon 21 of the Fourth Lateran Council the Church had to actually command the laity to take communion at least once a year. In the same way, private confession with a priest also had to be commanded.⁴⁵

Some even describe the Medieval removal of the cup from the laity not as a clerical grab for special privileges, but rather as a clerical capitulation to the laity's avoidance of the cup.⁴⁶

While the picture presented here is not complete, it would still seem that whether it involves parental neglect of Christian nurture, pious fear of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and/or disregard for the advice and commands of the Church, the laity in general were not receiving the sacraments very often. And so their young children were probably not receiving them very often either. It is likely that these pious and/or impious attitudes in the laity played a role in the rise of (or at least the easy acceptance of) credocommunion.⁴⁷

⁴³ I am currently hoping to do an independent study this coming summer to study these topics further.

⁴⁴ Fisher, 136-137.

⁴⁵ Paul Halsall, ed. "The Canons of the Fourth Lateran Council, 1215."

⁴⁶ Tommy Lee, "The History of Paedocommunion: From the Early Church Until 1500," Reformed.org,

http://www.reformed.org/social/index.html?mainframe=http://www.reformed.org/sacramentology/tl_paedo.html (accessed October 13, 2011).

⁴⁷ Johnson, 264.

Development of the Penitential System

At the same time as credocommunion emerged and came to dominance, the penitential system's requirement of regular, private confession to a priest was also being established.

In the eleventh century, the question of whether confession to a priest was necessary for forgiveness was a topic of discussion. By the early thirteenth century the importance of confession to a priest grew, and it was soon recognized as a sacrament.⁴⁸

It was then at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 (the same council which coincides with the dominance of credocommunion) where Christians were first required to go to confession with a priest at least once a year. This requirement greatly affected the role of the Church and its relationship to the laity. One historian goes so far as to say that it "is perhaps the most important legislative act in the history of the Church."⁴⁹

The Council of Trent (1551) would later forbid any person from taking the Eucharist without having first made confession to a priest.⁵⁰ It is unclear to what extent this was the practice or tendency in the Western Church in the early thirteenth century, and whether the expectation of confession preceding the Eucharist could have contributed to the rise of credocommunion, as those young children who could not yet reasonably confess to a priest were kept from the Eucharist.

The Emergence of the Concept of the "Age of Discretion"

In Canon 21, the Fourth Lateran Council uses the concept of the "age of discretion."⁵¹ This concept will (as we have seen) play a major role in changing the life and practice of the Church, in both the rise of credocommunion, but also in how penance, confirmation, and the spiritual place of children in general is understood.

But one wonders: Where did this concept come from? What is it based on and how had it developed to this point within the theology of the Western Church?

Interestingly, Mark Searle claims that the "age of discretion" developed not from biblical, theological or psychological insights and developments, but that rather, it was the product of legal and social conventions of the time, coming from Anglo-Saxon and Roman law.⁵²

Whether Searle is right, wrong, or partially right, the importance of the concept of the "age of discretion" for whether or not one can participate in the

⁴⁸ C. M. Roberts, *A Treatise of the History of Confession Until It Developed Into Auricular Confession, A.D. 1215* (London: C. J. Clay and Sons, 1901), 113-118.

⁴⁹ Henry Charles Lea, *A History of Auricular Confession and Indulgences in the Latin Church* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1896), 1:227-230.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 1:155.

⁵¹ Paul Halsall, ed. "The Canons of the Fourth Lateran Council, 1215."

⁵² Searle, 371, n. 10.

sacraments and the full life of the Church is very significant, and a clearer picture would be helpful to further understand its origin.

Conclusion

We saw above a clear line of development from the doctrine of transubstantiation to the practice of credocommunion. In this section we see that the picture is even more complex than that, even if some of the causal relationships are unclear. In any case, it seems there were many developments in the Western Medieval Church that may have contributed to or helped set the stage for the development of credocommunion. It is also noteworthy that none of those developments are things the average Protestant credocommunionist would endorse today.

VI. The Development of a Theological Explanation for Credocommunion

We pick up our story now in the thirteenth century, with the dominance of credocommunion practice, based on concerns derived from transubstantiation, and possibly from other sources as well (discussed above).

However, these explanations for a practice like credocommunion did not stand up for very long among learned theologians, and so a different understanding was needed – an understanding that would be provided by Thomas Aquinas.

By the time we get to Aquinas (1224-1274), the practice of credocommunion was accepted and assumed, to the extent that he seems almost unaware that the practice in the West was a relatively recent innovation.⁵³

But what is most interesting is the explanation and defense that Aquinas gives for the practice of credocommunion. The simplistic (and very practical) fear of profaning the transubstantiated body and blood of Christ by not swallowing or by vomiting it is not mentioned in reference to children,⁵⁴ but a new set of rationales are given.

The first rational given is that Aquinas insists that “those not having the use of reason” ought not to receive the Eucharist. The explanations Aquinas gives are that devotion and previous self examination (an appeal to 1 Corinthians 11:28) are required to approach the Eucharist. Aquinas goes on to specify that the devotion required is “devotion for the sacrament.”⁵⁵

Earlier we saw that the actual emergence and growth of credocommunion came from (at a minimum) concerns over the child’s ability to fully swallow and not vomit the transubstantiated host. Aquinas revises the basis, attributing it to the

⁵³ Mark Dalby, *Infant Communion*, (Cambridge: Grove Books Limited, 2003), 24.

⁵⁴ Though Aquinas is familiar and comfortable with that argument for other people – he himself employs it as a reason to avoid giving the Eucharist to some who are sick and may vomit. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* ed. Thomas Gilby (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975), iii.80.9, 59:73.

⁵⁵ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* iii.80.9; 59:70-73.

children's rational (rather than physical) capacities and making the concern about their not showing proper devotion to the Eucharistic elements, and not properly examining themselves before receiving the transubstantiated body and blood.

Whatever the merits of Aquinas' argument, there is no evidence that these concerns were present at the actual emergence and establishment of the practice of credocommunion in the Church, and so they appear to be later arguments made to justify a practice begun for different reasons and in need of a more credible justification.

The second argument Aquinas gives is on the nature of the Eucharist. Here Aquinas first emphasizes the difference between baptism and the Eucharist. Baptism is "the beginning of the spiritual life" while the Eucharist is "the summit," "necessary to bring it [that is, spiritual life] to its culmination." Aquinas concludes that the Eucharist is therefore not needed for basic Christian living.

Continuing his argument from the nature of the Eucharist, Aquinas also asserts that by desiring the Eucharist, through baptism and the intention of the Church, baptized infants will actually "receive the thing signified by the Eucharist" even while they do not receive the physical Eucharist.⁵⁶

On this point it is helpful to note that the Patristic and Early Medieval Church did not agree with Aquinas' reasoning about a distinction between baptism and the Eucharist that would lead to credocommunion. One must also wonder how Aquinas' separation of the "thing signified" from the physical host fits with the developed doctrine of transubstantiation outlined above. Additionally, once again, we do not have a record of either of these explanations being given in the actual emergence of credocommunion, but they are added as explanations for the practice after the fact.

Finally, Aquinas asserts that John 6:28 (a text that comes up often on the necessity of receiving the Eucharist for salvation, and therefore a text relevant to infants and whether they must receive the Eucharist) is about "spiritual" consumption through membership in the Church, not "merely sacramental, consumption." Aquinas appeals to Augustine to support his claim.⁵⁷

Here it is merely interesting that in appealing to Augustine for support, Aquinas does not seem to recognize that Augustine himself was a strong advocate of infant communion.⁵⁸

In these arguments, we see a more sophisticated rationale being given for credocommunion than the one that actually led to its emergence and dominance. Yet this appears to be an example of practice driving theology, rather than the other way around.

These new rationales for credocommunion were adopted (particularly the first rationale) and were then given as the reasons for credocommunion by many local councils that followed, so that in 1287 a local council at Liege barred children

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* iii.73.3; 58:10-13.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* iii.65.4; 56:154-157 and iii.73.3; 58:10-13.

⁵⁸ Dalby, 24.

from the Eucharist “before they are deemed to have the discretion of faith, at about the age of ten” as did the 1300-1310 council of Cambrai.⁵⁹

VII. Later Challenges to Credocommunion

Without going into too much detail, it is interesting to note that while credocommunion dominated the West after the thirteenth century, it did not go unchallenged.

The Hussite movement under Jakoubek of Stribo in Bohemia had as three of its central concerns: the restoration of the cup to the laity, the restoration of infants to the Eucharist, and a practice of more frequent communion. Even when threatened with death, the movement would not conform to credocommunion practice. But while there was debate and negotiation on other topics, Rome would not compromise on credocommunion.⁶⁰

In addition to the Hussite challenge, there is evidence that in some other Western churches, infants continued to be communed. It would appear that the uniform abolishment of infant communion, and therefore the uniform establishment of credocommunion, was not finally reached in the West until the Council of Trent in 1551.⁶¹

It should also be noted that the development of credocommunion described in this paper is exclusively a discussion of its emergence, growth and dominance in the *Western* Church. The Eastern Church did not adopt credocommunion, and continues even today to commune all the baptized, regardless of age, developmental stage or mental ability.⁶²

VIII. Relevance for the Modern Discussion on Credo vs. Paedo Communion

There are a number of ways this brief historical outline is relevant for the current debates over credocommunion, but we will only look at a brief sketch of them here.

First, the above picture should reframe the debate. Some credocommunion advocates have a habit of referring to their position as the “traditional” position, and speaking of paedocommunion as an unusual later development. This is inappropriate in light of the facts. The debate is closer to being one between the Patristic position (admitting all the baptized) and the Medieval position (barring young baptized children). It is inaccurate for credocommunion advocates to speak as if their position is the original or the default practice, if it is actually a thirteenth century Medieval innovation.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 25.

⁶⁰ David Holeton, *Infant Communion – Then and Now*, (Bramcote: Grove Books, 1981), 9-15.

⁶¹ Fisher, 118-119.

⁶² Fisher, 119.

Second, an overview like this should also bring into serious question whether a rejection of credocommunion really does strike at the vitals of the Reformed faith. While that must be determined at a systematic theology level, the history of the doctrine of credocommunion should raise eyebrows at such a claim, especially coming from Reformed Christians.

Third, this history should lead us to examine the Reformers' continued practice of credocommunion. They all continued the practice, but how closely did they examine it? Is it possible that they simply inherited a practice and, like Thomas Aquinas, merely rewrote the explanations so that they fit more with their theology? A thorough historical look should be taken at *why* the Reformers continued the practice of credocommunion and just how much thought they really gave it.

Fourth, more research is needed on this subject. There is still much of the picture of the twelfth and thirteenth century emergence of credocommunion that needs to be filled in (as discussed in Section V). While either side of the current debate can further their cause with overly simplistic characterizations of what happened, what is needed for the good of the Church is an accurate understanding of how we got where we are today.

Finally, this study should drive us back to the Scriptures. Tradition is indeed a help to us in Christian practice and theology. But when we see elements and sources of developments within our tradition that are either questionable or outright opposed to our core theological convictions, then we must go back to the Scriptures and re-examine what they teach about the doctrines we had previously accepted from our tradition. Good historical theology will always drive us back to the Bible.

Protestant Theosis?

Jake Neufeld

The long neglected Eastern Orthodox doctrine of *theosis*, otherwise known as *deification* or *divinization*, is gaining theological attention across a broad spectrum of Western traditions.¹ Reformed theologians have traditionally approached soteriology from the perspective of the *ordo salutis*; Eastern theologians have approached soteriology from the perspective of *theosis*. According to Orthodox theologians, *theosis* is the end result of the gradual process of salvation, wherein we become gods. Don Fairbairn clarifies, “by *theosis* the Orthodox mean the process of acquiring godly characteristics, gaining immortality and incorruptibility, and experiencing communion with God.”² Western theologians have been resistant to the doctrine of *theosis* because they fear that it blurs the distinction between God and his creation; Eastern theologians claim that it does not. In fact, D.B. Clendenin even claims, “it is not too much to say that the divinization of humanity is the central theme, chief aim, basic purpose, or primary religious ideal of Orthodoxy.”³

The doctrine of *theosis* is closely tied to the doctrines of the *image of God*, *incarnation*, *transfiguration*, *sonship*, *sanctification*, *glorification*, *perfection*, *hypostatic-union*, *fellowship*, *union with Christ*, and *immortality*. Adam and Eve were created to be like God, but Adam sinned and never attained divinity. In the incarnation, God became man in order that men might become gods, being clothed in immortality and reaching the goal that Adam never achieved. Christians take on the divine life through their adoption and progress into the family of God (divine sonship). While

¹ I first ran across the idea of divinization in a stream of Keswick spirituality, which teaches that God is within us. Most scholars miss this stream of deification theology. It is shown in various places like *Living Stream Ministries* or the journal, *Affirmation & Critique*. See, for an example, Ed Marks, “Deification by Participation in God’s Divinity,” *Affirmation & Critique*, vol. VII, no. 2 (October 2002): 47-54. I think that a complex mix of factors has led to the West’s recent interest in *theosis*. First, the West’s growing contact with the Eastern church and an ecumenical spirit have brought this chief difference front and center. How does it fit within Western frameworks? Second, many Protestants are increasingly emphasizing the role and importance of the Lord’s Supper. I think that partaking of the bread and wine naturally leads us to question the partaking of Christ. Third, our culture’s fascination with Eastern spiritualities leads to a sympathetic approach to *theosis*, which fits this postmodern mood.

² Don Fairbairn, “Salvation as Theosis: The Teaching of Eastern Orthodoxy,” *Themelios* 23 no. 3 (1998): 42.

³ D.B. Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Western Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1994): 120 quoted by Robert V. Rakestraw, “Becoming Like God: An Evangelical Doctrine of Theosis,” in *JETS* 40/2 (June 1997): 257.

Christians do become divine, they do not enter into the Godhead; thus, the distinction between God and his creation remains. The principle texts for *theosis* are 2 Peter 1:4, John 10:54, and Psalm 82:6.⁴ According to 2 Peter 1:4, men become “partakers of the divine nature;” even stronger, in John 10:54, Jesus quotes Psalm 82:6 and says “Is it not written in your law, ‘I said you are Gods?’”

CONTEXT OF ORIGINAL FORMULATION

The Christian doctrine of *theosis* traces back to Irenaeus, one of the earliest church fathers. However, the Alexandrian theologians (Clement, Origen, and Athanasius) developed the doctrine more fully. For each of them, *theosis* is closely tied to the incarnation. Indeed, the Son emptied himself *kenosis* in order that men might be filled *theosis* with divinity.⁵ The Cappadocians (Gregory of Nyssa, Basil the Great, and Gregory Nazianzus) continued to build upon the work of Origen and Athanasius, bringing a developed doctrine of *theosis* to the whole Greek Church.⁶ Some of the most prominent early samples of *theosis* include:

“...our Lord Jesus Christ, who did, through His transcendent love, become what we are, that He might bring us to be even what He is Himself.”⁷

Irenaeus of Lyons

“Being baptized, we are illuminated; illuminated, we become sons; being made sons, we are made perfect; being made perfect, we are made immortal. ‘I,’ says He, ‘have said that ye are gods, and all sons of the Highest.’”⁸

Clement of Alexandria

“...from Him [Christ] there began the union of the divine with the human nature, in order that the human, by communion with the divine, might rise to be divine, not in Jesus alone, but in all those who not only believe, but enter upon the life which Jesus taught....”⁹

Origen

⁴ Other important texts include Genesis 1:26-27; 3:5; Matthew 5:48; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 John 3:2; and John 17:1. I will use the English Standard Version for all Biblical quotations.

⁵ F.W. Norris, “Deification: Consensual and Cogent,” in *Scottish Journal of Theology* 49(1996): 415. Norris discusses this central theme in Gregory Nianzanus’ writings.

⁶ McGuckin, “Strategic Adaptation of Deification in the Cappadocians,” in *Partakers of the Divine Nature* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2007), 97.

⁷ ANF, 1:526, Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*.

⁸ ANF, 1:215, Clement of Alexandria, *The Instructor*.

⁹ ANF, 4:475. Origen, *Against Celsus*.

“For He was made man so that we might be made God; and He manifested Himself by a body that we might receive the idea of the unseen Father; and He endured the insolence of men that we might inherit immortality.”¹⁰

Athanasius

“So too Spirit-bearing souls, illumined by Him, finally become spiritual themselves, and their grace is sent forth to others. From this comes knowledge of the future..., endless joy in the presence of God, becoming like God, and, the highest of all desires, becoming God.”¹¹

Basil the Great of Caesarea

Deification was not a novel Christian idea in the ancient world; rather, it was an essential component of Platonic thought. John Lenz writes, “Plato, in the context of early Greek religion and contemplative spirituality, makes the idea of deification...open to all through personal contemplation and the development of the soul.”¹² Indeed, the overall framework and themes of deification can be seen in Plato’s *Timaeus*:

When a man has cultivated in himself the love of knowledge and true thinking; when with all his faculties he has exercised principally the capacity to think on things immortal and divine, then such a man, if he comes to touch upon the truth, will find it absolutely necessary to enjoy that truth entirely, at least in so far as human nature is capable of participating in immortality.... whoever contemplates, renders himself like the object which he contemplates, in conformity with its original nature; and being thus rendered similar to it such a man attains, both for present and future, the perfect fulfillment of life which the gods have proposed to humans.¹³

According to Plato, one conforms to the object he contemplates; thus, by contemplating the divine one is conformed to divinity, which is according to the true aspirations latent in human nature. The church fathers lived, thought, and taught within this world saturated in Greek Platonism. Origen’s theology, for example, is pervaded with a Platonic duality; salvation, according to Origen, was an

¹⁰ NPNE, 4:65, Athanasius, *Incarnation of the Word*.

¹¹ Quoted by Michael J. Christensen, “The Problem, Promise, and Process of *Theosis*,” in *Partakers of the Divine Nature*, 23.

¹² John R. Lenz, “Deification of the Philosopher in Classical Greece,” in *Partakers of the Divine Nature*, 47.

¹³ McGuckin, “Strategic Adaptation of Deification in the Cappodocians,” in *Partakers of the Divine Nature*, 101 quoting Plato, *Timaeus*, 90.

escape from this material world and ascension to a higher spiritual world.¹⁴ This is also evident in Gregory of Nyssa, who writes, “Once it is released from its earthly attachment, the soul becomes light and swift for its movement upward, soaring from below up to the heights.... The soul ever rises higher and will always make its flight yet higher.”¹⁵

J. A. McGuckin has persuasively shown how the two Gregories built upon the work of Origen in order to reconcile Christianity with the Platonism of their day. McGuckin writes, “both wished to re-present Plato as a ‘door into Christianity,’ through the medium of the genius of Origen.... entirely absorbed by the same overall task: the rereading of Origen on how to Christianize Plato, as part and parcel of the evangelization of the educated classes of their day.”¹⁶ It is not difficult to see the influence of Platonism and Neo-Platonism in Gregory of Nyssa’s ‘beautiful vision’ and doctrine of perpetual progression.

LANDMARKS IN DEVELOPMENT

The doctrine of theosis developed differently in the increasingly separated Eastern and Western churches. In Eastern Orthodoxy, two strands emerged. Don Fairbairn describes one as ‘mystical’ and the other as “personal.”¹⁷ The mystical strand, exemplified by Origen and the Cappadocians, tends to focus on an impersonal sharing in God’s attributes and, among some of the more speculative theologians, absorption into the being of God. The personal strand, on the other hand, exemplified by Irenaeus, Athanasius, and Cyril of Alexandria, tends to focus on “sharing in the personal communion between the persons of the Trinity” as adopted sons.¹⁸ The West, on the other hand, jettisoned the doctrine, largely through the influence of Augustine, who articulated a different doctrine of salvation along juridical lines.

Man’s original, created nature is one of the critical areas of contention between Eastern and Western theologians. For Eastern theologians, divinity was latent in the soul; our nature was made for divinity; it longed for divinity. Gregory of Nyssa repeatedly asserted that “the soul grows by participation in what

¹⁴ Jonathan Hill writes, “Origen rejects the idea that humans are intrinsically embodied, physical beings and accepts instead Plato’s belief that the body is simply a temporary container for an eternal, immaterial soul.” Jonathan Hill, *The History of Christian Thought: The Fascinating Story of the Great Christian Thinkers and How They Helped Shape the World as We Know it Today* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003), 55.

¹⁵ Everett Ferguson, “God’s Infinity and Man’s Mutability: Perpetual Progress According to Gregory of Nyssa,” in *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 18 (1973): 62 quoting Gregory of Nyssa, *Vita Moysis II*, ed. J. Danielou (Paris: Sources Chretiennes, 1955): 224-25.

¹⁶ J.A. McGuckin, “Strategic Adaptation of Deification in the Cappadocians,” 99.

¹⁷ Donald Fairbairn, “Patristic Soteriology: Three Trajectories,” in *JETS* 50/2 (June 2007): 293-94.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 293.

transcends it.”¹⁹ The finite soul was made to perpetually reach for the infinite. Western theologians, on the other hand, saw immortality as something externally bestowed, not something latent within our human nature. John R. Lenz notes, “Greek patristic theology stresses the fact that Plato’s soul is akin to the divine by nature, whereas in Western Christianity immortality is conferred as a gift from God.”²⁰

This distinction has important ramifications for Christ’s work on Earth. Eastern theologians emphasize the importance of the incarnation, whereas Western theologians tend to emphasize the importance of the cross. The incarnation points to the meta-purpose of humanity and creation: communion with God’s divinity. In other words, Adam was intended to ascend beyond his original created estate. The cross, on the other hand, points to sin and the fall. Jesus’ ministry, in this view, is to restore man to his original created state in the garden. Thus, the West focuses on redemption; the East focuses upon a cosmic participation in God. Redemption, in this view, is merely a step towards the larger goal of communion. In laying out the Orthodox position, Andrew Louth writes,

Deification is a way of expressing a sense of the ‘plan...of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things’ (Eph 3:9), a plan that is not exhausted in redemption made necessary by the Fall of humankind; it is a way of summing up the purpose of creation.²¹

In other words, the fall and redemption are a minor story; divine emptying and human deification are the major story. Both sides see Christ’s work as restoring true humanity; however, they have different visions of the nature and goal of humanity.

THEOSIS AND EASTERN ORTHODOXY

One of the most developed and creative proponents of *theosis* was Maximus the Confessor, who wrote in the 6th century. Maximus took the concept of *perichoresis* used to describe the hypostatic union of Christ and applied it to the believer’s relationship with God. Christ, according to Maximus, “Being God did not hinder him from becoming man, nor did becoming man diminish his divinity. He remained wholly one amid both, since he preserved both natures, and was truly existent in both natures at once.”²² Similarly, the human and divine natures remain

¹⁹ Everett Ferguson, “God’s Infinity and Man’s Mutability,” 62 quoting Gregory of Nyssa, “The Commentary on the Canticles,” in *From Glory to Glory*, trans. Jean Danielou and Hubert Musurillo (New York, 1961), 190.

²⁰ John R. Lenz, “Deification of the Philosopher in Classical Greece,” in *Partakers of the Divine Nature*, 53.

²¹ Andrew Louth, “The Place of *Theosis* in Eastern Orthodoxy,” in *Partakers of the Divine Nature*, 36.

²² Elena Vishnevskaya, “Divinization as Perichoretic Embrace in Maximus the Confessor,” in *Partakers of the Divine Nature*, 133 quoting Maximus, *Ambiguorum liber*, 42.

mutually distinct even while they “interpenetrate and exchange that which is particular to each nature.”²³ This divine-human dance is truly synergistic, requiring the participation of both God and man. For Maximus, “the stillness of the soul is transforming—unperturbed by the natural order left behind, the soul penetrates and partakes of the divine things and, in the end, is divinized....”²⁴ Believers become so closely related to God that they “become all that God is, excluding identity of essence. The human being receives to itself the whole of God and, as a prize for ascending to God, inherits God Himself.”²⁵ Christ died in order to grant all men the hope of resurrection. Actual resurrection requires that one diligently seeks God and attains the goal of deification.²⁶ Maximus’ vision of *theosis* upholds the distinction between God and man, but the line is somewhat blurred.

Gregory Palamas was another key proponent in the history of *theosis*. The Eastern Orthodox Church officially adopted Palamas’ teaching in the 14th century. Interest in Palamas regained prominence in the early 20th century when an Augustinian friar, Martin Jugie, accused Palamas of heresy and rejected his principle theological contribution—a distinction between the *essence* and *energies* of God. Man cannot know God in his essence; rather, men can only know God in his uncreated *energies*.²⁷ Vladimir Lossky came to Palamas’ rescue and defended his distinction, making it a hallmark of Eastern Orthodoxy in the 20th century.²⁸ The energies/essence distinction is the basis upon which Orthodox theologians maintain the creator/creature distinction. Man is divinized by participating in his energies (i.e. power, grace, immortality, incorruptibility), but he remains essentially distinct from God.

THEOSIS & PROTESTANTISM

A group of Finnish Lutherans held conversations with the Orthodox Church from 1970-1986. In a meeting in 1977, they experienced a ‘breakthrough,’ realizing that they truly had common ground, a “parallel between justification and deification, both ‘based on the real presence of Christ in the word of God, in the

²³ *Ibid.*, 134.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 135.

²⁵ Elena Vishnevskaya, “Divinization as Perichoretic Embrace in Maximus the Confessor,” in *Partakers of the Divine Nature*, 141 quoting Maximus, *Ambiguorum liber*, 41.

²⁶ Maximus’ vision of human freedom is similar to an Arminian notion of free-will. Deification is a synergistic goal, requiring rigorous spiritual disciplines. His spirituality had a very contemplative, ascetic tone; he sought to escape the flesh and find stillness in the contemplation of God. I think that this ascetic, contemplative focus marks Orthodox spirituality in general. In my opinion, this is one of the chief failures in their praxis.

²⁷ This follows the apophatic tradition, which affirms the essential incomprehensibility of God. One cannot truly say what God is; rather, one can only say what God is not.

²⁸ Lossky is credited with the neo-Palamism movement, which raised Palamas from historical obscurity. Jeffrey D. Finch, “Neo-Palamism, Divinizing Grace, and the Breach between East and West,” in *Partakers of the Divine Nature*, 233.

sacraments, and in worship.”²⁹ The Lutheran theologian, Tuomo Mannermaa, reinterpreted certain passages from Luther’s writings that had a deificational bent. For example, Luther preached, “God pours out Christ His dear Son over us and pours Himself into us and draws us into Himself, so that He becomes completely humanified (*vermenschet*) and we become completely deified... and everything is altogether one thing, God, Christ, and you.”³⁰ Mannermaa argues that Luther taught that Christ is present through faith in the believer in justification. Luther’s justification, then, would include Christ’s indwelling perfection. Thus, justification and deification are reconcilable, since Christ is really present through faith. While Mannermaa’s interpretations are questionable, he does succeed in demonstrating that justification and *theosis* are reconcilable in Luther’s thought at some level.

Carl Mosser argues that deification is present in Calvin’s thought as well. Mosser writes, “The believer’s union with Christ and the Father, the indwelling presence of the Spirit in our hearts, restoration of the divine image, being made like Jesus and our eventual glorification are each important themes in Calvin’s soteriology and eschatology. They are all pervaded by the language and imagery of *theosis*.”³¹ Mosser reasons that these themes are all very similar to *theosis*; therefore, *theosis* must be present in Calvin’s work. Deification seems to lurk in the background of Calvin’s thought, popping up in many places, but never prominent. “Therein lies the significance,” for Mosser, “the largely presuppositional role of deification in Calvin’s thought is strong evidence that by the end of his life Calvin had developed something like what the Eastern Orthodox term the patristic *phronema* or mindset.”³² The problem with Mosser’s analysis lies in his imprecision with regard to the Eastern doctrine. For Mosser, *theosis* is simply “a transforming union of the believer with God.”³³ Calvin’s doctrine of union with Christ fits with this definition, but the definition is too reductionistic. As seen above, the Cappodocian doctrine of *theosis* carried extra metaphysical baggage along with it, which is certainly not present in Calvin’s thought. I would agree with Mosser, though, that Calvin’s doctrine of union with Christ has much in common with deification.

Most convincingly, the theology of John and especially Charles Wesley has been tied to Patristic *theosis* sources. John Wesley’s doctrine of *entire sanctification* was likely adapted from the doctrine of *theosis*. Wesley was very familiar with William Cave’s book on patristic spirituality, *Primitive Christianity*. The doctrine of *theosis* in

²⁹ Kurt E. Marquart, “Luther and Theosis,” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 64:3 (July 2000): 182 quoting Hannu T. Kamppuri, editor, *Mikkeli 1986. The Seventh Theological Conversations between Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church, Mikkeli, June 3rd-11th, 1986*, Publications of Luther-Agricola Society, Band 16 (Helsinki: Vammalan, 1986), 14, 19.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 185 quoting Martin Luther, *Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, 58 volumes (Weimar, 1883-), 20:229, 30.

³¹ Carl Mosser, “The Greatest Possible Blessing: Calvin and Deification,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 55.1 (2002):55.

³² *Ibid.*, 56.

³³ *Ibid.*, 36.

the thought of Clement, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Macarius the Egyptian, and Ephraem Syrus particularly influence the Wesleys.³⁴ Christensen writes,

The effect of Wesley's reconstruction of theosis was the turning of the Patristic ladder of divine ascent on its side to make perfection 'into a genetic scale of development within historical existence'... By dismissing the Platonic notion of 'becoming gods according to grace' in favor of the less ambitious notion of becoming like God, by grace through faith, 'Christian perfection' suddenly emerged as an attainable goal.³⁵

Charles Wesley's hymns mirror the Patristic doctrine more faithfully. For example, in Hymn #5, *Hymns for the Nativity of Our Lord* (1745), Charles writes the following verses: "He deigns in flesh to appear...And *make us all divine*; And we the life of God shall know, For God is manifest below. Made perfect first in love...We shall *from earth remove*, And see his glorious face... *And man shall all be lost in God*."³⁶ Among all of the Protestant traditions, Wesleyanism shares the most similarities with the doctrine of *theosis*. Both primarily focus upon growth in perfection (sanctification). Both have a similar emphasis on man's free will and a synergistic understanding of salvation as the goal towards which believers strive. Both have a high view of divine enabling grace. Indeed, a number of contemporary Wesleyan scholars, including Michael Christensen, are seeking to recover a purer emphasis on *theosis* within their tradition.

CONCLUSIONS

I think that it is absolutely necessary to guard the distinction between God and his creation, especially in today's culture where pantheism, monism, and panentheism are becoming increasingly popular. Insofar, then, as the talk of deification blurs the lines, I oppose it. In this regard, I have much more appreciation for the personal strand of *theosis* (Irenaeus, Athanasius, and Cyril of Alexandria) that has largely been eclipsed in the Orthodox tradition, which has followed the mystical strand through the influence of Maximus and Palamas.

I also notice a consistent tendency to interpret Scripture ontologically. The image of God, for example, must mean that man share the same type of being or substance as God. Louth writes,

Orthodox theology wants to speak of this change in terms of ontology, not because this change involves a conversion into something other than human, but rather because the change

³⁴ Michael J. Christensen, "Theosis and Sanctification: John Wesley's Reformulation of a Patristic Doctrine," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 31:2 (Fall 1992): 75-76.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 88.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 89. Emphasis mine.

involved is fundamental, radical, a rebuilding of what it is to be human from the roots up.³⁷

Basically, mystical *theosis* desires to redefine what it means to be human. True humans are meant to transcend this world (platonic ontology). Many of the distinctions seem to presuppose an emanation theory of God—we can only know God’s lower emanations. In fact, the scheme seems anti-creational, evidenced by the centrality of ascetic contemplation in the process of *theosis*. It sounds like they are trying to escape physical—material life, seeking a higher life in the mind of God. Apparently, man was not made for this world.³⁸ Furthermore, other than a few mystical episodes (i.e. Moses on Mt. Sinai), the Old Testament seems to have little influence in the theological accounts of deification.

These criticisms aside, I have to admit that they have a beautiful vision for man’s relationship with God. They articulate a richer goal for humanity in the eschaton; and, Gregory of Nyssa’s conception of perpetual progress is appealing. They describe a rich *telos* for humanity; however, their conceptions of regeneration, justification, faith and repentance leave much to be desired. It appears that they have little to no concept of justification. In fact, their ontological preferences predispose them against a forensic doctrine like justification. Don Fairbairn sympathetically writes, “The major difference between Eastern Orthodoxy and virtually all forms of evangelicalism lies in the relation between justification and sanctification and Orthodoxy’s lack of emphasis on the distinction between the two.”³⁹ Eastern Orthodoxy has a robust understanding of the process of transformation and God’s empowering grace; however, they have an impoverished understanding of the essential beginning to the process. They focus solely upon regeneration that all receive at baptism, which instills the potential for salvation. Fairbairn also explains, “Orthodoxy’s failure to distinguish adequately between justification and sanctification and its lack of emphasis on the former is related to its understanding of grace.”⁴⁰ Their sole emphasis on empowering grace leads them to see the Christian life as something to be attained. God gives us the power, if we diligently strive, to become divine. They tend to miss the gift of God’s unmerited favor, the dominant focus of grace in the New Testament. It is no wonder that they miss the initial gift of life. I also disagree with their thoroughly synergistic conception of salvation.

³⁷ Andrew Louth, “The Place of *Theosis* in Eastern Orthodoxy,” 39-40.

³⁸ Analogical interpretations make much better sense of the disputed passages than ontological interpretations. For example, Al Wolters took a closer look at “partners of the divine nature” in 2 Pet 1:4. After a detailed philological study, including all of the Hellenistic sources, he concludes that it is better translated “partners of the deity” and should be understood relationally, not ontologically. Al Wolters, “Partners of the Deity: A Covenantal Reading of 2 Peter 1:4,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 25 (1990): 28-44; with postscript 26 (1991): 418-20.

³⁹ Don Fairbairn, “Salvation as *Theosis*: The Teaching of Eastern Orthodoxy,” 50.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 49.

I think that continuing dialogue can be fruitful for everyone involved. Protestants stand to gain a richer sense of the process and *telos* of salvation. Orthodox stand to gain assurance of God's gracious favor in which God accepts them and makes them his children at the beginning of the process. Most of all, I think that the Reformed doctrine of *union with Christ* can open up a fruitful dialogue. Union with Christ offers a much richer picture of salvation from beginning to end. It incorporates every aspect of salvation, man's goal in creation, the new creation's *telos* in Christ, the fullness of God given to the believer in Christ (i.e. God's empowering grace), gradual renewal into the image of Christ, mystical union with Christ, and holiness in Christ. What's more, union with Christ naturally fits man into creation and makes sense of the Old Testament.

Being Sarah's Children

A discussion of Peter's reference to Sarah in 1 Peter 3:5-6

Jenilyn Swett

For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.
1 Peter 3:5-6

Throughout Scripture, women are given a measure of honor and attention that was counter-cultural for the time in which it was written. In the Old Testament, we see God giving special attention to women who were marginalized by their barrenness or by unjust treatment towards them. In the New Testament, we see Jesus showing deep compassion for women, acknowledging the dignity and brokenness of women who had sinned and been sinned against in countless ways. His disciples followed suit, welcoming women into their community, and we see several New Testament writers granting women much more responsibility and respect than their culture would have typically offered. The Epistles also provide us with the apostles' teachings on the roles of women in the home and the church – teachings that are the topic of much study and scrutiny today. Such study seems imperative in order for us to understand how we are called to live in our fullest humanity as men and women. It is this conviction that leads me to embark on a study of one such instructive passage.

In 1 Peter 3:1-6, Peter writes instructions to Christian wives about how they are to conduct themselves in their marriages and lives. In verses 5 and 6, he references “the holy women who hoped in God” and Sarah, the wife of Abraham, in particular. Sarah is one of very few women who are named as examples of Christian living in Scripture, and she is the only woman referenced in the New Testament as an example for Christian wives in particular. While likely citing a specific reference from Genesis 18:12, Peter also draws on the wider story of Sarah to create a pedagogical example for the wives of Asia Minor. Appealing to his audiences' understanding of Sarah's character based on both the Genesis story and Jewish tradition, Peter admonishes wives to apply her example in their lives by following her obedience and faith.

Based on what we read of Sarah in the Genesis story, it is not immediately clear why Peter would choose her as an example for Christian women. She plays a decidedly secondary role in the Abraham accounts, often not appearing at all. On

the occasions when she is part of the story, there is deception, bitterness, and a lack of faith – certainly not exemplary qualities. It seems that Peter must have had a different view of this woman. How would he and the women he wrote to have understood Sarah? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to examine the original story of Sarah and its interpretations. Commentators vary in their opinions of Sarah; treatments range from sympathetic to judgmental, and some commentators fail to treat her as a significant figure. Given Peter's apparent esteem of Sarah, I will focus mainly on sympathetic opinions of her.

The book of Genesis was written by Moses for the purpose of teaching the Israelite community their history. The call of Abraham, God's promise to make him the father of many nations, and the birth of Isaac to a barren Sarah were all vital pieces of that history. In his commentary on Genesis, Walter Brueggemann points out that while the story of Sarah and Abraham is significant, it is not the foundation of Israelite history; he writes, "The call to Sarah and Abraham has to do not simply with the forming of Israel but with the re-forming of creation, the transforming of the nations. The stories of this family are not ends in themselves but point to God's larger purposes."¹ Given this larger story of which they are a part and God's redemption in that story, it is easy to forget the human, sin-wrought reality of Sarah and Abraham's lives. Though remembered as heroes of faith,² the journey of this couple frequently reminds us of their mere humanity. For the sake of brevity and the topic at hand, I will only discuss the events of their story that involve Sarah.

We are first introduced to Sarah³ as Abraham's wife in Genesis 11:29-30, at which point we learn a significant fact about her: she is barren. While not an uncommon state for women of her day, it was a devastating one in a culture in which maintaining one's family line was of utmost importance, and one which made God's promise of offspring a particularly baffling one. Nonetheless, God repeats this promise three times: Genesis 12:1-3,7; 15:1-6; and 17:16-19, with the promise becoming more specific with each iteration. The text gives us no evidence that Sarah was aware of these promises until Genesis 18 when she and Abraham are visited by three strangers.⁴ From inside her tent, she hears Yahweh say, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son."⁵ Further discussion will follow on her reaction to this news.

¹ Walter Brueggemann. *Genesis* (Interpretation. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982) 105.

² Hebrews 11:11,17.

³ Sarah is known as "Sarai" until Genesis 17:15, when God tells the newly-christened Abraham that Sarah will be her new name. She will always appear that way in this discussion, unless the name Sarai is used in quotations from other authors.

⁴ The text also does not tell us Sarah was unaware – she may have been with Abraham when God had visited him previously, or they may have discussed the news. Commentators do not seem to treat Genesis 18:10 as a great newsflash for Sarah, but her reaction suggests to me that it may have been so.

⁵ Genesis 18:10 ESV (all further Scripture quotations ESV).

In addition to the story of Sarah's barrenness and eventual childbearing, Sarah is featured in two other plot lines in Genesis: first, in two parallel stories of travels with Abraham in foreign lands; second, in relation to her maid Hagar, whom she offers to Abraham as a concubine. In Genesis 12 and 20, Sarah and Abraham travel abroad, and in both cases Abraham asks Sarah to pose as his sister. If the foreigners know that beautiful Sarah is his wife, he fears that they will be consumed with lust and jealousy and kill him. He asks her to play along with this deception for his sake, and she agrees. In both cases, this leads to potentially dangerous situations for Sarah, first being taken into Pharaoh's court, then into Abimelech's. Sarna emphasizes the fact that "only divine intervention protects her honor."⁶ God sends a plague on Pharaoh's house, and alerts Abimelech of his error in a dream, and in both cases Abraham and Sarah are sent away with no evidence of harm done to Sarah.

It seems likely that these two instances contributed significantly to the way in which Sarah would be remembered in Jewish tradition. Here we see God intervening on her behalf, which no doubt ascribes to her a unique honor. Beyond that, Sarah is remembered for an almost mythical beauty, which is a prominent factor in these stories. According to Jewish legend, on their sojourn "the whole of Egypt was resplendent with the beauty of Sarah. In comparison with her, all other beauties were like apes compared with men. She excelled Eve herself."⁷ Her beauty, which made her desirable to the men of Abimelech's court even as a ninety-year-old woman, was a source of great fascination and pride for Jews.⁸

In Genesis 16 we see the beginning of the second aforementioned storyline: the contentious relationship between Sarah and Hagar. Since she has not been able to provide Abraham with an heir, Sarah follows the custom of the day and offers him her servant Hagar as his wife. Sarna explains that this may have been because Sarah had given up hope of having her own children, or she may have been influenced by "the widespread popular belief that a woman who is unable to conceive may become fertile by adopting a child."⁹ Calvin suggests that her motivations weren't merely selfish, but that Sarah acted out of a desire to see God's promise fulfilled, and credited it to her as something of a pious act.¹⁰ When she conceived, Hagar "looked with contempt on her mistress;" Sarah was outraged by this and with her husband's permission she "dealt harshly with her, and [Hagar] fled from her."¹¹ Yahweh sends an angel to her aid in the wilderness, and tells her

⁶ Nahm M. Sarna. *Genesis*. The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 94.

⁷ Katheryn Pfisterer Darr, *Far More Precious than Jewels: Perspectives on Biblical Women* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 96.

⁸ Sarna. *Genesis*, 94.

⁹ *Ibid.* 119.

¹⁰ John Calvin, *Genesis*, Calvin's Commentaries, Volume 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2009), 423.

¹¹ Genesis 16:4,6. In regards to the issue of "permission," some scholars highlight situations such as this (Genesis 16:2,6;21:12) as evidence that Abraham was obedient to Sarah, rather

that she will bear a son named Ishmael. Sarah's heart remains hard towards Hagar and Ishmael throughout the rest of their story, but God continues to protect and provide for the outsiders. Brueggemann writes that for Abraham and Sarah, Ishmael's presence is yet another "temptation not to trust the promise. The very child who discloses the *passion* of God for the outsider is no small *threat* to the insider."¹² I will now turn my attention back to that promise and its fulfillment.

When Sarah is told that she will bear a child, she laughs in disbelief, which she later denies to God.¹³ Brueggemann sees Sarah and Abraham as being resigned to her barrenness, unable to see beyond their hopelessness – in spite of Yahweh's persistent promise. But, he writes, "The resolve of God to open a future by a new heir does not depend on the readiness of Abraham and Sarah to accept it. God keeps his own counsel and will work his own will. It will happen, if not in the context of ready faith (which is here denied), then in the context of fearful, resistant laughter."¹⁴ Of course, one year later, Sarah would laugh again, this time with joy as she meets her son Isaac and welcomes him with a song of celebration.¹⁵ Here again, we see evidence of miraculous divine intervention in Sarah's life; indeed, Schneider observes that most of the positive actions that we see toward Sarah in the Genesis story are carried out by Yahweh himself.¹⁶ The birth of Isaac to a barren old woman is the ultimate gracious gift; at long last, she gives Abraham an heir, and years of longing for the fulfillment of Yahweh's promise to them come to a joyous end – which heralds the beginning of the covenant family.

It is as the mother of this family that Sarah would be remembered. Along with her husband, she becomes a symbol of hope for the Israelite people, a symbol used by Isaiah in Chapter 51 to encourage the exiled Jews. Katheryn Darr writes, "Only then, when her descendants again find themselves in the most barren and hopeless of circumstances, is Sarah's story lifted up by a prophet who perceived in 'the creation of Israel out of Sarah's barren womb' a paradigm for 'the new creation of Israel out of desolate Jerusalem.' If God could bring new life out of barren Sarah, was anything too wondrous for the Lord?"¹⁷ This would be the last mention of her in the Old Testament, but her story lived and grew in Jewish tradition, with rabbis painting her as "a model for faithful Jewish living."¹⁸ Jewish

than Sarah submitting to him. However, Carson points out that Abraham always has the last word as husband (1036). This observation of Abraham conceding to Sarah's plan leads Sailhamer to claim that Moses was intentionally creating a parallel between this instance and the Genesis 3 account of Eve convincing Adam to eat the fruit. "Sarah's plan, like Eve's, is an attempt to achieve God's blessing on her own, without God's help" (176).

¹² Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 153. Emphasis original to the author.

¹³ Genesis 18:12-15

¹⁴ Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 160.

¹⁵ Sarna, *Genesis*, 146.

¹⁶ Tammi J. Schneider, *Mothers of Promise: Women in the Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 36.

¹⁷ Isaiah 51:1-2. Darr, *More Precious*, 113.

¹⁸ Darr, *More Precious*, 116.

philosopher Philo, writing in the first century, embellished the story of Sarah's death (told briefly in Genesis 23) by writing an obituary of sorts for her in his *Life of Abraham*:

His dearest wife, most noble in all things... [gave] countless examples of her love for her husband: her abandonment of family members together with him; her unhesitant migration from home; her continuous wanderings on foreign soil, one after the other; her privation during famine; and her attendance on campaigns during times of war. For always and everywhere was she near him as a help, leaving him at no place and time – truly a partner in life and in events throughout life... She did not, as some women do, shun misadventures and lie in wait for pieces of good luck, but accepted her lot in both realms with total readiness, as something belonging to and befitting a wedded woman.¹⁹

This tribute to the Israelite matriarch may take some liberties, but it seems a fitting summary of Sarah's life and the most noble of her qualities. It also reflects the enduring nature of Jewish esteem for Sarah in its expression by one of Peter's contemporaries.

I will now turn my attention to Peter's first letter. There is some question as to whether this letter was written by Peter or if that is merely a pseudonym; this is partly due to the lack of a concrete date for the letter, and nothing that necessarily places it in his lifetime. Another possibility is that it was written by an amanuensis under Peter's direction. Commentators consulted for this work agree that the letter was written in Peter's lifetime and he is most likely the author.²⁰ Peter directs his letter to believers in Asia Minor, specifically in Pontus, Capadocia, Galatia, Asia, and Bythina, "a vast area of 129,000 square miles."²¹ Although there was a large Jewish population in Asia Minor by the first century, this letter was likely addressed to mostly Gentile converts. Nonetheless, Peter's letter contains multiple allusions to Jewish tradition and history, such as this reference to Sarah. The Gentile converts were now being embraced as part of the covenant family and educated on the family history.

Chapters 2 and 3 of 1 Peter offer direction on how believers should live in the world. This was of great concern to Peter because believers were a minority in Asia Minor, and the climate was often hostile towards them. Hence, in his household codes he focuses on "life at those points where the Christian community

¹⁹ Qtd. in Maren Niehoff, "Mother and Maiden, Sister and Spouse: Sarah in Philonic Midrash," *Harvard Theological Review* 97, no. 4 (October 2004): 419.

²⁰ A detailed discussion of this issue can be found in Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 5ff.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

interfaces with the world around it,”²² and does so by offering “various examples of accommodating, rejecting, subverting, and transforming culture.”²³ In this letter, Peter specifically addresses slaves, wives, and husbands; the passage at hand specifically mentions women who are married to nonbelievers. These women would have been in a difficult position in their culture. As the writings of Plutarch demonstrate, women were expected to embrace their husband’s religious beliefs: “A wife ought not to make friends of her own, but to enjoy her husband’s friends in common with him. The gods are the first and most important friends. Wherefore it is becoming for a wife to worship and know only the gods that her husband believes in.”²⁴ Thus wives who had converted to Christianity were already disobeying their husbands by cultural standards, so Peter encouraged their submission and respect to the fullest extent that their newfound faith would allow.

What Peter was asking of women – submission to their husbands and a focus on inner beauty – was nothing new. He reminds them that this is what the “holy women who hoped in God” used to do.²⁵ Michaels suggests that Peter may have been referencing the four Jewish “matriarchs,” Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah, and Davids writes, “For Peter there is no discontinuity between the people of God of the OT and the NT... Because the Christian women he addresses are also looking forward to a coming hope, they and the OT women have the same perspective.”²⁶ Greco-Roman culture was not without revered examples of women; Plutarch and Xenophon offered virtuous women as role models, but in verses 5 and 6 we see Peter pointing women towards role models who share the roots of their faith.²⁷ He uses allusion to the Old Testament to celebrate their common history and provide a specific role model for these women.

Verse 6 begins with the Greek word *κύριος*, indicating the introduction of a concrete example: Sarah.²⁸ Peter presents Sarah as an example of wifely submission, evidenced by the fact that she obeyed Abraham and called him “lord” (*kyrios*). The only reference to Sarah calling Abraham lord in the Genesis story is in chapter 18, verse 12. In this case though, she does not call Abraham “lord” as a statement of submission but merely in reference to him when he may have not even been present.

Commentators translate this word in various ways: lord, master, husband; Davids points out that while this would have been a common term in Sarah’s day, almost interchangeable with the word husband, “Jews of Peter’s period saw it as

²² Peter H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1990), 115.

²³ Jobes, *1 Peter*, 4.

²⁴ Qtd. in Jeannine K. Brown, “Silent Wives, Verbal Believers: Ethical and Hermeneutical Considerations in 1 Peter 3:1-6 and its Context,” *Word & World* 24, no. 4 (Fall 2004): 400.

²⁵ 1 Peter 5:5.

²⁶ Michaels, *1 Peter*, 164. Davids, *First Epistle*, 120.

²⁷ Jobes, *1 Peter*, 206.

²⁸ Michaels, *1 Peter*, 164.

evidence of the proper respectful attitude toward a husband... While the grasping of an isolated term outside its literary context may bother modern readers, it was quite in line with the exegesis of Peter's day and thus spoke to his readers."²⁹ However, this one relatively quotidian word seems to be insufficient reason for Peter to uphold Sarah as a model of submission and has resulted in a great deal of criticism of this passage. One such critic writes that Peter "has molded Sarah to the image of the ideal Hellenistic wife, even at the price of reversing the biblical record."³⁰ Many others agree, though, that despite Peter's brevity, for the women of Asia Minor the example of Sarah is informed by more than just one word.

Peter refers to his audience as "sojourners and exiles."³¹ This language illuminates a parallel between these people who had become strangers to their unbelieving culture and their covenant parents who had left their country and people because of their faith. The most difficult of Sarah's sojourns described in Genesis were those in which she is put in danger by Abraham's deception. In Genesis 12:13 and 20:5,13 we learn that Sarah has submitted to Abraham, even though his request of her is "morally questionable and selfish."³² Such behavior by a husband would be especially familiar to the women Peter addresses who are married to nonbelievers, to the extent that Brown suggests the frightening things referred to in 1 Peter 3:6b could be intimidation or coercion by their husbands.³³ Certainly, Abraham was a God-fearing man and there are no hints of threats or violence by Abraham against Sarah in the Genesis story, but Peter is "focused on Sarah and her behavior, not on who Abraham was or how he treated her. His argument is from the greater to the lesser: if Sarah 'obeyed' Abraham and called him 'Lord,' the Christian wives in Asia should at least treat their husbands with deference and respect."³⁴ Bringing this view back to the actual Old Testament text at hand, Kiley asserts that Peter draws out the term "lord" from Genesis 18:12 "to typify what he sees as the commendable attitude of a wife as seen in Genesis 12 and 20."³⁵

Some take Sarah's example farther than merely that of submission and obedience, identifying her actions in these two episodes as self-sacrificing.³⁶ Spencer examines Peter's use of Sarah and goes farther still, suggesting that she is a

²⁹ Davids, *First Epistle*, 121.

³⁰ Dorothy I. Sly, "1 Peter 3:6b in the Light of Philo and Josephus," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 110, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 129.

³¹ 1 Peter 2:11.

³² D.A. Carson, "1 Peter 3:6," In *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* edited by G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 1036.

³³ Brown, "Silent Wives," 400.

³⁴ Michaels, *1 Peter*, 165.

³⁵ Mark Kiley, "Like Sara: The Tale of Terror Behind 1 Peter 3:6," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 106, no. 4 (December 1987): 691.

³⁶ Sarna, *Genesis*, 95.

Christ-type, “willing vicariously to suffer for Abraham.”³⁷ This seems like a nearly impossible stretch of the imagination – the vicarious sufferings of Sarah could hardly be compared to those of Christ. Peter simply uses Sarah, as known by Scripture and Jewish tradition, as an example of the attitude with which believing wives should live. The women of Asia Minor could take comfort in the fact that Sarah knew the hopelessness of being barren, the impatience of waiting on God to fulfill his promises, and the difficulty of being married to an imperfect man, yet her faith and her marriage remained and God was faithful to her.

In his faithfulness, Yahweh makes Sarah the mother of many nations, including the women to whom Peter is writing as he reminds them in 6b.³⁸ Grudem clarifies, “Peter’s insistence on doing what is right is a reminder that no acts of disobedience in Sarah’s life are to be imitated by Christian wives; it is her submission to her husband and her trust in God that Peter commends.”³⁹ The true encouragement here comes from the acknowledgement that they are now part of the family, a family founded by the grace of God through a mother who is an enduring symbol of hope, beauty, and faith – in spite of her sinful flaws. Carson’s suggested translation of 6b is helpful here: “You have become Sarah’s children, so do good and do not give way to fear.”⁴⁰ In other words, you are part of the family, adopted into the heritage of Sarah, so act like it!

Peter commends Sarah as an example to wives by referencing a single Old Testament Scripture in which he finds a representation of Sarah’s admirable qualities. As with all human examples used to teach and instruct in Scripture, Sarah was not a perfect model, but she was a redeemed one. As ones chosen by God and given enduring faith through his grace, the sojourning women of Asia Minor could look to the example of their sojourning mother Sarah for instruction and encouragement. Knowing her story, her children – both daughters and sons – can look beyond her life to see the miraculous and gracious work of God, finding our ultimate encouragement there.

³⁷ Aidi Besancon Spencer, “Peter’s Pedagogical Method in 1 Peter 3:6,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 10.1 (2000): 119.

³⁸ It should be noted that some commentators suggest that 3:6b is a reference to Proverbs 3:25, but none offer further discussion on any particular significance of this reference.

³⁹ Wayne Grudem, “Wives Like Sarah, and the Husbands Who Honor Them,” In *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2006), 202.

⁴⁰ Carson, “1 Peter 3:6,” 1036.

Hegemony, Marginalization, and Youth Ministry: A Cultural Meta-Analysis

Stephen Yates

“The Kid who Doesn’t Fit In” is a common archetype in the adolescent world – a world itself at once the driving force behind modern culture, entertainment, and economy and ostracized from that culture due to parental and societal abandonment.¹ As ‘the marginalized of the marginalized’, these students are often sought after by youth ministers and students wishing to emulate the example of Christ to reach the broken. However, even after the gospel has taken root in an individual’s life and relational capital had been sufficiently built to merit the student joining a church, the marginalized seem to fall on ‘rocky soil’ as they attempt to integrate into the local youth ministry. Ministers react to this by increasing their own efforts to build trust with specific students, planning teaching series on community, love for the other, and evangelism/mission, and attempting to have contextualized and appealing ministry models, yet even the most loving and most relevant ministries seem to struggle with ministry to the marginalized. What these ministers fail to see is that the microcosm of their student ministry is not a random sampling of adolescents learning to follow Christianity, but a complex system of overlapping subcultural and ideological groupings which exert influence upon one another, consciously and unconsciously creating an unsafe environment where the marginalized are threatened to the extent that ministry is stifled and the gospel silenced.

Some will challenge the complexity of this line of thinking, for youth ministry as a field has been aware of the influences of various cultural groups within the adolescent world for decades. The very genesis of modern youth ministries, parachurch groups such as *Youth for Christ* and *Young Life*, utilized (at the time) relevant cultural products such as jazz² as well as influential youth (such as football captains, student class presidents, etc.) to exert peer influence on the adolescent community.³ As youth culture splintered into various ideological factions, the ecclesiological children of these parachurch organizations, the ‘youth

¹ Patricia Hersch, *A Tribe Apart* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1998), 19.

² Mark W. Cannister, “Youth Ministry’s Historical Context: The Education of Young People” *Starting Right: Thinking Theologically about Youth Ministry*, ed. Kenda Creasy Dean, Chap Clark, and Dave Rahn. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 87.

³ Dave Rahn, “Focusing Youth Ministry through Student Leadership.” *Starting Right: Thinking Theologically about Youth Ministry*, ed. Kenda Creasy Dean, Cahp Clark, and Dave Rahn. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 168.

group', attempted to mute the marginalizing nature of having multiple factions of youth within the same smaller church microcosm by triumphing against 'cliques' and mixing populations of youth with dissimilar tastes together in attempts to force community. More recent leaders have dissuaded such approaches: popular youth minister Doug Fields of Rick Warren's Saddleback Church advocates youth small groups comprised of youth with similar cultural affinities and led by volunteers with similar-enough cultural knowledge to be relevant to that specific group.⁴ Youth theologian and analyst Chap Clark of Fuller Seminary likewise points out a growing academic confidence in 'peer cluster theory', the idea that adolescents today structure their personal identities around small 'clusters' of 4-8 students with similar social and relational affinities, going so far as to argue that such clusters take the place of family units for today's abandoned teens.⁵ The outworkings of Clark's theories are helpful in seeing ministry to individual teens in terms of ministering not only to the specific teen, but also to their cluster, which will no doubt influence whether the teen trusts an adult or ideology.

This being said, none of these approaches adequately handle anything beyond the existence of cultural sub-units within the adolescent world. They do not acknowledge (with a slight exception within Clark's work) that these sub-units interact as independent and yet interconnected social bodies, exerting a constant stream of influence, authority, fear, persecution, and a host of other emotions and actions. For this level of meta-analysis, one must turn to the realms of cultural, social, and political theory – interestingly, such interactions resemble the practices of nations and people groups more than children playing together.

The father of such thought is Karl Marx, whose political theories posited that the basis for all cultural interaction was the authority and power derived from controlling the means of production within a society. Yet it is one of his disciples who shed light upon the way in which subcultural units interact together, the Italian neo-Marxist Antonio Gramsci. While Marx believed that ideological positions were simply placeholders for spheres of controlling production, Gramsci believed that such positions might have begun with production, but eventually would become forces in their own right. In this way, nations did not only have to control the means of production to have power, but also had to have influence over the ideological spheres themselves.⁶ By possessing this control, the dominant class would be able to exercise control over the populace without them feeling controlled – in fact, they would feel that those who have this power were exercising it legitimately and naturally as opposed to doing so with an alternate agenda.⁷ Gramsci called this phenomenon *hegemony*.

⁴ Doug Fields, *Your First Two Years in Youth Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Youth Specialties, 2002), 176-177.

⁵ Chap Clark, *Hurt: Inside the World of Today's Teenagers*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 76.

⁶ Steve Jones, *Antonio Gramsci* (Routledge, 2006), 34.

⁷ Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. (Routledge, 1979), 16.

Of course, in a perfectly hegemonic state, the dominant group would always have complete control of the ideological spheres of culture, and thus culture would develop only so far as it carefully kept the balance of hegemonic control in place. Yet Gramsci's theories were key towards the formation of the field of cultural studies because they defined in political/social terms how and why cultures could develop even within hegemonic realities. Because dominant cultures (or group of cultures, complete with their own struggles for control) can be described as such because of their hegemony over society, subcultures can be seen as "semantic disorder",⁸ instances of cultural resistance that threaten the dominant culture and prompt either recuperation of the resistance or marginalization. This marginalization paints the subculture as useless to the continuation of society, and can result in persecution and/or alienation. At the same time, by labeling the 'other' as a threat and carrying out acts against it (called the 'war of position'⁹ in Gramscian terms), the resulting bitterness solidifies the marginalized and empowers them to draw hegemony away from the dominant group, which often impedes efforts to recuperate the society. As more and more ideologies participate in this struggle, society begins to become defined by the moment-by-moment 'moving equilibrium' of power between countless players, embodied not only by the individuals who ascribe to these various ideologies but also by the objects and actions imbued with ideological value by the various factions.

At the same time, modern criticism of early explanations of cultural theory stem from the fact that increasingly, individuals are not affiliated with a single ideological group, but multiple groups – literally embodying a private war-of-position within themselves as ideologies and cultures are weighed and prioritized. These multiple allegiances may consist of "...social networks of various complexions, as well individual sets of tastes and interests which to some degree crosscut genres, styles, and activities."¹⁰ Further complicating such prioritization is the need for individual power – the individual decides which ideologies to affirm and resist based on his desire to join or resist the hegemonic control of the dominating culture, all the while still attempting to affirm his own cultural sovereignty.¹¹ Thus, the already tumultuous war of position is imbued with what sociologist Paul Hodkinson calls 'disembeddedness'¹² – an entire society struggling to find individual and communal identity.

With this set of lenses, any microcosm of individuals, especially a culturally dense population such as a group of adolescents, is recast as an ever-

⁸ Ibid, 90-94.

⁹ Jones, 31.

¹⁰ Paul Hodkinson, "Youth Cultures: A Critical Outline of Key Debates" *Youth Cultures: Scenes, Subcultures, and Tribes* ed. Paul Hodkinson and Wolfgang Deicke (New York: Routledge, 2007), 15.

¹¹ Andy Brown, "Rethinking the subcultural commodity: The case of heavy metal t-shirt culture(s)" *Youth Cultures: Scenes, Subcultures, and Tribes* ed. Paul Hodkinson and Wolfgang Deicke (New York: Routledge, 2007), 73.

¹² Hodkinson, 7.

changing equilibrium of power between dominant and marginalized ideologies and their constantly shifting adherents. It is admittedly difficult to see a youth ministry in such a light. The people of God are biblically called to be those who reach out to the entire world with the message of God's reconciliatory love both theologically and practically, but especially to those groups who are marginalized by a non-compassionate society. A hegemonic analysis of youth ministry argues that in every ministry microcosm, there exist one or more dominant ideological sub-units which exert cultural influence and pressure upon the surrounding students, influences which both control the interactions between teenagers and create resistant subcultural positions to form, at least some of which will be openly hostile to the exerted dominance. Thus, whenever a new individual is introduced into a youth ministry, though that ministry is called to be a gospel-carrying movement of loving compassion, the individual instantly has to navigate the balances of authority and culture within the new system – hardly the environment for ministry. On one hand, every community can be described in hegemonic terms, and therefore all ministry that has ever been done has been in light of these realities. But a conscious realization of how hegemony influences adolescent interaction can help correct blind spots and theological emphases within youth ministries to both better reach marginalized students and disciple existing students.

The first shift a hegemonic awareness must induce is with the minister himself. The trouble with a microcosm continually in moving equilibrium is that the adolescent worker is himself a part of the equilibrium. He exerts cultural influence and control, and even unconsciously can be used as a hegemonic device to gain additional control. The youth minister must therefore be careful and intentional in his choices, even as he seeks to be authentic, open, relational, and humble. He must realize that even unconsciously, he may favor certain students through the time spent with them or an undue admiration for their gifts, both of which will not go unnoticed by other students. More subtly, the minister must be aware of certain favoring tendencies that lie systematically within the DNA of the ministry itself. Even something as seemingly innocent as the types of games commonly played (for example, games that favor athletic students or those with advanced Bible knowledge) can communicate the type of student accepted in a ministry. This is not to say that an individual cannot have preferences, have mentoring relationships with certain students, have favorite types of music, or even feelings of calling to specific cultures or demographics. The minister must simply be aware that he communicates culturally. Unfortunately, this also means that there are some students who will take advantage of this. It also means that the minister must truly pursue what God's calling on his life in this particular moment in history is – whether the demographic of students he is ministering to is a result of a particular Macedonian call, the will of God simply bringing certain teens to him, or a conscious or unconscious decision to reach a certain type of student.

Secondly, the minister must be aware of systematic hegemonic forces he may not have direct control over. Drawing from Gramsci's work, anthropologist Mary Douglas noticed that societies often have barrier structures that keep threats

away from the balance of hegemony; she called this the “organization of consent.”¹³ Sociologist Kai T. Erikson likewise notes these structures, calling them policing agents. Erikson’s perspective is unique in that he notes that policing agents often exist either with the permission of the public or they emerge from the public themselves (as in the case of mob justice, political watchdogs, etc.),¹⁴ because the public fears a change in the status quo. In youth ministries, over time policing structures can arise out of this same desire for a status quo. These may be individuals: perhaps parents with multiple students in the ministry expect continuity over the subsequent generations of youth, whether or not the mission or vision of the group has changed. They can be programs – a favorite ski trip or summer camp may serve to exclude those who cannot afford such luxuries. They may even come from students themselves. Whether consciously or not, students effectively communicate the level of an individual’s desirability within the ministry. Whether this manifests itself in the classic ‘pick the new kid last’ approach, or a lack of desire to integrate the individual into the intimacy of the group as a whole, students often showcase their choices regarding marginalization fairly quickly, often after a ‘honeymoon phase’ of welcome. Also, a common policing structure occurs as children pass from an elementary-school level program into the youth ministry; already, high-school students begin to decide whether or not these new students will be worth befriending, mentoring, bullying, influencing, etc. – whether or not they will increase their own cultural influence and perpetuate the status quo they have committed themselves to. At a theoretical and philosophical level, the locations of these policing agents can help the minister analyze where the commonly-defined boundaries of deviance are within the system – what things are considered worth marginalization for. With this information, ministers gain the insight necessary to compare the lived-out, practically held values of their ministry against the call of the gospel.

Finally, and most importantly, a hegemonic meta-analysis requires the student minister to redefine his understanding of the place of the people of God with regards to dominance. The biblical example of uniting with and defending the marginalized, both in the Old Testament (see Leviticus 19:9) and the New Testament (see James 1:27), displays a marginalized population (the people of God, being an alien, sojourning people within the world) uniting themselves with those even more marginalized than they are (the foreigner, the widow, the orphan, the child), to jointly emulate the love of God shown to them, to share His love tangibly, and to refuse to fall to the temptations which commonly befall those who are the ‘middle-marginalized’ – the tendency to shore up one’s own position by further marginalizing those below oneself. Unfortunately, it is this temptation that often befalls ideological units within microcosms, for the cultural power within the microcosm helps limit the feelings of marginalization outside the group.

¹³ Jones, 60.

¹⁴ Kai T. Erikson, "On the Sociology of Deviance". *Constructions of Deviance: Social Power, Context, and Interaction*. 4th ed. (Belmont, CA: Thomson-Wadsworth, 2003), 13.

Dominance itself within a culture is not sinful – Scripture presents a number of situations where dominant authority is exercised, from the leaders and kings of Israel, to the authority of the apostles, to Paul’s words to Philemon regarding his slaves, and in each of these circumstances it is not the place of dominance but its exercise that is ethically judged. But because cultural influence is a hegemonic *moving* equilibrium, this exercising occurs multiple times throughout the cultural relationship, and thus over time, sins of dominance create the material by which the relationship truly can be called a ‘war of position’. Thus, when a student first joins the youth ministry microcosm, the previously mentioned navigation of various cultural balances and units is a navigation that is accomplished in a fallen system – the individual is a sinner, and is attempting to find where he might gain dominant power, or (because of previous marginalized experiences) he might immediately attempt to join a marginalized group, and thus give momentum to the counter-hegemony of resistance. At the same time, the various ideological units also analyze the situation, attempting to discern whether the individual’s contribution to the system will better their own cultural dominance through synthesis, threaten it through a shift in hegemonic power, or whether it should be marginalized, and to what degree. Again, because of the moving equilibrium of hegemonic dominance, this is a perpetual analysis – the war of position perpetually gives ammunition to all sides, heightening tension, objectifying persons, sowing pride and bitterness, and mechanically hurting individuals.

It is this broken system to which the student minister is called to apply the gospel as it applies to dominance. This comes in two forms. First, the dominant ideological units must apply the gospel to their role as dominant. There is nothing wrong with being a senior in high school – yet age alone can increase dominant power. Therefore, the senior must understand his dominant position, and use the authority and power which that position gives him to serve those under him. In this way he follows the words of Paul and the example of Christ, who “emptied Himself by taking the form of a servant.”¹⁵ However, he also must apply the gospel to his own projection of his dominance. Even if the dominant continually use their dominance to build up the marginalized, they perform an incomplete service so long as they see the flow of their power only being one-way. Bonhoeffer writes of this inconsistency:

In a Christian community everything depends upon whether each individual is an indispensable link in a chain. Only when even the smallest link is securely interlocked is the chain unbreakable. A community which allows unemployed members to exist within it will perish because of them. It will be well, therefore, if every member receives a definite task to perform for the community, that he may know in hours of doubt that he, too, is not useless and unusable. Every Christian community

¹⁵ Philippians 2:7, *English Standard Version*.

must realize that not only do the weak need the strong, but also that the strong cannot exist without the weak. The elimination of the weak is the death of fellowship.¹⁶

In this way, the greatest act of the gospel upon dominance is the realization that dominance is not all-encompassing, that the strong (in some areas) need the weak, and that they have the wonderful serving gift of affirmation, of personhood, to give to the marginalized. And this must be done without patronization, but in true humility.

Secondly, the marginalized must realize his own counter-dominance, the power he has gained in anger and bitterness, but also in victimization, by being the marginalized. He must surrender the opportunity to strike back, to revel in the lowly state of the dominant, either by taking hegemony from him, or by refusing his offer of service and love on the grounds of pride and independence. As this leveling of the equilibrium occurs on both sides, cultural intelligence can be formed. The marginalized becomes known by the dominant, and the dominant joyfully cedes more and more of his dominance as the known removes the stigma of 'other' which empowers marginalization, and *visa versa*.

Because cultural hegemony is a continuous process, the application of the gospel within the process will be continuous and progressive as well – it is not a program or method to be executed. Instead, it is a theological perspective to be built into the DNA of the ministry itself over time. The policing structures of multi-generational parents and transitional practices are only shifted as those who fill those roles refuse to continue dominant practices. Patterns of marginalization are turned slowly as the ministry seeks to become equipped to reach different demographics and student populations, and refuses to adopt the patterns of dominance and marginalization which students will carry with them into the ministry from other microcosms such as school and extracurriculars. Issues of favoritism and manipulation are painful realizations that must be dealt with using pastoral wisdom and much discretion. And all of this only occurs as the minister views his ministry system as a hegemonic system, where certain groupings of students do have power, and others are marginalized. As students are fractured systems themselves, participating in multiple ideological groupings simultaneously, the youth pastor performs this analysis only in the context of continual relationship with the students themselves, tracing their stories to the point of understanding *why* they participate in the hegemonic system the way they do. He is continually self-aware of his own contributions to the system, and humbly submits himself to the reality that he may marginalize his own students in never-before-seen ways. And he is patient, realizing that his students are at specific spiritual and developmental levels, and will require time as God continually sanctifies each component of the system, even to the extent of absorbing the pain and burden of new fallen elements being introduced as life progresses.

¹⁶ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*. (HarperOne, 1978), 94.

Gramsci's work is described as a 'complexifying' work which has its greatest use in illuminating other disciplines.¹⁷ A hegemonic meta-analysis of the youth group microcosm will be the painful uncovering of unrevealed sin and the beginning of arduous theological development throughout the ministry. Yet it also answers, in the form of a multitude of new questions and experiences both potentially terrifying and wonderfully liberating, the black-hole of secret marginalization masked as youth ministry. It is an endeavor that is wholly worthwhile, a burden that the youth minister is called to, for the sake of the gospel.

¹⁷Jones, 58 and 121.

Faculty Paper Titles

Four Things Calvin Didn't Say about the Imitation of Christ - and Why It Matters

Dr. Jimmy Agan

William Cunningham vs. John Calvin on the Doctrine of the Lord's Supper

Dr. Mike Honeycutt

Bonhoeffer as Biblical Scholar

Dr. Robert Yarborough, Plenary Speaker

Historicity of the Burial of Jesus in the Canonical Gospels

Dr. David Chapman

Intertextual Identity Formation: Conserving and Transforming Impulses

Dr. Gregory Perry

Student Abstracts

The History of Credocommunion: From the Early Church Until 1500

Steven A. Nicoletti

The question of credocommunion vs. paedocommunion has been a contentious one in the Presbyterian Church in America. In this article, I draw a brief historical sketch of the emergence and eventual dominance of credocommunion in the Western Church. I argue that the evidence indicates that credocommunion emerged as a thirteenth century medieval innovation, absent from the church's practice before that time. I first establish the consensus that from the mid third to the twelfth century credocommunion was absent from the church, and the Eucharist was given to all the baptized, including young children and infants. I then argue that the best explanation of the evidence, regarding the church's practice before the third century, is that it too included baptized infants in communion. Factors in the rise and dominance of credocommunion in the thirteenth century are discussed, especially the development of transubstantiation and the fear that infants may not properly swallow the transubstantiated elements. Additional factors are also examined, including the disintegration of the Christian initiation rite and Thomas Aquinas' revision of the rationale for credocommunion practice. Finally, I draw out several implications for the church today.

A Brief Look at the Bi-directional Nature of Discipleship: Mark 10:35-45

P.D. Mayfield

The Church must continually reflect upon our mission statement: make disciples of all nations. What does it mean to follow Christ? What does it mean to lead others in following Christ? Mark 10:35-45 provides a helpful corrective to an understanding of "discipleship" that can easily spiral into reductionistic methods, pithy slogans, and prideful spiritual genealogies. By looking at the larger context of this pericope, we see Jesus teaching his disciples what it looks like to be both a disciple and a disciple-maker. Discipleship is following Jesus where he leads. He leads in a forward direction of suffering and serving for the redemption of all things, and he leads in an inward direction of his disciples for the renewal of their hearts. The *Gospel of Mark* in general, and this pericope in particular, appropriately realigns our evangelical discussion of discipleship from a *product* by way of method to a *process* by way of a relationship. Each generation of Jesus' followers must ask such questions in order to appropriate the gospel of Christ now and then to pass on what has been entrusted to us for others to come.

Being Sarah's Children: A Discussion of Peter's Reference to Sarah in 1 Peter 3:5-6

Jenilyn Swett

Questions of what the Bible teaches about how Christians are to live as male and female are raised frequently today, so one must carefully consider Scripture passages that are specifically instructive to men and women. One such passage is 1 Peter 3:1-8. In this article, I investigate the reference to Sarah in verses 5-6: why would Peter use Sarah, portrayed in Genesis as a secondary character who laughed and lied, as a pedagogical example for Christian wives? By examining the story of Sarah and Abraham in Genesis as well as the characterization of Sarah in Jewish tradition, I seek to acquaint readers with the Sarah that Peter commended. He knew her as a fully human but deeply faithful matriarch, a sojourner with whom the newly converted women of Asia Minor could identify and from whom they could draw encouragement and hope. Peter's use of Sarah as an example has implications not only for the Christian wives he addressed but for all of Sarah and Abraham's children.

The Jewish Concept of 'Witness' in the Period Surrounding the NT and Some Suggested Epistemological Implications

Daniel Robbins

When we want to know something, our immediate impulse is to find out 'the facts' instead of turning to trust the report of another. Our enlightenment scruples dictate that testimony is very untrustworthy. Yet, in the Gospels, testimony features often and in important ways. In this paper, I present a systematic survey of the concept of witness in Jewish literature from the period surrounding the New Testament. The survey considers some of the OT background as well as intertestamental literature, and Jewish literature after the first century. Who was qualified as a reliable witness, how many witnesses were required, and the cross-examination of witnesses all had a role in establishing the trustworthiness of testimony. After clarifying the role of a witness, I move to a rough and ready examination of testimony as a concept philosophically. This concept is suggested as the best fit for understanding the non-exhaustive, authoritative, and relationally dependent communication of the Scriptures. This concept preserves the authority of the Scriptures without imbibing positivist epistemology, and in doing so calls the hearer to make a judgment not simply on the content of the Scriptures but also on the one who testifies.

The Ethics of Food: Image-Bearers at the Market and the Table

Nick Gray

It can be a potentially daunting task to undertake an ethical review of what we eat. Modern food production is a large and sprawling industry. Buying options at the

market have become varied and even confusing. Should I only buy “organic” food? Should I be a vegan? I present a biblical, theological, and ethical review of this issue in hopes of aiding the Christian to better engage the daily, practical considerations that come with consuming food. First, I establish why it is valuable for today’s Christian to engage with this issue. Second, I present a summary of the current state of American food production and consumption. Finally, I suggest how the Christian should respond in light of the first two sections. I argue that our food is something so much more than mere sustenance. Instead, it is a gracious gift from our Creator and an avenue whereby we might minister his *shalom* into his creation.

The *Christus Victor* Theme in 1 John

KJ Drake

Despite the renewed discussion in theological circles, the *Christus Victor* theme’s development and impact within the canon has not received significant attention in the field of biblical studies. This trend holds for the study of 1 John, as a discussion of the *Christus Victor* theme is absent in most major commentaries and theological studies of the book. I argue that despite this lack of treatment, the *Christus Victor* motif is a significant theme within 1 John. To accomplish this task, I first outline the basic features of the *Christus Victor* theory of the atonement focusing on its portrayal of the human condition, the rectification of this situation by Christ, and its consequences for believers. Then I proceed to demonstrate that these features are present in 1 John. The study concludes with a brief discussion of the overall significance of the *Christus Victor* theme within the book and some reflections for further study.

Abraham Kuyper: Sovereignty and Multiformity for 21st Century Political Theology

Blake Hartung, Saint Louis University

In this paper, I examine Abraham Kuyper’s (1837-1920) theology, emphasizing God’s dominion over all things, his common grace in the world, and “sphere sovereignty,” as a unique Reformed theological perspective through which to examine and critique the excesses of modern pluralistic societies, as well as to rise and meet them with a uniquely Christian vision of political engagement in a pluralistic world. I argue that Kuyper’s theology of sphere sovereignty and its accompanying concept of the “multiformity” of God’s creation can form a basis for a Reformed alternative to the gospel of “pluralism” proclaimed by our contemporary culture. All the while, I grapple, as Kuyper did, with the inherent difficulties of remaining engaged in the public sphere while still maintaining a political vision radically and uniquely shaped by the Gospel.

B. B. Warfield and the Development of Orthodoxy

Parker Landis

Is so called “Christian orthodoxy” merely the most resilient formulation from a group of contending early Christian theologies or is it in continuity with the earliest beliefs? Can Christian orthodoxy survive the theological development of the modern era? In this paper, I analyze the life and thought of B. B. Warfield in order to see how he answered these questions. I conclude that, according to Warfield, theological knowledge progressed through the process of controversy as it confronted theological innovation. Despite this controversy, it developed in continuity with the preceding Christian tradition as it sought to better define historic Christian formula. Similarly, in his own practice Warfield was a man committed to both historic Christian faith and robust theological development. To him the two were not incompatible but were both vital to Christian theology.

The Motif of Hearing and Seeing in Mark 4-8: Contributions to a Missional Reading of the Second Gospel

Jonathan Coody, Th.M. Covenant Seminary, May 2011

Contrary to what may be suggested by the paucity of literature on the notion of mission in Mark – namely, that mission is not a major theme – a study of the motif of hearing and seeing in chapters 4-8 reveals a keen interest in mission on the part of the evangelist. Literary and exegetical analysis reveals a strong orientation toward the concept of hearing as presented in 4:1-34, with the focus being upon true hearing of the word of God spoken and embodied in Jesus. The other end of the narrative unit, 8:11-26, reveals a stronger emphasis upon seeing, that is, properly perceiving Jesus in his messianic identity and mission. The intervening passages (4:35-8:10) expand the motif, particularly adding the notion of hardness of heart, which results from or accompanies faulty hearing and seeing. Overall, Mark, uniquely among the Synoptic evangelists, employs the motif to communicate the need for would-be followers of Jesus to listen attentively to Jesus’ words, perceive the meaning of his deeds, and understand that in Jesus, God is establishing his kingdom. True hearing and seeing means that followers of Jesus are caught up in the missional purposes of God, witnessing to his victorious kingdom in both word and deed as they live out an embodied response to the gospel.

An Examination of Therapeutic Lying Among Dementia Patients

Dagan Mayfield

The number of human beings suffering from dementia-type diseases is increasing. The enormous confusion, sorrow, and burden experienced by families and caregivers is too complex and far-reaching to be summarized. The very nature of dementia’s symptoms causes us to question what we originally thought was straightforward with regard to our ethics. Is it justifiable, or even commendable, to

lie to a human being suffering from dementia? Unfortunately, ethicists have produced little to address this issue, and theologians essentially nil. Examining my own experience as a caregiver for advanced dementia patients, relevant medical and psychiatric studies, and biblical material that addresses lying, I have sought answers. The simplicity of the results may surprise you. The Bible affirms the inherent goodness of lying to protect innocent life. The case itself brings into view the severity of the disease and the spoken realities of the patient with reference to time. It is justifiable or commendable, dependant on the situation, to lie to a human beings suffering from dementia. The way people define and engage in loving and ethical behavior to a growing population in our society is the fruit of my study.

Imputed Righteousness Reassessed, Again

Ben Church, M.Div. Covenant Seminary, May 2011

Saint Paul insists that righteousness “will be counted” to those who believe in Abraham’s God who raised Jesus from the dead (Rom. 4:25). What that righteousness consists of, however, is a source of disagreement among biblical interpreters. One popular strain of interpretation in Western evangelicalism is that the righteousness that is credited or imputed to believers involves the record of Jesus’ perfect life and actions. While this is a compelling formulation of the basis for justification, it faces serious biblical challenges. In this study, I present focused exegesis of four of the central passages that are used to support the above interpretation (Romans 4; 5:18-19; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:1-11). I find that none of these passages support the imputation of the record of Jesus’ perfect life. Instead, these passages reveal a much deeper Pauline teaching on the basis of Christians’ righteous status, the righteousness activity of God that believers participate in, and the righteous behavior that they receive as a result of their position in Christ.

Hegemony, Marginalization, and Youth Ministry: A Cultural Meta-Analysis

Stephen Yates

An ideal environment for students new to a youth ministry can often be characterized by a series of individual actions - the friendliness of the students or the relevance of the program, for instance. Yet youth ministers who adopt this philosophy often unexplainably see student after student feel marginalized soon after coming into their programs. These workers fail to see their ministry from another perspective - systems. A systems perspective of youth ministry reveals a complex and broken network of ideological sub-groups negotiating hegemonic power and interest unconsciously under the auspices of visible teen culture. Using a biblical theology of marginalization, socio-political philosophical constructions, and Bonhoefferian discussions of power-in-community, I aim to persuade student ministers to become aware of these cultural structures in order to address pockets of marginalization currently and potentially present in their ministries. Such

findings have immediate application to issues as diverse as social events and games on one hand, and leadership dynamics on the other, working ultimately towards a ministry climate of cultural intelligence and sacrificial dominance reflecting the heart of the incarnate Christ.

An Old Testament “Extra Indwelling”

Andrew Allen

One’s view on the continuity between the Testaments will determine how they understand the faith and life of the OT believer, and in turn, will directly impact the influence of the true bonds between believers of every age. In this paper, I explore one such bond - the indwelling of the Holy Spirit - exclusively from OT texts and offers three arguments for an OT indwelling of all believers. First, the same OT foundations which prepared for the NT doctrines of Christ’s atonement and the Trinity prepare for the doctrines of regeneration and indwelling. Second, the OT focus on the Spirit of empowerment and prophecy does not exclude the distinct and likely simultaneous work of indwelling. Third, the exemplary lives of OT believers and longstanding OT familiarity with the concepts of regeneration and indwelling point to continuity between believers of all ages. To say that OT believers were not indwelt assumes that we possess a spiritual life superior to Abraham, Ruth and David (or, for that matter, any unnamed saint who was born, circumcised and lived a faithful life before YHWH). To assume otherwise is to provide a fresh reading of the whole of the Christian Scriptures, Old and New.

Divine Revealing and Human Recognition: Amos 5 and 9 as Inclusio in Acts 7 through 15

Aaron White

This study investigates the echoing motifs found in the context of the only two explicit quotations of Amos in the NT, namely Amos 5:25-27 in Stephen's Acts 7 speech and Amos 9:11-12 in James' speech at the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15, for the purpose of proving that Luke is using the narrative function of inclusio to heighten the divine revealing and human recognition of the eschatological seeking of the tent of David by the Gentiles. This study progresses by investigating the OT contexts of the Amos quotation to demonstrate Luke's dependency on the original verbal and thematic contexts. Next, this study defines narrative inclusio, so that a clear statement of this discourse function is understood. Finally, each verbal and thematic group is traced from Acts 7 to 15 to demonstrate the contrasting themes of judgment and salvation that make up this narrative inclusio. The study finds that an inclusio that would have been recognized by a first-century audience is possible, and should be considered as a likely literary strategy Luke utilized to highlight an important stage of his Acts narrative.

Acts 2 and the Day of YHWH

Peter A. Green, Ph.D., Wheaton College, 2013

In this paper I argue that the Day of YHWH forms the background to Peter's sermon in Acts 2 and is crucial for understanding the redemptive historical place of Pentecost. The Day of YHWH is central to the meaning of Joel 2:28–32. Thus, it is easy to miss the significance of the Day of YHWH for Peter's sermon without careful attention to the Day of YHWH in Joel 2:30–32. It is my contention that Peter intentionally quotes Joel 2:30–32 in order to warn his listeners that they are in danger of being judged in the coming Day of the YHWH, *which is the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple prophesied by Jesus himself* and that their only hope of avoiding the coming judgment is to be baptized as followers of Jesus the Christ. In order to do this I study the OT background to the Day of YHWH and the Spirit of YHWH. Then, I examine these concepts in the book of Joel 2:28–32. Next, I compare Joel and other Day of YHWH passages to the Gospel accounts of Jesus' prophecy concerning the temple. Finally, I examine Peter's use of Joel 2:28–32 in Acts 2 and suggest some theological implications for our understanding of pneumatology and the Pentecost event.

Trees, Leaves and Echoes in the Apocalypse: John's Use of Ezek. 47:12 in Rev. 22:2

Arthur J. Keefer

The Book of Revelation faces many interpretive difficulties, especially John's use of the Old Testament. Scholars debate over the method, scope and purpose of his quotations and allusions. I argue that in Revelation 22:2, John alludes to Ezekiel's vision of a tree and its healing leaves typologically, by escalating the Old Testament promise of God's blessing from Israel to all nations. To accomplish this, I discuss the genre, context, and literary structure of Revelation 22:2 and Ezekiel 47:12, focusing on the meaning and purpose of John's additional phrase regarding "the nations." I also focus on the debate over whether John misconstrues Ezekiel, considering his hermeneutical presuppositions and categories for the New Testament's use of the Old Testament. While many traditional categories account for John's allusion in Revelation 22:2, typology most completely explains the evidence. I substantiate the view that John wrote under certain Christological presuppositions with a biblically established hermeneutic.

Slightly Revised Ethic of Self-Love

Aaron Michael Davis

Is it biblical to pursue our own happiness? Are we called to be miserable for Christ? In this paper, I have a two-fold purpose: to develop a biblical perspective of self-love and to engage with a worldly perspective on this topic by interacting with the writings of Ayn Rand. Rand's objectivist ethic has greatly influenced the

contemporary culture's view of self. In her view, the highest moral good is a self-oriented love. One of the most basic aspects of love however, is that it is meant for relationship, and is other-oriented. Man was created in perfect relationship with both God and his fellow man. However, due to his rebellion against God, he sought his own good in himself. The Christian life does not oppose the pursuit of our own happiness, but we must understand where it is that we should find that happiness. It is only through communion with God by our union to Christ in both His death and resurrection that we are restored to an other-oriented relationship. It is only here where our highest good is found in Him. Christians must affirm the paradox that the proper love of self only comes through giving love away to others. We are not called to be miserable for Christ. We are called to find our ultimate joy and happiness in Him.

Calvin's use of Chrysostom in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*

Curran D. Bishop

Appropriating patristic sources into contemporary experience has occurred throughout the Church's history. In seeking to develop this trend the question of using ancient sources in ways which are faithful to their original author's intentions is significant. Understanding how the Church has used such material in the past, and the benefits and pitfalls of their methods, provides useful insights to contemporary practice. In this paper, I engage the issue by examining John Calvin's use of John Chrysostom in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. I categorize the forty-five instances in the *Institutes* where Calvin quotes or refers to Chrysostom into seven categories and considers examples from each category. The survey demonstrates that, while there are instances where Calvin was guilty of taking a statement out of context and using it to support his point in a way that was not entirely faithful to the original author's intent, such instances were the exception in his practice. I conclude that Calvin usually used his sources in ways that would be considered responsible by twentieth century scholars. In this way I highlight the important role that Calvin's, and other Reformers', development of historical sensitivity played in forming modern understanding and appropriation of patristic teaching.

The Faith Once Delivered: A Study of the Development of Orthodoxy in the Early Church

Kyle A. Keating

There has been much research into the nature and history of the development of orthodoxy in the early church. Some have even challenged that any sort of original orthodoxy existed at all. In this article, I engage three general views on the formation of orthodoxy: the traditional view, the Bauer-Ehrman view, and a synthetic view. I argue that an orthodoxy did exist within the earliest days of the church, but that this orthodoxy was implicit and basic until it faced the challenges

of heterodox teachings. In the face of these teachings, what was implicit and basic became explicit and nuanced, forming the type of orthodoxy we see in the early creeds. In reaching this conclusion, I discuss three guiding images for understanding the development of orthodoxy: a symphony, a river, and a painting—all describing how a single orthodoxy emerged from the panoply of early church teaching.

Hearing the Music in Noise: Exploring the Connections between Jazz and Christian Spirituality

Joel Littlepage

There is a mysterious wonder surrounding the music of jazz. Yet even in America, where the music was birthed, there is presently much confusion or apathy felt towards this particular form of art. As one who is a Presbyterian and a jazz musician, I argue that I, and the denomination that I call home - the P.C.A. - have much to glean from experiencing jazz, not only from delighting in the beauty of it but also through learning from its embodied ideas and philosophies. Jazz has power and truth residing inside of it. We need only approach it as we should approach all of life, with an “active engagement informed by theological reflection.” Jazz interacts in three distinct and yet connected areas from which the P.C.A. can learn: story, improvisational eschatology, and communal participation. These elements of jazz have the potential to guide the spirituality and worship of the P.C.A. towards expressions that are more holistic, honest, and biblical.

Anselm Remembered: A History of Satisfaction Atonement Theology

Philip Ryan

In this paper, I seek to inform readers on the legacy Anselm had on the Protestant view of the atonement. I begin by evaluating the deficient understanding of the atonement in Evangelicalism today. I then proceed to introduce Anselm’s work *Cur Deus Homo* (Why God became Man). Anselm shows the serious riff sin has caused between God and humanity. I walk the reader through Anselm’s discussion on sin, humanity’s inability to fix its sinfulness, and the necessity that God become man to eradicate sin. My goal is to show the church’s history of what Christ accomplished on the cross and how it does deliver us from a very real eternal existence in hell.

CSTS Minutes

28 September 2011

10:03AM – Attendance: Travis S., Frank Harrell, Kyle Keating, Austin Hilmer, Michael Price, Aaron White, Dan Robbins, Steve Green, Courtney Doctor. New Attendees: Arthur Keefer, KJ Drake, Jake Newfeld.

10:15AM – CSTS announcements by Aaron White, a motion was made by Aaron White for Steven Green to be treasurer, seconded by Frank Harrell. Steven Green was unanimously elected treasurer. Minutes were approved from last meeting. Daniel Robbins had conference announcements. First, date possibilities Tuesday the 17th, Friday the 20th, and Monday the 23rd. Monday the 23rd was confirmed as the official date. Second, will we allow alumni to submit papers? This was approved we will accept alumni papers for review. Courtney Doctor asked for more clarity on what is expected of the papers being submitted. Dr. Yarbrough volunteered to write up a more nurturing description of paper expectations.

10:24AM – Frank Harrell lead discussion on ch. 2 of Dr. Collins' book. A lively discussion was had on worldview and its influence in our lives as we read the Genesis story and also the purpose of Genesis as establishing a biblical worldview.

10:49AM – KJ Drake volunteered to lead discussion on ch. 3 for next week.

10:50AM – Aaron White closed us in prayer.

5 October 2011

10:03AM – Roll: Jacob Hammack, Courtney Doctor, Kyle Keating, Philip Ryan, Travis Schmalhofer, Austin Hilmer, Patrick Ward, Arthur Keefer, Dan Robbins, KJ Drake, Jake Neufeld, Aaron White, Prof. Yarbrough, and new attendee, Stacy King.

10:05AM 1 Cor 15:58 – “take great comfort that your toil is not in vain.”

10:18AM Philip Ryan was publicly reprimanded for leaving Dr. Yarbrough off the roll last week and emailing everyone on the CSTS list instead of just the covenant group. Minutes were approved.

10:19AM Aaron White CSTS announcements, discussion on eating before the ministry lunch since we cannot eat in the chapel, Aaron has received five papers so far for the conference.

10:21AM KJ began discussion of chapter 3 of *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist?*

10:50AM KJ closed in prayer. Philip Ryan volunteered to lead discussion of ch. 4.

12 October 2011

Dr. Yarbrough's Birthday!!

Roll: Dr. Yarbrough, Courtney Doctor, Jacob Hammack, Frank Harrell, Aaron White, KJ Drake, Patrick Ward, Philip Ryan, Michael Price, Austin Hilmer, Staci King, Daniel Robbins, Arthur Keefer.

10:04 AM Dr. Yarbrough began with a devotional and humbling exercise in Greek, from Galatians 6, "In due time we will reap if we do not faint." God is faithful.

10:17 AM – discussion on group size. Keep telling people they may come and visit. If we get too large we will deal with it then. Dr. Yarbrough agreed to be main speaker at our conference, what is our purpose and mission as a theological society. Nov, 1 we have to move from B111 to Preaching Chapel. We will have a CSTS banner by the end of the week thanks to Kyle Keating's dad. KEEP TALKING!! Keep telling people about our activities. One week from today, first CSTS lunch with Dr. Agan.

10:27 AM – Philip Ryan led discussion for chapter 4 in *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist?*

10:50 AM – Michael Price volunteered to lead in discussion by default since he was a biology major. Discussion is on ch's 5&6.

19 October 2011

Roll: Arthur Keefer, Frank Harrell, Courtney Doctor, Aaron White, Daniel Robbins, Jake Neufeld, KJ Drake, Michael Price, Philip Ryan, Kyle Keating.

10:21AM Papers are due the 28th. Keep spreading the word about the conference on January 23.

10:27 AM Michael Price lead discussion on Collin's last two chapters of *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist?*

10:50 AM What will our next book be? Webster *Holiness* was suggested.

27 October 2011

Informal meeting at Granite City 8:30 PM

The Ministry Lunch for Nov 1st was discussed. It was decided that doughnuts would be the best solution to our money situation (that we have little money to buy pizza or sandwiches).

Nick Perrin and Jack Collins' payment for speaking were discussed.

Dr. Yarbrough will not be in attendance at the ministry lunch on Nov 1st.

Ministry Lunches:

General introductions will include a summary of what our mission is as a theological society (see initial pamphlet). Also, a brief explanation of our logo, the Rooster, since it is intriguing and people would like to know more about it. For Covenant seminary professors introductions will be short since many of the students will have had or heard of each professor. The goal of these lunches is to foster discussion. Questions are encouraged, however, we want to be sensitive the time of both the professors and students so we would like to set a reasonable time limit – 15 minutes?

Future of CSTS:

Next year we would like to have our conference be a little bit more diverse. We discussed the possibilities of inviting some female scholars like Karen Jobes Gerald F. Hawthorne Professor of New Testament Greek and Exegesis, or previous Covenant professor Anthony Bradley. It would also be nice to create events that would be open to the other seminaries and graduate schools around us, Concordia, SLU, Eden, etc.

2 November 2011

Roll: Arthur Keefer, Frank Harrell, Jacob Hammack, Courtney Doctor, Staci King, Dr. Yarbrough, Aaron White, KJ Drake, Dan Robbins, Travis Schmaelhofer, Philip Ryan, Michael Price, Austin Hilmer, Kyle Keating.

10:02AM – Devotional led by Dr. Yarbrough from John 9.

10:17AM – CSTS announcements. Kyle Keating presented our official banner. Aaron and Dan made an executive decision to have a late submission date to submit papers. Right after t-day break is Dr. Chapman's group lunch.

10:22AM – What do we do next? Dr. Yarbrough offered three different books on Christian scholarship that we considered for our next book: *Is There a Doctor in the House?* By Ben Witherington. *Excellence: The Character of God and the Pursuit of Scholarly Virtue* by Andreas Kostenberger. *The Invention of the Biblical Scholar: A Critical Manifesto*. KJ suggested Christopher Smith's new book on Biblicism. Dan

Robbins voiced concerned that with the end of the semester it may be hard to give time to reading an extra book. In the next week or so we will decide on what to read for the Spring semester.

10:52AM - Prayer led by Aaron White and closed by Arthur Keefer

9 November 2011

Roll: Arthur Keefer, Frank Harrell, Courtney Doctor, Dr. Yarbrough, Aaron White, Dan Robbins, KJ Drake, Jake Neufeld, Michael Price, Kyle Keating, and Philip Ryan.

10:04 AM – Devotion and opening prayer led by Dr. Yarbrough on the great commission.

10:19 AM – Aaron White – announcements: 30 papers have been submitted for our conference, plus awaiting some faculty submissions.

10:22 AM – Discussion “On Calvinism and Missions” article was led by Dr. Yarbrough. He encouraged us to read *A History of Princeton Seminary* by David Calhoun.

10:55 AM – Philip will lead discussion on the article he emailed to the group last week.

16 November 2011

Roll: Jacob Hammack, Kyle Keating, Dan Robbins, Jake Neufeld, Arthur Keefer, and Aaron White.

10:08 AM – Possible speakers for next year: Karen Jobes, Esther Meek, Anthony Bradley, Andreas Kostenberger, and James Hunter (Sociologist at UVA). It would be nice to get some diversity. Philip – ask Mark Ryan about James Hunter, test the waters.

10:37 AM – Philip led discussion on ecclesial theology article.

10:52 AM – Next meeting Nov 30. Dr. Yarbrough will lead discussion on chapter for forth coming. Meeting closed in prayer by Dan Robbins.

30 November 2011

Roll: Dan Robbins, KJ Drake, Michael Price (Beard of Magnificence), Jake Neufeld, Travis Schmalhofer, Aaron White, Philip Ryan, Arthur Keefer, Frank Harrell, Courtney Doctor, Staci King, and Dr. Yarbrough.

10:15 AM – Aaron White – group lunch today. Another group lunch next week with Dr. Honeycutt and Peterson. Dr. Y recommends Dr. McClymond author of “Familiar Stranger: An Introduction to Jesus of Nazareth,” Professor of Modern Church history at SLU. We should look to the abundance of local scholars in St. Louis. “Pray for our students, there inviting heretics to Covenant.”

10:21 AM – Discussion on Dr. Y’s article on Kenton Spark’s book *God’s Word in Human Words*.

10:50 AM – KJ closed in prayer.

7 December 2011

Roll: Philip Ryan, Arthur Keefer, Frank Harrell, Staci King, KJ Drake, Kyle Keating, Dan Robbins, Aaron White, and Dr. Y.

10:05 AM Devotion: “Test everything hold on to what’s good.”

10:22 AM Announcements: Schedule is being refined. We will have the Preaching Chapel for plenary and other papers and four additional rooms in Founders. Phil, make sure to announce on Facebook. Advertise to local pastors (KJ). FINDING MISSING PAPERS!! Schedule should be published by next week. Staci will get the schedule on the portal news. Kyle – paper advertisement on campus. We will set up a “planning meeting” before the conference on Jan 23rd.

10:45 AM – group prayer closed by Dr. Y.

10:58 AM – meeting adjourned.

1 February 2012

Roll: Stephen Nicoletti (new member), Frank Harrell, Courtney Doctor, Philip Ryan, Michael Price, Kyle Keating, Staci King, Aaron White, Travis Schmalhofer, Dan Robbins, Jake Neufled.

10:04 AM – Devotional led by Dr. Yarbrough.

10:05 AM – Presentation gift to Dr. Yarbrough.

10:29 AM – CSTS Business: Steve Green needs to submit budget for 2012 year. We may be able to get some extra money from student council. We may be able to get Esther Meek here for next year's conference.

Conference feedback – (Led by Daniel Robbins). Overall people were pleased. Main suggestions: more time for lunch, questions, and time between sessions. Kyle Keating – lunch reception? This would promote a time to ask questions and it would keep people around since they will be hungry. Dan Robbins – maybe have people RSVP? Consideration of suggestions: Dr. Y recommends that the maximum length of a paper should be 3000 words and that we make this explicit. Nick Perrin's visit – we may have him do the Jones Lecture, which would include chapel and two lectures. (please keep this between the group). Dr. Pratt may be visiting CTS.

10:43 – We will start Andreas Kostenberger's *Excellence* two weeks from today, 2/15/12. Dr. Y will be sending an article by Langdon Gilkey for us to discuss next meeting.

10:48 AM – Frank closed us in prayer.

8 February 2012

Roll: KJ Drake, Daniel Robbins, Parker Landis (new attendee), Kyle Keating, Travis Schmalhofer, Michael Price, Steveen Nicoletti, Courtney Doctor, Aurthur Keefer, Staci King, Philip Ryan, Aaron White, Dr. Yarbrough, Frank Harrell.

10:05 AM – Devotional led by Dr. Yarbrough

10:12 AM – Announcements – led by Aaron White
Nick Perrin is now the Jones lecturer (we got this done!). He will not be doing chapel. 3/2/12 from 12:30-1:30PM and then an evening lecture.

Richard Pratt will definitely be here. We will be doing a group lunch with him and Dr. Perry. 3/8-9/12 @ 12:30 PM. The eight is Perry's and ninth is ours.

Student council has offered us more money.

10:21 AM Prayer led by KJ and closed by Aaron.

10:24 AM Discussion led by Dr. Y: Langdon Gilkey's article "Cosmology, Ontology, and the Travail of Biblical Language."

10:50 AM – Meeting adjourned.

15 February 2012

Roll: Steven Nicoletti, Arthur Keefer, Travis Schmalhofer, Courtney Doctor, Kyle Keating, Michael Price, Aaron White, Staci King, Dr. Yarbrough, Dan Robbins, and KJ Drake, Frank Harrell.

10:02 AM Devotional led by Dr. Yarbrough from 1 Tim.

10:26 AM Discussion of intro and chapter one of *Excellence* by Dr. Y.

10:55 AM meeting adjourned. Read chapter 2 in *Excellence* for next week. Discussion will be led by Philip Ryan.

22 February 2012

Roll: Dr. Yarbrough, Frank Harrell, Kyle Keating, Courtney Doctor, Staci King, Aaron White, KJ Drake, Michael Price, Jake Neufeld, Travis Schmalhofer, Arthur Keefer, and Philip Ryan.

10:00 AM – Devotion led by Dr. Yarbrough.

10:08 AM – Sign up for a time to lead discussion.

10:25 AM – Philip Ryan led discussion on ch. 2 of *Excellence*. The group contributed to discussion on ch. 3 since Philip did not prepare for that section.

10:50 AM – Dr. Yarbrough closed in prayer. Michael Price will lead discussion next week on ch's 4-5.

29 February 2012

Roll: Frank Harrell, Staci King, Courtney Doctor, KJ Drake, Kyle Keating, Michael Price, Travis Schmalhofer, Dr. Yarbrough, and Dan Robbins.

Devotion: Philippians 1:2.

10:25 AM – Michael Price led discussion on ch's 4&5 of *Excellence*. Four categories Dr. Y would add to *Excellence*: 1) recreation 2) physicality (exercise) “the sedate life of the diligent scholar is toxic.” 3) Family/friends – sit and talk with wife/husband and kids spend time fostering relationships with friends. 4) Rest/worship – take a break worship God.

10:50AM – meeting was closed by Dr. Yarbrough.

7 March 2012

Met outside to discuss *Excellence*. Dr. Yarbrough was in the Sudan. No minutes recorded.

14 March 2012

Roll: Dr. Yarbrough, Staci King, Courtney Doctor, Frank Harrell, Arthur Keefer, Daniel Robbins, Jake Neufeld, Michael Price, KJ Drake, Philip Ryan, Kyle Keating, and Aaron White.

10:07 AM – Discussion on “Creativity” in *Excellence* led by Kyle Keating.

10:24 AM – Update on Sudan from Dr. Yarbrough. The gospel is bearing fruit and spreading!

10:27 AM – Discussion on Richard Pratt’s lectures last week. Initiated by Kyle Keating.

10:49 AM – Meeting closed in prayer by the group.