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Let the Church Say "Amen!"

Nearly three decades ago, Reinhold Niebuhr made this general observation upon the dilemma of the liturgical life of American Protestantism:

> The trouble with American Protestantism is that its protest against the various forms and disciplines [of worship] led to their destruction. It may be possible to have a brief period of religious spontaneity in which the absence of such disciplines does not matter. The evangelism of the American frontier may have been such a period. But this spontaneity does not last forever. When it is gone a church without adequate conduits of traditional liturgy and theological learning and tradition is without the waters of life.[1]

Sometime before, Niebuhr had this to say about the worship of my own Methodist tradition:

> When the old evangelical piety is dissipated and there are not powerful theological and liturgical forces to preserve the Christian faith and feeling the tendency is to sink into vulgarity or into a pure moralism. In all sectarian churches there are today types of vulgarized Christianity in which both sermon and service seek to intrigue the interest of the religiously indifferent masses by vaudeville appeals of various sorts. This represents the worst form of disintegration. The best form is to be found in the championship of various moral and social causes. . . . The vulgarization of sectarian Christianity is partly due to its difficulty in finding proper forms for the social expression of its faith.[2]

No doubt Niebuhr might have modified his position if he had been witness to the recent resurgence of lively sectarian enthusiasm and our growing recognition of the continuing vitality of some sectarian liturgical expressions. But his observations continue to impress me as an apt description of the current malaise which many of us in the "mainline" denominations have been experiencing on Sunday morning. Or, as one layperson put it to me, "You can't have a Revival fifty-two Sundays a year. Something more has to happen."

In reaching out for that "something more" the Church has wisely turned its attention again to worship, that central action of the church which forms and is formed by our Faith. For a very long time the church went about its Sunday morning business as usual, comfortable and confident that what it had always done in worship was still an appropriate response for today. That confidence has been shaken. Historical study of the liturgy revealed how much we had changed over the years, how much we had lost, and what there was to be regained. Theological and biblical reflection raised troubling questions about the adequacy of many of our liturgical practices.

Tensions inside and outside of the church, changes within our society, recognition of our peoples' unmet needs; all pressed in upon our worship and made change inevitable.

And change we did. New liturgies, new ways of worship, new insights swept over us. Of course, some of us continued to go on with business as usual, refusing to embrace the new. Others uncritically borrowed, adopted, and experimented; frantically embracing everything. Both responses are inadequate.

Unfortunately, most pastors received little guidance in this area during their seminary days. Worship was usually confined to an adjunct relationship to a preaching course or passing reference in Church History. Protestant seminaries produced ministers who were equipped for everything but the one required activity which they did, week-in-week-out, every Sunday of the year, before and with more people than any other pastoral duty—the leadership of public worship.

Things are changing. The study of worship is no longer a minor aspect of the seminary curriculum. Seminary chapels are reporting unusually high attendance at regular services. More denominational ordaining agencies are requiring their candidates to have at least one course in worship. Above all, the laity, after centuries of being convinced that worship was the sole concern of the pastor, are awakening to a renewed vision of liturgy as "the work of the people."

Therefore we offer you this issue of the *Review* on worship. I have invited these writers to address themselves to pastors, sharing with you their observations on the present state and future prospects for worship within the local church. I hope these articles will remind you of the richness within this area of the church's life and the practical, pastoral significance of new trends in liturgical study. One of the most gratifying aspects of the current liturgical renewal is its strong ecumenical emphasis, its amazing consesus. So many of the barriers which once divided us are coming down as we come to Table and Font.

Let the church say, "Amen!"

W.H.W.

FOOTNOTES

1. "The Weakness of Common Worship in American Protestantism," *Christianity and Crisis*, May 28, 1951.

2. "Sects and Churches," *The Christian Century*, July 3, 1935.

Tension in the Sanctuary

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The late sixties and early seventies brought new and heady wine into many of our sanctuaries. Whether an inner city Roman Catholic parish in Atlanta, a posh Presbyterian church in suburban Dallas, or a Lutheran gathering in New Haven or Berkeley, in each case you find a freedom beat in their corporate worship that is still missing from most mainline congregations. The preacher seems relatively free of ministerial pomp, more natural and self-accepting. He's no longer a one-man show. He's given worship back to the people, and now serves as choreographer of the celebration. A housewife dances in the chancel to joy in the Lord as choir and combo offer an upbeat version of Psalm 150. The congregation breaks into applause in response to the declaration of pardon. The people offer each other the ancient Peace of Jesus Christ by joining hands, even hugging each other. Seemingly forgetful of some of its inhibitions, the congregation sings with new release. The sanctuary itself reflects the vibrancy in bright colors of new banners or pulpit and communion table cloths. Even the minister has exchanged his or her black robe for a multi-colored gown, somewhat dapper as he walks among the people while preaching or preparing the congregation for a baptism. Tangy wine! You hear in this worship echoes of a line from a Benedictine hymn: "Let us joyfully taste of the sober drunkenness of the Spirit."[1]

I have shared the giddy happiness in these new sights and sounds in the sanctuary. In my more optimistic moments I have seen in this liturgical effervescence something of the rebirth of wonder that has emerged in unexpected places across this continent.

> "and I am waiting
> for the lost music to sound again
> in the Lost Continent
> in a new rebirth of wonder."[2]

Could it be true that some of this lost music that young people have heard in primitive family experiences in communes, or been entranced by in transcendental meditation, has gotten loose in our sanctuaries? Could it be that the new sense of transcendence that secretaries on coffee breaks experience while reading their

horoscopes is breaking loose in some sanctuaries like a new Penetecost? While from Bethel, Maine to Big Sur, California the floodgates of feeling have been opened in encounter groups of transactional analysis sessions, so have some worshipers in some pews found a new freedom to turn themselves loose in prayer or song. There is a culture-wide pragmatism and compartmentalization that shows a new sensitivity to pain and joy, to subtlety and sensuality, to surprise and mystery. I have wanted to believe that as worshipers we are more sensitive to inner experience than ever before and as a result are less willing for the parameters of our perception to be limited by neatly printed prayers of confession and balanced harmonies. Someone has changed our stale water into wine and we're no longer satisfied with liturgies-as-usual.

Yet, let's be realistic. Not all the worshipers hail the new wine as savior of the wedding feast. While many of our most loyal clergy and laity have not slept through the liturgical revolution, neither have they joined it. All along they simply have preferred the way things were. To them the careful symmetries of eighteenth and nineteenth century music, architecture and thought constructs more aptly represent the Presence than do syncopated rhythms, circled and swaying congregations, and bright audio-visuals.

The main resistance to the new look in liturgy, however, comes less from preference for "tradition,"[3] as it does from reaction to gauche innovation. Many clergy and laity wonder if we haven't been drinking more a bad brew of impropriety than the new wine of Pentecost. They abhor the shaking of their liturgical foundations because their sensibilities have been violated. I know from experience how my unexamined zeal for new sounds and rhythms in liturgies has "ploughed people up emotionally," forcing traditionalists further into cloisters of yesteryear. You can sympathize with some of this resistance to change when you recall how some of us clergy plunged into the new look of liturgy.

In the first place, many revolutionaries in the chancel operated more by impulse than insight. Desperate to end boredom in worship we mistook liveliness for Life. Granted, the average worship service often reveals "less the joyful song of the 'new man' than the tiresome and familiar refrain of the old captivity in which nothing has been made new."[4] Yet, too many of us innovators have assumed that new moves assure new meaning, that perky litanies, clever responses and chancel dancing have of themselves the power to raise the consciousness of the congregation to a new level of spiritual

awareness. As if a *lit-orgy* passes for *lit-urgy*![5] Although action itself can console and enlighten,[6] suddenly altered behavior patterns and rhythms never guarantee changed feelings or perceptions.[7]

Many of us innovators, secondly, raised the hackles of traditionalists by unwittingly using liturgical gimmickry for managerial ends.[8] Guitars, banners and folk talk became for some worship leaders the currency with which either to buy new members or to build an image in the community. In our zeal for liveliness we failed to see that such self-conscious, self-serving uses of liturgy violate the nature of worship itself. No congregation can sing its hymns wholeheartedly while stealing glances at how impressed its guests are. We design liturgies fundamentally to praise God rather than to win souls, promote social involvement, or foster psychological health. "All of these other things may be legitimate and necessary in their own place, and all of them may be incidentally present in worship, but the purpose of worship is essentially to serve God and that only. Any additional purpose is blasphemy: God is not to be used for our own purposes, not even for our good and necessary purposes."[9]

In the third place we liturgical experimenters turned off the traditional liturgists by using balloons and hit tunes more from desperation for relevance than from an understanding of the role of the contemporary in worship. Novel techniques in the sanctuary at times mask a fear that ancient Glorias and Doxologies are hopelessly anachronistic. In clutching at modernity, however, we have "staggered from one lopsidedness to the other." Our compulsive production of new orders and gritty litanies has often betrayed a tragic misunderstanding of the role of tradition in worship. Liturgies that constantly shift and dazzle confuse more than upbuild the consciousness of a congregation. As Robert Worley puts it, "Churchmen...encounter difficulty in transforming the church when those who give credit only to the present and reject all expressions from the past insist that only that which is totally new can meet the challenges of the present."[10] We liturgical faddists often forget that only those in touch with their past can get in touch with their present. Amnesia is far worse than nostalgia.

The judicious use of traditional elements in worship adds the kind of fiber to a congregation's backbone that enables it to stand firm amid the winds of the present. The Peace, The Kyrie, or the Sursum Corda become occasions year in and year out, century upon century, for the Body of Christ to keep in touch with and feed upon the myriad of saints it carries in its collective unconscious. Genuine contemporaneity in worship, then, moves hand in hand with

tradition. Authentic tradition constantly lives in and empowers the Body for the present. That's why many congregations with "contemporary worship" at 8:30 Sunday morning and "traditional services" at 11:00 never come to appreciate things either old or new. When you or I maintain an unrelenting predilection for jazzy forms, we not only reveal our misunderstanding of things old, but also we betray our ignorance of the nature of relevance itself.[11] Relevance always needs to find its balance with irrelevance in worship. As Paul Hoon so wisely says, "The archetypal nature of man's subconscious life requires froms that are more than culturally credible. Man's libidinal need of mystical language that disengages him from the world and returns his energies in upon his own soul cannot be suppressed. His conscious and subconscious life needs as much to be decontaminated of, as engaged with, contemporary cultural images."[12] Dean Inge sagely concluded that when the Church marries the spirit of the age, she will be left a widow in the next generation.

Lest you think I'm too critical of recent liturgical innovation, however, remember that violated sensibilities belong not just to traditionalists alone. We clergy and laity pushing for liturgical reform need a hearing also. As I look back upon some of my own experiments in the sanctuary, I see in the recklessness of some of those moments an unconscious, if not desperate desire to penetrate the defenses of church people who use established liturgical forms as armor plate against reality. You can understand some of an innovator's abandon when you come up against the rock-like resistance many traditionalists offer to changes in the sanctuary.

Why these defenses against experimentation? What do many traditionalists stand to lose in the face of new forms of worship? Traditionalists fear, first of all, a loss of authority. Too many clergy today operate from nineteenth century models of leadership that display paternalistic, rugged individualism. Such leadership sets the example, calls the shots, takes the risks, and does most of the work. Committees exist to rubberstamp the leader's directives and to emulate his actions. More than a few clergy are sophisticated enough to manipulate the committee into thinking the new sanctuary or aid for the ghetto is its own idea. But such gestures at participatory decision making cannot gloss over the fact that laity do not own the process of determining the problem, setting the goals and establishing the steps for arriving at those goals.

No wonder, then, many clergy cannot afford to alter their patterns and practices in the worship hour. Their authority is at stake. For years we clergy have led liturgies as we have led programs,

setting the example, calling the shots, taking the risks, and doing most of the work. We have established the order of worship, prepared the prayers, picked the hymns, and dominated the hour in the leadership spotlight. Laity have possessed and participated in little of the process. Laity in fact have been conditioned for generations to expect clergy to plan and lead worship. Seminaries have inadvertently fostered the leadership of liturgy as a function belonging exclusively to clergy. Corporate worship for many congregations, then, is a dramatic occasion each week for the minister to act out his outdated authority model while the people sit at his feet seeming to give silent assent. How tempting for many of us clergy to become so enamoured with this paternalistic Sunday charade that we fail to perceive the

> "authority resides primarily in those who give it and for only as long as the givers continue to give it. A minister, for example, may have the formal authority to preach and conduct worship each Sunday, but nothing he or she says is authoritative for the people filling the pews. They decide for themselves if and when they will hear him or her."[13]

The revolution behind stained glass challenges traditional authority modes in the Church, asking if the power has not always in fact belonged to the people, and demanding that authority be seen as the process of the people deciding rather than the majesty of the clergy presiding. Since liturgy means "the work of the people," then the people of God today are rightfully reclaiming that work as their own.

As chancel boundaries fall, traditionalists fear not only the loss of authority in worship, but also the loss of propriety. When I examine the spate of new liturgical materials and practices today, I must admit I sympathize with those who resist these changes. Some of the new liturgical language grates on ears tuned to the majestic sounds of previous centuries. To respond to a declaration of pardon with, "Thanks, I needed that!," or to be told that we are going to "groove with Jesus" in prayer jolts the average sense, of propiety. Numerous folk tunes, such as Ray Repp's "Allelu," bounce with such syncopation as to make united congregational participation difficult. Unison prayers with strung out sentences or new creeds heavy with subordinate clauses make a mockery of the simple rhythms demanded for the congregation to speak in one voice. When St. Paul urged worshipers to do "all things . . . decently and in order,"[14] we question how much he would profit from batting balloons around during the prayer of intercession or sailing paper plates with newspaper advertisements on them during a litany of thanks.

In one sense, however, we welcome the radical departure in ceremonial in recent years.[15] The revolution in worship forms compels us to reexamine the nature of propriety itself. After all, how should a congregation "act" when it gathers to praise God? For generations most of our mainline churches have equated reverence with politeness, assuming that the hushed orderliness of people gathered in the court of a medieval king pictures the kind of sanctuary decorum the Almighty has ordained for all time. In jokes about something funny that happens during the worship hour the humor turns almost exclusively upon the violation of well-established boundries of propriety. Whether or not the story line involves a fainting soprano, or a child needing to go to the bathroom, or a minister losing his sermon notes, the gag promises to take the starch out of Sunday dignity. Laughing about something unconventional or disorderly that happened in church relieves the tension we all feel as we try to "behave" in worship. For centuries we mainline Protestants have been conditioned to associate restricted expression with reverence. In the presence of God we are expected not to sing too loudly, speak too forcefully, or move too excitedly. We are to conduct ourselves as decorously as we would in an eighteenth century drawing room. Natural expression seems taboo not only because it might violate the dictates of reasons and order but also because it might turn loose in the chancel and the uncontrollable libidinous forces.

Many church people wonder today, however, if the self-conscious courtliness of recent generations of worshipers has not done more to negate authentic worship than most uncensored natural expression in the pulpit or aisles. Granted the allegiance all expression in the sanctuary, natural or otherwise, owes to the canons of liturgical art,[16] who can say that a show of reverence in corporate worship demands formalism and fastidiousness? With Miriam beside the Red Sea, David before the Ark, or the Prodigal before his homecoming friends, Scipture pictures reverence in the form of excited dancing.[17] Reverence to the Psalmist thunders with full-throated, orchestral praise.[18] True reverence refuses to be equated with Victorian manners. Many traditionalists, therefore, in fearing the loss of propriety through liturgical innovation actually fear the loss of control. In their efforts to restrict the decorum of the worshipers, traditionalists actually constrict themselves. As a parish minister for a number of years, I *felt* that constriction in the muscles of the throat as I led worship. Guarded posturing with the protective framework of liturgical formulae keeps the lid on subterranean *daimons*[19] the release of which could be exciting, empowering and

redeeming. The struggle to maintain propriety can be at times a fundamental struggle with the fear of becoming, a natural defense against necessary change. Growth in Christ takes the kind of risks with our feelings that often scare us back into the safer climes of carefully controlled liturgies. While all meaningful worship needs clearly defined structure to give creative impetus and direction to forces alive in the body of worshipers, we need to guard against using structure, ceremony and decorum as a rationalization against getting in touch with ourselves. How ironic when worship becomes the setting for avoiding the true worship of giving our genuine selves to God.

Thirdly, in the liturgical revolution traditionalists fear the loss of a refuge. The sanctuary for many clergy and laity alike serves as the last bastion against shifting values and eroding absolutes. As we gather to worship we wonder about what has happened to all those fixed truths about inevitable progress, human potential, honesty in government, making the world safe for democracy, liberty and justice for all, or woman's place in the home. We had those absolutes so nicely wrapped, ribboned and displayed in the windows of our nineteenth century minds. But someone threw a brick through the display window. The church is running out of hiding places in the face of the world's demands that we radically reorient our thinking if this globe is to survive at all. No wonder we resist the current move to get rid of pews. Pews symbolize one of the few things in our lives that remains solid and bolted down.[20] And when we cannot afford pews, we opt for chairs stained and padded like pews, weighty and substantial like pews. A significant part of our emotional investment in liturgy is wrapped up in the fixity and immutability embedded in the experience. We long for one hour in the week when at least some of the ground beneath our feet is not shifting sand. "Good old" hymns, sermons in the language of Canaan, prayers that soar on the sounds of more innocent years, sung responses fixed in our bones, become ingredients so many of us depend on for a questionable sense of stability in a runaway world. Even the order of worship promises protection from further disintegration. The new preacher in the parish who a few weeks after his arrival enthusiastically shifts the offering to a moment after the sermon and breaks the long pastoral prayer into several shorter prayers may find himself suddenly in the eye of a storm. We often want the order as it was, not because we care that much about the theology or history of the order, but because we feel the need for the stability that the repetition of that order brings.

Despite our natural anxiety in the face of future shock, the use of worship as a psychological crutch smacks of blasphemy. Surely the genius of authentic worship depends significantly upon the

therapeutic repetition of established sequences, sights and sounds. But when we and our people obsessively cling to those patterns and stimuli, therapy turns into compulsion, signalling a regression based on the fear of dealing with the present.

These misunderstandings by no means exhaust the issues that have been turned loose in the Church because of recent liturgical upheavals. Today liturgists are exploring a number of the dialectical tensions embedded in worship as a result of the questions posed by the Liturgical Revolution. Congregations' renewed experience of corporateness through liturgical experiments, for instance, raises again the question of how to maintain the tension between individual and corporate expression in worship. Or, the human potentialist accent on intimacy in our time elicits a concern for how to balance closeness among the worshipers with a sense of awe and transcendence. Again, our present fascination with the occult in Western society reaffirms the importance of a consciousness of mystery in worship to offset a Protestant predisposition toward rationality and intelligibility. Or, where the holy worldliness of the socially activist churches of the sixties has left a secular imprint upon the language and imagery of liturgy, where does holy irrelevance have its rightful place in worship? In all such pondering, amid restlessness in the sanctuary, we are simply asking in a multitude of ways what worship is. We are admitting, amid the tensions at the worship hour, that many of us have delayed too long in comprehending the richness and majesty of our praises.

The problem of untangling this skein of misunderstandings about the nature of worship challenges anyone bent on revitalizing the Church's worship. Which end of the string do we take up to begin unravelling the knots? Let's begin at the seminary. Fundamental corrections in the churches' worship presuppose seminaries that provide tomorrow's ministers comprehensive study and experience in liturgy. Yet, lay people at a weekend worship workshop, for instance, spend more hours studying corporate worship than many seminary graduates spend in classes on liturgy during the three or four years they seek their first degree.[21] Add to this curriculum deficiency a chapel regimen sufficiently inconsistent and ill-planned as to confuse the student regarding the nature of his or her liturgical heritage.[22] Faculty members and students are left to plan and conduct worship as they please without recourse to any established community guidelines for worship. Too often faculty and students bring to the campus the same liturgical disarray they inherited from the churches. And behind the churches' lack of liturgical integrity lies a previous generation's *laissez-faire* bias toward liturgy on

seminary campuses. The vicious circle is obvious. Until this neglect in the teaching and practice of liturgy is adequately dealt with at seminaries we can continue to look for that same neglect of liturgy in the parishes.

What lies at the center of this confusion in many seminaries and congregations? Although no simple answer surrounds the question, a partial explanation lies in a free church bias, linked to seventeenth and eighteenth century Puritanism and Pietism, that declares worship an experience more to be caught than taught, more to be felt than prescribed. Many of our founding fathers sailed to these shores in rebellion against oppressive state churches which designated with the authoritarianism of the state precisely how the people were to worship. When Puritan settlers erected simple meeting houses in the New England colonies they transplanted a growing tradition that rejected established orders, set responses, vestments, lectionaries and candles. Simplicity, individuality and spontaneity became the guidelines for early American worship. The nineteenth century horseback preachers tailored their fiery sermons and long, tedious extemporaneous prayers to the needs of the camp-town-of-the-moment. The absence of any established cultural or institutional patterns served as a seedbed for such spontaneity. To these rugged evangelists precision litanies, printed prayers and classical orders were irrelevant to the sawdust trail. In the voluntarism and democratization that pervaded Western culture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries this ethos of liturgical *laissez-faire* received an impetus on the American frontier that still dominates the Protestant mind in this century. The average free chruch member, whether Baptist, Congregationalist, Methodist, or Presbyterian still carries in his or her psyche a deepset suspicion of established worship forms. In a word association test such Protestants respond to "liturgy" with parallels like, "high church," "printed words," "monotonous," or even "insincere." As Kenneth Phifer reminds us, "The heritage of the frontier still lingers. One peculiar feature of it, which is found again and again in the Ohio Valley, is a feeling that the preacher who does not pray extemporaneously lacks the true credentials a servant of the Lord should hold."[23]

Just a decade ago some Presbyterian executives in planning manuals for each of the stated committees of the Session (ruling board) of each congregation, expressed strong feeling that little prescription should be offered to the worship committees of each parish. How a congregation worships (they reasoned) should be left to the desires of the minister and the worship committee; as if no tradition in worship were more sacrosanct than a specific tradition.

Although renewed interest over the past century in the historic liturgies of several Protestant denominations has produced denominationally approved service books with designated congregational participation, such established orders, litanies and prayers enjoy little popularity in free churches today. Offices of Worship and Music have had difficulty in getting started or supported in several such denominations because the need remains low on the list of denominational priorities. Until quite recently ministers and congregations simply have not felt the need to question what they have been used to doing on Sunday morning, nor have they sensed much desire within themselves to be informed and enlivened by their liturgical heritage.

For all the liturgical experimentation over the past decade, the average Protestant parishioner still comes to worship expecting the sermon to be the main event. Calls to worship, prayers, responses and readings serve mainly for such worshipers as preliminaries that lead to the sermon. In my first pastorate a middle-aged woman each Sunday purposely arrived at worship a half hour late. She asserted that she had no intention of putting up with all that "fol-de-rol" before the sermon. Since the initial Puritan influence on American worship three hundred years ago the sermon has dominated most Protestant worship,[24] creating in congregations the assumption that worship is mainly a matter of sitting and listening. Some communions betray this bias by calling the sanctuary the "auditorium," namely a place of hearing. As James White points out, "The question we have been accustomed to hear from someone who missed church was, 'what did he say?' "[25] indicating how closely identified free church worship has become with the sermon. With some Protestants attending worship is tantamount to "going to preaching."

Sensitive liturgists today, however, strive not to downgrade the sermon as much as to restore it to its proper perspective in the service. During the middle third of this century biblical and systematic theologians have taken significant strides as to realign the sermon with Scripture, to help us see preaching as an event that uniquely turns Scripture loose in the lives of the hearers. Many seminaries now make it clear to their students that no one preaches a sermon *per se* who does not root and ground those words in God's Word in Scripture. We rejoice at the yeomanlike task many biblical theologians and homilecticians have accomplished over the past generation in recapturing the original biblical grounding of preaching. The task remains for most Protestants, however, to regain

the proper *liturgical setting* for the sermon. While preaching uniquely conveys God's Word to His people, the sermon cannot claim to be the sole vehicle of that Word. Calls to worship, hymns, prayers, litanies, responses, charges and benedictions, not to mention Baptism and The Lord's Supper, can significantly bear God's revelation of forgiveness and new life to the congregation. The sermon, both in the first centuries of Christendom and the first century of the Reformation took its place in a series of events in the liturgy through which the people acted out their response to God's grace in their lives. The sermon followed acts of praise and confession,[26] giving grounds for such acts, while also preparing the people by its inspiration and instruction for The Lord's Supper that followed. The medieval neglect of the sermon aside, preaching traditionally has lived at the center rather than at the end of the order, taking its place in the dramatic sweep of the liturgy rather than wholly dominating that drama. When parishioners begin to understand both the intent and setting of preaching, the other elements of the service begin to regain the importance they enjoyed prior to the Puritan reaction. Prayers, hymns and responses take on a value of their own rather than being made merely to serve as prelude or postlude for the sermon.

This free church bias, therefore, born of the Puritan's mistrust of established forms and his infatuation with the spoken word, explains much of the difficulty many seminary communities have in pulling together a liturgical life both faithful to deeper traditions and sensitive to contemporary experience. How important to strive to see how seminaries can better train their students in responsible liturgical leadership, not only through classroom instruction but also through the planning and leadership of worship services on campus. How, for instance, can seminaries help their students experience and understand the corporateness in worship that offsets the excessive accent on voluntarism in many of our churches? How can theological schools help their students see more in the priesthood of all believers than an excuse for each person to be his own priest? How on seminary campuses can we gain an appreciation for how structure in the service of worship actually makes possible genuine spontaneity? Or, take the use of visual images in worship. In the free church tradition the fear of making idols of visual images has made an idol of "simplicity" itself. How can seminary faculties and students relearn trust of the visual image in order both to enrich worship as well as to recapture a significant liturgical tradition? The worship of God's people in Scripture readily shows that God's praises were served by more than words alone.

At this point we have sought only to understand the need for altering the teaching and practice of worship at the seminaries so that tomorrow's parish leaders might stand a chance to deal more creatively with the problems of corporate worship outlined in earlier pages. But meanwhile, what of the thousands of seminary graduates already in the chancel who Sunday by Sunday lead worship either oblivious to any liturgical malaise or depressed by the congregation's torpor? How can these parish ministers be awakened to the life in the liturgy and be vehicles of the translation of some of that life into their people in the sanctuary? What of the multitude of worshipers who sense living death in their local worship but feel too confused or powerless to raise questions with the minister and church officers? How can we help these loyal concerned people to understand and involve themselves in public corporate worship as to enable the drama of salvation to become a reality for them when they enter the pews?

Such questions frighten as much as attract. No generation of Christians will surround, understand or surmount the complexities involved in its worship. Yet we address the subject with the assumption that more precise, profound educational strategies in worship than we have known before will help congregations discover new liturgical riches. For, since liturgy is "the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed," and "the fountain from which all her power flows" we owe the task of educating our people in worship no less than our inspired imagination and enlightened zeal.

FOOTNOTES

1. Lawrence Ferlinghetti, *A Coney Island of the Mind* (New York: New Directions, 1958), p. 51.

2. Paul Hoon, *The Integrity of Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1971).

3. The term, "traditionalist," is used in these pages in the narrower sense of one who prefers those worship forms regularly practiced by a local congregation over recent decades. For a good discussion of the category, "tradition," see, *Ibid*, p. 95.

4. Claude Welch, *The Reality of The Church* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 17.

5. See Hoon, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

6. Will James argued that physical actions determine feelings more than feelings determine physical actions. We are sad because we cry, not crying because we are sad. See E.R. Micklem, *Our Approach To God* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1934) pp. 19-21. "Action is consolatory," wrote Joseph Conrad. . . . "Only in the conduct of our action can we find the sense of mastery over the Fates." *Nostromo* (New York: E.P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1957), p. 66. "I kiss my child not only because I love it," said Friedrich von Hugel, "I kiss it also in order to love it." *Essays and Addresses On*

The Philosophy of Religion, First Series (New York: E.P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1921), p. 251.

7. "To equate liturgical action too simply with physical activity can be sterile. Such reductionism can let the worshipper off too easily and defend him from reality. Indeed, on important levels of his being, indiscriminate physical action can reinforce passivity," Hoon, *op. cit.*, p. 294.

8. See Hoon, Ibid., p. 34.

9. Shirley Guthrie, *Some Reflections on the Theology of Worship*, (an unpublished paper), p. 1. See, also, Hoon, *op. cit.*, p. 52f.

10. Robert Worley, *Change In The Church: A Source of Hope (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1977), 1947.*

11. See Hoon, op. cit., Chapter III.

12. *Ibid*, p. 267.

13. Robert Worley, *op. cit.*, p. 28f.

14. 1 Corinthians 14:40.

15. If liturgy is *what* we do in worship, ceremony is *how* we do it. See Howard Hageman, *Pulpit and Table* (Richmond: John Knox, 1962) p. 2.

16. See Roger Hazelton, *A Theological Approach to Art* (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1967).

17. Exodus 15:19-21, 2 Samuel 6:16f, Luke 15:25.

18. Psalm 150.

19. The daimonic (from the ancient Greek word, "daimon"), akin to demonic or daemonic, is a fundamental, archetypal drive in human experience that can be just as creative as it can be destructive. See Rollo may, *Love and Will* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1969) pp. 122-180.

20. See William H. Whyte, Jr., *The Organization Man* (Garden City: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1956), p. 417.

21. A survey of 100 Protestant seminaries in the U.S. and Canada reveals that the average seminary graduate spends approximately 15-20 classroom hours studying worship while in his or her first degree program.

22. Only one seminary among those responding to the survey regarding the practice and teaching of worship on campus revealed a direct relationship between what is taught in class about worship and what is practiced in chapel.

23. Kenneth Phifer, *A Protestant Case for Liturgical Renewal* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965), p. 100.

24. See *Ibid.*, chapters 6-9.

25. James F. White, "Worship In An Age of Immediacy," *The Christian Century*, February 21, 1968, p. 228.

26. Not until the Reformation did the act of corporate confession become a regular part of the worship service. See Hubert V. Taylor, "The General Confession of Sin," *Reformed Liturgy And Music*, Vol. VIII, No. 3, Spring 1974, p. 27.

27. "Constitution On The Sacred Liturgy," *Documents of Vatican II*, p. 142.

Thanks, Papa Hippolytus

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"How, . . . can one account for the recent popularity of the liturgy of Hippolytus, except on the grounds that it happens to combine a fairly early date with features that are congenial to some contemporary ecclesiastics? The liturgy itself is undistinguished, and concerning Hippolytus my predecessor F. L. Cross has remarked that he was a 'reactionary' and 'not a master of his subject.'"
John Macquarrie, *Paths In Spirituality* (Harper, 1972), p. 78.

When Bob Gregg dared to use the pages of this august *Review* to enable a second century heresiarch to advance the scandalous notion that even prostitutes have a place in the Kingdom of God, Dr. Gregg illustrated that our patristic past "is richer and much less predictable than we suspect."[1] In our uniquely a-historical milieu, sometimes the oldest truth has a strikingly contemporary ring. I am not a historian. I teach and lead Christian worship. But because I teach worship I am forced to become a historian at times. Modern liturgical experimentation has found that the path to meaningful liturgy usually requires us to journey again where the church has been before in order that we might arrive where we would like to be today.

I sympathize with those pastors and laypersons who are dismayed by recent innovations in their accustomed worship practices. Part of the power of the liturgy is its predictability, sameness, uniformity, and familiar words and gestures. The liturgies of the church, across nearly every denomination, have changed more in the last ten years than they changed in the last four hundred years. For the post Vatican II Roman Church, the change has been even more dramatic. The United Methodist who was comfortable with the old, restrained format of "The Number 830 Holy Communion," may encounter *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper: An Alternate Text* and exclaim with John Wesley, "I like the old wine best!" Lutherans, long nurtured on *sola fide* and non-sacrificial communions, may find that when they participate in the new services of the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship they will recall Luther's rebuke of some liturgical innovators of his day who, "...act like unclean swine, rush wildly about and rejoice only in the novel, and as soon as the novelty has worn off forthwith become disgusted with it."

From whence did this worship innovation and liturgical experimentation come? The sources are many and the factors are complex; a desire to adapt our worship to the needs and realities of

the contemporary church, new discoveries in historical and biblical studies, ecumenism, pluralism, ethnic awareness, and dissatisfaction with the theological and biblical shallowness of most Protestant worship.

Oddly enough, a chief source of modern liturgical innovation is a third century ecclesiastical conservative and anti-pope who probably wrote to stem the tide of innovative worship in his own time. His name was Hippolytus. While he lived in pre-Constantinian Rome, it is difficult to know whether to classify Hippolytus as a third-century or a twentieth-century church leader. Few people have exerted as far-reaching influence on liturgical change in our time. This article will attempt to describe the significance of innovations in our celebration of The Eucharist by acknowledging our debt to our ancient father, Hippolytus.

Until the late nineteenth century we knew little about Hippolytus. Then, due to the work of Connolly and Cagin, a number of Hippolytus' works were pieced together and Hippolytus was discovered by the modern age.[2] Hippolytus was a presbyter of the church at Rome in the beginning of the third century. He wrote at least fifty books—all in Greek, for that was still the language of Roman clergy. He was a highly regarded theologian and exegete. But his teaching on the Trinity thrust him into a bitter controversy with Bishop Zephyrinus (197-217) in which Hippolytus showed his dour, irascible, meticulously traditionalist and rigorist nature. Hippolytus was the sort of person whom no one would accuse of possessing broad-mindness or irenic disposition. He eventually instigated a schism from Zephyrinus' church, accusing Zephyrinus of promoting sexual immorality (because he allowed some divorced Christians to remarry) and dangerous laxity in church discipline. His loyalty to the "good old time religion" of Logos theology earned Hippolytus a trip to the deadly Sardinian mines at the expense of the Emperor Maximus. The old war horse died there about 235. It is demonstrative of the good humor and forgiving spirit of the Roman Church that it eventually made Hippolytus a saint with a feast day of August 13.

His writings ceased to be read in the West shortly after his death when the Western Church abandoned Greek as its official language. In the East, however, especially in Egypt and Syria, his work was accepted as having great authority—particularly in regard to the polity and liturgy of those churches.

In 1691, a work entitled *The Egyptian Church Order* was made known to the Western world. Its author was unknown, but it was recognized as a very early account of church discipline and liturgy. A theory among scholars that the work was apostolic in origin led to

some of the revisions in the *Book of Common Prayer* during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. John Wesley studied the work with much interest and came to some erroneous conclusions about early church worship by reading it.

But it was not until the early 1900's that the work was identified as the lost *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus. Extensive textual work has given us a reliable reconstruction of its original liturgical directives. *The Apostolic Tradition* is one of the oldest examples of Christian prayer literature and the only detailed account of early church worship in this period. We think it was written by Hippolytus around 197 (when the "ignorant" and "unskilled" Zephyrinus became bishop).[3] Here we have a record of the "correct" rites and customs that were part of the tradition in order that they might not be destroyed by mindless innovators. Because of the conservative purpose of *The Apostolic Tradition,* we are confident that we have before us, in Lietzmann's enthusiastic assessment, "the model of all liturgies known to us."[4] How did the Ante-Nicean church worship? In *The Apostolic Tradition* we have a fairly detailed picture.

While *The Apostolic Tradition* has been influential in contemporary thought on the ministry and Christian worship in general,[5] I wish to focus upon the significance of this ancient document for a contemporary understanding of The Eucharist.

In the Hippolytan description of The Eucharist, a number of details strike us at first glance. Only baptized and sufficiently instructed persons participate. The meal occurs as the usual climax of Sunday worship. The deacons collect loaves of bread and jugs of wine from the people and present them to the bishop who stands before the table.

The bishop alone recites the eucharistic prayer since, while there appears to be a definite outline of the prayer, as yet there is no fixed formula. What we have in the *Apostolic Tradition* is a model, not a fixed text. The presbyters, standing on each side of the bishop before the table, extend their hands over the offering. This is "concelebration" which was revived by Vatican II as a means of expressing the communal and collegial nature of ordination as opposed to the old individualistic and hierarchial nature of the clergy. The concelebrated liturgy is a sign of the whole people of God in unity. "They are the body of Christ, not many bodies, but one body," as John Chrysostom once said. (Concelebration has been used in recent years to overcome the problem of intercommunion when two churches are not in communion with each other, though one

wonders if this sometimes masks the more difficult problems of full intercommunion.)

After prayers, psalms, scripture lessons, sermon, baptism and/or ordination if there is one, an Introductory Dialogue *(Sursum Corda)* is spoken (probably derived from Synagogue practices) between the Bishop and the people:

Bishop: The Lord be with you.
People: And with your Spirit.
Bishop: Lift up your hearts.
People: We have them with the Lord.
Bishop: Let us give thanks to the Lord.
People: It is right and proper.

Now follows what is variously called the Prayer of Thanksgiving, Anaphora (from the Greek, "to offer up"), or Eucharistic Prayer:[6]

THANKSGIVING	We give you thanks, O God, through your dear Child, Jesus Christ, whom you sent us in these last days to save us, redeem us and inform us of your plan. He is your Word, inseparable from you, through whom you created all things and whom, being well pleased with him, you sent from heaven to a virgin's womb. He was conceived and took flesh and was manifested as your Son, born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin. And he, accomplishing your will and acquiring a holy people for you, stretched out his hands as he suffered to free from suffering those who trust you.
NARRATIVE OF INSTITUTION	When he was handed over to undergo voluntary suffering, to destroy death and to break the chains of the Devil, to crush hell beneath his feet, establish the rule [of faith] and manifest his resurrection, taking bread, he gave thanks to you and said: Take, eat, this is my body broken for you. In the same way, taking the chalice, he said: This is my blood which is shed for you. When you do this, do it in memory of me.
ANAMNESIS (REMEMBRANCE)	Remembering then, his death and resurrection, we offer you this bread and cup, giving you thanks for judging us worthy to stand before you and serve you as priests.
EPICLESIS (INVOCATION)	And we ask you to send your Holy Spirit on the offering of holy Church. In gathering them together grant to those who share in your holy mysteries so to take part that they may be filled with the Holy Spirit for the strengthening of their faith in truth.
DOXOLOGY	So that we may praise you and glorify you through your Child Jesus Christ, through whom be to you glory and honour with the Holy Spirit in holy Church now and throughout all ages. AMEN.

Note the commendable brevity and simplicity of the Hippolytan anaphora. Behind the eucharistic liturgies stands a long development in the course of which they became loaded with secondary elements which obscured their structure and essential parts. Here we see all of the main parts which found their way, in this order (with the exception of the mid-fourth century Egyptian Anaphora of Serapion), into all later eucharistic prayers. The parts of this prayer are set forth in a bold, straightforward manner.

To comprehend the Thanksgiving section of the anaphora, we must be reminded that, among the Jews, the "blessing" of food is always a "thanksgiving." A Jew does not say, "bless this food" but rather "blessed be God who gave this food." "God is great, God is good, let us thank him for our food." *Eucharistein* ("to give thanks") and *eulogein* ("to praise") are used without great distinction in the New Testament (cf. Mk. 8:6-7).[7] The basis for the thanksgiving is gratitude before the *Mirabilia Dei.* The opening, "Let us give thanks to the Lord," sets the tone.

The basic form of this eucharistic prayer is modeled on those Jewish "eucharistic" prayers, the *berekah,* in the Old Testament (II Chron. 6:4, Neh. 9:5 f. *et alia*). The outline of these prayers is always the same: a series of thanksgivings, often in the form of blessings of God for divine mercies in the past which bear upon and justify certain petitions appended. In Hippolytus, as in the Jewish table prayers, the times of thanksgiving are four: action of the Word of God in Creation, the Incarnation, the Passion, and at the Last Supper. Gregory Dix notes that the prayer is Jewish, through and through, Jewish in form and feeling, saturated in Paschal conceptions and *heilsgeschichte,* Christianized, but recognizably Jewish.[8]

The content of the prayer corresponds directly to the Christological part of the Apostles' Creed. Here we have a public proclamation of the deeds of God, a "Christological Hymn,"[9] making known and recalling to the assembly what God has done and is doing. It has been shown that the Eucharistic Prayer was a principle form for passing on the faith in the early church.[10] Liturgy is always education, catechesis, a re-telling of the old story. The theological and biblical leanness of much of our current Sunday morning worship could profit from a rediscovery of the liturgy as the principal way of reminding God's people of things we do so easily forget. Liturgy is also proclamation. It is a witness to and an acting out of the Good News. In short, it is evangelism. The split in many Protestant churches between so-called "evangelicals" and self-styled "liturgists" might be healed if we could recover this sense of the liturgy as evangelism, an acted, visible Word to the world.

"He stretched out his hands" is undoubtedly an allusion to Isaiah 65:2, "Each day I stretched out my hands to a rebellious people." The passage is repeated by Paul in Romans 10:21 as well as by the Epistle of Barnabas and in Justin's *Dialogue* as a powerful image of divine compassion on the cross. But note that, unlike our later liturgies for the Mass and the Lord's Supper, there is surprisingly little emphasis on the passion and suffering of Christ. The medieval doctrine of the Substitutionary Atonement, in which Christ becomes the Sacrificial Lamb to atone for the sins of humanity, is absent. The thundering words, "to break the chains of the Devil, to crush hell beneath his feet, establish the rule [of faith] and manifest his resurrection...." represent a mythical *Christus Victor* image of Christ's saving work rather than the narrow focus on forensic and sacrificial images that was to dominate later Christian theology. The work of Christ is shown to be active, rather than passive, with decisive, continuing, saving significance for suffering humanity.

The tone in Hippolytus is one of joyful triumph at the victory of Christ in the war of human liberation. It is an eschatological prayer, a prayer which sings of a New Age in which the whole cosmos is redeemed, all things are being made new, and the chains which once bound humanity no longer enslave us. What a far cry this enthusiastic hymn of victory is from the traditionally sombre, restrained, funereal, penitential, passive, "memorials" into which our Communions degenerated during the Middle Ages and the Reformation. The prayer does not stop short with a sympathetic meditation on the pain of the crucifixion. Here, in Hippolytus, there is no doubt that Christians are partaking of a Resurrection Meal, not a wake for a departed hero. They are eating an Emmaus meal more than a Last Supper. This discovery has had profound implications for recent liturgical reform.

The Narrative of Institution is a simple and undeveloped free rendering of I Cor. 11:24 into the indicative form. There is no special emphasis on the words, no attempt to highlight them, they are merely an integral part of the entire salvation story.[11] The unfortunate medieval debates on the "moment of consecration" which seized upon these *verba* as the heart of the Mass and Luther's misguided stripping of The Canon of the Mass until it contained nothing but these Words of Institution, impoverished our eucharistic theology for centuries. Luther, in his attempt to purify the Mass of its later accretions, followed his principle of *sola scriptura*, taking everything out of the Mass which he did not find in scripture, thinking that he was restoring the primitive tradition.[12] The

Narrative of Institution thus became the heart of the Reformation liturgies. *Sola scriptura* is not a bad liturgical guideline. The tragedy was that only this part of the Jesus story was lifted up. Only the Last Supper and Good Friday were recalled. In an odd way, Luther succeeded in accentuating some of the most limited aspects of the Late Medieval Roman Mass. The Eucharist became a mournful recalling of the Last Supper which overshadowed the other elements in the great sweep of salvation history. Christ became significant mainly as the God-man who had to die. Hippolytus reminds us that when the early church ate the Eucharist, it remembered the birth, life, teaching, actions, death, and resurrection of Jesus—not just the death of Jesus.

Immediately following the Narrative of Institution comes the so-called *anamnesis*. This is usually rendered in English as "remembrance." Gregory Dix suggested that this should be translated, not as something remembered from the past, but as a "re-representation" or "re-enactment" of some past event, making it present.[13] To recall something in the liturgy, as Dix reminded us, is not to focus on the dead past, it is to proclaim its presently manifested power. Recent studies have raised the possibility that, in the Jewish-Christian setting, *anamnesis* means more nearly "proclamation."[14] Once again, this stresses the evangelical, kerygmatic nature of The Eucharist. The "remembrance" here is something more dynamic and presently relevant than mere historical memory.

Note the offering within the *anamnesis*. The Reformers, in reacting against the late medieval emphasis on the Mass as a sacrifice, created liturgies which dropped the offering and obscured the fact that, in our worship, a true offering is being made. (Calvin did view worship as a "sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.") But we have no reason to doubt that a strong sense of offering, of our collective self-giving, was present in the church's earliest worship. While the later emphasis on the offering as a sacrifice was probably overstated, Protestant worship today needs to recover the offering as a chief focus of public worship. In the offering we affirm that all our good things have come as gifts. We affirm, against the ever-present danger of Marcionites and Gnostics, that the material can be a bearer of sacred reality, that our gifts, our creations, and our lives are transformed in the very act of thanksgiving. As Tillich once said, "Thanksgiving is consecration; it transfers something that belongs to the secular world into the sphere of the holy."[15] Too much present day worship fosters a purely subjective, passive attitude on the part of the worshippers. A false "spirituality" has obscured the incarnation. There is too much talking, listening, sitting, thinking, and too little acting and

responding. The Offering is not an intrusion into our worship, it is the very core of our worship.

Then follows the *epiclesis* which asks for a divine response to the church's offering in the preceding *anamnesis*. The spirit is invoked upon the offering and upon the participants. Unlike later developments in the Eastern Church, the *epiclesis* does not ask for a change in the bread and wine into the body and blood—although this may be implied by the invocation. The Roman Church has no *epiclesis* for the elements in the strict sense of the word, as centuries of bitter controversy between East and West have shown. Recent recognition that the *epiclesis* was a part of early rites has been helpful in promoting Orthodox-Roman dialogue. For Protestants who are debating "The Spirit" and its assorted gifts, where the Spirit seems to be experienced by people more often outside the church (in some disembodied form) than in the church, this is a helpful reminder that a primary locus of the Spirit is in the gathered community at worship. The *epiclesis* also reminds us that true worship, like faith itself, is always a gift, a reminder which cannot be made in the Reformation liturgies where the Holy Spirit is not even mentioned!

The anaphora ends with a concluding Doxology, reinforcing the eucharistic nature of this prayer as a hymn of praise in response to our liberation in Christ. The final "Amen" of the people signifies their assent and participation in all that has gone before.

Karl Barth once commented that what matters most in the church's worship is not being up-to-date, but reformation. Reformation does not mean to go with time or let the spirit of the age judge what is true and false. It means to carry out better than yesterday the task of singing a new song unto the Lord. "It means never to grow tired of returning not to the origin in time but to the origin in substance of the community."[16] Or as Pius XII said in his encyclical on worship, "To return in mind and heart to the well-springs of the sacred liturgy...."[17] The rediscovery of the *Apostolic Tradition* has helped us to recover much that we lost in our worship. Hippolytus has influenced all revisions of the Eucharist since the 1930's.

In the liturgical reforms of Vatican II, some suggested that the Hippolytan anaphora could be taken completely into the new Roman rite. The simplicity, conciseness, and clear patterns of the prayer were said to be valuable correctives for many weaknesses within the old Roman Canon. But the absence of the ancient *Sanctus,* the Intercessions, and the Lord's Prayer caused problems. The *Sanctus* is not a primitive feature of the anaphorae. But it has become a part of all later liturgies as a way of emphasizing that our praise is

united with the praise of all the saints in all ages.[18] Added to this was the problem of the *epiclesis*. The 1968 Roman Eucharistic Prayer III transferred part of the Hippolytan *epiclesis* to a position before the Narrative of Institution. The rest of this new Roman anaphora is different from Hippolytus even if its tone and content are much the same. Eucharistic Prayer II is substantially the same as that in the *Apostolic Tradition*. It is intended for use, not for community Mass on Sunday, but for week days and special situations when a simplified form is desired.

The Lutherans, following Luther's drastic revisions of The Canon, have traditionally had no eucharistic formula between the opening *Sanctus* and the Lord's Prayer except the Words of Institution. The Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship has now drawn upon Hippolytus and other early rites for a full eucharistic prayer which moves Lutherans out of their old rite's unfortunate limitation to the Words of Institution.[19]

The new Episcopal prayers follow more the outline of the Eastern rites (with the single exception of their retention of the Proper Prefaces), than their former Cranmerian adaptation of the old Roman Canon. Their choice of a full recital of thanksgiving for all God's acts in creation, redemption, and final consummation reflect their indebtedness to works like the *Apostolic Tradition*. The new Eucharistic Prayer B of the *Draft Proposed Book of Common Prayer*[20] is almost a duplication of Hippolytus.

As for the United Methodists, their liturgical revision parallels much that has gone on in other denominations with the additional stress, following Hippolytus (and Gregory Dix), that the Eucharist is not so much a set of words but rather a pattern of basic actions which allow for possible variations in the words. Like the anaphora of Hippolytus, United Methodist worship innovation has sought to produce basic patterns rather than fixed texts.[21] As for the texts which they have produced, we need only compare the old *Order for Holy Communion*[22] (which Methodists inherited, of course, from the *Book of Common Prayer*) with *The Lord's Supper: An Alternate Text*[23];

> Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by the one offering of himself, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of his precious death until his coming again:
>
> Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech thee, and grant that we, receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine, according to thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his passion, death, and resurrection, may be partakers of the divine nature through him: (Then follows the Institution Narrative.)

Unlike the old *Order,* the *Alternate Text* refers to its central prayer as "The Prayer of Thanksgiving" (rather than the misnomer, "Consecration") thus calling attention to thanksgiving as the heart of the Lord's Supper. By examining a portion of this new prayer (which is derived from the ICET texts [24]) we can readily see the differences between the new and the old:

Father, it is right that we should always and
everywhere give you thanks and praise.
Only you are God.
You created all things and called them good.
You made us in your own image.
Even when we rebelled against your love,
you did not desert us.
You delivered us from captivity,
made covenant to be our God and King,
and spoke to us through your prophets.
Therefore, we join the entire company of heaven
and all your people now on earth
in worshiping and glorifying you:
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.
We thank you, Father,
that you loved the world so much
you sent your only Son to be our Savior.
The Lord of all life came to live among us.
He healed and taught men,
ate with sinners,
and won for you a new people by water and the Spirit.
We saw his glory.
Yet he humbled himself in obedience to your will,
freely accepting death on a cross.
By dying, he freed us from unending death;
by rising from the dead, he gave us everlasting life.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us,
the Lord Jesus took bread.
After giving you thanks,
he broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
When the supper was over,
he took the cup.
Again he returned thanks to you,
gave the cup to his disciples, and said:

Drink from this, all of you,
this is the cup of the new covenant in my blood,
poured out for you and many,
for the forgiveness of sins.
When we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we experience anew the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ
and look forward to his coming in final victory.

Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

We remember and proclaim, Heavenly Father,
what your Son has done for us
in his life and death,
in his resurrection and ascension.
Accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,
in union with Christ's offering for us,
as a reasonable and holy surrender of ourselves.
Send the power of your Holy Spirit on us,
gathered here out of love for you,
and on these gifts.
Help us know
in the breaking of this bread
and the drinking of this wine
the presence of Christ
who gave his body and blood for mankind.
Make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in service to all mankind.

Through your Son Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit in your Holy Church,
all glory and honor is yours, Father. Amen.

In returning to our heritage in worship we have been continually impressed by our commonality rather than our differences. In stripping away accumulated liturgical bric-a-brac, we now see more clearly what we are about. For this new spirit of liturgical development, for moving us off our age old debates about "sacrifice" and into new ecumenical affirmations of the whole cosmic saving work of Christ, for the new tone of joy and victory, for restoring a bold and clear statement of theological content to our once disordered and superficial rites, for helping us transform our sombre "Memorial Meal" into a celebration of praise and thanksgiving, we say, "Thanks, Papa Hippolytus."

FOOTNOTES

1. Robert C. Gregg, "Early Christian Variations on the Parable of the Lost Sheep," *The Duke Divinity School Review*, Spring, 1976, pp. 85-104.

2. R. H. Connolly, *The So-Called Egyptian Church Order*, Cambridge, 1916, Dom Paul Cagin, *L'Eucharistia: Canon primitif de la messe ou formulaire essentiel et premier de toutes les liturgies*, Paris, 1912.

3. This date is the opinion of C. C. Richardson, "The Date and Setting of the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus," *Anglican Theological Review*, XXX (1948), pp. 38-44. For a differing opinion on the dating, see Gregory Dix (ed.), *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome*, London, 1937.

4. Hans Lietzmann, *Messe und Herrenmahl*, Bonn, 1926. The belief that Hippolytus represents a very early form of the Roman Rite has recently been challenged by Louis Bouyer, *Liturgical Piety*, Notre Dame, 1968, pp. 188-191.

5. Bernard Cooke, *Ministry to Word and Sacraments*, Philadelphia, 1976, pp. 421-27, 537-53.

6. Translation by Dom Bernard Botte, *La Tradition Apostolique de saint Hippolyte. Essai de reconstruction*, Münster, 1963.

7. Burton Scott Easton, *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus*, N.Y., 1934.

8. Dix, *Treatise*, p. XI. See also Massey Shepherd, "Hippolytus....," *Studia Liturgica*, June 1962, pp. 85f.

9. Lietzmann, *Messe*, p. 178.

10. Josef Jungmann, *The Mass*, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1976, p. 263. The educational function of the eucharistic prayer continues today. See the article by James White in this issue of the *Review*.

11. Gregory Dix, in *The Shape of the Liturgy*, London, 1946, p. 240, tried to prove that the Words of Institution were a later addition but his argument has been refuted. See Josef Jungmann, *The Early Liturgy*, Notre Dame, 1959, pp. 68-69.

12. Frank C. Senn, "Martin Luther's Revision of the Eucharistic Canon in the *Formula Missae* of 1523," *Concordia Theological Monthly*, v. 44, #1, 1973.

13. Dix, *Shape*, p. 245.

14. G. D. Kirkpatric, "Anamnesis," *Liturgical Review*, Vol. V, #1 pp. 210-223.

15. Paul Tillich, *The Eternal Now*, N.Y., 1963, p. 179.

16. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Edinburgh, 1961, IV, 1, p. 705.

17. *Encyclical Mediator Dei*, 20 Nov., 1947.

18. Bernard Botte in *The New Liturgy*, ed. by Lancelot Sheppard, London, 1970, p. 197.

19. Frank C. Senn, "Contemporary Liturgical Theology," *Response*, Vol. XIV, #1, pp. 10-16.

20. *The Draft Proposed Book of Common Prayer*, New York, 1976, pp. 369-371.

21. *World and Table*, Nashville, 1976, pp. 13-14.

22. *The Book of Worship*, Nashville, 1964, pp. 15-22.

23. *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper: An Alternate Text*, Nashville, 1972.

24. "A Common Eucharistic Prayer," ICET, 1975. See Jame's White's Article in this issue of the *Review* for a commentary on the *Alternate Text*.

Liturgy, Theology of the Laity: The Case of the 1972 United Methodist Communion Service

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One of the historic slogans of the twentieth-century liturgical movement has been that "liturgy is the theology of the laity." This phrase stands almost as the motto for the life work of the great Belgian monk, Lambert Beauduin, a pivotal figure of the twentieth-century Christianity. I want to examine the truth of this slogan and what it implies for United Methodists today. I shall use the 1972 United Methodist Communion service as a case study to illustrate what seems to me to be a profound truth, that "liturgy is the theology of the laity."

First of all, this short statement needs a bit of expansion. It means that those things which are said and done in the public worship of the Church are crucial means for shaping the understanding laity have of what it means to think and feel as a Christian. The words and actions of worship provide vehicles for perceiving what is ultimately real in life and for expressing our relationship to the Ultimate. Such words and actions help the laity form belief patterns that sustain and nourish life. All of this is true for clergy as well but the clergy have the additional resources of seminary education, constant reading, and Bible study.

If the statement "liturgy is the theology of the laity" is true for Catholics, I believe these words apply to Protestants equally well. Worship clarifies and articulates the theology of our laity as nothing else does. Frequently public worship is the only occasion our people hear theological statements made. Unfortunately Bible reading is the exception rather than the rule among Protestant laity today. Long gone is the day when the minister could assume that his or her people spent any time between Sundays reading God's word. If, today, they are exposed to theological statements between occasions of worship, such statements come incognito in novels and films. Public worship is the sole event in the life of most people in the pews where Christian faith is put into actions and words in a conscious and deliberate way.

Such a situation places all the more emphasis on the unvarying texts used in Protestant worship since we have far fewer stable

elements than does Roman Catholic worship. Much of our service is devoted to extemporary prayers and sermons which are never repeated. Thus elements such as creeds, doxologies, hymns, and the Lord's Prayer have an even greater theological importance for us than in Roman Catholic worship where there is more stability. This takes on even more significance when the Lord's Supper is celebrated and the major portion of the service is unchanging. The unvariable nature of most of the communion service gives it definitive qualities as a theological statement that our efforts in preaching and education cannot duplicate, since they always word their contents in new and unrepeated ways.

Much of the power of liturgy as the theology of the laity is, then, due to the power of repetition. This is expecially true of graphic phrases. The one prayer the laity of the Episcopal Church refused to give up was the prayer of humble access. How many Methodists, too, have had a strong image of their unworthiness reinforced by the repetition of such a graphic phrase as "we are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table"? Unfortunately Reformation liturgies were so successful in composing such vivid penitential images that constant reinforcement of these has given the whole Lord's Supper a gloomy cast. Liturgical repetition is an extremely powerful means for making theological images become a part of life.

United Methodism has rarely grasped the importance of liturgical texts as basic theological statements. No other theological statements reach as many people as constantly as those we use in public worship. This is where the Church's real theological work gets done. Yet this is an area in which our trained theologians are scarcely involved. Of necessity, theologians talk to each other and to seminary students. And we liturgists talk to the people, Sunday after Sunday. The 1972 "Sacrament of the Lord's Supper" has sold over 1,310,000 copies, has been xeroxed and mimeographed many times that number, and has been used over and over in churches. Can we point to any other recent United Methodist theological document that has sold more than a few thousand copies? The 1976 "Service of Baptism, Confirmation, and Renewal" is probably the closest runner up with 130,000 copies in use. In United Methodism the liturgists are doing the theology of the laity with little or no direct contributions from the professional theologians. This is a frightening responsibility for liturgists. Can you imagine Rome turning loose a liturgical text without thorough scrutiny and approval by the Congregation on Christian Doctrine? To be sure, not all decisions by the old Holy Office were wise, but at least its approval was a necessity before any

liturgical texts were published. One looks in vain for a Methodist parallel. One suspects that theology is not terribly important in United Methodism.

But liturgists do not do theology in isolation. We are completely dependent upon pastors. This is a consumer's market. Poor and sloppy celebrations weaken the possibility that the liturgy can teach anybody any theology at all. On the other hand, good celebration of an inadequate liturgy can teach an unsatisfactory theology as when basic Christian doctrines, such as eschatology, are constantly omitted. But careful celebrations of well-balanced liturgies can be powerful tools in teaching good theology. So much depends upon the discernment and sensitivity of the local pastor who plans, prepares for, and conducts the actual services! Each of you must be, as Paul Hoon reminds us, a "liturgical theologian". And that is a very important responsibility.

I

I maintain that the repeated parts of liturgy are decisive in shaping the theology of the laity whether by actions such as the breaking of bread or by words such as the *gloria patri*. But there is one action that is supremely important in defining the Church's faith. This is the giving of thanks at the Lord's Supper, the great thanksgiving, the eucharistic prayer, the canon, or anaphora which since 1662 Anglicans and Methodists have mislabeled the "Prayer of Consecration." This prayer, which I shall call "the eucharistic prayer," is the key theological statement the Church makes in worship. A similar prayer has been recovered in our 1976 baptismal rite after having been totally absent for decades. Though sadly deformed and undervalued during most of our history, potentially the eucharistic prayer is the most important theological statement the Church makes within or without the context of worship.

If there is any consistent theme in recent liturgical studies, it is the necessity of understanding the Jewish roots of Christian worship if we hope to revitalize worship in our churches. There is no better example of this than in the eucharistic prayer. We have come to understand how thoroughly Jewish are the sources of this prayer both in form and in purpose. The return to our roots has made us realize how tremendously exciting the eucharistic prayer can be and how sadly we have ignored one of our chief treasures.

The early Christians followed the form of Jewish synagogue prayers with extraordinary faithfulness, simply changing the contents to those of the new covenant. But the basic concepts, the forms, the key words were all borrowed. For the Jew, the essence of

the formal fixed prayers of the synagogue was proclamation of and thanksgiving for God's mighty acts of salvation. It is a theology of recital of the *mirabilia Dei.* For the early Christians, the eucharistic prayer did exactly the same thing. It was a marvelous welling up of proclamation and thanksgiving for God's mighty actions from the beginning to the conclusion of time. Here the new Israel poured forth its joyful recital of those acts by which God had called the Church out of the world.

The early Church never seemed to question this function of the eucharistic prayer nor did obvious parallels between Christian eucharistic prayers and the synagogue benedictions seem a problem. In a sense, Paul overstated his case. One does in many ways have to become a Jew first in order to become a Christian, though, thank heaven, I do not have to teach students how to circumcise or how to kill chickens. But this point is crucial, the eucharistic prayer carries on the Jewish practice of thanking God by proclaiming God's mighty works on behalf of God's people. It is a think-thank process in which recalling what God has done becomes the highest form of praise that we can offer God. Making memorial is our most important sacrifice because it offers God's own actions as our most precious possession.

Since the eucharistic prayer performs such a supremely important function, the proclaiming of it is an action of great importance. Just as the synagogue designated respected officers of the congregation to lead its central prayers, so the Church early assigned this function to the president of the local congregation. After all, only a truly representative minister could be expected to have the competence and sensitivity to sum up those things for which the congregation gave thanks. Justin Martyr tells us that the "president similarly sends up prayers and thanksgivings to the best of his ability, and the congregation assents, saying the Amen." Much has been made of the phrase "to the best of his ability"; perhaps more ought to be made of "the congregation assents." The president performs a representative act for the people by summing up the memories the congregation has to offer God. Not anyone could do it, only someone who knew both theology and the people, a true "liturgical theologian."

The Church grew more cautious with time, just as Judaism had, and pushed the celebrants in the different parts of the world into following fixed patterns for proclaiming the thanksgiving. Our earliest example of this is Hippolytus, about 215 a.d., who tells us chief pastors are still free to devise their own form "only let him pray what is sound doctrine." Apparently skepticism as to the ability of

many pastors to do justice to the Church's faith and hopes plus the attacks of heretics pressured the Churches of the world to adopt fixed formulas. It is fascinating how the early liturgies of the different churches of the world reveal native expressions and thought forms of immense ethnic variety, yet at the same time enunciate precisely the same faith. For the eucharistic prayer was the Church's chief expression of its faith, already centuries old before councils began promulgating creeds. It is common to state that *lex orandi, lex credendi* but easily forgotten that the eucharistic prayer is the chief example of the *lex orandi.*

The eucharistic prayer functioned for centuries as the Church's chief summary of faith. Beside it a creed was redundant. It was a sign of decadence when the Church in the West finally incorporated the creed in the mass. It meant that the Church had forgotten what the eucharistic prayer was all about. In the early eleventh century, Rome yielded to pressure and added the Nicene Creed to the mass. By then no one sensed the redundancy of doubling the eucharistic prayer. It indicated that the Jewish roots of the prayer had finally shriveled up altogether. Even the basic trinitarian shape of the eucharistic prayer had become so concealed that the innovation of adding the creed, in Charlemagne's time in the West, was seen as a safeguard of orthodox Trinitarian faith. It ought to be a warning to us, today, that something is seriously amiss in any eucharistic rite where the proclamation of the eucharistic prayer is so weak or one-sided as to need to be propped up by a creed in the same service. Such presence may be a necessity in our 1964 rite, but it is an intrusion in the 1972 service. We are, at last, in the process of becoming better Jews, of learning to pray our creeds and to proclaim our prayers as Judaism and the early Church did.

Though the eucharistic prayer has been and potentially is the most important theological statement of the Church, it obviously has not been that for over a thousand years. Once we lost our Jewishness, we lost our understanding of how the eucharistic prayer functions as an act of proclamation. We continued to restrict it to clergy, but we forgot why it needed to be guarded by being entrusted only to someone truly representative of the community. Any sense of the priest as the one who sums up the community's corporate memories as its sacrifice, became replaced by alien concepts of sacrifice and presence. The loss of the function of proclamation is most vividly seen in the complete absence of any sense of a need to recall the old covenant. You must remember that these medieval losses are our losses too. But for over a thousand years, the Church in the West simply forgot to proclaim and give thanks for the old covenant. Scarcely less seriously, it forgot to mention the present and active

intervention of the Holy Spirit. And it blithely ignored the final culmination of all things in the messianic kingdom.

If the Protestant Reformers inherited a defective tradition, they nevertheless reinforced many of its worst aspects often under the illusion of recovering primitive elements. What they knew and had experienced as late medieval men was a rite heavily penitential, shot through with apologies in which priest and congregation constantly apologized for their sinfulness. If anything was proclaimed, it was not God's acts but humanity's sins. So Reformation liturgies became litanies of human sins, not recitals of God's acts. Could anything be more inverted than to substitute apology for proclamation? This was compounded by the Reformers' abandonment of the sacrament of penance. The human needs that penance served did not go away; they were simply transferred to the eucharist which ever since has had to do double duty. Many of our present problems are due to need to have to celebrate penance every time we make eucharist. We need to recover reconciliation as a corporate act of faith in order to let the eucharist do its own work once again.

Unfortunately, the exigencies of the times compelled the Reformers to deal with corrupted popular concepts of eucharistic sacrifice. Luther took the most drastic action—he simply threw out the whole eucharistic prayer. At least he was colorful in denouncing it as "that mangled and abominable thing gathered from much filth and scum." The crowning irony is that Luther kept only the words of institution, apparently unaware that to a first-century Jew these words were about as heavily sacrificial as anything that could be spoken. Cranmer dealt with the same problem in a hardly more successful way. He gave us, instead, a prayer full of theological polemics, arguing with Roman Catholics by asserting that on Calvary Christ made "(by his one oblacion once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifyce, oblacion, and satysfacyon, for the sinnes of the whole worlde." And so Methodists have been refuting Roman Catholics every Sunday for the last two hundred years though I doubt many were listening. The tragedy was that we have had to settle for a negative statement of eucharistic sacrifice all these years.

Well, I hope you can glimpse the magnificent vehicle of praise the Church lost when it ceased to understand the form and function of the eucharistic prayer as the Church's supreme act of proclamation, and consequently, its chief statement of theological doctrine. Theology is far too important to leave just to the theologians. We are challenged today to overcome the medieval distortions, to remember what we have forgotten for a thousand years, to remember how Christians give thanks.

II

Well, what is our record so far? The 1972 United Methodist Communion service makes an important case study for it was our first major step in recovering those things we did not know that we had lost. I must say a quick word about the legal status of this service. It is an official alternative service of the United Methodist Church which in its 1970 General Conference authorized the former Commission on Worship to develop alternative services to those in *The Book of Worship* and *The Methodist Hymnal.* This mandate first bore fruit in the publication of the 1972 communion service. We now refer to this and the services that followed as "Supplemental Worship Resources." They do not abolish existing resources, they supplement them, giving us additional options and underscoring the pluralistic character of United Methodist worship. Perhaps more significant, since Methodists are nothing, if not pragmatic, is the *de facto* situation. The service was prepared with the anticipation that it would serve a minority of churches eager for change. Instead, it has been widely accepted in every segment of United Methodism and has virtually replaced the communion service in the hymnal for thousands of congregations representing wide differences of opinions and practices. In the weekly eucharist in the seminaries, faculty now have to insist that the 1964 service be used at least occasionally so as not to be forgotten. The widespread use of the new service and its replacement of the traditional rite is as surprising as it is gratifying to those of us who worked on the development of the 1972 communion service.

For the first time in our history, United Methodists have an official communion service which is not simply a revision of previous Anglican-Methodist efforts. John Wesley only ventured to change a single word in the 1662 Anglican eucharistic prayer; he removed a redundant "one." Though totally different in wording, our new eucharistic prayer is more Wesleyan than any we have ever had. The evidence for this statement occurs in the eucharistic hymns that the Wesleys produced. Scholars agree these are the chief statements of John Wesley's eucharistic doctrine.

How do we account for the tremendous popularity of the new communion service? Few lay people care that it has broader and deeper historical roots than any of its predecessors, that it is more Wesleyan, or that it is classical and ecumenical in shape [rather than narrowly Anglican-Methodist.] Probably not many people have been excited by its language. One critic called its language "undistinguished" and that was exactly what we desired. Cranmer, too, might have considered that a mark of success in the sixteenth century. Its

third keynote, greater flexibility has been disappointingly utilized. I fear most pastors simply read it as printed rather than try to make creative and imaginative use of the options suggested. No, I think its popular appeal has not been historical, linguistic, or because of flexibility.

I suspect its appeal has been largely due to clarity of function in teaching the laity how to think and feel about our relationship to God. Its imagery is balanced; nothing is overloaded nor underplayed. All dimensions of our relationship to God receive balanced expression. The service is, in short, a good school of theology.

It is time to examine briefly the theological statements the eucharistic prayer of our 1972 service makes. What is its theology? First of all, it picks up the basic trinitarian structure of all classical eucharistic prayers. Previous Methodist eucharistic prayers (excepting a strange Methodist Protestant one of the 1830's) do not even mention the Holy Spirit. It will be helpful to follow this trinitarian structure using three key greek terms: *eucharistia, anamnesis,* and *epiclesis.*

First of all, the eucharistic prayer is, as its name indicates, a jubilant proclamation of praise and thanksgiving to God for what God has done. To bless God means to recite God's works. "To bless" and "to give thanks" are synonymous terms for Jews and Christians. The opening dialogue calls us to give God "thanks and praise" and this is reinforced throughout the prayer. The prayer is addressed to God the Father from beginning to end. It differs greatly from any we have had previously by not limiting itself to thanking God only for the "passion, death, and resurrection" but in including the whole sweep of God's mighty actions from creation to second coming. The *mirabilia Dei* are recited in joyful acknowledgement that God has accomplished it all for us. Instead of the mournful passion piety, to which we have so long been accustomed, this prayer rejoices in the joyful mysteries which outnumber so greatly the sorrowful. The gospel, after all, is good news. The crucifixion is, of course, an important part of the Christian message but the 1964 service dwells so exclusively on the passion narrative that it is no wonder that congregations consider communion a gloomy occasion.

The goodness of God's creation, God's faithfulness despite the rebellion and captivity of God's people, and God's constant accessibility are elements of good news that we have long excluded from our great thanksgiving. All reaches its climax in the incarnation, the healing and teaching, and the creation of a new people. Even the resurrection is not the last word but rather the coming in final victory. A whole section of Wesley's eucharistic

hymns is entitled: "The Sacrament a Pledge of Heaven," few of which are in *The Book of Hymns* and none in the section of communion hymns. Hymn 93 acknowledges: "We now are at His table fed,/But wait to see our heavenly King;/To see the great Invisible/Without a sacramental veil," and continues: "Haste to the dreadful joyful day,/When heaven and earth shall flee away." So, in our 1972 rite, we declare we look forward to Christ's "coming in final victory" and acclaim "Christ will come again."

A major portion of the eucharistic prayer is *anamnesis* of what Christ has done. Unfortunately because of controversies in 1552, half of the eucharistic prayer got misplaced and occurs in the 1964 rite after the communion of the people, thus obscuring completely the function of those words. The least we can do is to reunite the two halves of the eucharistic prayer in the 1964 book. But we need even greater clarity than that supplies to express what *anamnesis* does. Why do we recall what Christ has done? It is closely, indeed inseparably, united to *eucharistia.* What we offer is also what we proclaim. We recite what God has done both as recalling and as thanksgiving. So *anamnesis* and *eucharistia* really are one. But the new service adds another important dimension to which we have been blind. What Christ "has done for us in his life and death, in his resurrection and ascension" is all we have to offer to God. The memorial of his actions is our true sacrifice. But Christ's work is not done. He continues to be our great "high priest," "to appear now before God on our behalf" (Heb. 9:24). As the worshiping Church we act "in union with Christ's offering for us." We are a priestly people through union to Jesus Christ. The language is reminiscent of Augustine but it is more emphatically akin to Wesley who, alone of the great Reformers, stresses the importance of seeing the eucharist as sacrifice. Part IV of the Wesleyan eucharistic hymns is entitled: "The Holy Eucharist as it implies a Sacrifice." Hymn 117 reminds us: "Parts of Thy mystic body here,/By Thy Divine oblation raised,/. . . We now with Thee in heaven appear." Recent research has made us realize just how constantly the New Testament speaks of the eucharist in sacrificial terms. Now, for the first time, United Methodism has a positive statement of eucharistic sacrifice. It is, I believe, a stronger and more biblical statement of sacrifice than any I know of in any Protestant liturgy. Once again, we find John Wesley out ahead of us.

I have mentioned the total absence of any recognition of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Lord's Supper. It is a common blind spot in western Christendom until Post-Vatican II reforms. The constant

witness of the eastern churches, recognizable as early as St. Cyril of Jerusalem in the fourth century, has finally reached us. We now have a clear *epiclesis,* invoking the Holy Spirit to be present, to act, to bring us specified benefits: communion, consecration, recognizing the presence, and mission. The new baptismal liturgy makes parallel recognition of the activity here and now of the Holy Spirit. Once again there are good precedents, this time in Calvin's theology for stressing the agency of the Holy Spirit in the eucharist (though curiously absent in Calvin's liturgy). Wesley's hymn 72, "Come, Holy Ghost, Thine influence shed,/And realize the sign;/Thy life infuse into the bread,/Thy power into the wine," sounds like Calvin's theology set to music.

We have succeeded in articulating the presence in a dynamic sense, associating it with the "breaking of this bread and the drinking of this wine." This finds fulfillment in union with Christ, in Paul's words, "so that in him we might be made one with the goodness of God" (II Cor. 5:21). Our unity is in Christ through whom we are enabled to serve "all the world." The whole prayer ends in a doxological crescendo of praise of the Trinity, words constructed from those of Hippolytus in the third century.

Two items need brief mention. The service, I am convinced, makes a stronger statement of the Christian's responsibility for social action than any other denominational rite does. Methodism's historic participation in the struggle for justice rings out in the words just before the doxology, the prayer after receiving, and the dismissal.

What is missing is also important. Gone is the medieval-Reformation gloom of penitential elements calling attention to our unworthiness rather than to God's glory. If there is any place that sin is made irrelevant it is certainly at the Lord's table. There are no apologies here. All depends upon God; it is pure gift. And no irrelevancies about our not deserving these gifts intrude upon our thankful proclamation that first and last all depends upon God's work, not ours. The pervasive individualism of medieval-Reformation rites is gone too. The singing of hymns, recommended during communion, helps to overcome the tendency to individualistic introspection and meditation. This is no place for that kind of thing; we pray that the Holy Spirit makes us "one with each other." Wesley accomplished this by giving the people hymns to sing rather than silent meditation and this we can accomplish by avoiding divisive table dismissals and periods of silence.

Finally, though, so much depends upon the use pastors make of it. "Good celebrations increase and renew faith. Bad celebrations weaken and destroy faith." So much depends upon you! You must

understand it yourself; you must teach it to others. My last word to you is Paul Hoon's: You "cannot escape the duty" of "the minister's calling to function as a liturgical theologian." You are the only ones who can make it happen. If liturgy is really to be the theology of the laity, it is up to you. Make it happen!

Worship in the Black Church

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In an article entitled "Religious Education and the Black Experience" which was published in *The Black Church,* a journal of the Black Ecumenical Commission of Massachusetts, President Grant Shockley of the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta wrote: "Being Black in the United States of America is a peculiar experience."[1] It is an experience and a condition whose roots are in Africa and whose history is a long and bitter night of slavery, segregation, discrimination, oppression, deprivation, excusion, alienation, and rejection in this country. This is the experience in which the black church had its beginning and has its continuing history and development. This is the experience out of which emerges a peculiar black theology and a distinct black worship tradition.

For the most part, black churches in America were established in three basic ways.

First, black churches were established on slave plantations where owners were, for one reason or another, sympathetic toward the Christianizing of slaves. In some cases, slaveowners were genuinely concerned about the religious development of their slaves and felt some moral or religious obligaton to share the Gospel with these "heathens". In many cases, however, slavemasters used Christianity to further exploit their slaves. It was thought and it was taught that making slaves Christians would make them better slaves. Such evangelizing was usually conducted by white preachers; sometimes black preachers thought to be sympathetic toward the slave system were the evangelists; in both instances, such evangelizing was always under the strict control of the master.[2] It was designed to serve his goals and purposes. Other considerations were at least secondary and, more often than not taboo. This was the beginning of a long history of biblical misinterpretation and manipulation in American Christianity to support black slavery, segregation, discrimination, and oppression. And as recent as today, instances can be cited where the biblical faith is still misinterpreted and manipulated to victimize ethnic minorities in this country.

Secondly, black churches were established on plantations where slaveowners were opposed to the Christianizing of black Africans.

Religious exercise among them was prohibited.[3] But, being religious as they were, slaves devised their own ways and forms of relating to deity. They stole away to Jesus and held secret meetings in their huts, or in the woods, or in other places of safety; they devised means to muffle their sounds so that unfriendly masters would not hear them as they worshipped their God, told him about their troubles, found assurance that it will be alright afterwhile, and prayed for strength to sustain them until the day breaks and their long and bitter night of sub-human condition and existence would be over.

And thirdly, black churches were established in direct protest of the subordinate and inferior status that was forced upon black people in white churches. Dr. D.E. King, writing in the book, *The Black Christian Experience,* describes how black people have always been denied the right and privilege of participation in white churches. Dr. King wrote:

> From slavery until now blacks have been humiliated, embarrassed, harrassed, brutally attacked, arrested, and imprisoned for even attempting to worship in white churches of all denominations. Even when they were admitted to worship and membership in a few white churches, they were relegated to the rear or to the balconies. They were also forced to wait until whites were served the Lord's Supper before they were served.
>
> From the treatment suffered by blacks in the white church it is indeed, a miracle that they did not renounce Christianity altogether. Perhaps they would have if they had not, psychologically, separated Christ from the white church.[4]

Blacks did separate Christ from the white church. If God and his Son could condone the oppression and the inhumane treatment they experienced in the white church, the God of black folks had to be separated from that institution. Thus the failure of "American Christianity" to accord humanity to black people necessitated the establishment and development of black churches.

Obviously, this same failure of "American Christianity" inevitably precipitated a black interpretation of the faith and a black worship tradition. When the churches compromised the civil and spiritual rights of black people and yielded to the assumption that black persons were less than persons — less than human, the formation of a different church, a particular theology, and a unique style of worship ensued. If the God of "American Christianity" could deny blacks freedom and acquiesce in their slavery and brutal oppression, there must be some other interpretation of God, persons, and the world. Black people developed this particular interpretation through a combination of their African heritage and their daily experience of depersonalization with the Bible and the religon of their masters. They formed a church and forged a theology and fashioned a worship tradition to respond to their peculiar needs.

"Being Black in the United States of America is a peculiar experience". The black church, through its interpretation of the faith and its worship, has been the most relevant and adequate response to that experience and that condition. In the "sermons, spirituals, prayers, and Sunday School teachings of the black church," Shockley asserts that "Black people came to terms with their blackness, their expressional gifts and their social situation of slavery and brutalizing oppression in a white racist church and society."

In their churches and in every other aspect of their existence, black people worshipped and proclaimed an Almighty Soverign God in whose image they are made. They worshipped a God who was against slavery and oppression, and those who perpetrated this evil. They worshipped a God who wills liberation and sent his Son to be the Liberator of oppressed peoples. They worshipped a God whose Spirit works for the liberation and freedom of all peoples. It is said that a black preacher was heard to remark that it all began when a group of black people, in protest of the inferior and subordinate status forced upon them in a white church, left that church singing: "Ev'rybody talkin 'about Heab'n ain't goin dere, Heab'n..." Do you know that spiritual?

I got a robe, you got a robe,
All God's chillun got a robe.
When I get to Heab'n gonna put on my robe,
Gonna shout all over God's Heab'n.

I got shoes, you got shoes,
All God's chillun got shoes.
When I get to Heab'n gonna put on my shoes,
Gonna shout all over God's Heab'n.

Heab'n, Heab'n.
Ev'rybody talkin bout heab'n ain't going dere,
Heab'n, Heab'n,
Gonna shout all over God's Heab'n.

The black experience and the black condition: we have to have some appreciation of that experience and that condition before we can begin to understand the worship tradition of the black church.

Nor can we begin to understand the worship tradition of the black church except we recognize and accept the reality that black people did not come to America bereft of any religious experience. This is important because Western historians and sociologists alike have acepted the myth that the black American has no meaningful past. E. Franklin Frazier, the celebrated Negro sociologist wrote the book, *The Negro Church in America.* In it he said:

> ...From the available evidence, including what we know of the manner in which the slaves were Christianized and the character of their churches, it is impossible to establish any continuity between African religious practices and the Negro church in the United States.[6]

Frazier goes on to describe how, in the process of enslavement, the Negro was completely stripped of his social, cultural and religious past. American Christianity became the "new basis of social cohesion" for black Americans; and, Frazier, concludes, "There was one element in their African heritage that was able to survive capture in Africa and the 'middle passage'—dancing, the most primitive form of religious expression."[7]

The tremendous contribution of "Black Power" has been its emphasis on black awareness and black identity. It has led black Americans to seriously question Frazier's position; it has led to a new appreciation of the work of Melville J. Hershovits and others who assert that the prevailing attitude upon which this nation bases its racial policies is a "myth." To believe that black Americans have no meaningful past; to believe that African religion has not had some influence on the black church in the United States is to embrace a myth, a fictitious imagination that cannot be supported by the facts of history.[8]

Alex Haley spent 12 years studying the seven American generations of his family. He researched the history of the slave trade, the slave ship crossings, and the history of the Kinte family in Africa. In *Roots,* Haley told the story of his family; but more than that, he told the story of black people in America. It is a story that declares for all time that African life and culture has influenced black life in America and African religion has impacted the black church in the United States.[9]

It is not to be doubted that very early in our existence in this country, black people were exposed to Christianity. The missionary efforts, and the warmth of the style and message of the Methodists and Baptists at that time won for those churches large followings from among the slaves. Nor can it be denied that those early religious communities provided the slaves some others prohibited social cohesion. But to think that the black church in America has ever been without some continuing African influence is to be mistaken.

At the turn of the century, W.E.B. DuBois published his findings on the Negro Church which was his report to the Atlanta University Conference for the Study of Negro Problems in 1903. DuBois wrote of the black church:

> It was not at first by any means a Christian Church, but a mere adaptation of those heathen rites which we roughly designated by the term "Obe Worship" or

> "Voodooism." Association and missionary effort soon gave these rites a veneer of Christianity, and gradually, after two centuries, the Church became Christian, with a simple Calvinist creed, but with many of the old customs still clinging to the services.[10]

And more recently, within the decade, Professor Henry Mitchell has insisted that "Black Preaching and Black Religion generally are inescapably the product of the confluence of two streams of culture, one West African and the other Euro-American."[11] Acknowledging the influence of Euro-American Christianity on the Black Church, Professor Mitchell goes on to say:

> Black scholars now have proven beyond doubt that the religion of the black masses of the United States is so clearly distinguishable from the white Protestant tradition not only because of the unique experience of oppression but, even more so, because the basic culture/religion continuum from Africa was never broken... It is true that slavery was hard, but not quite that hard; and African religion is still alive and doing well in the Black Church and even the black street culture of today.[12]

Well, that's the backdrop against which we must cast any consideration or discussion of worship in the black church. It is the black experience, a tradition which cannot be known nor fully appreciated except by those who have lived it. It is the black experience in America, with its roots in Africa and a history of dehumanizing oppression in this country.

In his book, *The Souls of Black Folk*, DuBois described preaching, music and frenzy as some of the distinctive "Characteristics of Negro religious life as developed up to the time of Emancipation."[13] Can you give a definition for "frenzy"? When black people have church today, when *black people* have church today, when black people have *church* today, the experience is still characterized by preaching, music and frenzy. One need only to recall the meeting in Memphis on April 3, 1968 where Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke and reported that he had been to the mountain top and had seen the Promised Land. He said "I may not get there with you, but my eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord." And the resounding refrain was heard: "Glory, Hallelujah." If you saw that meeting, or if you witnessed the choir at Hubert Humphrey's funeral singing "Goin Up Yonder", or if you visit a black church where black masses gather today; the distinctive features are preaching, music and frenzy.

Attention must be given to the acculturation of black "middle-class" worship before this article is concluded with some additional features of authentic worship in the black tradition. The writer served a "middle-class Negro church in a town where Sunday

worship was broadcast from several of the "leading churches in the city". It was at the height of the civil rights movement and we were appalled that none of the black churches had ever participated. We approached the management of the radio station to protest this discrimination. They simply could not identify a "colored" church in the city that could fit the guidelines. They wanted the call to worship at 11:01 a.m. and the benediction at 11:58 a.m. They did not want long breaks, loud preaching and they could not broadcast shouting. Our church was insulted. We certainly fitted the guidelines; in fact, we could do it better than any of the churches that had had their worship broadcast. We became the only black church in that town that could participate. And we were proud of it. We were better than the other "colored" churches because we did things as well as, or better than, white folks.

I cited this incident to document how well black people have been taught that the right way to worship and do anything else in this country is the way white people do them. There used to be a saying in the black community: "If you're white, you're right; if you're brown, stick around; if you're black, get back." "Black" was the term used to denote error, rejection and evil. "White" was used to denote truth, acceptance and goodness.

In an article "The Black Church in White Structures," Gil Caldwell described the dilemma of many black churchpersons in predominantly white churches:

> The Black Christian in a predominantly white institution has to make a decision early in his or her church life as to whether or not all that represents the white Christian experience will be internalized. Today around the nation there are black people in white Churches who assume that there is a rightness, a correctness, an historical validity to white Church life that is not present in a Black local church or denomination. They have been deluded into thinking that because their Black physical presence represents some form of racial desegregation... all might be right.[14]

Caldwell offered a possible solution to the dilemma:

> There are other Black Church people (their number is increasing daily) who have not bought the false concept of the inherent rightness of white Christianity. They are devoted to instilling the best of Blackness into non-Black Church life and preserving the Black experience in other settings.[15]

We would be remiss if we ignored those who insist that there can be no authentic black church life in a predominantly white church structure. Some define the black church as that Christian community whose organization, administration and programs are originated, controlled and staffed by black people. Others insist that if black

people are going to remain in predominantly white churches, we should forget our blackness. This latter position led me to raise some questions about the black presence in my own United Methodist Church. Are we United Methodist black people? Or are we black United Methodist people? What claims our first priority, our blackness or our United Methodism? Black people must answer for themselves; and it makes all the difference in the world about how we see ourselves and how we fulfill our ministry and mission in and through the church. I happen to believe that I must be both black and United Methodist. That means that I must try to bring to bear upon this church the black heritage and the black experience. It means that my church can and must be relevant and responsive to the needs and aspirations of black people and the black community at the same time as it is faithful to the doctrines, beliefs and practices of the United Methodist Church.

What then are some additional distinctive features of authentic worship in the black church? I've already mentioned DuBois' distinctive characteristics — preaching, music and frenzy. I also alluded to the fact that authentic black worship may or may not be limited to a specific time schedule. When people have faced the experience of dehumanizing oppression all the week and in every other setting, they are not so anxious to get away from the one setting that gives them personhood and assures them that they are somebody.

If worship is designed to bring people into a conscious relationship with God and into a spiritual relationship with their brothers and sisters in Christ, then authentic black worship must be designed to bring black people into a conscious relationship with God and into a spiritual relationship with their brothers and sisters in Christ. And when you do that with black people, you cannot determine beforehand what is going to happen. Rigid rules of order give way to freedom — freedom of expression and freedom of movement.

Authentic black worship is celebration. Black worshippers celebrate the sovereignty of an almighty God. Life is hard. In all of our trials and troubles, God has been with us. God has brought us safe thus far. God is with us now. "If it wasn't for the Lord, what would I do?" God will give us the victory through Jesus Christ. We celebrate the sovereignty of our almighty God who "can do anything but fail".

Black people also celebrate our survival in a hostile environment. Before emancipation, the life of a black slave had worth as this nation built its economy on the blood and sweat and toil of black people. When emancipation struck down legal slavery, blacks lost their

worth as this country has never really found a need for free black people. It's alright to kill us, or for us to kill each other. Even our predominantly white churches have mixed feelings about a strong and viable black presence. But here we are! We have survived. Slavery, segregation, discrimination, injustice and bitter hatred. But here we are! We have survived! And we celebrate that.

> How I got over,
> How I got over;
> My soul looks back and wonders,
> How I got over.

Authentic black worship is celebration.

And now abide, uniquely in authentic black worship, preaching, music, frenzy, freedom, celebration, prayer, ritual, emotion, etc. But the greatest of these, in black worship, is preaching. Preaching and the preacher is always at the center and core of the black church. Describing the black preacher's ability to tell a story, D. E. King recalls an incident in the ministry of John Jasper at Sixth Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia.

> It is said that on one Easter Sunday morning, he was preaching and demonstrating how Jesus raised Lazarus from the grave. In the balcony was a white student from the Richmond Union Seminary with his son. John Jasper created an almost visible grave as he had Jesus bring Lazarus forth. Several times he said: "Jesus said to Lazarus, 'Come forth.'" The student's little boy said: "Dad, come on let's go." The student and the congregation were transfixed as Jasper had Jesus bring Lazarus forth. Finally, the son got up and said, "Daddy, let's go before he makes the man get up." That is spritual creativity when a preacher is able to raise the dead on Sunday morning.[16]

Preaching the Gospel, telling the story and raising the dead, is at the heart of authentic worship in the black tradition.

This is but an introduction to any serious study of worship in the black church. It may well be concluded and summarized with a quotation from an address which Bobby McClain delivered at the National United Methodist Convocation on the Black Church in 1973.

> Black worship...is based on the cultural and religious experience of the oppressed. Its liturgy and its theology are derived from the cultural and religious experience of black people struggling to appropriate the meaning of God and human life in the midst of human suffering. Worship in the black tradition is celebration of the power to survive and to affirm life, with all of its complex and contradictory realities. The sacred and the secular, Saturday night and Sunday morning, come together to affirm God's wholeness, the unity of life and his lordship over all of life. Such a tradition encourages responses of spontaneity and

improvisation, and urges worshipers to turn themselves loose into the hands of the existential here and how where joy and travail mingle together as part of the reality of God's creation. It is in this context that black people experience the life of faith and participate in the community of faith."[17]

In 1978, being black in America is yet a peculiar experience. Recent "progress" in race relations and the increased visibility of a black "middle-class" may delude many into believing that we have found the answer and that all will soon be well in this country. It just isn't so! Black people still live at the bottom of the employment and economic ladder. Justice is still not just as it relates to black Americans. In every relationship with white people, blacks are expected to assume an inferior and subordinate status. It is still a peculiar experience. It promises to be for some time to come. Thus it is still incumbent upon black churches to help black people come to terms with what it means to live and move and have our being in this oppressive society.

The renewal and enhancement of our worship, in terms of its music, its freedom, and its preaching, is but one aspect of the total renewal of the church for its mission and ministry with black people and the black community.

Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel,
Deliver Daniel, Deliver Daniel,
Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel,
And why not every man?

FOOTNOTES

1. Grant S. Shockley, "Religious Education and the black Experience", *The Black Church Quarterly Journal* (Boston: The Black Ecumenical Commission of Massachusetts, 1972) Volume 11, Number 1, p. 94.

2. Leon L. Troy and Emmanuel L. McCall, "Black Church History," *The Black Christian Experience*, compiled by Emmanuel L. McCall (Nashville: Broadmen Press, 1972) p. 22.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

4. Dearing E. King, "Worship in the Black Church," *The Black Christian Experience*, compiled by Emmanuel L. McCall (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1972) pp. 33-34.

5. Shockley, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

6. E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Church in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1974) p. 13.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

8. See Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1941) pp. 1-2. He outlines the myth, which "validates the concept of Negro inferiority" in this country. It moves to the conclusion that "the Negro is thus a man without a past".

9. See Alex Haley, *Roots*, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1976) This "saga of an American family", was long overdue and its impact on American race relations cannot now be measured.

10. W.E.B. DuBois, *The Negro Church* (Atlanta: Atlanta University Press, 1903) p. 5.

11. Henry Mitchell, "Two Streams of Tradition", *The Black Experience in Religion*, edited by C. Eric Lincoln (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1974) p. 70.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

13. W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folks* (Greenwich, Connecticut: Fawcett Publications, 1961) pp. 141-142.

14. Gilbert H. Caldwell, "The Black Church in White Structures," *The Black Church Quarterly Journal* (Boston: The Black Ecumenical Commission of Massachusetts, 1972) Volume 1, Number 2, p. 14.

15. *Ibid.*

16. King, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.

17. William B. McClain, "What is Authentic Black Worship?" *Experiences, Struggles, and Hopes of the Black Church*, edited by James S. Gadsden (Nashville: Tidings, 1975) p. 70-71.

Songs of Salvation: Yesteryear's Music for Yesterday's Faith*

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...some to church repair,
Not for doctrine, but the music there.
Alexander Pope, "An Essay on Criticism"

Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to him belong,
They are weak, but he is strong.

Jesus loves me—he who died,
Heaven's gate to open wide;
He will wash away my sin,
Let his little child come in.

Jesus loves me, loves me still,
Though I'm very weak and ill;
From his shining throne on high,
Comes to watch me where I lie.

Jesus loves me—he will stay
Close beside me all the way,
Then his little child will take
Up to heaven for his dear sake.

A Hymn Reflects Theology

When St. Theresa read the *Confessions* of Augustine she observed, "I see myself in them reflected." This concept is the classic test of art—does it mirror or indirectly reveal the real life and faith of every man and woman?

But art also reflects culture. If we want to find out what a particular people who lived in a certain place and time believed, we can see it reflected in their art: literature, poetry, music painting, architecture, etc. Religious music is an art form. It expresses the

*Adapted from *I'm Saved, You're Saved—Maybe*, © 1977, with permission of John Knox Press, Atlanta.

theological convictions of the subculture that gave it birth. Thus, "Jesus Loves Me" reflects a time, a place, and a subculture: 1860s, America, evangelical Christianity. It was a time when parents took seriously the petition in the baptismal prayer for infants, "bring him safely through the perils of childhood," because many children never made it.[1] It was a time in which Sunday School evangelism was flourishing and its evangelists, like Lewis Tappan, stated unashamedly, "You ask why I cannot keep my religion to myself? I will tell you, my dear brother. Because I see you are in danger of eternal damnation."[2] As the times changed the "morbid" verses were dropped, but the song stuck. It is still the one song most associated with the Sunday school in evangelical circles. The song *reflects* the applied *theory* of the 1960s and it continues (in altered form) because...

A Hymn Is Also Reflex Theology

A "reflex" is a response controlled by the autonomic nervous system. You cannot control it directly. Just try to keep your leg from jumping when the doctor strikes it with the rubber hammer. Emotions too are reflex-like responses which get paired with persons, places, things, etc. After you've been to a great restaurant several times, simply thinking about it can cause you to get that good feeling inside and, like Pavlov's dog, salivate.

Music is one powerful "conditioned stimulus." Persons who were "soundly converted" when they sang "Almost Persuaded" will probably always feel some of those same emotions every time they sing or hear it. A whole segment of America and even the world had feelings of intense sadness associated with the Navy Hymn, "Eternal Father, Strong to Save," because it was played repeatedly at President Kennedy's funeral procession by the military band. Afterwards, every time they heard it they probably felt sad even though they couldn't remember why. Thus, even though the death-fixated stanzas of "Jesus Loves Me" are eliminated, the music and chorus trigger the feelings of childhood in Sunday school for adults of all ages who grew up singing this song. These feelings can be good or bad, strong or weak.

When a congregation demands the "old" hymns, they aren't referring to those written the longest time ago. They want the hymns that they enjoyed as they grew up, often regardless of the theology of the text. Hymns reflect the theology of the time and situation of their writing, but by association they become the reflexes of future generations of Christians who may have outgrown the theology of those hymns but not their emotional power.[3]

The Theological Critique of Religious Music

Dr. Alvin C. Porteous is only one of many theologians, hymnologists, and church leaders who decry the bad theology or heresy in hymns. In his article "Hymns and Heresy" this professor of theology and ethics attacked specific types of poor hymns. One type was the subjective hymn; here the worshiper's feelings and experiences are highlighted instead of the "objective" glory and grace of God. Porteous also condemns the sentimental hymn. In this type of hymn, the worshiper "gets familiar" with the God who is "high and lifted up," as is illustrated by the blasphemous remark of a movie star who referred to God as a "living doll." The escapist hymn, Porteous continues, is inadequate because it replaces human responsibility with a religion where God goes into hiding with the person to comfort and console. These neurotic souls should be roused, not indulged. Thus, we should be suspicious of hymns that center on "me" not "Him," "myself" not "Thyself," and "I" not "Thou."

This attitude is a familiar type of "high" church, theological or aesthetic evaluation. If equal time were allotted to those who still enjoy "those" hymns they'd probably say that they found the "other" hymns lacking the rhythm of the old favorites.

Moral Stage Theory

I would suggest that a fairer and more sympathetic way to understand religious music of all types is this: each reflects the beliefs and style of its moral Level (and stage) with all the strengths and weaknesses pertaining thereto. Lawrence Kohlberg, through his cross-cultural researches, found that all civilized persons develop in their moral understanding through a sequence of 6 stages which he groups into three Levels. How far one advances depends on a number of factors, but the sequence is always the same.

Children typically move through the Preconventional Level's (I) two stages: the first is reward and punishment, the second could be called "enlightened self interest." To use a clerical question: "Why *ought* one to be a good pastor?" Stage 1: because you will be liked, respected, and not hasseled by your governing board (and *vice versa*). Stage 2: Because *if* you are you will get a raise each year, a good reputation, and be called to greater fields of service. Level I is a conditioned selfishness: "What's in it for me now, or in my future?"

Adolescence is when people typically enter Level II, Conventional (identification) Morality. Like adolescence, the frame of reference is one's peer group, its beliefs and behaviors. Stage 3, often called

"nice boy, good girl," would answer, "You ought to be a good pastor because you will be respected by peers (fellow clergy), parishoners, and yourself." Some older adolescents and adults move to stage 4, law and order, and would answer with what is an extension of stage 3's reasons, "Because the standards of our profession specify this kind of behavior." Most of the adults in a highly educated and developed country like ours do most of their moral reasoning at the Conventional Level: they are the "great silent majority."

However, a small percentage (perhaps 10-15%) advance to Postconventional (principled) Morality (Level III). Its earlier stage (number "5"), "the social contract" does not see laws as ends or ultimate purposes but as means toward higher causes. Thus, the pastor's answer from this stage would be something like, "I have contracted (Covenanted) with the church through my vows at ordination and with this congregation by accepting their call and so I must keep my word." Stage 6 stretches to ultimate reasons which would motivate the same behavior even if the denominations were dissolved, the existence of the church were illegal, etc.: "God has called me: I believe this and so does the church."

The Changing Conceptualization of Salvation

In *I'm Saved, You're Saved — Maybe,* I put forth the thesis that the answer to the most important moral question, "Why ought I to be saved?," is conceptualized at the moral stages. And, because the people in the Bible were at the various stages of faith development, a variety of Biblical arguments as to why God's people *ought* to do or believe certain things can be found. The six stages with illustrative Biblical material are presented in the following table.

Perceptions of Salvation by Stages	Biblical illustrations of Stages
1. God My Rewarder-Punisher	1. Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. Gen. 6:11. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a food, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth. Gen. 9:11
2. God My Personal Covenant Giver	2. "If my people . . . pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin . . . and heal their land." 2 Chron. 7:14 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive

men their trepasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matt. 6:14-15

3. Christ Our Model

3. Abstain from all appearance of evil. I. Thess. 5:22 KJV

Give no offense to Jews or the Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please all men in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. I Cor. 10:32-II:1

4. Christianity Our Belief-Behavior System

4. "A single witness shall not prevail against a man for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed; only on the evidence of two witnesses, or of three witnesses, shall a charge be sustained." Deut. 19:15

But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. I Cor. 15:13-14

Do not be mismated with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and inquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? II Cor. 6:14

5. Christ, Redeemer of the World's Power Systems

5. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed." Luke 4:18

For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Eph. 6:12

They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Is. 11:9

6. Christ the Universal Uniting Omega Point

6. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love. I Cor. 13:13

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities — all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. Col. 1:15-20

If the moral stage salvation thesis is correct, we should expect hymns to reflect the six stages of moral reasoning and salvation conceptualization. However, we should remember that the moral Level of religious music is often *lower* than the moral Level of the singer if it elicits a reflex of childhood or adolescent experiences which were emotionally positive: yesteryear's music for yesterday's faith. On the other hand, people rarely like religious music above their moral Level unless the music itself attracts them. This attraction is most likely to occur in musical people in general, singers in particular. With the preceding ideas in mind, let us consider the music of the different moral Levels, each with its strengths and weaknesses.

Me, Myself, and I
Preconventional Morality
Developmental Level I

This moral Level operates at the emotional level: it stresses that which feels good now or later. It tends to be subjective and otherworldly, often with a survival mindset. What kind of art, specifically religious music, reflects this experience? It is the music of those who have been on the short end of life's proverbial stick. It may not be considered "good" art, but neither is much of the experience.

Consider "country" religious music today. Its ballads were "hurtin' songs" because the poor Southern whites who originated it were near the bottom of the social and economic heap and they knew it. The pre-agribusiness sharecropper and the pre-union (or union-influence) textile worker, coal miner, or trucker often spent his life just barely makin' it. Medical help wasn't sought till the tooth had to come out (if the moon was right), or the baby was startin' or "you hurt so bad you couldn't stand it." Red dirt, white lightnin', and blue songs when his girl was slippin' round were his trinity.

If that's what life was actually like, then the religious music of this moral Level could be expected to be as "earthy" in terms of religious feelings and rewards as country music's other songs were earthy about everything else.

Angel Band[5]

My latest sun is sinking fast,
My race is nearly run,
My strongest trials now are past,
My triumph is begun

O come, Angel Band,
Come and around me stand,

Bear me away on your snowy wings to my immortal home,
Bear me away on your snowy wings to my immortal home.

I've almost gained my heavenly home,
My spirit loudly sings,
The holy ones, behold they come,
I hear the songs of wings.

Of course, country music of all types has invaded the upper classes. The college generation as well as many middle-and upper-class persons have rediscovered bluegrass. The "Nashville sound" is even heard on FM. As lower class people have moved up the socio-economic ladder, they have taken their music with them. The tech school, college, and skilled-labor jobs may take the boy out of the country, but they haven't taken the country out of the boy.

The Negro spiritual also reflects Preconventonal moral understanding. This music has been considered primitive, quaint, and even "good" art, but never good theology. These songs of salvation were too otherworldly, too unabashedly emotional; but they were great to sing, especially when one felt "down." Perhaps musical as well as racial factors put spirituals "in" and country "out" of good taste, but theologically it's hard to discriminate between the attitude in "Angel Band" (country) and that expressed in this authentic spiritual:

Carry Me Home[6]

While trav'ling through this world below,
Where sore afflictions come,
My soul abounds with joy to know
That I will rest at home.

Yes, when my eyes are closed in death,
My body cease to roam,
I'll bid farewell to all below
and meet my friends at home.

And then I want these lines to be
Inscribed upon my tomb:
"Here lies the dust of S.R.P.,
His spirit sings at home."

(Chorus)

Carry me home, carry me home, when my life is o'er;
Then carry me to my long sought home where
pain is felt no more.

"Carry Me Home" appears to be a far cry from the assertive and positive associations now linked with the spiritual "We Shall Overcome." However, that civil rights rallying song had a peculiar adaptability; it could be interpreted at the Preconventional and Conventional moral stages. Black slaves could sing it as long as that "some day" was believed to be their reward in the next world, not this one. But the song was radically reinterpreted into the "our" Conventional mindset of the civil rights movement as the fulfillment of that hope in their time. The "we" now meant every "good" disenfranchised person, blacks especially.

Another source of Preconventional songs of salvation is evangelical Protestantism. Though many "gospel" hymn illustrations could be used that highlight "me," and "my," and "I" almost exclusively there are many others that can be sung, like "We Shall Overcome," from either a Preconventional or a Conventional point of view.

Just as I am, Without One Plea

Just as I am, without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou biddest me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

This "gospel" hymn elicits a Pavlovian response to evangelical Christianity, at least in America, because it is frequently sung when the invitation to come to Christ is given in revivals or crusades. It is not otherwordly, but like "Amazing Grace" it balances the singer's personal condition, the "I," with the gift of salvation through the cross of Christ. It was written by Charlotte Elliot, who was reared in the low or evangelical Anglican tradition. This woman, who was an invalid, wrote it out of frustration at not being able to "do something" to help her minister brother fund a school for the daughters of poor clergy. So she edited *The Invalid's Hymnbook* and gave the income from the sale of this hymn, which was substantial, to help found St. Margaret's Hall, Brighton. It is a song of salvation seen through the

eyes of a person with deep desire to help and to be relieved of her human misery. Perhaps the depression-associated inadequacy and conviction of sin are so closely related in this hymn that it says what thousands have felt and perceived since it was penned in 1834.[7]

A widow-senior-citizen received this letter from a forty-year-old pen pal:

Dear _____,

Many thanks for the thoughtful gifts and lovely cards for Christmas and birthday. Your kindness is surpassed only by your love for your Lord.

I'm glad to see that you are still quite active going hither and thither for your family and friends. I trust that the Lord will continue to give you the strength to carry on as you have for many years to come.

My holidays and special day were very blessed and happy. I'm most thankful for *this at this particular time in my life, for I seem to be buffeted each day by Satan. The period of trying seems to be an endless one, at least so long as we are in the flesh...*

This letter appears to be the expression of one who has turned into himself and now needs a good dose of God-centered, objective theology. However, this man had been paralyzed from the neck down for about 23 years and had spent all those years in an iron lung or on a rocking bed. From there he "witnessed" through spoken and written (dictated) correspondence. But he does get "down" and like many of the Psalms we read for consolation, he is honest about it. The content of his letter is similar to Psalm 88. Perhaps the Level or aspect of salvation you see depends not only on *who* but *how* you are.

We, Ourselves, and Us
Conventional Morality
Developmental Level II

With this Level we move from an emphasis on the singular (I) to the plural (us). Whereas faith was formerly motivated mostly by personal reward, now much of its drawing power is in Christ-the-model and then, faith-the-system. "Our" Jesus and faith are the supreme values, first because they are ours, and then because the system of belief and practice itself is worthy of our devotion.

Consider how country music responded to the Postconventional arguments about war and morality put forward by the flower generation. "The hippies are wrong"—not for any ideological

reason but because they don't think and act the way we do. Merle Haggard's "Okie from Muskogee," which sold over a million records, perfectly captured what many felt. In the verses the emphasis is on what "our group" doesn't do: use drugs, destroy draft cards, have love-ins, wear long hair, beads, or sandals. The chorus reiterates what "we" feel, value, and do:

And I'm proud to be an Okie from Muskogee
A place where even squares can have a ball.
We still wave Ol' Glory down at the courthouse
*White lightning's still the biggest thrill of all.**

Country and gospel music react against threats to the way they interpret the Bible in a similar fashion: with assertions about the validity of "our" way of interpreting the Bible and, by deduction, concluding that the other ways are wrong. Songs such as "The Great Speckle Bird" and "I Believe the Good Old Bible" assert that literal interpretation of the Bible (or at least the controversial portions) is what *our* kind of people proudly believe.

While the country boy was singing about the Speckle Bird, his middle-class equivalent might have been found in Sunday school singing about the "B-I-B-L-E, . . . the book for me." The mass of moral stage 3, songs, though, would be about Christ(ian)-the-model. Worshipers would pledge to be "true" to and be "like" Jesus, to follow him or his cross anywhere, and to be counted among his faithful followers. Military images with positive, rousing music are common.

Onward, Christian Soldiers

Onward, Christian Soldiers, Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus Going on before:
Christ the royal Master leads against the foe;
Forward into battle, See, His banners go.

(Chorus)

Onward, Christian soldiers, Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus Going on before.

The higher stage of Conventional morality, law and order, is also known by its songs of salvation. "Faith of Our Fathers!" "O Word of

*From the song OKIE FROM MUSKOGEE (written by Merle Haggard and Roy Edward Burris), Copyright © 1969 Blue Book Music, Bakersfield, California. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

God Incarnate," and songs about the Law of God where one finds salvation in the narrowest and broadest sense of that word are clearly stage 4. So are those hymns which express the substitutionary doctrine of the atonement.

There Is a Green Hill Far Away (stanza 3)

He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good,
That we might go at last to heaven,
Saved by His Precious blood.

There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood

There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The World, the Universe, All
Postconventional Morality
Developmental Level III

At the final moral Level there first appears an awareness of Christian responsibility for complex social problems. Salvation, meaning freeing, preserving, and healing in all senses, includes claiming all peoples and systems for God. Chesterton's "O God of Earth and Altar" illustrates this broad application of salvation. Its author was reacting to the Boer War, which he viewed as naked aggression motivated by the discovery of diamonds, in addition to the already known presence of gold, in South Africa. The "prince and priest and thrall" (politicians and aristocracy, clergy, and commoners) were bringing damnation to themselves by either supporting this policy or by not speaking out against it—the classic division of sins of commission and ommission. Read this song of salvation as if you were an English citizen around the turn of the century when newspapers were full of conflicting points of view about the Boer "problem."

O God of Earth and Altar

O God of earth and altar, Bow down and hear our cry;
Our earthly rulers falter, Our people drift and die;
The walls of gold entomb us, The swords of scorn divide;
Take not Thy thunder from us, But take away our pride.

From all that terror teaches, From lies of tongue and pen;
From all the easy speeches That comfort cruel men;
From sale and profanation Of honor and the sword;
From sleep and from damnation, Deliver us, good Lord!

Tie in a living tether The prince and priest and thrall;
Bind all our lives together, Smite us and save us all;
In ire and exultation Aflame with faith, and free,
Lift up a living nation, A single sword to Thee.[8]

If Britain specialized in the sins of colonialism, America excelled in the sins of economic exploitation (including slums) according to hymnwriter Walter Bowie. His "O Holy City, Seen of John," is a reminder that God's redemption includes the ghetto and the sweatshop.[9]

O Holy City, Seen of John

O Holy City, seen of John, Where Christ, the Lamb, doth reign,
Within whose foursquare walls shall come No night, nor need, nor pain,
And where the tears are wiped from eyes That shall not weep again!

O shame to us who rest cntent While just and green for gain
In street and shop and tenement Wring gold from human pain,
And bitter lips in blind despair Cry, "Christ hath died in vain!"

Give us, O God, the strength to build The city that had stood
Too long a dream, whose laws are love, Whose ways are brotherhood,
And where the sun that shineth is God's grace for human good.

Already in the mind of God That city riseth fair.
Low, how its splendor challenges The souls that greatly dare—
Yea, bids us seize the whole of life And build its glory there.[10]

During this period, the turn of the century, Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller were busy teaching Sunday school and bringing souls to Christ. The New York *Journal* and the Pittsburgh *Press* rejected Mr. Rockefeller's stage 3 and 4 limitation of what salvation was and what it demanded. From a stage 5 vantage point the *Press* said that "With his hereditary grip on the nation's pocketbook, his talks on spiritual matters are a tax on piety," while the *Journal* cartoonist depicted him teaching his class holding up a Bible, while ticker tape gushed from his mouth.[11]

In stage 6, the higher level of Postconventional morality, songs of salvation emphasize Christ's uniting all things in himself. The

salvation orientation is not the substitutionary atonement, but Christus Victor,[12] Christ winning the world and the universe for himself, their ultimate source of unity.

God Is Working His Purpose Out

God is working His purpose out As year succeeds to year:
God is working His purpose out, And the time is drawing near;
Nearer and nearer draws the time, The time that shall surely be,
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
As the waters cover the sea.

From utmost east to utmost west, Where's man's foot hath trod,
By the mouth of many messengers Goes forth the voice of God:
"Give ear to Me, ye continents, Ye isles, give ear to Me,
That the earth may be filled with the glory of God
As the waters cover the sea."

March we forth in the strength of god, With the banner of Christ unfurled
That the light of the glorious gospel of truth May shine throughout the world,
Fight we the fight with sorrow and sin To set their captives free,
That the earth may be filled with the glory of God
As the waters cover the sea.

All we can do is nothing worth unless God blesses the deed;
Vainly we hope for the harvest-tide Till God gives life to the seed;
Yet nearer and nearer draws the time, The time that shall surely be,
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
As the waters cover the sea.

Songs of Salvation

As we develop morally we move from feeling, to thinking, to doing; from personal subjectivity to group subjectivity to objectivity. This development can be seen in the gamut of songs of salvation. At one end are those in which God rewards the singer in some way in the present or in the future. In the middle the singer and his or her group affirm their faithfulness to Christ their leader, who has paid the just price for their sins. They elevate the Bible and its interpretation of that doctrine and aggressively move out to win others to this same victory over personal sin. Finally, salvation is widened to include the whole world and all its political, economic, and other systems. The worshipers sing their commitment to be a part of the war against social, economic, political, and any kind of injustice anywhere in the world. Who knows—maybe soon we will sing songs about salvation

which will say that God's law and justice should rule space. These Christians at the highest Levels are sure that God is at work winning ALL things, peoples, and systems to unity in himself. The Christian commitment to this task, not to nation, denomination, or self, is the highest loyalty.

FOOTNOTES

1. *The Book of Common Worship*, p. 124.
2. *The Big Little School*, p. 39.
3. Jack Renard Pressau, "Emotional Reactions to Innovations in Church Music," *Music Ministry* (January 1971), pp. 2-6, 42. Reprinted in *The Church Musician* (September 1971), pp. 46-52.
4. Alvin C. Porteous, "Hymns and Heresy," *Pastoral Psychology* (October 1966), pp. 46-47.
5. "Angel Band," text by Gaby I. Adams.
6. *Spiritual Folk-Songs of Early America*, ed. George P. Jackson (Locust Valley, N.Y.: Augustin, 1953), pp. 112-113. "S.R.P." are the initials of Professor S.R. Penick.
7. Albert Edward Bailey, *The Gospel in Hymns* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), pp. 182-183.
8. "O God of Earth and Altar" by G. K. Chesterton (1873-1936). By permission of Oxford University Press.
9. *The Gospel in Hymns*, p. 571.
10. "O Holy City, Seen of John" by Walter Russell Bowie. Used by permission of Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.
11. Raymond B. Fosdick, *John D. Rockefeller, Jr.: A Portrait* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), pp. 126-127.
12. Some other hymns couched in the Christus Victor perspective are:
"Welcome, Happy Morning!" by Venantius Fortunatus, 530-609
"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" by Martin Luther, 1529
"Am, I am Soldier of the Corss" by Isaac Watts, 1724
"Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus" by George Duffield, 1858
"Onward, Christian Soliders" by Sabine Baring-Gould, 1864
"Thine Is the Glory" by Edmond Budry, 1884.

Book Reviews

Mary, the Feminine Face of the Church. Rosemary Radford Ruether. Westminster, 1977. 106 pages. $3.65.

"The *feminine* face of the church," "the *feminization* of American culture," these are catchy titles in a decade of growing awareness of women. But what do the authors mean by their key word, feminine? In Ann Douglas' book, the meaning derived from her use of it (she nowhere defines it), is pejorative. It is equated with *sentimental,* with *weakness,* with the "Total Woman" who gains secondary power through manipulation of that place declared hers, the home and the buyer's side of the cash register. Ruether begins using the word in its strongest sense. It is rooted in cosmic and biblical images which she sets against the stereotypical sentimentalized "feminine." In her chapter on protestantism, however, Ruether agrees that the image of Jesus is feminized, and here Ruether and Douglas agree: "This feminized Christ may have something to do with the secularization of public power in modern society. [74] Ruether is not satisfied with such a distortion, however, and finishes her book with a strong appeal for a reevaluation of women in the church and the role of feminine symbols. Ruether's last two chapters pick up the cosmic theme of the first chapter and suggest, rightly I think, that a just evaluation of the feminine provides a needed corrective to basic theological models. Briefly, the nurturing matrix, from which are derived both male sky and female earth gods, is a model of empowerment rather than of demanding power, of mediation and service rather than domination and enslavement. In such a context, Jesus is also better understood. The revolution Jesus inaugurated was an effort to break down patriarchal models. Jesus taught true meditation and service that is not servile.

Lest I become subject to my own criticism, I describe the archetypal feminine as matrix, as power at its purest, that is, as potency which is simultaneously enabling. Both action and passion then arise from it. When action is ascribed to the male and passion or suffering to the female, the basis is laid for stereotyping men and women. Ruether, in barest outline, traces the history of western patriarchal religion, a religion in which men act, think, dominate, and women passively receive. The figure of Mary acquires images through which men choose to regard women. Nevertheless, the ancient nurturing power, early ascribed to Mary, remains. Mary and the Church mirror each other. The fundamental feminine image is too strong, too real, to be lost, however much it may have been overlaid. That image is there, suggests Ruether, to help men and women to develop more fully. It is there also to teach a receptivity that is not merely passive, but itself enabling of growth. Ruether concludes:

> ...women as the church represent that whole of redeemed humankind which can only be liberated and reconciled when the victims have been empowered to be persons and when power itself has been transformed.[86]

The book is intended to be used in study groups. The twelve chapters average five brief pages followed by two questions for discussion. Page 89-106 comprise a section by D.M. Stine, "For the Leaders of Study Groups." There is no bibliography and the readers are expected to be very busy and about junior

high level. Not much more is expected of the leaders. Those who want to know more about any chapter receive no bibliographical assistance beyond *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible,* and further biblical references. A bibliography of five books per chapter would enrich this handbook. Especially useful would be references to such fundamental works as Raymond E. Brown's *The Birth of the Messiah* [Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1977], to Charles Long's *Alpha* and Mircea Eliade's *Primitives to Zen.*

The book is, nevertheless, challenging in spite of oversimplification and simplistic theological errors. [On pages 59-60, Ruether speaks of the Chalcedonian formula as advocating a "mingling" of the two natures of Christ, and on 70, she attributes this doctrine to Luther and Calvin. Luther's language occasionally lends itself to such a notion, e.g., his infamous sugar-water analogy, but Calvin insisted upon the absolute distinction of the two natures and the noncommunicability of their attributes.] Historians of religion will probably object to the telescoping of various cosmological myths into one simple pattern. Biblical scholars will find Ruether's discussion lacking in the full-range of feminine images. Biblical theologians will take issue with Ruether's treatment of the Incarnation [35]. She argues that the virginal conception was "substantially the same as that of...great heroes of Israel." Was it not, rather, substantially different since all of Israel's heroes had human fathers, however "miraculous" their conceptions? The virginal conception of Jesus provides the basis for the two natures Christology as against the adoptionism that Ruether advocates.

These points, however, provide further matter for scholars to dispute. The questions and projects at the ends of the chapters are more practically oriented and are directed to lay-people. The proof of the integrity of the book in its primary theses will lie in parish use. The weakest portion is the Study Guide which ought to provide greater breadth and depth for those leaders who wish to prepare themselves thoroughly.

Ruether asked three basic questions: "Is there any basis for feminine symbols in Christianity [11]?" "How is the veneration of Mary related to Biblical religion?" And lastly, has Protestantism overlooked ideas important for the integrity of the church? [12] This last question includes a challenge to Roman Catholics and Orthodox who have used mariology to keep women "in their place." Ruether challenges all Christians to reevaluate the mother of Jesus and consequently, the feminine face of the church. Ultimately, not only the Christian lives of men and women, but the foundations of theology, that is our thought about God, will be enriched.

—Jill Raitt

U.S. Foreign Policy and Christian Ethics. John C. Bennett and Harvey Seifert. Westminster, 1977. 235 pp. $7.95.

Reluctantly this reviewer recently removed from the curriculum a course entitled "Christian Ethics and International Relations." It was probably a mistake, at a time when apathy and even isolationism afflict our society and our churches despite increasingly inescapable global interdependence. Students, alumni—and faculty—have a powerful substitute in this persuasive, provocative collaboration.

Those who know the authors, in person or in print, will acknowledge their expertise in both poles of the title. Those who know them well will recognize divergent interests and perspectives beneath their common commitment. In the Preface, Bennett and Seifert identify their respective contributions and claim that "there are differences of emphasis between us only on how close an approximation to Christian goals can be expected of nations even in the long run..." (12). In point of fact, the authors wrote only one chapter jointly, the one on "Personal Options and Modern War,"

and their assignments are as significant as the obvious tensions between modified pacifism and Niebuhrian realism.

This volume is invaluable for its "Theological and Ethical Presuppositions," for its "Evaluation of Military Deterrence," for its "Political Structures of Interdependence." It is invaluable for its factual data on international economics, on Western exploitation of physical and human resources, on "America's Political Role in the World." It is of course invaluable for its insights into "Morality and National Interest:" e.g., "Beyond the social and economic and political and strategic reasons for the rich aiding the poor is the simple motive of humanitarian conscience" (Sen. Fulbright) (84).

Three conclusions emerge with compelling force: (a) "the desirability of a *material* standard of living lower than the developed nations now have" (209)—in exchange for more creative, personal, spiritual values; (b) the conviction "that the emergence of a new world system (built on cooperation) is a matter of necessity, not preference" (205); and (c) the incredible hope, the impossible dream, that the church—for all its lassitude and pious platitudes—can yet inspire "vast unused resources in both individuals and society" (216) to save the world from itself.

—Creighton Lacy

Decision Making and The Bible. H. Edward Everding, Jr. and Dana W. Wilbanks. Judson, 1975. 160 pages. $5.95.

In *Decision Making and The Bible* Everding and Wilbanks present a clearly written handbook for relating biblical study and ethical reflection to practical decision making. The readable and unassuming format of the text belies its sophisticated biblical and ethical methodologies. Drawing heavily upon the work of H. Richard Niebuhr in the formulation of a "response style" for relating biblical text and decisional situation to the individual decision maker, the authors develop a "case study" strategy for affecting the biblical-ethical connection for decisions made within the Christian faith community.

In brief but well supported dismissals of two all too common decisional styles, Everding and Wilbanks opt for a relational mode of decision making. Both the prescriptive/rules style and the formal/rationalization style deal in a "linear" mode with the text, decision maker, and situation. This mode, they judiciously claim, preempts valued dialogic interaction with both text and situation. The response style, they argue, facilitates a dynamic interpenetration of biblical resources and situation setting in the decision making self.

Written for use with groups most often calling for such a practical tool for biblical/ethical reflection, groups within the typical parish church, the authors speak with equal clarity to persons in the ranks of the professional clergy. It should be noted that in neither content nor methodology do the creators of this manual condescend to their reading and practical audience.

One of the strengths of this text is to be found in the balance achieved between practical application and technical methodology. Exegesis of both text and situation becomes an inviting task for the decision maker, a task which necessarily precedes in both reason and function the decisional act. Another strength, seen from our personal point of view, stands in the authors' tolerance of both biblical and moral ambiguity while evidencing no lessening of methodological clarity. A subject index at the end of the text reveals the topical inclusion of many grating ethical issues in contemporary church life. Inclusion of each within the context of specific decisional situations serves to illuminate the response style of biblical/ethical hermeneutic. In this rests an additional strength of the text.

It would be unfair both to the authors and to text itself to present a critical assessment of this work without identifying what we believe to be a

singular shortcoming of the book. The treatment of the response style stands without fault. Appropriate space and concern focus on the crucial elements of this style: the centrality of faith, informing images of God and human responsibility, and the communal context and reference for Christian deciding. The shortcoming is one of omission rather than of commission: the authors do not provide the readers with a clear grasp of the constituent elements of an actual decisional moment. We mean by this those ingredients which adhere to form the value engendering decisional act itself: conscience, assessment and ranking of values, guessing, motivation, intention, potential consequence, evaluation of actual consequence and subsequent reexamination of the decision, and a theological notion of "grace." To be certain, the text deals effectively with several of these elements in discussions of case studies related to the response style. Still, this work would increase in practical value with the inclusion of a brief analysis of the decisional moment itself and its appropriate constituent elements. Perhaps this is planned for a second edition. This single deficiency notwithstanding, *Decision Making and The Bible* deserves the considered attention of professional clergyfolk and the enthusiastic use by laity of the Church. We have here a practical and timely tool for constructing a healthy biblical/ethical style of decision making in the Christian context.

—William M. Finnin, Jr.