Reviews & Responses

Response: Leonard J. Coppes, *The Divine Days of Creation* (Thornton: Providence Presbyterian Press, 2004). Response by Leonard J. Coppes to "Reply by Dr. Benjamin Shaw" (*CPJ* 1.154–155).

I thank the editor for allowing me to respond a second time to Dr. Benjamin Shaw, the reviewer of my book on the days of creation. The thesis of my book is: the days of creation were real historical days consecutively and contiguously recorded and occurring, but their length cannot be determined from the text. Hence, it is going beyond the text to say conclusively that they were long or short, although I believe some were very short and the seventh day was long (it has not yet come to a close because God is still in His creational rest). I would grant that it is debatable as to how long days 3 and 6 were—there might be convincing textual evidence that they were longer than an ordinary day. I do affirm that the view I defend, since it is tied to the statements of the creational record, cannot reasonably be used to introduce macro-evolution. I note that the reviewer often agrees with my conclusions but repeatedly affirms that he disagrees with my methodology. Moreover, in developing the definition(s) of words, couplets, and idioms, I did examine multiple occurrences of each element in their respective OT contexts. I thank him for pointing out the three errors in the Biblical references. Finally, I truly apologize if what I wrote previously or below is in any way impolite or offensive—it is not my intention.

I. Dr. Shaw in his Reply to my Response to his Review states (*CPJ*, 1.154): "First, no one disputes something that Dr. Coppes goes to great lengths to demonstrate—that *yom* is used in a variety of senses in the Hebrew Bible. He alleges at the beginning of chapter 4 that 'there has been so much debate on the range of meaning (semantic distribution) of this Hebrew word.'"

To this I would like to make the following points:

1. "Range of meaning "is not equal to "used in a variety of senses." Hence, the quote from my book does not say that the debate is whether *yom* has a variety of senses, but it focuses on what those various senses are.

2. As a pastor, I have encountered many who doubt that the Hebrew word means anything other than an ordinary day. Moreover, I was writing essentially to address the discussion in the Orthodox Presbyterian General Assembly, sessions and congregations and not simply to address lexicographers.

3. There certainly is a lot of debate as to whether *yom* always refers to a period of historical time (one of the basic elements of its meaning)—some appear to believe it may signify a literary category (Kline, Collins).

4. Dr. Joseph Pipa wrote, "I doubt if it [the Hebrew word *yom*] ever means 'stage (era?)' or a 'long indefinite period'" (*Did God Create in Six Days?* Pipa & Hall eds. [The Covenant Foundation, Oak Ridge, 1999] 87).

5. Moreover, since the question in the debate on the significance of the creation days should be which of the many connotations of the word is used in its various appearances in that passage, it seems appropriate to present a survey of those connotations.

I note that the reviewer disagrees with my interpretation of *b^{e}yom* in Gen. 2:4 (see below), and my statement that the word *yom* is used in "several" ways in the creation account. In discussing the latter statement, he lists three uses. I see four. The *American College Dictionary* defines several as "being more than 2 or 3, but not many" (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1109). Hence, since four is several, how is it misleading to use language accurately?[1] To be certain, this point is not at the heart of my thesis that *yom* is used in several ways in the creation account, and except for the semantic distribution of the Hebrew expression *b^{e}yom* , it appears Dr. Shaw agrees with my conclusions.

II. Continuing, Dr. Shaw writes secondly (*CPJ*, 1.154):

> Coppes says, 'The Bible, outside of Genesis 1, never uses the evening-morning couplet to mean an ordinary day.' This assertion, as stated, is simply not true. I suspect that what Dr. Coppes means is that the couplet, outside of Genesis 1, never refers to the totality of an ordinary day. Instead every single case where the morning and evening occur in the same verse, they refer to a part of an ordinary day.… There is not a single verse where evening and morning are used in the same verse that refers to anything other than an ordinary day. Second, there is no place in the Bible where the precise clause "and there was evening and there was morning" occurs, outside of Genesis 1. Hence, given the fact that every verse where "morning" and "evening" occur in the same verse they refer

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1. "Coppes states in his response, 'The creation account itself uses Heb. *yom* in several connotations.' This is technically true, since 'several' means more than two but less than many. But it tends to mislead the reader." "Reply by Dr. Benjamin Shaw," *CPJ*, 1.154

> to parts of an ordinary day, it is reasonable to conclude that the sequence "and there was evening, and there was morning" refers to the course, or the totality, of an ordinary day.…

To this portion of Dr. Shaw's reply, I respond as follows:

1. He seems to identify my use of "mean" with "refer." I see the difference as that between the concepts "represent" and "point to." Thus, he erects a "straw man." He says that the couplet in the creation days may be *equivalent* to its common use in English, viz., as parts of a day—I agree. He misses my point that the couplet as such can never signify (mean) an ordinary day so that, in essence, evening means nighttime and morning means daytime—they are "*descriptive*." This would mean that in the flow of the first day there was a nighttime and then a daytime and this flow is repeated/summarized/set forth in the phrase "there was evening and there was morning, the first day." The two words are *descriptive* of the day's proceedings.

2. I do not intend to say in the words cited that outside Genesis 1 *yom* never refers to the totality of an ordinary day. I agree that outside Genesis 1 the couplet almost always describes two parts of an ordinary day, i.e., when used in the same verse the couplet is almost always accompanied by the background implication that they are parts of an ordinary day (I prefer stating the matter this way rather than using the ambiguous word "refer" which is used in two different senses in the above quote).

3. In his rebuttal Dr. Shaw appears to state his own reasoning as to why the creation days are to be viewed as ordinary. This helps one understand his objections to my primary thesis better. His reasoning seems to be as follows:

> The two words outside Genesis creation days are always used to signify disparate parts of an ordinary day,
>
> The two words are used in Genesis 1 to signify parts of the creation days,
>
> Therefore, the two words in Gen. 1 signify disparate parts of ordinary days.

The argument he suggests appears to be well reasoned: since the two words in every other Biblical verse in which they both occur outside Genesis 1 usually signify parts of an ordinary day—but is it well defended? I label this view the *equivalent* usage of the couplet. I respond to his reasoning as follows:

(1) Dr. Shaw's argument assumes that reference to what are parts of an ordinary day requires the conclusion that an ordinary day is being set forth. But this hardly follows. It falsely assumes that the two parts in the creation days necessarily infer the context in which they occur elsewhere, i.e., it begs the question. This error is clearly demonstrated since every time the couplet occurs outside the Genesis record it "refers" to an ordinary day regulated by the sun, then this reasoning would seem to carry with it the existence of the sun on day 1.

(2) The conclusion appears to ignore the unusual nature of day 1. The first day includes the darkness mentioned in Genesis 1:2 and 4 (where we are told that God called the darkness night). So, darkness-night in verse 4 is the precedent of the light. If one takes the *equivalent* sense (see above) of evening and morning (as my reviewer does), then the day also concludes with nighttime. Since the day opened with a nighttime (night), then this first day consisted of a nighttime, a daytime, and another nighttime. Hence, either it is not an ordinary day in length insofar as it appears to have had two mornings, or it is not an ordinary day in content (nature) since it has two nighttimes within the space of 24 hours—John Lightfoot, the Westminster divine, wrote that the first day was 36 hours long (*The Works of the Reverend And Learned John Lightfoot D.D.*, Vol. 1, London, [1684]). In this verse then, the couplet enveloping the evening and morning appears to be a means of stating the conclusion to the day and not its length. The couplet certainly does not carry with it the assumed backdrop of an ordinary day.

(3) I respectfully point to a third problem with the reviewer's reasoning: regulators were not introduced until day four where we read that God made the two great lights, the sun and the moon, "to divide the day from the night … and … for days and for years" (Gen. 1:14). Hence, since the evening-morning couplet does not determine the length of the day on day 1, perhaps it does not function this way in days 2 and 3. Apart from assumption, how can one possibly know for sure that days 2 and 3 were the same length as the *solar* days? All we know for sure is that these were truly days and that they concluded. Surely, the assumption of uniformitarianism is unfounded in the text. However, had God used night and day in the concluding formula, then there would be a stronger argument for the ordinary day position insofar as this is a usual Hebrew "idiom" for an ordinary day. On the other hand, apart from the uniformitarian assumption, even with such a change there would be no certainty as to how long the days lasted—at least not before day 4.

(4) From my perspective there is another problem with this reasoning, viz., the major proposition is not true. It denies or ignores that the couplet in Daniel 8 refers to something other than parts of an ordinary day. This exegesis is defended by E.J. Young and C. F. Keil in their respective commentaries on verses 14 and 26. They argue that in Daniel the couplet evening-morning signifies days of indeterminable length. It is one thing to offer every occurrence of the phrase as evidence but quite another to find an exception to the general assertion.

(5) Moreover, if one accepts the *equivalent* exegesis, Dr. Shaw introduces additional problems. If evening and morning are parts of an ordinary day, and if the textual order states their order on the days of creation, then the days begin and end with a morning, and extend from morning to morning. This distinguishes the creation days from the ordinary and sacramental days of Israel that were marked from evening to evening. This, in turn, introduces a conundrum in the fourth commandment because it sees God as commanding man to imitate Him by resting one day a week from evening to evening just as He rested one day a week from morning to morning. It certainly seems preferable to argue that the days of Genesis and the days of the fourth commandment were the same insofar as they were all periods of time going from evening to evening and with a beginning and end—although they differed as to length or in nature.

III. My reviewer Dr. Shaw continues in his reply, writing (*CPJ*, 1.155), "Third, when Dr. Coppes argues that the couplet "day-night" is necessary to conclude that an ordinary day is in view, he is arguing far beyond what the evidence will allow. As just demonstrated, the morning-evening couplet clearly refers to ordinary days, and we should not think Moses must have been constrained to the use of day-night if he wanted to refer to ordinary days."

The argument to which reference is made is an argument against the *descriptive* exegesis and not an argument against the *equivalent* exegesis (p. 168–172 of my book) as the reviewer seems to assume—at least, I do not apply it to the *equivalent* exegesis in my book. On the other hand, in view of what the record of the first day reports (as discussed earlier), my argument also applies to the *equivalent* position: since the first day includes a night, a day, and then a night, it seems it would be more clearly an ordinary day if God had used the usual couplet signifying an ordinary day—in the order night-day. That language would exclude an extra nighttime (be used as a summary statement) and would less likely represent only a concluding statement.

IV. Dr. Shaw states (*CPJ*, 1.155): "Fourth, due to what I perceived as serious flaws in Dr. Coppes' arguments, I decided … to deal … with … underlying methodological issues."

I respond that, in spite of his protestations, he appears to agree with my conclusions as to the semantic distribution of "day" and "evening-morning"—other than my seeing Daniel 8: 18, 26 as a use of the couplet in the *descriptive* sense and a usage that does not "refer to" an ordinary day. I do believe that those who read my treatment of these couplets will see that I derive the various usages from the Biblical contexts rather than reading into the contexts a preconceived sense. It is also interesting that Dr. Shaw appears to violate his own principle with reference to idioms when he affirms that *b^{e}yom* "simply means when." It appears that he means that *b^{e}yom* has no usage other than "when." My reviewer agrees with my affirmation, at least in part, that the use of the Hebrew word *yom* in the phrase *b^{e}yom* often means "when." On the other hand, he seems to say it always means "when" and refers to the translations as support (and understandably not as proof). Yet, the translations do not always render the phrase "when." Indeed, in Genesis 2:4 the NKJV, RSV, ESV, ASV, and NASV render the phrase "in the day" (as I do), while only the NIV renders it, "when." In 2:17 the NKJV, ASV, and NASV render it "in the day," and the RSV, NASV, and RSV render it "when." Thus, the reviewer seems to deny the proposition that the meaning of idioms (e.g., *b^{e}yom*) may vary from context to context and must be determined from the contexts.

Finally, Dr. Shaw writes (*CPJ*, 1.155): "… in my review I state that the Hebrew phrase *b^{e}yom* simply means 'when.' Dr. Coppes offers Psalm 18:1 as a counter-example. It is not, as the reader can easily tell.… In addition, he dismisses the work of Barr with the statement 'that work is seriously flawed methodologically.' While it may be that Barr sometimes paints with too broad a brush, one of the things against which Barr warns is the ignoring of context in the determination of the connotation of a word. In my opinion, Dr. Coppes regularly ignores this stricture…."

The matter about Barr appears inconsequential since both Dr. Shaw and myself reject some of what Barr held and accept some of it. I deny that I ignored the context of words when exegeting or doing word (and phrase) studies. Moreover, as pointed out above, the reviewer appears to contradict one principle he affirms when he says *b^{e}yom* "simply means 'when.'"

[Editor's Note: Dr. Shaw is giving Dr. Coppes the last word on this exchange over his 2005 review of *The Divine Days of Creation.*] ▪

Review. *In Thesi* Deliverances in Constitutional Perspective—A Response to Dr. C. N. Willborn, "The 'Ministerial and Declarative' Powers of the Church and *In Thesi* Deliverances," *The Confessional Presbyterian* (2005) 94–101. By Stuart R. Jones, Instructor in Polity, Ministerial Training Institute of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Pastor of First OPC, Baltimore, Md..

Dr. Willborn's recent article on *in thesi* deliverances provides an opportunity to consider, by way of response, a major injustice in the case of J. Gresham Machen who was disciplined by the Presbyterian Church USA seventy years ago. As a supplement, this response differs from Dr. Willborn mainly in emphasis rather than principle. Particularly, there is agreement with the following statement near the end of his article:

> Nevertheless, we do admit there is a difference between the constitutional law of the church, the judicial decisions of the supreme judicatory, and *in thesi* deliverances.[1]

Compared with the position of Thomas Peck, Willborn argues for a reduced distance between *in thesi* deliverance authority and the authority of judicial decisions or the constitution. For Presbyterians that followed J. Gresham Machen out of the Northern Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) to form the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), this question possesses special interest. It will be argued here that due process and the constitutional nature of American Presbyterianism argues for a sharp distinction between *in thesi* deliverances and constitution and that *in thesi* deliverances do not bind the conscience beyond their persuasiveness and truthfulness. How different this position is from that of Mr. Willborn, the reader may decide.

The question for OPC members and churches with a similar Form of Government may be framed in the following terms: Is there a tension or conflict between the polity constitution and the doctrinal constitution, i.e. *Westminster Confession*, Chapter 31.3 (31.2 in the PCUSA text) regarding the requirement to receive the "decrees and determinations" of synods and councils with "reverence and submission?"[2] If there is such a conflict, one might suppose that the tertiary standards should give way to the secondary standards, i.e. the *Confession* and *Catechisms*. It will be further argued here that the WCF needs to be understood in terms of the special American Presbyterian context in which it was given constitutional status.

DUE PROCESS

In 1934 the constitutionality of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions was questioned and in effect decided by a General Assembly mandate. The question was not raised by formal appeal or complaint but through entities of church judicatories acting on their own initiative, particularly the General Council. This was an interim creature of the General Assembly which was by rule precluded from doing judicial business.[3] Certain "Constitutional Studies," not specifically mandated or authorized by any judicatory, resulted from the concerns of the General Council. These studies were leveraged to produce the 1934 Assembly Mandate that all members of the Independent Board resign the Board. Failing to do so, the appropriate judicatories were mandated to take disciplinary measures against the same.[4] Whether the General Council acted beyond its charter is secondary to our concern here. The point to be observed here is that the General Assembly issued an authoritative mandate, binding judicatories to discipline certain parties based on purported constitutional grounds. No due process was afforded affected parties before the mandate. The specific resolution of the General Council, as opposed to the "Studies" per se, was only made known on the day of the Assembly when action was to be taken (Rian, 112–113). This rendered all due process after the mandate illusory since the "law" question of the Independent Board had been decided without opportunity for adequate defense. The appearance of due process in the subsequent trials was an illusion as the "law" question had already been decided independently.

This illustrates the potential for abuse of *in thesi* deliverances. By nature, such deliverances concern themselves with what may be called questions of law, conceived broadly to include doctrine, ethics, constitutional rules, etc. They are considerations that may be argued "mostly" independent of the "facts" in a judicial case. The "mostly" qualification is given here because it is debatable whether "law" can be completely explained apart from concrete cases. The "Studies" addressed a question of law in the abstract without overt direction at specific parties. The 1934 Mandate arising from the "Studies" was more specific in its application of the "Studies" material to parties but without the safeguard of due process. In other words, the not so well disguised purpose of the "Studies" blurred with the Mandate to constitute an *in thesi* deliverance that was in truth, more *in hypothesi* than *in thesi*; or in other words, a judicial judgment arrived at using the teaching and/or legislative powers of the church rather than the judicial powers that are guided and ruled by due process constraints. The result was a bill of attainder.

When a Presbyterian judicatory inquires whether a charge and specifications are in order, it seeks, *inter alia*, a legal determination at the outset whether the major premise of a legal syllogism (the charge) really articulates an offense subject to formal discipline. This inquiry and determination has much in common with an *in thesi* deliverance. Both address matters that are abstractly legal in form rather than factual. Though the preliminary legal inquiry in a judicial case seems detachable from the minor premise (specifications of fact), in truth, the specifications may have an effect on the major legal

1. C.N. Willborn, "The 'Ministerial and Declarative' Powers of the Church and *In Thesi* Deliverances," *The Confessional Presbyterian* (2005) 1.101.

2. One of the well known changes made to the Confession of Faith when adopted by the PCUSA in 1788 was the deletion of the original paragraph 31.2. The OPC text of course derives from the PCUSA tradition. See *The Book of Church Order of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church* (Willow Grove, Pa.: The Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 2005) and *Confession of Faith* (Glasgow: Free Presbyterian Publications, 1994).

3. Edwin Rian, *The Presbyterian Conflict* (Philadelphia: Committee for the Historian of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1992 [reprint]) 103–104.

4. N.B. Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen: A Biographical Memoir* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954) 485.

premise. Walter Steuart of Pardovan, in addressing the law of the Church of Scotland, states it this way:

> But in causes intricate and difficult, the discussing of the relevancy [the overall validity of the legal syllogism] may be delayed till probation be taken; and then greater light being thereby given, both relevancy and probation may be advised jointly, as the Lords of Session and Privy council have oftentimes done [secular courts].[5]

Though exceptional, this practice may be appreciated in view of a provision in most Presbyterian Churches that cases should not be dismissed for technical reasons but may be reformulated by a judicatory. For example, when specifications of fact are examined, it may be that a charge of *teaching* false doctrine should be recast more precisely to something like *believing* or *confessing* false doctrine. The right verb may be vital for proving the major premise and deciding on a suitable censure. It may be an important consideration that a man believes an error that he does not publicly teach. Thus, it becomes important to allow the major premise to either be reformulated or re-interpreted according to the facts being alleged. For example, the Northern General Assembly gave leave to the prosecuting committee to reformulate charges, "not changing the general nature of the same", in the Charles Briggs case.[6]

Though a defendant may argue that an *in thesi* deliverance is not relevant to the charge and facts alleged or that such pronouncements are not part of the constitution, this does not change the danger attached to assigning undue authority to such deliverances. One motive behind such deliverances is belief that the doctrinal constitution is not sufficiently clear. In such a situation, rather than applying the doctrinal constitution to a specific case while making appropriate adjustments in light of the facts alleged, a formulation is given that threatens to become a grid through which the constitution is interpreted. This amends the constitution in practical effect without undertaking the proper and more deliberative process of amendment. This danger is more acute when an *in thesi* deliverance is afforded more authority than pious advice. Thus, it is helpful that a church maintain a bright line between advice and constitutional authority.

Presbyterians of the South may appreciate this in connection with their distaste of the Gardiner Spring Resolutions. The typical criticism of these resolutions is that they compromised the spiritual nature of the church. A better argument might be made that these resolutions were in fact corrupted *in thesi* deliverances that were issued to the deprivation of due process rights of Southern Presbyterians.[7]

American Presbyterian Constitutionalism

When Machen was tried, the 1934 Form of Government XIII.VI stated:[8]

> Before any overtures or enactments proposed by the [General] Assembly to be established as rules regulative of the constitutional powers of presbyteries and synods, shall be obligatory upon the Church, it shall be necessary to transmit them to all the presbyteries, and to receive the returns of at least a majority of them, in writing, approving thereof, and such rules, when approved, shall be appended to the Constitution of the Church.

This provision separates constitutionally defined obligations from the persuasive authority of an *in thesi* deliverance. The requirement of approval of the presbyteries before General Assembly acts become binding has its origins in Scotland with the Barrier Act of 1697.[9] In America the practice took root in 1788. Prior to these dates, the highest Presbyterian judicatories had to be restrained by either civil government or their own good sense. The acts of any given Assembly were in force until repealed by some subsequent Assembly. Customary under-

5. Cf. Pardovan's *Collections*, Book IV, Title III, Article 3. "Pardovan" is the abbreviated title for Walter Steuart, Laird of Pardovan, ruling elder in the Church of Scotland, advocate, and Burgess member of the Scottish Parliament (which Parliament ceased during his lifetime). The first edition of the *Collections* is 1709. One of the latest editions is found in *Compendium of Laws of the Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh: 1837), Part I.

6. Cf. *The Case Against Professor Briggs* (New York: Scribners, 1893) 171.

7. Cf. Edgar Caldwell Mayse, "Robert Jefferson Breckinridge: American Presbyterian Controversialist" (diss.; Union Seminary, Richmond, Va., 1974), 638, 697–698. Further, Henry Van Dyke argued that the Spring resolutions were not binding because they had not been ratified by the presbyteries per the requirement of the Presbyterian Constitution.

8. Cf. *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.* [1934] (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1934) Part I.

9. Cf. Samuel Baird's Digest, *A Collection of the Acts, Deliverances, and Testimonies of the Supreme Judicatory of the Presbyterian Church* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1856) 22. In 1639 the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland passed an act that appears to have required fair notice to lower judicatories before bringing major items of business to the General Assembly. In 1648, explicit mention is made of the fact that Presbyteries were informed of the contents of the Larger Catechism prior to the Assembly's adoption of that instrument. This order of deliberation shares concerns similar to the ones expressed in the Barrier Act, except that the Barrier Act moves in a different direction and forms a constitutional protection for presbyteries that goes beyond protection against surprise proposals. Cf. *Records of the Kirk of Scotland, Containing the Acts and Proceedings of the General Assemblies, from the Year 1638 Downwards, As authenticated by the Clerks of Assembly* by Alexander Peterkin, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh: John Sutherland, 1838) 208, 496.

standing (leaving aside civil law) distinguished the fundamental law from the incidental decrees of the church judicatory.[10] Under the pre-Barrier Act mode of doing business, efficiency ruled over greater deliberation. This is hard to resist when a single assembly might by a majority vote resolve a crisis. In the post 1788 history of American Presbyterianism, the Old School-New School Division, the Gardiner Spring Resolutions, and the Machen case are examples of constitutionally questionable quick fixes to perceived crises. Presbyteries were by-passed or dictated to with little justification beyond the emergency of the times.[11]

Since 1788, American Presbyterianism has a distinct method of recognizing its "fundamental" law or constitution. This must be duly appreciated when seeking to apply *Westminster Confession*, Chapter 31 to the discussion of *in thesi* deliverances and the degree of authority they should be afforded. The *Westminster Confession* predates the Barrier Act and the establishment of a full fledged constitutional American Presbyterian Church. As such, Chapter 31 was not specifically tailored to function in a context where a distinction between a constitution under ecclesiastical control and *in thesi* deliverances is present.

In WCF 31.3 (31.2 PCUSA), we may ask which enumerated acts compare with *in thesi* deliverances. There is a threefold categorization of "decrees and determinations" set forth in this chapter which are set apart by semicolons. The structure of the chapter takes the following form (key outline items are underlined):

Decrees and Determinations

A. Determine
  1. *controversies of* faith,
  2. *cases of* conscience

B. Set down rules and directions *for the better* order*ing*
  1. *of the* public worship *of God, and*
  2. government *of his Church*

C. *Receive* Complaints in cases of maladministration *and … determine.*[12]
  1. receive
  2. authoritatively determine

This three-part scheme was part of the debate at the Assembly. The Independents did not disagree with Presbyterians that there was a threefold church power (dogmatic power, power to order, and power to discipline)[13] but disagreed that all these powers resided in synods and councils beyond the congregational level. Parliament also, with its Erastian bent, was disinclined to accept chapter 31. Synods confined to dogmatic pronouncements were of lesser consequence than synods that authoritatively imposed constitutional rules or oversaw discipline. The Presbyterian party advocated for the same powers being present in all church assemblies.

From the above outline, it can be seen that the only class of determinations listed in the *Confession* that might qualify as '*in thesi*' are those first listed, i.e. "determine controversies of faith and cases of conscience." The "rules and directions" for worship and government do not qualify. This power (diatactic), under modern Presbyterian practice, is manifested primarily in tertiary standards that have been adopted by the special process to establish constitutional law. The WCF does not address the "how" or "form" by which rules are established (i.e. single majority vote versus a more intricate constitutional process). It is anachronistic to apply the WCF to questions it did not address. It can be fairly assumed that the Westminster Divines were not immediately thinking of a system like that which evolved in America after 1788.

It may be safely assumed that the Westminster Divines were thinking in terms of how the church historically met in councils and dissolved them after their business was done.

10. Cf. William Mair, *A Digest of Laws and Decisions Ecclesiastical and Civil: Relating to the Constitution, Practice, and Affairs of the Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1887), 1–2. Mair lists various documents that form the constitution of the Church of Scotland using as his criterion what is fundamental to the "position and character" of the Church.

11. Charles Hodge seems to suggest an emergency basis for the manner of dealing with the New School in the work, *Discussion in Church Polity* (New York: Charles Scribners, 1878) 407. Whether there was an "express" violation of the constitution or not is where the debate seems to lie. An express violation is problematic, but since the constitution for Hodge is simply a limitation of original powers rather than a granting of powers, it is easier to argue for the constitutionality of Old School Actions in exscinding the New School judicatories. Hodge's position on this distinction probably helps explain some differences between him and strict constructionist Southern Churchmen.

12. In most American Presbyterian churches, the term "complaint" usually carries the technical meaning of bringing a charge of error against a judicatory, usually for the purpose of correcting a governmental action. The term appears to have evolved from an earlier general usage of the term which might refer to a charge or accusation in which the offending party was not always a judicatory. An example of a more general use of this term occurs as early as 1562 where it is specified that "no Minister leave his flock for coming to the Assembly except he have complaints to make, or else be complained on, or at least be warned thereto by the Superintendent." Cf. *The Booke of the Universall Kirk of Scotland*, ed. A. Peterkin (Edinburgh, 1839) 10.

13. Peck uses the terms diatactic, and diacritic in his discussion of *in thesi* deliverances. Cf. "The Powers of the Several Church-Courts," *Paradigms in Polity,* ed. Hall & Hall (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994) 589; also available as a free e-book at www.fpcr.org. Some of the Westminster divines used a similar three-part differentiation of church power during their polity debates, particularly in reference to which powers might have been present in the Acts 15 Council. Cf. "Notes of Debates and Proceedings of the Assembly of Divines and Other Commissioners at Westminster," *The Works of George Gillespie* (Edinburgh: Robert Ogle and Oliver and Boyd, 1846) 40.

To the degree this meant following the model of the best Reformed churches, including the Church of Scotland, we can assume they were thinking of national synods that met on a yearly or regular basis. None of this is spelled out and so the unspoken assumptions of the Divines do not constitute a constitutional law. The *Confession* framers were concerned with the broad powers of higher assemblies rather than specific polity rules.

The clear burden of the Divines who advocated Chapter 31 was to assert that synods had more than a dogmatic power at their disposal. When the *Confession* says "which decrees and determinations are to be received with reverence and submission" we understand that the powers of ordering and discipline were most in the spotlight and that the precise degree of authority assigned to the dogmatic powers of synods was not much in dispute. But it is the dogmatic power that today most readily furnishes a basis for the *in thesi* deliverance.

Allowing that the *Confession* includes the dogmatic deliverances and determinations within the sphere of things "to be received with reverence and submission," we must not immediately conclude that the *Confession* requires giving equal weight to (what we today call) *in thesi* deliverances and our doctrinal constitution. Our doctrinal constitution has already been "received with reverence and submission" in a uniquely privileged sense. It contains many of the sorts of decrees and determinations with which the Westminster Assembly was concerned. Using the outline given above, it may be asked, "Under which power does the adopting of a doctrinal constitution (Confessions and Catechisms) fall?" At first, a constitutionally minded Presbyterian may assume that this falls under the diatactic ordering function (i.e. "B"). But this sub-function is not listed there. Confession and creed adoption most naturally fall within the activity of "determining controversies of faith." The situation is also a bit complicated by the fact that the Westminster Divines had been called to draft their *Confession* but had no power to actually adopt it as Church law for the three Kingdoms.

Because of developments in Presbyterian polity over time, WCF 31.3 (31.2 PCUSA) cannot be used simplistically to give undue weight to *in thesi* deliverances. At the time the *Confession* was being drafted, those synods of Reformed churches that existed operated under a system where all deliverances of the Synod were similar to a constitutional deliverance. Even today Reformed Synods are held where a simple majority vote establishes guidance—presumably in matters of faith and order—that is hardly distinguishable in effect from a Presbyterian's more cumbersomely determined constitutional faith and order. The Church Order of Dort, article 31 (Cf. *Paradigms in Polity,* 180), speaks of "settled and binding" decisions arrived at by majority vote (though the article is descriptive of an appellate matter, little else in the Dort Order exists to suggest a more deliberate policy to elevate fundamental law).

The distinction between constitutional rules and less binding deliverances was made clearer for Presbyterians by the passage of the Barrier Act about fifty years after the *Westminster Confession*. At the time of the *Confession*, there was little basis for distinguishing between contumacy for disobeying an *in thesi* deliverance and contumacy toward the fundamental law of the Church. The disestablished nature of American Presbyterianism meant that it was able, in time, also to provide a serious deliberative policy for distinguishing its doctrinal constitution from the momentary deliverances of a single Assembly. In short, American Presbyterianism, by use of its diatactic power of order, has established a more deliberative process for how controversies of faith will be authoritatively resolved.

Lest this treatment leave the impression the Church after 1788 has no dogmatic power except when it passes an amendment to the doctrinal constitution, it must be noted that the polity constitution of the OPC, *Form of Government* XIV.7 (cf. PCA BCO 11.4) speaks of a presbytery having authority "to condemn erroneous opinions…." This power is particularly important in an age when not every opinion maker is subject to the discipline of a sound Presbyterian Church. Increasingly, some "Presbyterian" seminaries have ruling elders or non-officers teaching who are not directly under the original jurisdiction of a Presbytery. In such a state of affairs, a Church must have power to issue pastoral advice about what it may see as errors of the day. But where errant teachers are under the jurisdiction of a Presbyterian church body, the use of *in thesi* pronouncement to challenge their teaching may be unfair, an abrogation of real responsibility, or both.

The Westminster Standards, as doctrinal constitution, have already resolved a great deal of doctrinal controversy among Presbyterians and an amendment process is still available to address new controversies, but the excellent and comprehensive nature of the Westminster Standards has made this cumbersome process less needful in many doctrinal matters. Application of the existing standards by judicial means is often sufficient. The danger of creating "in effect" amendments to the constitution by *in thesi* pronouncements is real and must be resisted (cf. OPC FG XV.8). For this reason, Machen and his followers did not regard the 1934 Mandate as binding.

There is a place for a Church giving "constitutional advice" and it should not be thought that such advice is of no value. There can be value in the persuasive authority of advice issued in a context where the heat and divisiveness of a specific case is not present. Further, since Christians are generally commanded to submit to one another and to obey leaders, there certainly is a proper moral respect that should be paid

to advice from the church's higher judicatories. However, the practice of issuing *in thesi* advice should avoid the "authoritative interpretations" of the constitution one finds in PCUSA polity today. Such interpretation may introduce discord between the constitution and the will of a given Assembly.[14] Precisely because councils and synods may err, there is wisdom in the constitutional limits we now impose on our assemblies. Had the Assembly of 1934 afforded proper "reverence and submission" to its constitution and the due process rules previously respected by previous Assemblies, it might have avoided a tyrannical error. ▪

Review: Sean Michael Lucas, *Robert Lewis Dabney: A Southern Presbyterian Life* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R, 2005). Hardcover, 295 pages. $24.99. Reviewed by C. N. Willborn, Professor, Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

Robert Lewis Dabney: A Southern Presbyterian Life is the inaugural volume in the American Reformed Biographies series from P&R. The subjects of these biographies will be men who received scant if any biographical attention during the twentieth century, but are believed to be of continuing relevance for twenty-first century Christians by the editors and authors. The editors of this series are Drs. D. G. Hart and Sean Michael Lucas. Hart has served the faculties of Westminster Seminaries in Philadelphia and Escondido and is currently Director of Academic Projects at Intercollegiate Studies Institute in Wilmington, Delaware. Lucas is Assistant Professor of Church History at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. Both men are active historians with keen interests in American Presbyterianism and are well qualified for both the editorial involvement in this series as well as their contributions as biographers.

The present review is in many ways both an easy task and a difficult one. It is easy because the subject matter is one with which the reviewer is familiar and one which he enjoys researching and discussing. It is difficult because the subject matter, R. L. Dabney, is a lightning rod of a man. There are lovers and haters, but seldom if ever are there indifferentists when it comes to Mr. Dabney. Therefore, to criticize this treatment of Dabney will be to inflame haters of Dabney; and to commend it will incite to riot the lovers of the Virginian. With this in mind, one can hardly expect to win the Nobel Peace Prize with this review.

Another complicating factor is the reviewer's friendship with the author. Frankly, it is hard for a Southerner to critique a friend in a public forum. I am sure, however, Dr. Lucas will both expect and appreciate (even if he does not agree with) this exercise in academic honesty.

Finally, a review of *Robert Lewis Dabney: A Southern Presbyterian Life* is complicated by the nature of previous reviews. In addition to being altogether uncritical, one reviewer seems to suggest that future criticism of Lucas's work should be expected because Lucas has offered a "truthful account" of Dabney. Further, it is surmised, the "polarized response" (i.e., the criticism that will come from lovers and haters of Dabney) is a "testament to his [Lucas] competence as an historian."[1] Thus, to criticize Lucas would suggest that one is a representative lover or hater of Dabney; or, it is to question Lucas's competence as an historian if one begs to differ with or question him. Now the former reviewer surely did not intend to create such a dilemma for future reviewers, but, as the reader can see, it does complicate any effort at an honest review from someone who may differ at points. With these preliminaries stated, it is hoped that all would admit that an objective, truthful, and critical review of Dr. Lucas's work can be offered without impugning Dr. Lucas as an historian or joining ranks with the less than objective readers of Dabney's life.

While objections will be made in this review to certain interpretations of Dabney, there are a number of positive aspects to *Robert Lewis Dabney: A Southern Presbyterian Life.* It was this reviewer's privilege to read the pre-publication text and it was found then to be extremely readable. If anything, the published version is even better in this regard. Dr. Lucas is a very able writer whose style is imitable. He uses his lucid style to place before his readers a number of Dabney's contributions that can positively serve and challenge today's church. For example, Lucas discusses Dabney's view of theological education and its relationship to the ordained ministry. The theological seminary, for Dabney, was not a place for "literary novelties." It was a place where men were to be moored in the Holy Scriptures, as those Scriptures are understood and summarized in the public confession of the church (in his case, the Westminster Confession and Catechisms as received by the Presbyterian Church US). In this, Dabney stands in the company of Thornwell's successor at Columbia Seminary and his contemporary, John L. Girardeau. In his lengthy debates with James Woodrow over evolution, Girardeau insisted on the seminary's singular role as a teacher of the Church's Confession. Over against Dabney's and Girardeau's view of the seminary's purpose, there was something of a plea for "academic freedom," which figured into the defense of Woodrow during the 188os in Dabney's Southern Church. While the Dabney-Girardeau view ultimately prevailed in the evolution battle in the Southern Church, the greater war was lost and the seminaries in the United States soon came to be

14. A provision for this is in the PCUSA Governmental Standards (cf. 1992 edition, Chapter on the General Assembly, G–13.0103r). ▪

1. T. David Gordon, "Reviews," *New Horizons* (December 2005) 25. Online at http://www.opc.org/review.html?review_id=43

graduate schools for ministerial students. With the graduate school model came the license of academic freedom and the end of a confessionally-oriented ministerial preparation. Lessons from history can be helpful.

A correlative to Dabney's view on theological education was his insistence on an educated ministry. Dabney was not for lowering the standards or requirements for education and preparation toward the ordained gospel ministry. He knew like so many that to jettison requirements for pragmatic or perceived reasons would only weaken the church and her message. There had been the Cumberland experiment earlier in his century, which substantiated his concern. Frontier activists, many with the best of intentions and desires, were willing to reduce or abandon altogether ministerial preparation for the sake of the expansion of the kingdom, due to the great need on the frontier for preachers and churches. The product was a sadly anemic church that more resembled the world than heaven. Here again, Dabney's concerns need to be echoed through the halls of many presbyteries today. The church will neither be strengthened, nor the gospel advanced ably by compromising the standards.

In the same discussion, Lucas offers Dabney's timely advice to the church in regard to seminary oversight. Who should provide the oversight of the theological education of the church's future ministers? Dabney's answer was "to emphasize local control … so that each seminary would be supported and governed by local ministers and churches …" (79). He was a firm believer that centralization of power and influence, whether it is in government, church, or education, was both unwise and unhealthful. Therefore, "multiplication of seminaries under local synodical control" (80) was best for educational purposes and preservation of orthodoxy. His commitment to "grassroots" Presbyterianism, particularly as applied to ministerial academies, could be a productive topic for the church's consideration today.

Another characteristic of Dabney that Lucas brings to his readers' attention and which could go far to aid the church is his theological moderatism. Interestingly enough, most people think of Dabney as a "hardliner" on most subjects and, in a day that lauds pluralism and diversity and tolerance, summarily dismiss the Presbyterian as passé. Lucas rightly points out that Dabney was as his students regarded him—"essentially moderate" (88). It is true that Dabney was an adherent to confessional Presbyterianism and had little sympathy for novel innovations, but he was a biblical theologian first and so was willing to stand down from an inherited position when he concluded it to be extra- or contra-biblical.

While he followed the *Elenctic Theology* of Francis Turretin for classroom lectures, and agreed in many respects, he was not a blind follower. For example, he was a vocal opponent of Turretine's federal view of imputation, especially as it pertained to the imputation of Adam's sin to his progeny. His arguments are found in his systematic notes and in his *Discussions* where he objects at length to Charles Hodge's treatment of Romans 5. Dabney, following Robert Landis, opted for what B. B. Warfield termed an "agnostic" position on the imputation of Adam's sin. Those interested in this debate should confer with the fine little book by George Hutchinson, *The Problem of Original Sin in American Presbyterian Theology.*[2]

Dabney was also opposed to the fine tooth speculating that often attended the lapsarian question. Indeed, the supra- and infralapsarian distinction was one he preferred to avoid on grounds that the Bible simply did not provide enough information to support a dogmatic position on one or the other position. Sometimes, however, his differences with Turretin were not over the insufficiency of special revelation (as in the case of the lapsarian matter), but revolved around a different understanding of God's revelation. To illustrate this point, Lucas briefly explains Dabney's development of Providence. While the point is a welcome one, disappointment may follow as one fails to find the expected explanation of "how" Dabney differs from the master Calvinist. This is a weakness of the book, as comparisons or explanations of Dabney's similarities and differences with others are lacking throughout. It would have been very useful at points like this to find documentary references to Turretin and others, at least in the footnotes. Nevertheless, to know Dabney's divergences is helpful to the uninitiated reader.

It is a good providence for the church that Lucas dealt fairly with Dabney's epistemological consciousness and portrays Dabney's philosophical commitment not as something to be ridiculed or ignored, as is too often the case today, even among those in Dabney's Presbyterian and Reformed tradition. Dabney was indebted to and a practitioner of Scottish Realism and in this he was not alone. The Princetonians, from Archibald Alexander to B. B. Warfield, utilized this system as did fellow Southerners such as James Henley Thornwell, John L. Girardeau, and B. M. Palmer. Charles Hodge utilized the Scottish Realism in establishing the prolegomena to his magnum opus, *Systematic Theology.* In these men's hands Common Sense Realism was not anthropocentric, egocentric, or rationalistic. It was the key to their orderliness and it was unmistakably theocentric. Lucas rightly explains that Dabney followed the Thomas Reid school of Realism. This is notable and distinguishes him from his most notable contemporaries in the Southern Church, Thornwell and Girardeau. The latter men leaned more heavily toward the school of Sir William Hamilton.

2. George P. Hutchinson, *The Problem of Original Sin in American Presbyterian Theology, An International Library of Philosophy and Theology: Biblical and Theological Studies* (Nutley, N.J: Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co., 1972).

In Dabney's hands, Common Sense Realism was an effective tool for use in dismantling the sensualist or positivist philosophy of Spencer, Mill, and the like. Likewise, Dabney applied his keenest arguments against the radical empiricism that promoted materialism and evolution. Lucus draws from Dabney's comprehensive work on the topic, *The Sensualistic Philosophy of the Nineteenth Century Considered,* to illustrate both the inductive and deductive arguments against the rationalism of Christianity's opponents. This apologetical work appeared in two editions (1875 and 1887) during Dabney's lifetime, is currently in print, and stands next to *The Practical Philosophy* as the Virginian's most notable academic work. While some may dismiss Dabney's approach as outmoded or lacking in sophistication (although this can hardly be imagined) or "not Reformed or Biblical," Lucas's presentation should serve as an invitation to revisit some of the old paths in apologetics. It is a real shame to neglect the genius of men like Dabney and Warfield no matter who your guru is.

Another positive side of this work is the handling of Dabney and the black population. Here the reviewer enters into very lonely ground. Many friends no doubt will disagree; many who thought they disagreed with the reviewer will be pleasantly surprised. Dabney was wrong in his view of the Africans brought to America through slaver trade, as Lucas argues. Until the end, Dabney insisted that they were inferior to his Caucasian ancestry and contemporaries. Unlike his South Carolina friends and co-laborers, John L. Girardeau and Thomas Peck, Dabney did not believe that a black man could ascend to majority status in society. A black man could never be qualified to fill the office of Pastor in Dabney's world. Girardeau demurred from his friend. Prior to filling Thornwell's shoes as the theologian at Columbia Seminary, Girardeau had labored among the slaves and free blacks of Charleston. He built a church for the black population that numbered over a thousand in membership and witnessed thousands in attendance every Lord's Day. Girardeau ordained black ruling elders in 1869 and agitated for integrated churches as soon as possible. It was Girardeau who held out to the end (1875 General Assembly) for the Southern Church to withstand segregation along the color line. The action of the 1875 Assembly for "organic separation" was to Dabney's liking. One must think that Dabney would have been a better man had he followed Girardeau in his view of blacks and their ability within the church.

There is also an excellent treatment of Dabney on the topic of anti-modernism. Lucas helps the reader to gain perspective on the distinctions between anti-modern and anti-intellectual. Dabney was the former but not the latter. In the church today, it would be good for these distinctions to be maintained and understood. There is a place for anti-modernism, especially when it comes to modernity's influence on the preaching of the gospel and regulation of worship. A number of lessons may be extracted from Lucas's representation of Dabney's intellectualism and anti-modernism.

Aside from the main text, Lucas's labors also provide a helpful and insightful *Bibliographic Note*. In this final section of the book, the author surveys various volumes that influenced and informed his thought on R. L. Dabney. The notes are helpful in directing both the novice and informed to further studies on the life and times of this complex subject.

Having noted a number of the strengths of the book, there are a few concerns that deserve to be noted. As a biography, the book lacks in relational development. That is, very little is said of Dabney's relationship with his wife, children, and friends. Allusion is made to his correspondence with certain peers and students, but little space is given to early friendships with men like William White of Lexington, which according to T. C. Johnson were foundational to his early and later ministry. Had Lucas traced out such influences perhaps he would have stayed away from the psychologizing tendency that riddles portions of the book. For example, Lucas speculates that Dabney's "fatherless upbringing during his key intellectual years" fueled his "hatred for ambiguity and his quest for certainty" (34). Disorder in the family, Lucas suggests, can explain "at least partly" Dabney's penchant for order (34). In fact, a number of other factors could more easily and naturally explain Dabney's propensities for order and precision. His commitment to truth and his indebtedness to the Scottish Realism (mentioned above), not to mention his rearing within a Puritan work-ethic model, provide better and less speculative reasons for his proclivity for precision and certainty.

One must believe the tendency to apply a psychological model to Dabney's life (over one hundred years after Dabney's death!), goes hand in hand with Lucas's wholesale (and seemingly uncritical) acceptance of the "honor" model he applies to Dabney's war time activities. Lucas portrays Dabney as a man struggling to maintain his manly honor. According to Lucas, Dabney struggled with his self-esteem due to his lack of front line involvement. The author goes so far to as to say Dabney attempted "to rationalize his avoidance of the war," in order to reclaim his manhood and honor (129).

Dabney, however, did not avoid the war. It is true that he was not on every or most campaigns; but, as Lucas records for his readers, the preacher's wartime colleagues attested to his bravery in duty—"Our parson is not afraid of Yankee bullets and I tell you he preaches like the Devil" (116). It should be noted that Dabney and a number of his students at Hampden-Sydney had rushed off to join the fracas early and the theologian had served at First Manassas as a chaplain. Chaplains were often thrust into the heat of the battle, the front lines, and this often without arms or cover. Like the surgeons of every war, the chaplains of the Civil War were remarkable for their

valor and the record reveals Dabney was "not afraid of Yankee bullets." Dabney was later called upon by T. J. Jackson to serve as his adjutant. Jackson was careful in his selections and chose Dabney on reputation as a man of character and honor. The records show that Jackson was pleased with Dabney's service and that Dabney only left the field of action (where he entered the front lines on several occasions during his tenure) for health reasons. Lucas attests that recurring illness, not fear, forced Dabney's resignation, which Jackson accepted "with great reluctance," (116). We have hardly described a dishonorable military life, albeit brief.

In the light of the few facts set forth above, it appears unnecessary and highly speculative to portray Dabney as a man fighting to regain his honor and manliness. Yes, Dabney evinces all the signs of an embittered man after the war. He became entrenched in his positions on race and sectionalism. This, however, reflects more his disappointment over the loss of a culture and the abuses of Reconstruction, which were great. His bitterness is further understood by his despair over the demise of a Constitutional Republic and the erection a democratic egalitarian state centered in a central government in Washington D.C. All of these factors, by the way, are not speculative but find clear expression in Dabney's *Discussions.*

Finally, there are a number of places where Lucas fails to give his readers the bottom line. For example, he details a number of Dabney's comments on temperance and alcohol (58) but fails to tell his readers Dabney's view of the right or wrong of alcoholic consumption. One is left wondering if Dabney held a position of total abstinence or a position like his fellow Southerners Thornwell and Girardeau. The latter tandem spoke *for* temperance or moderation but not for total abstinence.

From what has been said, it may be clear that several readings of this book have left the reviewer ambivalent toward *Robert Lewis Dabney: A Southern Presbyterian Life.*

As Dabney is offered to the public as a representative Southern Presbyterian, it can only be wished that he had been compared throughout to his Southern contemporaries and fathers. How did he compare to Girardeau on ecclesiastical relations of the freedmen? Did he agree with his colleague Thomas Peck on social issues? What about comparisons to other leading Virginia Presbyterians like the popular Moses Hoge of Richmond? The comparison at the end of the book to Abraham Kuyper, the Dutch reformer, is interesting but does little to prove the thesis of a representative Southern Presbyterian.

Dabney was far from perfect. He did view black Americans, as a class of people, as inferior and for that he should be criticized. He was wrong in ignoring the biblical mandate to provide Jubilee for slaves. He was, however, a fine theologian, with much to offer the church. Therefore, it is a good providence of God that a new biography is available to honor the life of this man who trained many young men in the Scriptures and left the church a legacy of rich writings on many topics which remain germane to our life as Christians and citizens of this world. Dr. Lucas is to be thanked for bringing Robert Lewis Dabney back to the table. Hopefully his work will spur a number of the uninitiated (and perhaps those who have dismissed Dabney) to plum the depths of Dabney, imbibing the truly good and disdaining the truly bad. The product of reading Dabney closely will be loving God and hating sin; and that is what Dr. Dabney would want. SDG! ▪

Review: George M. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2003). Hardcover, 640 pages. $35.00. Paperback (2004). $22.00. Reviewed by W. Gary Crampton, Th.D.

The author of Hebrews tells us that there are certain men whose godly examples are to be emulated: "Remember those who rule over you, who spoke the Word of God to you, and considering the outcome of their conduct, imitate their faith." Jonathan Edwards was such a man. He was a theocentric, "God-intoxicated" man, who was "mastered" by the Word of God; he thought biblically.[1] He was a man of great spiritual insight, "who put faithfulness to the Word of God before every other consideration."[2] It is beyond serious question, as Samuel Davies suggested, that this Puritan divine is "the profoundest reasoner, and the greatest divine … that America ever produced" (Murray, xv), and it more likely, as stated by B. B. Warfield, that he was a man whose "analytical subtlety has probably never been surpassed."[3] R. C. Sproul agrees with Warfield, claiming that (in his opinion), Jonathan Edwards is the greatest thinker in the history of Christ's church.[4] Of all men, said Martyn Lloyd-Jones, this was the man "most like the Apostle Paul."[5] We might conclude, with Perry Miller, that Edwards was "so much ahead of his time that our own [time] can hardly be said to have caught up with him."[6]

Since his death in 1758, various persons (beginning with

1. Carl W. Bogue, *Jonathan Edwards and the Covenant of Grace* (Cherry Hill, N.J.: Mack Publishing Company, 1975) 42, 50.

2. Iain H. Murray, *Jonathan Edwards: A New Biography* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1987) 471.

3. Benjamin B. Warfield, *Studies in Theology* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1988) 528.

4. R. C. Sproul, "Foreword," *Altogether Lovely*, edited by Don Kistler (Morgan, Pennsylvania: Soli Deo Gloria, 1997) v.

5. Cited in Stephen J. Nichols, *Jonathan Edwards: A Guided Tour of His Life and Thought* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R, 2001) 9.

6. Perry Miller, *Jonathan Edwards* (New York: Meridian, 1959; first edition, 1949) 305.

Edwards' protégé, Samuel Hopkins), have written biographies on Edwards, but Edwardsian scholars in general agree that George Marsden's new biography on Jonathan Edwards is the most comprehensive "definitive life" of this Puritan divine, and correctly so.[7] Samuel Logan has written that "there is no question that Marsden's biography is the best book ever written about America's (and perhaps the world's) greatest theologian…. It is thorough, meticulously researched, and in touch with all of the relevant sources both in Edwards himself and in secondary literature."[8] Some of the most salient features of the Puritan's life and ministry follow.[9]

George Marsden, who devoted nearly ten years of his life to the writing of the work, introduces this biography with the statement that "Edwards was extraordinary," and that even though "his pen brought lasting influence," his "life involved far more" (Marsden, 1). The "Introduction" and the thirty chapters that follow go on to show just how "extraordinary" Edwards was. Throughout the book it is obvious that Marsden, who is himself well versed in the Reformed and Calvinistic theology which Edwards embraced, has immersed himself in the study of the life and theology of the New England Puritan. In his own words, "one of my goals has been to understand him as a real person in his own time." "I find him," says Marsden, "to be a person of immense personal integrity. He was intensely pious and disciplined, admirably but dauntingly so for those of more ordinary religious faith." Yet, there were flaws in the New England Puritan as well. The seriousness with which he took most all matters "made him not an easy person to spend time with as a casual acquaintance, although he would have been fascinating to talk to about matters that concerned him." Nevertheless, "his prowess as a logician made him exceedingly sure of his opinions, sometimes given to pride, overconfidence, tactlessness, and an inability to credit opposing views." He was a man "much loved by those closest to him," but "his opponents found him aloof, opinioned, and intolerant" (2, 5–6).

Marsden begins at the beginning. Jonathan was born on October 5, 1703, in East Windsor, Connecticut. He was the fifth child, and the only son among eleven children, each of whom would grow to be over six feet tall (Jonathan's dad jokingly referred to his "sixty-feet of daughters" [18]). His father, Timothy, was the Harvard trained, influential pastor of a Congregational church in East Windsor. His ministry began in 1694, and lasted until 1755. Jonathan's mother, Esther, was the daughter of Solomon Stoddard, the renown pastor of the Congregational church in Northampton, Massachusetts. Stoddard's influence among the New England ministers was so substantial that he was dubbed the "pope" of the Connecticut River Valley. Years later, Jonathan would replace Stoddard at Northampton.

Timothy Edwards taught his son, along with a number of other boys in his congregation, the Bible, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and other disciplines from an early age. Pastor Edwards' major emphasis was on the need of his students to "close" with Christ. Young Jonathan saw several seasons of revival under his father's ministry at East Windsor, which deeply affected him, and would continue to do so in his later years. As a youngster, Jonathan would spend much time in prayer and religious conversation with other youth, but, as he later commented, this "religious" involvement soon died out, and he turned back to sinful behavior.

At the age of thirteen, Jonathan entered the Collegiate School at Connecticut (which was later named Yale), where he studied a number of subjects, including (Calvinistic) theology and philosophy. He was an excellent student and rigorously disciplined, qualities which did not endear him to at least some of his less concerned classmates. During his senior year in college, Jonathan fell deathly ill with pleurisy, but he recovered and graduated in 1720 as the top student in his class; he delivered the valedictory address in Latin. Edwards then continued his studies for several more years preparing for the ministry. At the age of nineteen he was licensed to preach, and completed his studies in divinity in 1723; his Master of Arts' thesis (written in Latin) was on the doctrine of "justification." He accepted a call as "supply" pastor at a small Presbyterian church in New York where he ministered for eight months, returning home to be with his parents for a period of time.

During his years of study for the ministry (probably in 1721) he was converted. It was in the reading of 1 Timothy 1: 17 ("Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.") that Edwards was subdued by the great triune God of Scripture, and bowed his knee to kiss the Son. Now the sovereignty of God which at one time had been so difficult to embrace, became his fondest thought. "I thought to myself," wrote Edwards, "how excellent a Being that was; and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God, and be wrapped up to God in heaven, and be as it were swallowed up in Him" (41). This was that "new sense" of divine things that God gives to those who have genuinely professed faith in Him. Young Edwards was a new creature in Christ.

As Marsden explains, to understand Jonathan Edwards, one must understand his devotion to the Bible as the Word of God. From start to finish he was a devotee of *sola Scriptura*:

7. Philip F. Gura, *Jonathan Edwards: America's Evangelical* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2005) 271.

8. Samuel T. Logan, Jr., Review of George M. Marsden's *Jonathan Edwards: A Life*, *WTJ* 65 (2003) 373, 375.

9. Samuel Storms, "A Chronology of the Life, Ministry, and Writings of Jonathan Edwards," has also been very helpful in the preparation of this study of the life of Edwards. Online: http://www.enjoyinggodministries.com/article.asp?id=371.

The Bible and the Bible alone is the Word of God, and it has a monopoly on truth. For him there was always "the paramount importance of Scripture for everything else in his thought." From early on he took "the greatest delight in the Holy Scripture, of any book whatever." He held to the "firm conviction that special revelation provided the only hope to know God's ways," and he devoted himself to mastering the Word of God (473–474, 477).

During this time Jonathan, who had been trained to study with his pen in his hand, began writing his miscellaneous thoughts on various topics. He penned his "Notes on Scripture," his "Notes on the Apocalypse" (the book of Revelation), and his "Miscellanies." These "Miscellanies" (which number over 1300) were notes, articles, and papers on various subjects (e.g., theological, philosophical, scientific). Some of these were very short, while others were quite lengthy. Edwards added to the "Notes" and "Miscellanies" throughout his life, continuing to demonstrate, says Marsden, that he "was a polymath interested in all knowledge and fascinated by how things worked" (68).

During the nineteenth year of his life, Jonathan also started a Diary, which he, like many Puritans kept as a record of his spiritual state. It was also during this year that he began to write out his Resolutions, which he viewed as God-honoring instructions and maxims which would guide him through his pilgrimage in this world. There were 70 resolutions in all.

It was in 1723 that Jonathan wrote glowing words about a young teenage girl (whom he had likely met several years earlier), by the name of Sarah Pierpont. She "is a young lady in New Haven who is beloved of that almighty Being, who made and rules the world." And she in turn loves Him. You "could not persuade her to do anything thought wrong or sinful, if you would give her all the world, lest she should offend this great Being. She is of a wonderful sweetness, calmness and universal benevolence of mind; especially after those times in which this great God has manifested Himself to her mind." And this young girl "loves to be alone, and to wander in the fields and on the mountains, and seems to have someone invisible always conversing with her." Sarah Pierpont, states Marsden, "was the perfectly embodied ideal of all that he [Edwards] aspired to be, the pure spiritual being, sweet tempered, singing sweetly, always full of joy and pleasure" (93–94). Four years later, Sarah became Mrs. Jonathan Edwards. In the next twenty-three years the Edwards would have eleven children of their own: three sons and eight daughters (the first child born was Sarah in 1728, and the last one born was Pierpont in 1750).

From late in 1723 until the spring of 1724, Edwards had a brief pastorate at Bolton, Connecticut. He then, however, returned to Yale as a tutor, where he served for a period of two years. During this time (for a period of three months in 1725), he became seriously ill. God, however, once again delivered His servant. During this time at Yale Edwards underwent a period of (spiritual) depression, which lasted nearly three years, until the Lord brought him out of it in the last part of his tutorship. Then in late 1726 Jonathan resigned this teaching post to accept a call as the assistant pastor to his maternal grandfather, Solomon Stoddard. He was ordained in February of 1727.

Years before Edwards accepted this call, Stoddard had introduced a view of the Lord's supper wherein the sacrament was treated as a "converting ordinance." Persons who lived upright lives, yet with little claim to genuine conversion, were invited to join the congregation and partake of the Supper. This might, said Stoddard, lead to their conversion. The result, however, was a general laxity in matters of the Christian faith. When Jonathan came to Northampton as assistant to his grandfather, he accepted this "converting ordinance" view, even though, as he later admitted, he was always wary of the doctrine. Years later, when Edwards publicly challenged Stoddard's view, it led to his dismissal.

Nevertheless, Edwards entered into his ministry with a servant's heart, taking his calling very seriously. He was a fine pastor as well as a theologian and philosopher. His ministerial duties included preaching, teaching, counseling, and aiding his grandfather. He also continued his writing ministry. The young pastor devoted himself to the study of Scripture. The Bible was not just a manual for ministry to Jonathan Edwards; he was firmly convinced that it is the very Word of God. As Marsden notes, Edwards was a "deeply spiritual" and "intensely hardworking" man. He "regulated his days by the strictest disciplines." It was his practice to rise "at four or five in the morning in order to spend thirteen hours [a day] in his study, involving himself in Bible study, meditation, writing, and prayer (253, 133). This intenseness continued throughout his life.

The "pope" of the Connecticut Valley died in 1729, and Edwards was called to be the pastor of the Northampton church. He would serve in that capacity until 1750. Shortly after becoming the sole pastor of the church, Jonathan suffered from emotional and physical fatigue, even loosing his voice, which prohibited him from carrying out his pastoral duties. But when he recovered, his ministry flourished. He pastored his people, preached the Word of God, and even mentored young candidates for the ministry. At the age of twenty-six, writes Marsden, "Edwards was now a man of authority.... He was God's spokesman in Northampton. He was, in one of his favorite metaphors, 'the trumpet of God'" (132).

The young pastor not only preached to his own congregation, but he was also asked to speak in other church gatherings. Some of his sermons were published during this time. Edwards was even asked to deliver a sermon/lecture to a gathering of the clergy at Boston in 1731. In this message,

titled "God Glorified in Man's Dependence," Jonathan took a strong and forceful stance for the Calvinist doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God in the salvation of lost sinners. Here he directly took on the Arminianism which was beginning to gain somewhat of a foothold in erstwhile Calvinistic churches. The Boston clergy was so well-pleased with the sermon/lecture, that they saw that it was published. This marked a turning point in young Edwards' career, as he now had achieved international recognition.

Edwards' "popularity" increased as he continued his ministry at Northampton. As he preached the Word of God and ministered to his people, slowly he began to see the tide of the members of the congregation shifting from a state of spiritual lethargy (what the Puritans called a "sottish" state) to one of genuine concern over their spiritual condition. Then in 1734–1735, the first "awakening" occurred. Concerned over the dual threat of Arminianism and antinomianism, Edwards preached a series of sermons on "Justification by Faith Alone," which triggered this awakening. Many souls were converted during this time, but there were (as always) numerous "counterfeit" conversions as well. Two years later the Puritan pastor had his first book published, his own personal documentary of the first awakening: *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God in the Conversion of Many Hundred Souls in Northampton and the Neighboring Towns and Villages*. Once again, Edwards, and the success of the Northampton ministry, reached international acclaim.

The revival that began in 1734 began to peter out shortly after 1735. One of Satan's devices for bringing this work of God to an end was that of convincing Edwards' uncle Joseph Hawley II (a somewhat mentally unstable man, prone to states of depression) that he should commit suicide by cutting his throat. By 1737 Edwards recognized that it was clear that many of the Northampton parishioners were returning to their old ways. In response, over the next several years he preached three lengthy sermon series attempting to change the direction of his congregation. The first was a nineteen-unit sermon series on Matthew 25:1–12 ("The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins"), the second was a twenty-one-unit sermon series on 1 Corinthians 13:1–8 (published posthumously as *Charity and Its Fruits*), and the third was a thirty-unit sermon series on Isaiah 51:8 (later published as *A History of the Work of Redemption*), wherein he set forth God's "grand design," wherein "Christ's redemptive love" is shown to be "the key to all history" (193)—this was the first truly Christian philosophy of history since Augustine's *City of God*. As expertly preached as the sermons were, however, the tide was not turned. Much to the dismay of its pastor, the Northampton church was back in its sottish state. It was five years after the fires of the first awakening occurred that the second awakening, the "great" awakening began.

When Edwards heard that the Anglican George Whitefield (called "The Grand Itinerant") was preaching in New England, he asked him to preach at Northampton. The itinerate preacher arrived in October of 1740 and preached several times to this congregation. Apart from his concerns for various "spiritual excesses" of the Anglican, Edwards was impressed with the guest speaker, and even "wept during the whole time" of one of Whitefield's Sabbath morning sermons. The result was that "joyful tidings" spread to many, who were "savingly brought home to Christ" (207). The "great awakening" had begun, and it lasted until 1742. While in Northampton, Whitefield stayed at the home of Edwards, spoke with his children (at the request of their father), and was very much impressed with the solidarity found in this family.

In this second awakening, besides Whitefield, there were other itinerant preachers involved (e.g., the Presbyterian evangelist Gilbert Tennent). Edwards himself itinerated during this time. He was very "much in demand," writes Marsden, "as the revival fires continued to blaze all over New England" (239). It was on July 8, 1741, that he preached his famous "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" sermon at Enfield, Connecticut, in which he portrayed, not only the awful wrath of God, but also His mercy to lost sinners who will put their faith in Christ. Apparently, a number of souls were won to Christ through this message. What is not as widely known is that the month before he had preached to same sermon to his own congregation without nearly the same effect.

Jonathan Edwards wrote about this second awakening in his *Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England*. He also delivered the Yale commencement address in 1741, wherein in opposition to the gainsayers, he strongly supported the ongoing revival. This address was later enlarged and printed as *The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God*, in which the author offers five marks by which we should "test the spirits" to see if a spiritual work is truly from the Holy Spirit or the spirit of error; the most eminent and conclusive mark being a spirit of love. It was also during this time that he preached a series of sermons, which were later published in book form under the title of *Treatise Concerning the Religious Affections*. This latter work, which "remains the most widely read and admired of his theological works" (285), is generally considered to be one of the author's two finest volumes (the other being *Freedom of the Will*). In it he gives us a penetrating analysis of the Christian life and the difference between genuine and spurious Christian experience. "True religion, in part," said Edwards, "consists in holy affections" (285).

In the spring of 1747, David Brainerd, the young missionary to the Indians, was dying of tuberculosis and came to live in the Edwards' home. Edwards had met him in 1743, and was impressed with the fact that Brainerd possessed an

indefatigable zeal for Christ, as Edwards himself did. There was an immediate bond established between the two evangelists. In the Edwards' home, Brainerd was cared for by the seventeen year old daughter of Edwards, Jerusha. (It is sometimes suggested that these two were engaged to be married, but there is no real evidence for this.) The young missionary died in the fall of that year at the age of twenty-nine, and Edwards preached his funeral service. The sermon was titled "True Saints When Absent From the Body are Present with the Lord." Jerusha died some five months later and was buried next to Brainerd.

At this time, Jonathan Edwards set aside some of his other intended projects to write *The Life of David Brainerd*, the substance of which is Edwards' editing of the missionary's diaries. Marsden agrees with those who see this magnificent work "as in part a spiritual autobiography," written as somewhat of a companion piece to his *Religious Affections*, portraying "all the traits of the model Christian." The missionary's whole life was lived under the rubric of "Thy will be done." Nonetheless, *The Life of David Brainerd* turned out to be Edwards' "most popular work and one of the most influential missionary accounts of all time" (331, 333).

An earlier incident, referred to as the "bad book" case or the "young folks' Bible" fiasco, was likely behind a good deal of the animosity against the Northampton pastor. In this occurrence, there were a number of young men (between the ages of twenty-one and twenty-nine) who had come across some midwifery books and were making erotic use of them to taunt the young ladies in town. As this fiasco continued, Edwards knew that this was a matter that must be dealt with, even in discipline if not repented of. But in his zeal to correct the sinful behavior of the young men, the pastor unintentionally raised questions about some young men who had not done anything wrong. Apparently some of the members of the congregation (perhaps vengefully) used this against their pastor later, and it eventuated in his dismissal. As Marsden explains: "Edwards himself later referred to it as that which gave so great offense, and by which I became so obnoxious" (301).

As noted, Solomon Stoddard had introduced the Lord's supper as a "converting ordinance," teaching that those who lived upright lives, even though they could not give claim to a genuine conversion, should be allowed to the sacrament. It may well lead to their conversion. Edwards had from his arrival at Northampton adopted his grandfather's view, but with reservations. Progressively, however, he became more and more convinced that the only persons who should come to the Lord's supper were those who could give a credible profession of faith. Yet he realized that if he proceeded in this direction he would likely lose his job. Nevertheless, his biblical beliefs and his adherence to the principle of *sola Scriptura* would not allow him to waiver from his convictions. And as Marsden points out, "that Edwards was willing to sail the foundering ship of his pastorate into the teeth of the storm, knowing well that he and his family were likely to go down, tells us much about his character … he was irremediably a man of principle." He "was willing to give up his own and his family's worldly security for the cause of eternal souls" (349, 370).

In 1749 he wrote *An Humble Inquiry into the Rules of the Word of God Concerning the Qualifications Requisite to a Complete Standing and Full Communion in the Visible Christian Church*, with the purpose of explaining his view. Being opposed to their pastor's position, the majority of the congregation was not even willing to read the treatise, and in 1750 the male members of the congregation voted ten to one to dismiss Jonathan Edwards. Perhaps the "vengeful" members of the congregation had accomplished their task. The trouble maker of the "bad book" case was gone. Later, there was a small bit of vindication for the Northampton Puritan. One of the members of the opposition, Edwards' cousin Joseph Hawley III, repented of his role in the affair, and published of his severe and uncharitable deeds.

In his farewell sermon the pastor reminded his congregation that he had faithfully served them for a period of twenty-three years. He addressed the various groups among his people, and appropriate words were spoken to each group. He told them that although they would be separated for now in this earthly state, they would all meet again at the last day, where every right would be rewarded and every wrong brought into judgment. At the time Jonathan was forty-six years old, and he and Sarah still had nine children living at home. He lamented that he was now "thrown upon the wide ocean of the world," knowing full well that "I am fitted for no other business but study" (362). Edwards, however, knew well that he was in the hands of God, and that in the end all would be to His glory.

After Edwards' dismissal, one of his cousins (Solomon Williams), who was a Stoddard devotee, published a response to Edwards' *Humble Inquiry*, and Edwards responded in kind with his *Misrepresentations Corrected and the Truth Vindicated*. Also, interestingly, during this time while the Northampton congregation was without a pastor, on various occasions Edwards was requested to do the work of "pulpit supply." He did so, with reluctance, but only a week at a time. During this time several offers for pastoral ministry were made for Edwards to consider. One of these was from Scotland; another was from some of the families in Northampton who had sided with their pastor in the controversy over the Lord's supper who were willing to start a new church in town. Edwards kindly refused.

Then in December of 1750, the church members in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, asked him to become their pastor. At the same time he was asked by the Society in London for

Propagating the Gospel in New England, to evangelize the Housatonic Indians at Stockbridge. Stockbridge was a frontier village on the outskirts of New England. The congregation consisted of some white settlers and a number of Indians. Edwards spent the winter in Stockbridge and accepted the call in the summer of 1751. His family moved to Stockbridge at this time.

There in the outskirts of New England, Edwards once again faithfully gave himself to the ministry. He pastored his congregation, preached each Lord's Day, often through an interpreter, and helped in the overall education of the Indians, especially in their study of the English language, which he thought was better suited to the propagation of the gospel. He also taught the Indians to sing "sacred music." "Music," he wrote, "especially sacred music, has a powerful efficacy to soften the heart into tenderness, to harmonize the affections, and to give the mind a relish for objects of a superior character" (390).

During this time problems arose. In 1754 Edwards once again became seriously ill for a period of seven months, but God spared his life. Further, there was much strife between Edwards and another family over Indian rights, Indian schools, parcels of land for use with the Indians, etc., which threatened to destroy the mission work. Some Indians even left over such matters. On top of this there was the concern over vulnerability of Indian attack. Through it all, however, Edwards stood on his biblically based grounds, and, by God's grace, won out in the end. Then too, while in this frontier town, Edwards completed a work he had begun earlier: *A History of the Work of Redemption*. He also wrote four of his major treatises: *Freedom of the Will, The Great Doctrine of Original Sin,* and the "two dissertations": *The End For Which God Created the World,* and *The Nature of True Virtue*.

The first of these voluminous works, *Freedom of the Will*, functions as a Calvinist apologetic against the onslaught of the "almost inconceivably pernicious" Arminian thought that mankind, since the Fall, is still able to please God through his choices. Such thinking denies the fact that the doctrine of man's state of moral depravity ("total depravity"), is essential to our understanding that man is unable to do anything pleasing to God. Edwards supports the two-fold doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God and (at the same time) the responsibility of mankind. *Original Sin* supports the Calvinistic teaching (contra modernist thinking) on the doctrine of original sin, i.e., that because of the Fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden, all humans are found guilty in Adam (imputed sin) their federal head, and inherit their corrupt nature from him. This is due to the "constituted" union that God has established between Adam and all of his posterity. Man is culpable, and God is not the author of sin.

The first of the two dissertations, *The End For Which God Created the World*, which is to glorify Himself," functions as "sort of a prolegomena to all of [Edwards'] work…it might be seen as the logical starting point for all of his thinking." The "highest end of creation is 'the glory of God.'" God does not create the world to remedy some lack in Himself. Rather, He glorifies Himself by communicating Himself to elect men that they may participate in the blessings of God throughout eternity. "The beams of glory come from God, and are something of God, and are refunded back again to their original. So that the whole is of God, and in God, and to God; and God is the beginning, middle, and end of this affair" (460, 462–463). *The Nature of True Virtue* is a corollary to the first "dissertation." "Nothing is of the nature of true virtue in which God is not the first and the last." Further, true virtue is only possible "if one's heart is united to God, who is love and beauty and the source of all love and beauty" (467–468). As Marsden explains: "Characteristically, Edwards was insisting that the only important question in life is whether one is united to God or in rebellion against God." If it is the former, "then one will learn to love all that God loves—which includes benevolence and justice toward others. God's happiness will be our happiness" (470).

In 1757, Aaron Burr, Edwards' son-in-law and president of Princeton College, died. Edwards was chosen to succeed Burr. He was reluctant to accept the position, believing that he could be of better service in Christ's kingdom by remaining in Stockbridge, pastoring the flock, and completing some major writing projects which he had in mind. As to the latter, Marsden comments "that his heart was most often in his work as a writer … the center of Edwards' life was his devotion to God expressed with pen and ink" (432). Nevertheless, Edwards agreed to seek counsel on the matter, and when the council concluded that he should accept the call to Princeton, Edwards did so, even with tears. He moved to Princeton, New Jersey, in January of 1758, intending to bring his family there in the spring of the following year. Little did he know that it would be the final year of his earthly life.

Marsden tells us that Edwards' planned, yet never completed "unfinished masterworks" of which he wrote about to the board, were "A History of the Work of Redemption" (which would be a substantial expansion of his earlier work by the same name) and "The Harmony of the Old and New Testaments." The "Harmony" was to consist of three parts: a compilation of the prophecies of the Messiah and their fulfillment; a study of "the types of the Messiah"; and "the harmony of the Old and New Testament, as to doctrine and practice" (473–475).

The "History," on the other hand, was to be "a body of divinity in an entire new method, being thrown into the form of an history, considering the affair of Christian theology, as the whole of it, in each part, stands in reference to the great

work of redemption by Jesus Christ; which I suppose is to be the grand design of all God's designs, and the *summum* and *ultimum* of all the divine operations and decrees; particularly considering all parts in the grand scheme in their historical order" (482). Edwards intent, it seems, was to write a systematic theology, what he called "A Rational Account of the Main Doctrines of the Christian Religion," and work it into an historical form. This would have been a monumental work indeed.

Marsden begins the final chapter of *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* ("The Transitory and the Enduring") with the following words: "Edwards spent the whole of his life preparing to die" (490). This is what his whole life was about. He knew that life was transitory, but he was ready to die. He knew Christ savingly, and he practiced what he preached: *sola gratia, sola fide, sola Scriptura,* and *solus Christus*. Jonathan Edwards, who, as we have seen, had experienced health problems throughout his life, championed scientific exploration. Thus, he favored the medical practice of inoculation. There were risks involved, but such practice might prevent an epidemic. One month after assuming the presidency of the school, Jonathan Edwards was inoculated for smallpox. The results were fatal. The pustules in his throat were swollen to the point where he was not able to take the medicine which would fight the fever. Jonathan Edwards died on March 22, 1758. On his death bed he called his daughter Lucy, who was attending her father, and said to her: "Dear Lucy, it seems to me to be the will of God that I must shortly leave you; therefore give my kindest love to my dear wife, and tell her, that the uncommon union, which has so long subsisted between us, has been of such a nature, as I trust is spiritual, and therefore will continue forever: and I hope she will be supported under so great a trial, and submit cheerfully to the will of God. And as to my children, you are now like to be left fatherless, which I hope will be an inducement to you all to seek a Father, who will never fail you" (494). Sarah, with whom Jonathan shared this "uncommon union," died some six months after her husband, on October 2, 1758. She was forty-eight years old.

Jonathan Edwards the man is dead. His life was transitory. But his legacy is enduring. He continues to live on for us in his numerous writings. In these volumes one can study the Puritan for himself. There one will come into contact with a man who was equally devoted to the truth as set forth for us in the Word of God, and to the God who set forth this truth for us in His Word. One may begin by reading about the life and thought of this great Puritan divine in George Marsden's "definitive" life of Jonathan Edwards. Pick up and read; it is worth the effort to do so. In the words of Samuel Storms, "Marsden is unparalleled among Edwardsean biographers."[10] ■

Review: Lewis Bevans Schenck, *The Presbyterian Doctrine of Children in the Covenant* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R 2003). Large Paperback, xx + 188 pages. $15.99. Reviewed by Rev. Dr. Rowland S. Ward, minister of Knox Presbyterian Church, Melbourne, Australia.

The republication of this historical study of the significance of infant baptism in the Presbyterian Church should be welcomed by conservative Presbyterians even if they find cause to disagree with some of the author's arguments, and are less than satisfied by aspects of his historical reconstruction and arrangement. The modern introduction by Frank A. James III enhances the volume, and there is a useful bibliography and an index.

Dr Lewis Bevans Schenck (1898–1985) was a North Carolina man descended from German stock and brought up in an Episcopal home. He joined the Presbyterian Church as a young man, trained for the ministry at Union Seminary, Virginia, was ordained in 1924 and served in West Virginia as an assistant pastor. Realising his call to teach rather than pastor, he earned a Th.M. from Princeton in 1926, and taught at Davidson College, North Carolina 1927–66. The book now reviewed was first published in 1940 as a revised form of his 1938 Yale doctoral dissertation.

Schenck held that the place of children in the Presbyterian Church had become confused through the impact of revivalism so that the key role of the nurture of the church and family was neglected because of the excessive emphasis on a conscious conversion experience. I would imagine that Dr Schenck may have been influenced by neo-orthodoxy in his overall teaching career, but his book draws almost exclusively on orthodox Presbyterian theologians to illustrate its thesis, and should be judged on its merits.

The first chapter is foundational (3–52), for it seeks to answer the question, 'What is the historic doctrine of the Presbyterian Church concerning children in the covenant?' Schenck shows that Calvin taught that (1) the Abrahamic promise—'I will be God to you and to your seed after you'—was a spiritual covenant including the promise of eternal life; (2) baptism for both adults and children had the significance of a seal of purification and forgiveness of sins as well as a seal of 'regeneration,' by which term Calvin meant not only the inception of new life but its outworking in sanctification throughout life; (3) children are not baptised to make them children of the covenant but because they are already in covenant according to God's promise; (4) as Jesus embraced the little children brought to him, we would need a good reason to refuse to admit children of believers to baptism, since baptism

10. Samuel Storms, "Books released in conjunction with the 300th Anniversary of the birth of Jonathan Edwards," http://www.enjoyinggodministries.com/article.asp?id=357.

is a symbol of our communion and association with Christ; (5) admission to church membership is always on the basis of a credible profession of faith on the part of older persons but their children also have the right of church membership by virtue of God's promise; both classes are presumptively Christians in the judgment of charity, and should be treated accordingly so as to grow and develop in Christian character; (6) baptism is not a mere empty sign, nor does it automatically convey grace; rather, it confirms and seals what is already true in the promise of God; (7) it is certain some infants are saved and therefore such infants must have been regenerated, and our inability to observe or understand this is no argument against it; indeed, the promise of God assures us that covenant children dying in infancy are saved; (8) against those who say only those able to profess repentance and faith should be admitted to the church, the response must be that only those who are presumptively Christ's children should be admitted, and this includes the children of believers, since the promise of God is a true pledge of adoption to them; further, the entirety of what is represented in baptism need not be present at the time the sign is administered to children, anymore than was the case with circumcision.

Schenck then more briefly reviews the teaching of Zwingli, Bullinger, Knox and the European Reformed Confessions, concluding with the Westminster Standards, and finds them in agreement with Calvin. One could note the Westminster Directory: 'That the promise is made to believers and their seed; and that the seed and posterity of the faithful, born within the Church, have, by their birth, interest in the covenant.' Again, '… they are Christians, and federally holy before baptism, and therefore are they baptised.'

In this lengthy first chapter there are a few matters one would express differently. For example, Schenck's comments on Cocceius are really out of sequence (33–34). Also, in the way common in earlier scholarship, they overstate the role of the German/Dutch theologian in formulating traditional covenant theology. Such was quite mature before Cocceius wrote his first work in 1648, and Schenck unconsciously concedes this in his references to the Puritans on page 43. In reviewing the Westminster Directory for Public Worship no notice is taken of the possible significance of the omission of specified questions for parents presenting their children for baptism from the final text. But these points do not affect Schenck's basic outline, which, to my mind, fairly represents the historic Reformed doctrine. However, in view of the points developed in Schenck's next chapter some elaboration of the early Reformed position would have been appropriate.

In his second chapter (53–79), Schenck considers the development of revivalism. His essential argument is that modifications of the traditional doctrine encouraged formalism and in reaction produced a stress on conscious crisis conversion as the only true evidence of salvation, an experience also demanded of children.

Strikingly enough, Schenck begins with Samuel Rutherford (1600–61) who advocated baptism of the children of all who would seriously attend on the preaching of the word irrespective of whether they professed saving faith.[1] One has some question as to the appropriateness of the citation of Rutherford in this connection. (1) As one of the Scottish Commissioners at the Westminster Assembly, it should hardly be supposed without adducing argument that Rutherford varied from the Westminster Standards with whose formulation he had had so much to do. (2) Schenck does not seem to have read Rutherford except through his secondary source, John Macpherson's fine work, *The Doctrine of the Church in Scottish Theology* (Edinburgh, 1903). Schenck even overlooks Macpherson's references to many other writers (MacPherson, 86), whom Boston sought to confute, who held similar views to Rutherford, nor does he consider that assertion of a principle, as in Calvin and the Confessions, need not exclude some modifications found needful in the complexity of practical application. For example, in 1570, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland decided that children of excommunicated persons might be baptised if presented by a faithful member of the church.[2] As for other writers, William Bucan (d. 1605) of Lausanne argued for the baptism of the infants of the faithful and those born of baptised parents, even those who are unfaithful, since the sins of the fathers should not be visited upon the children and their seed is contained in the covenant promise. He adds, 'Neither is the piety of the next parents to be considered so much as the piety of the church in which they are born, and which is, as it were, their mother; as likewise their ancestors who lived godly.' He cites Romans 11:16, 'if the root be holy,' that is, the first parents, 'so are the branches,' and supports the baptism of the children of the excommunicated and also of the children of Papists, noting that the children of unbelieving Jews were still circumcised.[3] So Rutherford was not quite the innovator Schenck suggests.

When we further consider the careful discrimination of the old Reformed in their insistence that the distinction between the visible and invisible church must be consistently maintained, and thus only visible profession is essential for the one and invisible grace for the other, we can understand better where Rutherford and others are coming from. However, this is not to deny that there was formalism in the church of

1. See Samuel Rutherford, *A Peaceable and Temperate Plea for Paul's Presbyterie in Scotland* (London 1642) 164ff.

2. William McMillan, *The Worship of the Scottish Reformed Church 1560–1638* (London: James Clarke, 1931) 251.

3. Guillaume Bucanus, *Institutiones Theologicae* [Bremen 1605] translated by Robert Hill as *Institutions of Christian Religion* (London 1606) 711–714.

the early 18th century, but the reason I think is more related to the greater laxity in practical oversight when compared to Rutherford's day, although this is not to say that Rutherford's view, shared by people like Richard Baxter, is beyond criticism. MacPherson suggests (MacPherson, 90) that Rutherford's concern was for the salvation of sinners, that many were called to the privilege of hearing, and should be encouraged so that they might become of the elect. On the other hand, in the early 18th century Thomas Boston opposed Rutherford's position, without naming him, out of the same concern for the salvation of sinners. He saw in the formalism and false peace of his day a hindrance to salvation. It's probably fair to say that Rutherford at least tested the boundaries of Westminster doctrine in some respects, whereas Boston made some excellent points but ran the risk of advocating a visible profession that required a man to be a believer rather than a credible professor. Schenck seems to think Boston was a reversion to the original doctrine (54), and that people like Bowles and Baxter agreed with him. Here he misreads MacPherson who says the very opposite (86). In the sense that looking for marks of grace to qualify for church membership was characteristic of revivalism, we might look more to Boston for a precursor.

Schenck is on somewhat better ground in his references to the Half-Way Covenant in New England, although even here he does not trace the relevant matter of the interest in felt experience to its New England origins. The story is well known. In 1662 some Massachusetts Puritans agreed to a half-way membership status for those who had been baptised as infants but were not able to testify to a conversion experience. Such could still have their children baptised if they acknowledged God's claims on their lives and accepted the church's discipline despite their unwillingness to profess faith in Christ. A further step was taken in 1707 by Solomon Stoddart. He treated the Lord's Supper as a converting ordinance and allowed the unconverted to partake. Much coldness and formality became characteristic of the churches of New England leading to eventual reaction.

My take on revivalism is to indeed recognise the impact of formalism, which was widespread, to note that the earnestness of the mid 17th century was missing in the early 18th century, and that to some degree the wrong use of the visible/invisible church distinction was to blame. But the inevitable reaction did not revert to the Westminster and early Calvinist doctrine, but to an emphasis on religious experience. Why so? In part it can be seen as a pendulum swing, somewhat like the rise of Pentecostalism in the face of 20th century liberalism. But it also can be seen as taking up the separatist idea of the church as comprised of a regenerate membership. The early Puritans had not required such a test of conversion. Edmund S. Morgan argues that this practice originated in Massachusetts, spread to Plymouth,[4] New Haven and Connecticut and back to England. This is surely relevant in assessing the historical development, but Schenck does not refer to it.

In the 1730s and 1740s the first Great Awakening found fertile soil in the formal worship in many churches and among the many unchurched on the frontier. The emphasis on experience, and the revivalistic emphasis fostered at the Tennents' Log College, impacted on Presbyterians. The reaction to formalism produced a stress on conscious, crisis conversion as the only true evidence of salvation, an experience also demanded of children. Thus the only way to God was popularly seen as involving terror and misery arising from conviction of sin preparatory to the experience of God's love and peace. The 1741–58 Old Side/New Side division of Presbyterians resulted. After reunion there was a period of indifference until the Great Revival of 1800, which saw a renewed and rather lasting emphasis on revivalism. Schenck (78) quotes Dr Samuel Miller writing in 1832: 'I confess I deeply regret that the use of camp meetings should be resumed in our body. To say nothing of the irregularities and abuses … they have always appeared to me adapted to make religion more an affair of display, of impulse, of noise, and of animal sympathy, than of the understanding, the conscience, and the heart….'

Schenck begins his 3rd chapter—The Threat of Revivalism (80–103)—by writing: 'The disproportionate reliance upon revivals as the only hope of the church and the proclamation of the Gospel from the pulpit as almost the only means of conversion, amounted to a practical subversion of Presbyterian doctrine, an overshadowing of God's covenant promise.' He traces the neglect of infant baptism in Presbyterian churches in the 19th century, citing Charles Hodge's survey (84). This showed that in 1807 there was one child baptised for every five members but a steady decline had reduced the ratio to one for every twenty members in 1855. He cites the pleas of leaders such as Ashbel Green, Samuel Miller and J.W. Alexander, who sought proper care for baptised members, rather than that they be left without care as if they were not members of the church and had no obligations by virtue of God's covenant.

Confusion in American Presbyterian thought is illustrated by a number of examples. Some took up essentially the notion involved in the half-way covenant. They distinguished two aspects to the covenant, one merely outward, ecclesiastical and legal, and the other spiritual, in a rather dualistic fashion so that the external covenant was not seen as 'interpenetrated by the internal covenant,' to quote Louis Berkhof. Schenck asserts (86) that Dr Stuart Robinson even took the position that the Abrahamic covenant was actually not the covenant of grace at all, and T.E. Peck likewise. Thornwell and Dabney taught

4. Edmund S. Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (New York: New York University Press, 1963).

that baptism made a child a child of the covenant, meaning an ecclesiastical covenant by which the child had the right to instruction. Until they showed a new heart they were to be treated as unregenerate baptised children. The seal of God's covenant was only a symbol until they had faith.

The differences came to a head in the debate on revision of the Book of Discipline at the General Assembly of 1859. Some, such as Charles Hodge, wished to retain the wording that said all baptised persons 'are members of the church, are subject to government and discipline' and when adult 'are bound to perform all the duties of church members.' Others, such as Thornwell, wanted to state that all baptised persons are under the church's 'government and training' and to add that only those, however, who have made a profession of faith in Christ are proper subjects of judicial prosecution.' With the Civil War, the church was divided. In 1863 the Northern Church adopted without dissent the disputed part as it was in the original book, while in 1879 the Southern Church adopted without controversy Thornwell's draft. Thus a change had occurred from the historic Reformed doctrine, a change that in many respects adopted Baptist ground so far as the baptism of infants was concerned. Interestingly, in 1934 the Northern Church made a modification in line with the South without exciting any controversy, but Schenck does not mention this.

The Defence of the Doctrine forms the subject of the fourth chapter (104–147). This does not seem entirely aptly named as the first part is spent demonstrating that the rise of the New England Divinity (which divided the church 1838–1869) impacted on the doctrine of redemption and regeneration, and therefore on the doctrine of baptism, because of its different doctrine of original sin. But as it proceeds we do come to read a positive exposition of the Reformed doctrine of infant baptism as held by the Old School. Schenck writes, 'The theological system of Princeton Seminary was essentially that of John Calvin, received through the medium of Francisco Turretin and the Westminster Standards' (132). He concludes that, over against the crisis conversion idea of revivalism, which tended to regard infants as unconverted pagans, Christian nurture was 'the appointed, the natural, the normal, and the ordinary means by which the children of believers were made truly the children of God' not, of course apart from 'the regenerative act and effectual cooperation of the Holy Spirit' (145).

A short chapter, The Resultant Confusion, completes Schenck's book (148–158), although it does not take the history beyond the 19th century. This would have been the ideal point at which to summarise his conclusions and lay out a charter for reform. As this is not done effectively, the ending is a bit limp. Having said this, don't think this book is not of real worth. It deals with an issue of perennial importance and its concern to recover the emphasis on the promise of God sealed in baptism, and the corresponding obligations of the baptised, are issues of great practical significance.

Given the controversy over Abraham Kuyper's presumptive regeneration position, one might well be rather discriminating in one's language when speaking of the basis of Christian baptism. It seems better to emphasise the promise of God in his covenant as the warrant to baptise rather than presumed regeneration. Of course in the West today we do not face the high infant mortality of an earlier age. But an earlier age did place their confidence in family and Christian nurture in dependence on God's Spirit, not in spurts of evangelical fads and fashions or spasmodic revival efforts. The promise of God gave incentive, and encouragement. In our individualistic age we need to recover the older Reformed doctrine. If Schenck's work helps to stimulate a fresh treatment of the theme, brought up to date and dealing with some more recent aberrations, or if it otherwise stimulates a return to a more Biblical position, it will be well worthwhile. ▪

Review: Guy Prentiss Waters, *Justification and the New Perspectives on Paul: A Review and Response* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R , 2004). Paperback. 273 pages. $16.99. Reviewed by Dr. J. V. Fesko, Pastor of Geneva Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Marietta, Georgia, and adjunct professor of theology at Reformed Theological Seminary—Atlanta.

In the field of New Testament (NT) studies the new perspective on Paul (NPP) has occupied scholars for approximately the last thirty years. Unlike theological movements of the past, which were once confined to the academy and took generations to trickle into the pew, the NPP has moved through the church with lightening speed as information has disseminated through the Internet. Previously, the Reformed community has been engaged in internecine controversies such as the worship wars, and the days of creation, and has not, until quite recently, noticed the encroaching influence of the NPP. Though a few Reformed scholars, such as Moisés Silva, formerly a professor of NT at Westminster Theological Seminary, and his colleague, Richard B. Gaffin Jr., professor of biblical and systematic theology, have engaged scholars associated with the NPP, there has not been a monograph from the Reformed perspective devoted to the subject, until now.[1]

Guy Prentiss Waters, a professor of biblical studies at Belhaven College, Jackson, Miss., has offered the first book-length engagement of the NPP from a distinctively Reformed confessional perspective. What makes Waters well qualified to

1. See Moisés Silva, "The Law and Christianity: Dunn's New Synthesis," *Westminster Theological Journal* 53 (1991) 339–353; and Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., "Paul the Theologian," *Westminster Theological Journal* 62 (2000) 121–141.

write such a book is that he studied at Duke University under Richard B. Hays and E. P. Sanders, two scholars who share NPP concerns. Waters divides his book into nine chapters and covers: the antecedent history leading to the development of the NPP, leading scholars who share NPP concerns, such as Sanders, James D. G. Dunn, and N. T. Wright, a critique of the NPP, and the significance of the NPP for the Reformed community. The book closes with an annotated bibliography that is worth the price of the book alone.

The initial chapters covering the antecedent history are quite helpful for one coming to the subject anew. Few in the Reformed community are intimately familiar with the authors with which Waters interacts, F. C. Baur, Albert Schweitzer, or Ernst Käsemann (3–22). In surveying the NPP antecedent history, Waters is able to show how the field of NT studies became ripe for the work of Sanders, who called for a reevaluation of the common portrait of Judaism found in 20th century NT studies (35–90). It was Sanders' watershed work that set the stage for the work of two of the most prolific authors with NPP concerns, James Dunn (96–117) and N. T. Wright (119–49). It is critical for anyone who wants to understand the NPP to see how it developed. Many do not realize that NPP authors such as Wright primarily engage the likes of Rudlolf Bultmann, whom Wright understands to represent a common "Lutheran" understanding of Paul.[2] In this area, then, Waters excels in his treatment and critique.

In Waters' critique of the NPP (151–90) he identifies key weaknesses such as Wright's questionable proposition that first century Jews saw themselves being in exile because they lived under Roman occupation in the promised land. Waters also demonstrates the problems with using the literature of second temple Judaism to interpret the NT making the important point that if one is to understand truly the NT, at least according to scholars with NPP concerns, then one would have to become an expert in the literature of inter-testamental Judaism (155–56). He also identifies the key presupposition of many scholars with NPP concerns, who do not distinguish between the writings of the OT and second temple Judaism—in other words, they fail to recognize the inspired nature of the Scriptures (156–57). What is especially helpful, however, is that Waters engages the exegesis of those with NPP concerns covering texts such as Romans 11:5–6 (159), 3:20 (159–61), 4:4–5 (161–62), and 9:30–32a (162–64), to name just a few. On the whole, Waters' exegetical work is first-rate. A recent review of Waters' book, however, has been critical of his work on some of these very points.

Recently James Meek has argued that there are weaknesses in Waters' book, including his claims that: Wright is not unconcerned with linear, logical thinking; the NPP has not imposed a priesthood of scholars, a new magisterium for the church; Wright's present and future justification is like that of Herman Ridderbos, Geerhardus Vos, and George Eldon Ladd; and Waters' tone is often harsh and disparaging.[3] While I cannot engage at length each of these supposed weaknesses, I can nonetheless make a few observations.

First, Waters writes that in Wright's works there is "an inherent bias against doctrinal formulation and linear, logical reasoning, a predisposition against conceiving of the relationship of God and man in *vertical* terms" (121). Meek, reacting against this statement, argues that "one only has to read Wright, however, to know that he consistently employs 'linear, logical reasoning' in his writing, as well as 'doctrinal formulation' (which Waters catalogs and with which he disagrees). Waters does not explain how story undermines a 'vertical' dimension in our relationship to God" (Meek, 654). One must wonder whether Meek has understood Waters' criticism of Wright. Waters' statement comes from his section on "Theology (Proper) in N. T. Wright." Theology (Proper) deals with, among several other things, one's understanding of Scripture and revelation. That Wright understands the NT as a historical phenomenon is uncontested. That he understands the NT as divine revelation, inspired, inerrant, and infallible, is something that is totally absent from Wright's prolegomena where he lays out his theological presuppositions, what we can call the *vertical* element.[4] In this regard, Wright is quite hostile to the concept of systematic theology and instead employs narrative theology. One can read thousands of pages of material and never once find anything resembling, for example, an *ordo salutis*, which is a common way to express the believer's relationship to God.

Second, is Waters correct to argue that the NPP has erected a new academic magisterium? Meek believes, no. Meek argues, "Many readers of this *Journal*, however, would affirm the importance of historical and other knowledge for (historical-grammatical) biblical interpretation without believing that they thereby establish a scholarly tyranny" (Meek, 654). Meek, however, seems to forget two things: (1) the intention of the book; and (2) the role that those with NPP concerns often give the literature of second temple Judaism. From the perspective of one in the pew, the audience for whom Waters' writes, a fact acknowledged by Meek himself (653), the claim that one cannot understand the NT apart from the literature of the second temple does, in effect, establish a new magisterium. Tell a person in the pew or an elder that he must first read the apocrypha, Josephus, rabbinic writings, but only those prior to

2. See e.g., N. T. Wright, "On Becoming the Righteousness of God: 2 Cor 5.21," in *Pauline Theology*, vol. 2, *1 and 2 Corinthians* (Atlanta: SBL, 2002) 203 n6.

3. James A. Meek, "*Justification and the New Perspectives on Paul*: A Review and Response," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48/3 (2005) 654–655.

4. See N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) 29–144.

70 AD, and the Dead Sea Scrolls to have a proper understanding of Paul, and then say there is not a new barrier between the believer and his Bible. Moreover, Wright has claimed that "we cannot escape the constant task, important in the study of second-temple Judaism as much as anywhere else, of reconstructing the worldview which informed and underlay not only this or that particular writing but the society as a whole" in order to understand the NT (*People of God*, 119). In the light of this statement, it certainly does not appear that the Bible is self-interpreting as we have historically understood it (WCF 1.7, 9). For example, a person in the pew reads that a person "is justified apart from the works of the law" (Rom 3.28). He then goes to Ephesians and reads, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works" (2.8–9). It seems simple, one's moral effort is excluded in his justification, as the church has historically understood these statements for nearly two millennia. But in actuality, because the person in the pew has not read Wright and Dunn, he does not know that "justification" is the Jewish desire to be vindicated before their Roman overlords and Jewish sectarian groups like the Essenes and Zealots, that "works of the law" are not one's moral effort but only circumcision, Sabbath, and dietary food laws, and that we cannot necessarily appeal to Ephesians 2:8–9 to help us understand Romans 3:28 because Paul may not have written Ephesians (*People of God*, 147–214).[5] One wonders whether Meek has carefully thought through such a scenario before he dismissed Waters' argument.

Third, Meek observes that Waters' is critical of Wright's "two-staged" understanding of justification (655; cf. *Perspectives on Paul*, 131, 33), and then claims that Vos, Ridderbos, and Ladd have similar views. Let us begin with Ladd. Seeing that Waters has written for the confessional Reformed community, again, a fact that Meek recognizes, then can one appeal to Ladd as a confessional Reformed theologian? Yes, Ladd is evangelical, but something that many from within the Reformed community forget, is that Reformed theology is evangelical, but not all evangelical theology is Reformed. If one appeals to broader evangelicalism for the legitimacy of a belief, then one has to contend with Arminianism or Open Theism, for example, theological views well outside the bounds of Reformed confessional theology. Furthermore, to argue that Vos and Ridderbos have similar views is simply irresponsible. Wright is quite clear that the ground of one's present justification is faith and that final justification is based upon the believer's Spirit-produced works.[6] This construction is completely at odds with those of Ridderbos and Vos. Riddberbos is very careful to say that faith and works are synecdochical: "*Faith is involved in justification by the grace of God and by nothing else*, even so work emanates from this same faith; as faith cannot remain empty and work-less, *but becomes known as faith precisely in works*."[7] Here Ridderbos says that faith is involved in justification, and nothing else, which means that he preserves the ground of justification, the obedience of Christ, both in the present, and however justification may be related to the final judgment. Likewise, Vos states throughout his writings that our justification is based upon Christ's merit, his active and passive obedience, and comes through faith alone.[8] To say that Vos and Ridderbos cast justification with careful attention to eschatology, which supposedly makes their views similar to Wright's, means that one must ignore all of the details, which is simply sloppy scholarship.

Fourth, Meek claims that Waters "is often harsh and disparaging" (Meek, 655). Yet, he only cites one example. To substantiate this claim, other references should have been provided. The one example that Meek cites is the following statement: "Wright has been found attractive to Reformed men because of the latter's ignorance of historical and systematic theology … since charity forbids us from attributing this failure to malicious duplicity" (Waters, 204). I must admit that I find such a statement difficult to label as harsh or disparaging. Waters specifically does not attribute malicious motives to those who favorably cite Wright. Moreover, this is not a blanket statement against all Reformed theologians who positively cite Wright but from within the context, one can easily see that it is those associated with the Federal Vision (FV) that are in view. To say that someone is ignorant, simply means that they are without knowledge, or that they are unaware or uninformed. To say that Wright's and the historic Reformed, even Protestant, understandings of justification are compatible does seem to point in the direction of ignorance. Can one who is knowledgeable of Reformed historical and systematic theology truly argue this case without having to redefine radically many of the terms and concepts of Reformed theology? As Alister McGrath has noted, one very knowledgeable with historical and systematic theology, "If Sanders or Wright is correct, Martin Luther is wrong."[9] So,

5. See James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 13 n39; idem, "The New Perspective on Paul," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library* 65 (1983) 95–122. Wright does affirm the Pauline authorship of Ephesians (N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection and the Son of God* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003] 236).

6. See N. T. Wright, *Romans*, NIB, vol. 10 (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002) 580.

7. Hermann Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, trans. John Richard de Witt (1975; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 180, emphasis added.

8. See Danny E. Olinger, ed., *A Geerhardus Vos Anthology: Biblical and Theological Insights Alphabetically Arranged* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R, 2005) 163–165.

9. Alister E. McGrath, "Reality, Symbol and History: Theological Reflections on N. T. Wright's Portrayal of Jesus," in *Jesus and the Restoration of Israel: A Critical Assessment of N. T. Wright's Jesus*

it appears that these criticisms, upon further investigation, are lacking. Waters' analysis, contrary to these criticisms, is accurate. This does not mean, however, that there is nothing that one might critique. It is in Waters' final chapter where some readers will likely cry foul.

Waters' final chapter deals with the significance of the NPP for the confessional Reformed community. In this chapter Waters tours various doctrines such as justification, regeneration, assurance of salvation, and baptism (191–98), which, again, is valuable. Where some will take issue, however, is when Waters critiques the Auburn Avenue Pastor's Conference, or FV, as well as the theological formulations of former Westminster Theological Seminary professor Norman Shepherd. To be sure, Waters is careful to caveat that those associated with the FV do not arise out of the same antecedent history as the NPP. He points out, nonetheless, that those associated with the NPP and the FV share parallel affinities: an aversion to systematic theology, the need for inherent righteousness for justification, and their understanding(s) of baptism. Some will argue that it is out of place for Waters to include a section on the FV and Norman Shepherd in a book devoted to the NPP. Such an objection has, perhaps, some validity at first glance. Upon closer examination, however, there are legitimate reasons to include a critique of those associated with the FV.

When one considers that several of the authors associated with the FV have favorably cited N. T. Wright, even embracing some of Wright's definitions and categories, then it is fair to place them under the microscope for scrutiny and critique.[10] This portion of Waters' book is therefore helpful, identifying where and how the NPP has found an entry point to the Reformed community. So, while it is legitimate to critique the FV in this respect, Waters could have improved his critique by citing specific examples where those associated with the FV favorably cite Wright. Where some of Waters' critique is possibly questionable, however, is in critiquing the formulations of Norman Shepherd. While parallels certainly exist between the theology of Shepherd and the NPP, there is no documented paper trail, to my knowledge, that shows an explicit connection between the NPP and Shepherd. One wonders if the closing pages of a book devoted to the NPP is the place, therefore, for such a critique. Though, perhaps Waters legitimately includes Shepherd in his critique given the title of his book, *Justification and the New Perspectives* [note the plural] *on Paul*. In other words, the title casts a broad umbrella under which Waters could engage any perspective of recent origin, whether the views of Sanders, Dunn, or Wright, those associated with the FV, or even Norman Shepherd.

Guy Waters has done the Reformed community a great service in engaging the NPP. Waters swiftly navigates through the historical, exegetical, and theological terrain with skill and clarity. Though N. T. Wright publicly repudiated Waters' treatment of his work at the 2005 Auburn Avenue Pastor's Conference, one would do well to recall Karl Barth's similar rejection of Cornelius Van Til's critique of his thought. The confessional Reformed community would undoubtedly side with Van Til. Scholars, ministers, elders, and astute laymen would do well to study Waters' monograph and the issues set forth therein. Waters' book, therefore, is highly recommended.

Reply to Dr. John V. Fesko, Review of *Justification and the New Perspectives on Paul.* By Guy Prentiss Waters.

I wish to extend my thanks to the editor of the *Confessional Presbyterian,* Mr. Coldwell. He has kindly invited me to respond to Dr. Fesko's review of *Justification and the New Perspectives on Paul,* and to James A. Meek's recent review of *J&NPP* in the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society.* I am also grateful to Dr. Fesko for his willingness to participate in this exchange. I present this reply in the hopes that it will facilitate a continuing dialogue within Presbyterian and Reformed circles. May God be pleased to grant that this conversation result in its participants "being of the same mind" (Phil. 2:2) on these important matters.

Students of the New Perspective(s) on Paul (NPP) are likely aware of the zeal with which some of its Reformed sympathizers have been promoting the idea that the NPP is compatible with our theological and confessional commitments. For this reason, it has been encouraging to see a growing number of Reformed ministers and teachers reaffirming our common confessional commitment to the doctrines of grace in the face of the challenges that the NPP pose to them. I am grateful that we may count Fesko and the *Confessional Presbyterian* among this number.

Fesko's review manifests a great deal of sympathy for the arguments and conclusions presented in *Justification and the New Perspectives on Paul* (*J&NPP*). His assessment of the work seems to me to be, on the whole, positive. Towards the end of his review, Fesko poses two questions that merit comment and reflection. Is it appropriate to include in *J&NPP* a critique of aspects of the theology of Norman Shepherd? Does the inclusion of this critique reflect the author's persuasion that Shepherd may rightly be counted a proponent of the NPP?

and the Victory of God, ed. Carey C. Newman (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity, 1999) 169.

10. See, e.g., Rich Lusk, "A Response to 'The Biblical Plan of Salvation,'" in *The Auburn Avenue Theology: Pros & Cons*, ed. E Calvin Beisner (Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.: Knox Theological Seminary, 2004) 135–36; Ralph Smith, *Eternal Covenant* (Moscow, Idaho: Canon, 2003) 64, nn. 6–7; Peter J. Leithart, *Against Christianity* (Moscow, Idaho: Canon, 2003) 29 n11; p. 52, n. 11; Douglas Wilson, *'Reformed' Is Not Enough: Rediscovering the Objectivity of the Covenant* (Moscow, Idaho: Canon, 2002) 204.

First, let us take up the second question. Does the inclusion of this critique reflect the author's persuasion that Shepherd may rightly be counted a proponent of the NPP? I think that it would be an injustice to Norman Shepherd to claim that he is a proponent of the NPP. I stated in *J&NPP* that I did not include the critique of Shepherd because I thought that there was an organic connection between the NPP and Shepherd's theology. In *J&NPP,* I claimed that Shepherd had not "arrived at [his] conclusions or support[ed his] conclusions through a concerted study of the NPP" (204). I also wrote that Shepherd would not be "necessarily supportive of all aspects of NPP scholarship" (205). I clarified this latter point in a footnote:

> These comments are all the more important in view of a not infrequent tendency within the church to apply the label "New Perspective" to the teachings of Norman Shepherd and the theology of the Federal Vision. While Shepherd and the Federal Vision share some of the concerns expressed by the NPP, it is inaccurate to categorize them as a single movement (261n.15).

In summary, it is inaccurate to identify Professor Shepherd as a NPP proponent. The label "New Perspective(s) on Paul" properly belongs to such scholars as E. P. Sanders, James D. G. Dunn, N. T. Wright and their immediate advocates and sympathizers.

Let us now take up the first question. Is it appropriate to include a critique of aspects of the theology of Norman Shepherd in a book analyzing the New Perspective(s) on Paul? The answer is that, in certain conservative Reformed circles, the NPP, the theology of Norman Shepherd, and what has been termed the Federal Vision, have come to share a common theological life. Some individuals find "certain actual affinities" among these three distinct theological entities (205). To confirm this judgment, one need only peruse selected "weblogs" of individuals associated with the conservative Presbyterian and Reformed church. It was my intention in the closing chapter of *J&NPP* to observe that "certain issues that we have raised in our study of the NPP find parallels in the writings of the above-mentioned individuals [i.e. Norman Shepherd and the session of the AAPC]," and that "individuals who have interest in NPP, e.g., might and do (rightly) take interest in Shepherd and the AAPC theology because of certain actual affinities between them (and vice versa)" (205). *J&NPP* argued that there were three such areas of affinity: the "'allergy' to the vertical issues pertaining to God and the individual soul … [and] a form of dichotomization of heart and history;" "functional adherence … to a justifying inherent righteousness;" and the doctrine of baptism (205, 209, 211). Since the purpose of this chapter was to explore the impact that the NPP is having in the Reformed churches, it seemed fitting to explore why advocates of Shepherd's theology and of the Federal Vision might have interest in the NPP.

I agree with Fesko that *J&NPP* would have benefited from extensive documentation of FV proponents' sympathy with the NPP. He has helpfully provided such references in his review. The precise nature and documentation of the tangled relationship that the NPP, the theology of Norman Shepherd, and the Federal Vision have come to assume in our churches is a matter that my forthcoming book on the Federal Vision will pursue in some detail (*The Federal Vision and Covenant Theology* [Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R, forthcoming 2006]). In this respect, I am hopeful that it will both complement and continue the effort of the last chapter of *J&NPP.*

Fesko included in his review a helpful analysis of James A. Meek's recent review of *J&NPP* in the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society.* It would therefore be appropriate to include in this reply to Fesko's review a few reflections on Dr. Meek's criticisms of *J&NPP.* Meek charges *J&NPP* with "misrepresent[ing] the views of 'new perspective' writers" (654). Whereas *J&NPP* claims that there is in Wright "an inherent bias against doctrinal formulation and linear, logical reasoning, a predisposition against conceiving of the relationship of God and man in *vertical* terms," Wright, Meek asserts, "consistently employs 'linear logical reasoning' in his writing, as well as 'doctrinal formulation' (which Waters catalogs and with which he disagrees). Waters does not explain how story undermines a 'vertical' dimension in our relationship to God" (654). Meek has misunderstood the concern. *J&NPP* does not question Wright's use of argumentative logic or doctrinal formulation in his writings. *J&NPP* argues that Wright's particular narrative epistemology undermines argumentative logic and doctrinal formulation and promotes an unbalanced view of the Christian life (200–202).

Second, Meek claims that "Waters' argumentation is often weak." He offers two examples in support of this claim. First, "at times it appears that his primary concern is that 'new perspective' views differ from traditional formulations." This, Meek says, is "not an argument, much less an adequate response to scholars who are asking us to reexamine our views in the light of Scripture" (654). We should observe that Meek offers no specific examples to support his criticism. His qualifying phrase "at times" lends the reader no assistance in finding instances of this transgression. *J&NPP,* however, offers a number of exegetical arguments concerning matters that *J&NPP* argued to be at the core of the debate (158–185). These exegetical arguments were part of a critique that was hermeneutical, exegetical, and theological in nature. Meek simply needs to be clearer about his concern if we are to grant it credence.

Meek offers a second example. *J&NPP* is said to "over-

reach" when it maintains that the NPP is in effect "proposing 'a priesthood of scholars be established in the church' that puts ordinary believers 'at the mercy of an academic elite' and of an 'academic magisterium'" (654, quoting *J&NPP* 155–156, 203). I agree with Fesko's observation that "from the perspective of one in the pew … the claim that one cannot understand the NT apart from the literature of the second temple does, in effect, establish a new magisterium." As Fesko points out, non-specialists of Second Temple Judaism are being asked to accept a radical rereading of the doctrine of justification. They are not, however, in a position to evaluate that rereading. This goes far beyond what Meek says is the "importance of historical (and other) knowledge for (historical-grammatical) biblical interpretation" (654). At issue is whether Christians are in a position, "in a due use of the ordinary means" (WCF 1.7), to understand the Bible's teaching on justification.

Third, Meek claims that Wright's "two-staged" doctrine of justification is not objectionable because such writers as Geerhardus Vos, Herman Ridderbos, and George E. Ladd have argued for a similar "two-staged" doctrine. Meek misunderstands the concern that *J&NPP* raised regarding Wright's doctrine of justification. It is not that Wright conceives justification to be a "two-staged event" *simpliciter.* The issue is that Wright conceives what he terms "final justification" within that two-staged event to be grounded, in part, on the believer's obedience (133). No Protestant, consistent with his Protestantism, can assert such a doctrine.

Fourth, "Waters attributes to 'new perspective' authors formulations not found in their writings, that is, that Sanders, Dunn, and Wright 'agree with Rome that the believer is never justified but by infused grace.'" (655). *J&NPP* argues that Sanders, Dunn, and Wright have rejected the doctrine of imputed righteousness in justification. All point to the work of God *in* the believer as constituting at least part of the ground upon which he is justified. In classical terms, this is a doctrine of justification by infused grace. Why is it necessary that NPP proponents themselves use such language in order to warrant this language as an appropriate description of their doctrine?

Finally, Meek claims that the "tone" of *J&NPP* is "often harsh and disparaging." In support, Meek cites only one example: "[Waters] can only imagine that those in the Reformed camp who have accepted some 'new perspective' teachings have done so out of 'ignorance of what their [denomination's] standards teach, since charity forbids us from attributing this failure to malicious duplicity.'" I am pleased to see that Fesko "finds such a statement difficult to label as harsh or disparaging." This statement cites neither malice nor incompetence on the part of Reformed individuals who are sympathetic to the soteriological claims of the NPP. As Fesko observes, it endeavors in charity to attribute that inconsistency to a lack of awareness of what the Westminster Standards say on the points in question.

In conclusion, let me again extend my appreciation both to Editor and to Dr. Fesko for permitting me to participate in this dialogue. May the God of all grace bless this exchange to the edification of the church and to the glory of his name. ▪

***Review:* The "Prince of the Federal Theologians" and *The Covenant of Life Opened:* A Review of Samuel Rutherford's *The Covenant of Life Opened,* edited by C. Matthew McMahon (New Lenox, Ill.: Puritan Publications, 2005).[1] 515 pages. Large perfect-bound paperback. $39.99. Reviewed by Guy M. Richard, senior pastor of First Presbyterian Church (PCA), Gulfport, Miss.. Pastor Richard is a Ph.D. candidate in Systematic and Historical Theology at the University of Edinburgh, New College, in Edinburgh, Scotland.**

Samuel Rutherford (1600–1661) is a towering figure in Scottish theology. Among seventeenth-century Scots theologians, he is, as James Walker says, "perhaps … the greatest" of all.[2] In his lifetime, he published thirteen major theological treatises, amounting to just over 7,000 pages of text, not to mention other works, including sermons, letters, an in-depth catechism (equaling 562 questions and answers—over five times the number in the Westminster Shorter Catechism), and a myriad of political writings, all of which add nearly 3,000 pages to the total. In order to give a frame of reference for the magnitude of Rutherford's literary output, it should be noted that the sixteen volumes of John Owen's *Works* account for only about 9,200 pages.[3] When we add to Rutherford's total a commentary on Isaiah, which has tragically been lost, and several unpublished manuscripts and sermons, we have a literary production that clearly rivals that of Owen. And yet Rutherford has received comparatively little attention in the scholarship of this period, especially in relation to John Owen.

Rutherford is perhaps best known today among evangelical Christians for his *Letters* (365 of them, written to colleagues and parishioners), which have been in print ever since their original publication in 1664.[4] They have passed through

1. The moniker "prince of the federal theologians" is one used by M. Charles Bell in his *Calvin and Scottish Theology: The Doctrine of Assurance* (Edinburgh: Handsel Press, 1985) 70.

2. *The Theology and Theologians of Scotland, 1560–1750* (Edinburgh: Knox Press, ²1982) 8.

3. *The Works of John Owen*, ed. William Goold, 16 vols. (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1965).

4. For the original edition of the letters, see *Joshua redivivus, or Mr. Rutherfoord's Letters* (Rotterdam?, 1664); for the standard edition, see *Letters of Samuel Rutherford*, ed. Andrew Bonar (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1891).

something like one hundred editions and been translated into at least four other languages. The great Charles Spurgeon once said of the *Letters*: "When we are dead and gone let the world know that Spurgeon held Rutherford's letters to be the nearest thing to inspiration which can be found in all the writings of mere men." The Puritan Richard Baxter expressed similar sentiments: "Hold off the Bible," he said, "such a book the world never saw."[5]

Among historians and conservative Presbyterians, Rutherford is possibly best known today for his political treatise *Lex, Rex, or the Law and the Prince* (1644). John Coffey, whose work on Rutherford is the finest thing yet published, cites no fewer than nine histories of the early modern period that discuss *Lex, Rex* and its implications for political thought.[6] Others among Rutherford's biographers claim that this treatise is "the constitutional inheritance of all countries in modern times" and that it represents "one of the most valuable contributions to political science" in any period.[7] Still others, coming out of conservative Presbyterian circles, consider *Lex, Rex* to be "[o]ne of the greatest works on Government, the Civil Magistrate, Church and State ever written," because it treats these subjects from an explicitly biblical perspective.[8]

Whether or not one agrees with these assessments of *Lex, Rex* is beside the point. The treatise is without doubt an important one in the realm of political science for Christian and non-Christian alike, and the University of Edinburgh confirms this by still, to this day, offering a course in which students read and interact with the central tenets of *Lex, Rex*.[9]

In light of Rutherford's importance, it is surprising that so little attention has been paid to his theology. Currently, there exists no published, book-length treatment of it.[10] There are only cursory, chapter-length surveys discussing one aspect or another of Rutherford's theology but without examining it as a whole.[11] One problem preventing the study of Rutherford's theology is the inaccessibility of his works. Three of his treatises remain untranslated from the original Latin;[12] and many that are available in English have never been republished since the seventeenth century. Only one of Rutherford's main theological works has been published in modern times.[13]

That is why the republication of Rutherford's *The Covenant of Life Opened* (1655) by Puritan Publications is such a significant event. Finally someone is attempting to get the writings of this important Second-Reformation Scots theologian into the hands of a wider reading audience. Their effort is laudable. Their motivation is also laudable. Unfortunately, their end product falls somewhat short of achieving this same standard, at least as it is in its current condition. Before turning to discuss the concerns I have with this new edition, however, let me first say that I especially like the fact that it is a *readable* edition. It is not a photocopy of a PDF download or even of the original hardcopy. It is an actual reprinting and reformatting of the text. This means that the tell-tale smudges and illegibilities that accompany photo-reprints and make them exceedingly tedious to read are not a part of this new edition. (Inevitably, it seems, photo-reprints always have at least one such smudge over the portion of text that the reader particularly wants or needs to see!) It also means that many of the typical early-modern textual difficulties that previously required sustained concentration in order to decipher—e.g., the use of "f" in the place of "s," as in "wife" for "wise," and the archaic spellings of the seventeenth century—are also not a part of this edition. The text is clear and plain for all to read, although, it must be said, that a different font style from the one the publishers selected for the headings in the book would have made the headings just as easy to read as the main body of text.

The chief concerns that I have with this edition, in a nutshell, pertain to the errors and omissions it contains when compared with the original. In the preface and first three chapters, for example, there is at least one (and sometimes more than one) serious error or omission *on every page*.[14] The errors range from transcribing mistakes, like wrongly

5. Spurgeon, *The Sword & Trowel*, June 1891; Bonar, "Sketch of Samuel Rutherford," in *Letters*, 25.

6. *Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions: The Mind of Samuel Rutherford* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1997) 146.

7. A.T. Innes, "Samuel Rutherford," in *Studies in Scottish Church History, Chiefly Ecclesiastical* (London, 1892) 5.

8. C. Matthew McMahon, "Lex Rex." www.apuritansmind.com/Samuel Rutherford/SamuelRutherfordLexRex.

9. Richard Gunn, a lecturer at the University of Edinburgh, currently teaches a course (course number, PO 0044), entitled "Scottish Political Thought," which examines *Lex, Rex* in considerable detail.

10. The current author hopes to fill this *lacuna* with his Ph.D. dissertation that examines the theology of Samuel Rutherford.

11. See, e.g., Walker, *Theology and Theologians of Scotland*, 8–13; John Macleod, *Scottish Theology in Relation to Church History Since the Reformation* (Edinburgh: Publications Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, 1943) 68–78; Bell, *Calvin and Scottish Theology*, 70–91; T.F. Torrance, *Scottish Theology: From John Knox to John McLeod Campbell* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996) 93–111; and Coffey, *Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions*, 114–45.

12. *Exercitationes apologeticae pro divina gratia* (Amsterdam, 1636); *Disputatio scholastica de divina providentia* (Edinburgh, 1649); and *Examen Arminianismi* (Utrecht, 1668). The current author's Ph.D. dissertation includes translation work on the last of these. As far as he knows, there is another project underway to translate the second of these treatises as well.

13. *The Trial and Triumph of Faith* (1645; Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2001).

14. The current author stopped comparing the new edition to the original text after the third chapter; a pattern had already been established. Every page in the preface and first three chapters, except for page 34, contains at least one serious error or omission. Even if it is true that this pattern stops after chapter three and the rest of the book

substituting "is" for "as;" or "state" for "stage;"[15] to inaccuracies, like incorrectly substituting "day of safety" for "day of assize" or using an artificial subtitle for a subsection of chapter two that masks the original intent and flow of the chapter.[16] Granted, some of these errors affect the intended meaning of the text only slightly; but others of them alter it quite significantly.

The omissions, too, range from the serious to the not-so-serious. An example of the latter is the editor's failure to put many of Rutherford's biblical citations in italics, as Rutherford himself does, and as he expressly states he is going to do in the introduction.[17] Placing these verses in italics, while not essential to understanding the text, would have made the new edition easier to follow in several places by demonstrating that the otherwise obtuse language that Rutherford employs is chosen by him over language that may have been less obtuse, simply because it is the language of Scripture. An example of the former, a serious omission, occurs in chapter one, where Rutherford, in the original, lists four "Particulars of the Treatise," and then says the following: "Of the latter, especially of the last, not much hath been spoken by any in a practical way."[18] But the new edition lists only the first three of these "Particulars," omitting the fourth, and then concludes with the same statement making reference to the "latter" or "last" one (which would then be referring to the third instead of the fourth, as Rutherford intends).[19] Furthermore, on at least two other occasions in the first three chapters, words from the original text are omitted in the new edition.[20] In each case, the word omitted is fairly insignificant, insofar as the omission does not alter the sense of the sentence in which it occurs. But the point remains: *any* omission is a serious matter. It may have been a "the" or "a" in the first three chapters, but it could be something much more significant in the others.

The end result of the errors and omissions is to call the accuracy and reliability of the new edition into question. And this is unfortunate, to say the least, because *The Covenant of Life Opened* (hereafter, *COL*) is an important work. If Charles Bell is right in ascribing to Rutherford the title "prince of the federal theologians," then *COL* is, indeed, an important work, because it contains the most complete and most mature expression of Rutherford's covenant theology.[21] None of his other treatises presents his thinking on the covenants in the breadth or depth that *COL* does. What is more, because *COL* was published near the end of Rutherford's lifetime, it contains the most mature expression of his views of federal theology. Readers can be certain that what they see in this treatise is not an early viewpoint that was later discarded or refined but one that represents the culmination of a lifetime of study and reflection on the covenant idea.

In what remains of this essay, I would like briefly to summarize the content of this important treatise. My aim is not to address every topic under consideration in the treatise, nor is it to cover any particular topic comprehensively, but it is simply to whet one's appetite and to encourage one to take and read (*tolle*, *lege*!) the book for oneself. In this treatise, Rutherford advances a three-covenant view of federal theology, which includes the pre-temporal Covenant of Redemption—or, as Rutherford also calls it, the Covenant of Suretyship—and the temporal Covenant of Works and Covenant of Grace. Rutherford begins the treatise by exploring the nature of Adam's original state and the Covenant of Works. In this original state, he says, life was held out to Adam, and to his posterity, upon the condition of his obedience. But Rutherford is quick to point out that Adam was not thus predestined to eternal life by a "law glory," i.e., by keeping the law of God as a "publick

contains no such errors and omissions (which is itself doubtful), those found in the first three chapters are enough to cause grave concern.

15. Transcribing mistakes occur on pages 17, 18, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38.

16. See page 29. The second subsection in the new edition, entitled "Adam was Predestined to Eternal Life in Christ, and How," which is found on page 28, is placed in the middle of the propositions that should, according to the original text, form part of the first subsection "Propositions Touching Adam's Covenant State." Rutherford gives six such propositions in the original text. In this new edition, however, only two of them occur under the (artificial) subsection entitled "Propositions Touching Adam's Covenant State" and four occur under the second (artificial) subsection entitled "Adam was Predestined to Eternal Life in Christ." The problem is that Rutherford's original table of contents is actually more like what we would consider an index. The editor to the new edition would perhaps have been better served by simply translating Rutherford's detailed table of contents into an index and then composing a new and simplified table of contents of his own.

17. See, e.g., pages 27–8, 31, 34, 35, 37. On page 21 of the introduction, the editor states: "Also, Scripture references are not in quotations, but, as in the original, are in italics." Unfortunately, many of the references that occur in the first three chapters are neither in quotation marks nor in italics.

18. Rutherford, *The Covenant of Life Opened* (Edinburgh: Andro Anderson, 1655) 1. The editor cites a publication date of 1654 for the original. This mistake is probably due to a notation on the title page of the copy in the Early English Books series which is a facsimile of the copy in the Thomason collection (*Catalogue of the Pamphlets, Books, Newspapers, and Manuscripts Relating to the Civil War, the Commonwealth, and Restoration collected by George Thomason,* 1640–1661, Volume 2 Part 1 [London: British Museum, 1908] 102). George Thomason would often write the date he acquired a publication on the title page (in this case Feb. 20), and since England was still on the Julian calendar (wherein March 25th was the first of the new year), and Scotland on the now ubiquitous Gregorian, this would explain his marking through 1655 and writing 1654. The compilers of the *Catalogue* follow the Gregorian in their index and thus *COL* is under the year 1655.

19. See page 25.

20. E.g., such occurs on pages 35 and 37.

21. Bell is arguably right, especially as far as Scotland is concerned. Among Scots, perhaps only David Dickson would challenge for this

person representing all his sons." In his public capacity, Adam fell, and, when he fell, his posterity fell with him. But Adam *was* predestined to eternal life, "as a single [and private] person, as *Abraham*, or *Jacob*," through Jesus Christ. Following the general tendency among the post-Reformation orthodox, Rutherford states that the Covenant of Works and the whole "Law-dispensation" was never intended by God to be an end in itself but to be a means whereby God would "set up a Theatre and stage of free grace." The Lord had

> an aime that works and nature should be a transient, but no standing Court for righteousnesse: Hence it is now the reliques of an old standing Court, and the Law, is a day of assise, for condemning of malefactors, who will acknowledge no Tribunall of grace, but only of works: And it is a just Court to terrifie robbers, to awe borderers and loose men, but to beleevers it is now a Court for a far other end.[22]

Rutherford devotes considerable space to discussing matters pertaining to the Covenant of Grace in *COL*. He examines the nature of grace, faith and obedience, and the work of Christ within this covenant in great detail, devoting over 200 pages to such soteriological issues as saving faith, justification, the role of good works, and the atonement of Christ. With respect to the number of the covenants, Rutherford argues against the view that sees three (or more) temporal covenants between God and man by proving from Scripture that the covenant made with Israel was "a darker dispensation of Grace" and not a separate Covenant of Works (*COL*, 57–65). He helpfully distinguishes between "externall, visible, professed, [and] conditionall" covenanting, on the one hand, and "internall, invisible, reall, [and] absolute" covenanting, on the other (*COL*, chapter 13). And he uses this distinction as the basis for his view of the church and, thus, of baptism as well. While the theology that lies behind his doctrine of the church, and of baptism, is nothing unusual for a covenant theologian in any period, the particular situation of seventeenth-century Scotland ensures that it will be applied in an unusual way in his thinking in regard to baptism. Because the Scotland of Rutherford's day was a covenanting nation, and because merely signing the National Covenant of 1638 was tantamount to making a public profession of faith, baptism, according to Rutherford, was rightly to be applied to every infant who was born within the bounds of Scotland, whether or not the specific parent(s) had professed faith. It is important to point out, however, that this is not so much because of a peculiar theological belief as a perception that the visible church of his day in Scotland was co-extensive with the nation itself.[23]

In contrast to the later prominent Scottish federal theologian, Thomas Boston, Rutherford advocates a third covenant, in addition to the above-mentioned two, the Covenant of Redemption.[24] The primary reason for his doing so is because he believes that Christ's relationship with God on earth cannot be subsumed under the Covenant of Grace, as ours can be. Rutherford goes on, in what is clearly a significant chapter in *COL*, to offer eleven proofs from Scripture to substantiate this claim and, thus, the existence of a separate Covenant of Redemption or Suretyship.[25] But even though Rutherford considers the Covenant of Redemption to be distinct from the Covenant of Grace, he does indisputably link the two in an indissoluble bond. The latter covenant "cannot be separated" from and is wholly founded upon the former (*COL*, 311–12). Rutherford then concludes the treatise with a discussion of the nature of this pre-temporal covenant and with helpful comparisons of it to each of the two temporal covenants.

In the end, there can be no doubt but that *COL* is an important work written by an important individual from an important period of time in church history. It contains the most complete and most mature expressions of the covenant theology of the so-called "prince of the federal theologians." By all means, we welcome its republication—as we would welcome the republication of any of Rutherford's theological treatises—but only if the new edition(s) can accurately reflect the thinking of the man represented. Our regard for Rutherford, his theology, and his desire to do all for the glory of God, should prompt us to strive for nothing less. ▪

[Editor's Note: The editor contacted Puritan Publications regarding the errors noted in the text by the reviewer, and they indicated that as they find or are notified of problems such as these they will update the text of the book, which is a Print on Demand (POD) publication (i.e. only one copy is made at a time). It thus can be quickly updated for subsequent copies.] ▪

title, and his writings are nowhere near as influential or as voluminous as Rutherford's own (nor was his prominence within the church what Rutherford's was). Along with the Dutchman, Johannes Cocceius, Rutherford stands head and shoulders above others of the post-Reformation period in terms of both influence and prominence.

22. *COL* (1655), 2–3.

23. See *COL*, chapters 13–14. See also Rutherford, *Quaint Sermons* (1885; Morgan, Pa.: Soli Deo Gloria, reprint, 1999) 61, 92–3, where Rutherford laments that many who signed the National Covenant were only external covenanters and not "heart-covenanters."

24. The differences between Rutherford and Boston in regard to this covenant ought not to be overly exaggerated. For one thing, much of what Rutherford considers in the third covenant, Boston sees as part and parcel of the Covenant of Grace. For another thing, Rutherford plainly acknowledges Boston's point that the Covenant of Grace is made with both Christ and men. It is made "principally with Christ … but personally, with believers" [see, Rutherford, *The Tryal & Triumph of Faith* (London, 1645) 81].

25. *COL*, 290–302. Rutherford adds a twelfth proof on 302–8 and a thirteenth on 316–39.

***Review:* Tim Gallant, *Feed My Lambs* (Pactum Reformanda Publishing, Grand Prairie, AB, Can., 2002). Paperback, 220 pages. $15.95. Reviewed by Dr. Leonard J. Coppes, Pastor of Providence Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Denver, Colo.**

Mr. Gallant is a 2000 graduate of Mid-America Reformed Seminary, and is currently serving as the pastor of Conrad Christian Reformed Church of North America in Conrad, Canada. In the course of his work, he remarks that no one has yet gathered all the arguments in support of paedocommunion and offers this work to help fill the gap. His work is written in good style and a minimum of technical theological jargon.

The body of the book offers three primary arguments supporting the practice of paedocommunion. First, the general teaching throughout the Bible (especially in the New Testament) is that under the new covenant infants by virtue of their birth and/or baptism, are members the covenant community (the church, 29) and, as such, have a right to the meal acknowledging and including their covenantal community membership. Second, all the OT meals (except the covenant initiating meal on Mt. Sinai), and especially the Passover, admitted children by virtue of their inclusion in the covenant community, and since the Lord's Supper is a principial continuation of those meals (and especially of the Passover), it, too, admits infants and children. Finally, Paul's discussion of the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians, admits children insofar as he teaches that the Lord's Supper is rightly enjoyed by all who are members of the body of Christ—and children of believers, by virtue of their birth and/or baptism, are members of that body. These biblically based arguments supporting paedocommunion, are followed by a chapter on the history of this practice and another chapter responding to objections that may be raised. The book includes three appendices entitled: "Covenant of Grace and its Children," "Consideration of Practical Issues," and "Brief Theses on Communion and Covenant Children." Mr. Gallant also appends an extensive bibliography on this issue. The book is an effort to set forth briefly and in clear terms all the arguments currently being offered in support of paedocommunion. The author acknowledges that his work is not exhaustive in depth of treatment.

In the introduction, Mr. Gallant argues that the Church has not yet considered this issue carefully. This is not the case, at least, in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The Confession and other secondary standards are clear on the matter, teaching that those who are unable to make a profession of faith are barred from the table (e.g., WLC 171, 173, 174, 177). This has been the position of the Presbyterian Church since before the Standards were adopted. Why is this such an immovable conclusion? It is immovable because the Scripture is very clear on the matter in passages such as 1 Corinthians 11. Indeed, it is clear in the many other texts which deal with related issues, e.g., the visible and invisible church, the structure and discipline of the church, the nature and use of the outward benefits of the covenant, the nature and observance of the Lord's Supper, etc. Moreover, it should be noted that historically speaking, the paedocommunion position has been a moving target since its reappearance in the modern world. The supporting arguments continue to grow and shift. Hence, the church is wiser to respond positively in defense of its historic position—and it has done so in retaining and affirming the Westminster Standards. Also, its scholars, both past and present, have carefully and repeatedly exposited biblical passages such as 1 Corinthians 11 demonstrating that the Confessional position is biblical.

Argument 1: The redemptive-historical shift from old to new covenant.

The first argument offered by Mr. Gallant in defense of infant communion is that the Bible teaches that the "redemptive-historical shift from old covenant to new is in the direction of universalization of [covenantal] benefits" (71). This way of expressing the point is somewhat difficult to follow because "benefits" is not clearly defined, "universalization" is used in a strange way, and because he repeatedly appears to shift between the ideas that these benefits come as a result of regeneration (they are received and enjoyed by virtue of the act of God) and that these benefits amount to rights (that they may be received and enjoyed as a result of some act or action on man's part, i.e., baptism).

One of the key passages used to explain the universalization argument is Jeremiah 31:31–34 (*Feed My Lambs,* 27–28). He argues that all of the benefits set forth in this passage (plus the Lord's Supper) accrue to all who are members of the new covenant community—the benefits are universalized. According to Jeremiah 31, not only will the Law be written in the minds and hearts of all new covenant members, but also God will forgive their iniquity and remember their sins no more. If this means that all the members of the new covenant will be regenerated, then, following Mr. Gallant's universalization position, it implies that children, by virtue of their being born into a Christian home, are regenerated (cf., 1 Cor. 7:14; *Feed My Lambs,* 34–36). But if they are envisioned as regenerated, it is a strange regeneration insofar as Mr. Gallant says that some of these (and other) regenerated members of the new covenant may apostatize. Hence, there is an eternal life (resulting from regeneration) that may not be eternal in duration—one may have and then lose eternal life. On the other hand, if he chooses to deny that Jeremiah 31 is speaking about those who are forgiven forever (*à la* the Federal vision position), then he holds that God forgives their sin never to remember it, but subsequently may reject them

on the basis of sin committed since their baptism (or birth). In either case, his argument entails a status wherein the new covenant member may have all his sin forgiven (and never to be remembered) but from which he may fall (he may lose this new covenant status).

Also, Mr. Gallant is unclear as to what brings upon children this new covenant membership and its universalized benefits. Is it birth or baptism? If it is birth (as argued in the last paragraph on page 28) then, following his logic, children do not have to be baptized to be admitted to the table. So, if babies are members of the covenant community because they are members of a covenant family, and if because of this, they are to be admitted to the table, then they do not need to be baptized to be admitted. The significance of this matter becomes clearer, perhaps, if one considers the children of Baptists. Are not these children of the covenant? They belong to a covenantal family but are not baptized. Should they be admitted to the Lord's table by virtue of their membership in the covenant (by birth)? For example, if they and their parents attend a paedocommunion church should they be allowed to partake? If they should be admitted, then it is evident that baptism is not required for admission to the table. The problem with this alternative is that circumcision was required (as Mr. Gallant points out) for participation in the OT sacramental meals. So, if Baptists' children should not be admitted, then it is clear that something more than regeneration (birth) is required for admission and it is not true that all the benefits of the new covenant (including admission to the Lord's Supper) accrue to all its members (as Mr. Gallant argues on the basis of Jeremiah 31). If one argues that admission to the table requires birth plus baptism (conceived as a necessarily conjoined unit, see page 29), then it is clear that more is required than being a member of the covenantal community (the body of Christ)—just as it was in the OT. One cannot have it both ways, i.e., (a) all that God requires in Jeremiah 31 for inclusion in the new covenant community is regeneration (or the law being written in one's heart and mind, and having one's sins forgiven and remembered no more) and (b) that God requires one to be baptized as well as being a member of the covenantal community—that, for inclusion, He requires more than regeneration, viz., covenantal faithfulness (to some extent).[1]

One may also ask just how the Lord's Supper is included in the benefits listed in Jeremiah 31. Mr. Gallant seems to answer this question by granting that Jeremiah does not speak to this question but implies that all members of the new covenant have a right to the meal that, biblically speaking, includes all such members. Again, either Jeremiah 31 sets forth the basis of admission to all the "universalized" benefits of the covenant or it does not. Also, if in the case of infants, nothing beyond birth and baptism are required for admission, then with other converts should it not be that nothing beyond the (new) birth and baptism are required? After all, Jeremiah 31 speaks of all members of the new covenant, not just of infants and children. One might reply that since we do not know that someone has been converted unless he tells us, he must make a credible profession of faith—lest the church and the table be profaned by admitting the non-covenantal. But this entails two further problems. First, this adds another requirement beyond what Jeremiah 31 sets forth, and one does not become a participant in all the benefits of the new covenant simply by virtue of their regeneration. The convert must also make a profession of faith to be formally admitted to the fellowship (a benefit of the covenant). Second, if one grants that members under the new covenant must make a profession of faith to be admitted to the Lord's Supper (and other covenant benefits) so we can discern their standing spiritually lest the body be defiled, why, on the same grounds, are children exempt from making such a profession of faith upon reaching sufficient maturity?

Indeed, Mr. Gallant's discussion lacks a clear, and necessary, distinction between those blessings that come with regeneration without additional qualifying requirements (its benefits), and those benefits which come with further qualifying requirements—its rights (e.g., baptism, the Lord's Supper, etc.). Note the seeming confusion in the following (28–29, italic emphasis original):

> [1] *The new covenant norm is effectual divine blessing upon our children from day one.*
>
> This virtually universal spread of covenant benefits is not to be seen as a phenomenon unique to a restored ethnic Israel.[2]
>
> [2] In context, the passage [Gal. 3:27–28] is articulating the sufficiency of baptism into Christ to qualify one for full membership in the people of God, with its attendant privileges.… In response, Paul explains that Christ is the One to whom all the promises belong (3:16), and therefore, when one has been incorporated into Him (namely, via baptism, 3:27), one has thereby been identified with His full rights of inheritance (3:29). These rights include table fellowship, as is implied by the prior context (see 2:11–13).

The conclusion that this passage sets forth the "universalization" (universal reception) of all the benefits of the new covenant is not true because this either denies that the passage speaks of regeneration, or affirms that there is a "regenera-

1. We raise the problem between birth or regeneration as a requirement for admission, because Mr. Gallant does not sufficiently distinguish between these matters.

2. Cf. above. This is the same conclusion he offers for his discussion of Jeremiah 31.

tion" that may be lost, or affirms that enjoying the benefits described in the passage (the universalized benefits—including admission to the Lord's Supper) does not require baptism. Moreover, the interpretation is wrong because it requires that with infants, only birth and baptism are prerequisites for participation of all benefits envisioned (full participation), but with older "converts" both a prior profession and baptism are mandated.

By now, it should be clear that the problem is in an improper definition of the church (the covenantal community). Mr. Gallant does not properly distinguish between the visible and invisible church—that not all Israel is Israel. Therefore, his position is unable to distinguish properly between the requirements for participation in the outward and the inward benefits of the church—between the visible and non-visible church. The visible church consists of all professing believers and their seed while the invisible church consists of all the regenerate. Hence, there are individuals who are regenerate but who are *not* members of the visible church and who, consequently, do *not* enjoy the all the benefits of the visible church, e.g., participation in the Lord's Supper, voting in congregational meetings, the discipline of the visible church, teaching in the church, holding church office, etc. There are some members of the visible church who may *not* enjoy all its benefits (all the benefits of the new covenant) because of their immaturity: e.g., learning from the teaching ministry, entering spiritually into the worship of our Lord, laying aside the sin that so easily ensnares them, and participation in the Lord's Supper, etc. Hence, there is not a divine teaching that all who are truly regenerate are, or should be, automatically admitted to all the universalized outward benefits of the covenant, nor is it taught that all babies should be presumed to be regenerate (that their sins are forgiven forever). Although Mr. Gallant writes that the church has not yet considered the paedocommunion arguments carefully, it is hardly true that the church has not yet carefully considered the biblical distinction between the visible and invisible church.

Argument 2: Children were admitted to sacramental meals in the Old Testament

The second chapter holds that children should be admitted to the Lord's Supper because all of the sacramental meals of the OT admitted children (except the meal on Mt. Sinai) and the Lord's Supper is patterned after, or is a continuation of, those meals. He does not properly accept or evaluate the thesis that the OT meals were divinely ordered with ever increasing admittance limitations until the last meal in the sequence, eaten immediately before God (e.g., on Mt. Sinai) or sacrifice immediately before God (great atonement), excluded almost all Israel. His argument, also, does not properly accept or evaluate the fact that the OT meals and sacrifices are not all of one level. Hence, while all the blood sacrifices are truly atoning (typologically), God distinguishes between them in accordance with where the blood of the sacrifice in view was to be applied. There were five levels or degrees of sacrifice. In the highest degree (the first level), the blood was applied to the top of the altar in the most holy place. In the next four degrees the blood was applied respectively to the horns of the altar of incense in the holy place, the horns and top portion of the great altar outside the sanctuary proper, the bottom portion of the great altar, and on the ground around the base of the great altar. The various OT sacramental meals under the Mosaic institution are not all attached to the same level of sacrifice. Consequently, the meals, like the sacrifices on which they rested most immediately, carried various levels of admission. Mr. Gallant denies that this is the case (note: he does grant that there were admission restrictions with respect to the priestly meals and the Mt. Sinai meal). The arguments involved here are too complex to present at this point, but some examples of his argumentation might illustrate some of the problems it poses.

First, Mr. Gallant argues that the meals limited to priestly participation (the guilt offering) admitted the male children of the priest (55):

> "Priestly families, including children, partook in various priestly meals, and these meals required a state of cleanness (see the requirements of Lev. 22:4ff.). One who was born in the priestly household had the privilege of eating the priestly food (Lev. 10:14; 22:11– cf. 2 Chron. 31:18). Since the priestly food was provided, strictly speaking, from the holy things (including, apparently, the trespass [or guilt, LJC] offering: Lev. 22:16), and since this food was for both them and their households, it is inescapable that the requirement for cleanness does not bar the participation of small children."

The Scripture references to which he alludes argue for the admission of women and children (indeed, even small children) into the court of the priests. Specifically, Lev. 6:16 specifies that the meal associated with the guilt offering was to be eaten in the priestly court of the tabernacle. Leviticus 22:11 says that the priestly food there referenced was to be eaten by the priest's household—this included his servant, one born in his household (11) and his daughter (12–13). By necessary implication, these verses also admit his wife—as a member of his household. Therefore, if no distinction is drawn between the meals referenced in Leviticus 6 and 22, then Mr. Gallant argues that the Lord commanded that not only male children but also the female children and the women of the household were to be admitted to the court of the priests. It should be apparent that the general regulations of Leviticus 22 do not apply to the meal associated with the guilt offering

described in Leviticus 6. In the Temple, women and children were as a general rule barred from going beyond the court of the women and could not enter either the court of Israel or the court of the priests. On rare occasions, women might enter the court of Israel, as far as entering the Gate of Nicanor, for purposes specified in God's law, but as Alfred Edersheim implies,[3] they were not allowed to tarry or sit down. Similarly, men might bring their offerings far enough to allow the offerer's hands to be laid on the sacrifice, but they could not tarry or sit in the court of the priests. Moreover, the penalty for the non-ordained coming into the court of the priests was death (Num. 17:12–13–18:1–7). Therefore, it is biblically inconceivable that a priest's sons, daughters, or wife would sit (or stand) at a meal in the priestly court since they were not, and could not be, ordinates.

A second argument offered by Mr. Gallant to contradict the thesis that the OT meals were divinely arranged in increasing narrowness of admission (for the full argument see below), is his denial that the uncircumcised non-Israelite was admitted to the meals associated with the Feast of Weeks/Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles. It is an interesting turn of exegesis that sees in the specification regulating the Passover (Exod. 12) the commandment that non-Israelites must convert to Judaism by circumcision as a pre-condition of participation, while arguing that the absence of such a commandment in the other feast meals teaches their admission. Moreover, the regulations attached to these other meals list the non-Israelite among those who were also in some sense disenfranchised (i.e., not enjoying some of the privileges of full covenantal participation). Thus, they are allowed participation in the Pentecost and Tabernacles meals. For a list of the disenfranchised see Exodus 22:21–22. The Israelites as members of the assembly (church) and non-Israelite non-member strangers are contrasted in Leviticus 18:26 and Numbers 15:15. The admission of non-Israelite, non-member disenfranchized strangers to the Pentecost and Tabernacle meals is mentioned specifically in Deuteronomy 16:10–11, 13–14. It seems clear that the point of the admission of the stranger was that of exception. Were he to become a full member of the assembly through circumcision, then he would no longer be disenfranchized, or an exception—he would be among those addressed in these verses as "you."[4]

Note that even if one removes the gradation in the sacramental meals (with reference to terms of admission), there remain the distinctions in the gradation of the courts with the corollary of a gradation in the terms of admission. The Gentiles could go no further the court of the Gentiles, the women could go no further than the court of the women, the men could go no further than the court of Israel, and only the priests could fully enter the court of the priests. There is an increasing limitation on admission to the parts of the Temple (tabernacle) until only the high priest could enter the Most Holy Place—the place were the Lord's Supper, figuratively speaking, is eaten (Heb. 13:10). The Lord's Supper is eaten in the most Holy Place, in which, moreover, the censure on unholy entry into the Most Holy Place persists (1 Cor. 11:28–32).

Third, Mr. Gallant maintains that the only OT Mosaic meals with restrictions are the priestly meals, and since there are no longer priests, there are no longer OT restrictions. Thus, he maintains, there are no restrictions on admission to the NT meal beyond covenantal membership. However, while the typological mediatorial role of the priesthood has been discontinued, some "priestly" restrictions continue. For example, the distinction between those who are divinely designated as worship leaders and others is not removed. Hence, the church continues to have ministers who uniquely are ordained to preach and lead in public worship (and paid for their ministry from the tithe). And in this regard, even though in the new covenant there is no longer a distinction between male and female (Gal. 3:28), nonetheless, the NT bars women—they are neither to lead in public worship nor to preach. Next, even more to the point is the fact that the Lord's Supper still bears the sanctions of sickness & death (1 Cor. 11:29–31). In the OT approaching the Lord in worship required one to honor and respect God's holiness, and this requirement was sanctioned by sickness and death (Num. 17:1–18:32, cf., Exod. 19:12–13, 21–22). In the OT, entering God's immediate presence (coming "before the Lord") was not only sanctioned by sickness and death but it required all those admitted to His presence to examine themselves carefully as to their state and practice of holiness. Even so, in the NT we are called to examine ourselves as to our state and practice of holiness as we approach the Lord in communion. The humility of the incarnate Son of God has been replaced by the glory of the enthroned King of glory. Divine holiness still requires a thoroughgoing self-examination. Thus, the historical consensus of the reformed church meets the data of Scripture, "let a man [communicant] examine himself." Just as in the OT, so today, the Lord protects children from the judgment that comes upon all who "come before the Lord" without examining themselves. Thus, the OT restrictions or regulations are not entirely removed but are, in principle, repeated in the NT. The OT distinction between the outward and spiritual benefits of the covenant has been somewhat reformulated in the NT, but it has not been obliterated.

Not only does Mr. Gallant miss the biblical restrictions arising from the holiness of God, but he also misses the

3. Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple Its Ministry And Service* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994) 25, 27, 37, 40.

4. The social and religious position of the stranger is discussed in Roland DeVaux, *Ancient Israel* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965) 74–76.

biblical differences between the Passover and the other OT meals. The Passover admitted only the circumcised but the wilderness meals (which were sacramental, 1 Cor. 10:1ff.) admitted animals (they drank the water God provided—but not as sacramental water) and the uncircumcised (many of the Jews were not circumcised yet, and Jethro seems to have remained uncircumcised although he ate before God, Exod. 18:12). Also, the Bible is rather clear in stipulating that no uncircumcised male should be admitted to the Passover (the circumcised alien was no longer an alien, but was a convert), but this requirement is not stipulated with reference to the feasts of Tabernacles and Weeks. God structured the sacrificial system so that the closer one came to the most holy place (the outward "presence" of God), the more restrictive the admission. The Passover was not the closest meal to God's presence; the guilt and sin offering meals and the Mt. Sinai meal were closer. The blood of the Passover was sprinkled at the base of the great altar. Hence, the sacrificial typology of this offering was five degrees away from the highest offering. The highest level (first degree) of sacrifice was made in the most holy place on the Day of Atonement. There was no meal attached to it, yet, in the book of Hebrews the Lord's Supper is attached directly to the great atonement worked by our Lord (Heb. 13:10). It is important to note that while all of the blood sacrifices were atoning, God Himself made distinctions between them. Hence, it is appropriate to seek the typological and spiritual truths taught by these distinctions.

Mr. Gallant argues that the Lord's Supper is more closely tied to the Passover than to other OT sacramental meals, but this is hardly the case. While it is especially tied to the Passover (resting on a sacrifice of the fifth degree), it is also especially and directly tied to the covenant initiating meal on Sinai insofar as at the first Lord's Supper our Lord cited the words of that Mt. Sinai meal (Ex. 24:8). Moreover, it is especially and directly tied to the guilt offering (resting on a sacrifice of the fourth degree) by Paul in 1 Corinthians 11 where he uses that pattern (and not the Passover pattern!) in presenting the Lord's Supper. It is especially attached to the meals during the wilderness wandering (1 Cor. 10:1ff.). Also, as pointed out above, it is especially and directly tied to the great atonement by the writer of Hebrews, who specifically alludes to the Lord's Supper as a meal attached to the great altar in heaven (it rests on a sacrifice of the highest degree). The obvious implication of this is that the Lord's Supper carries with it the sanctity of directly approaching God in the most Holy Place. This implication is confirmed in Paul's report that God carried over into the NT observance of the Lord's Supper, the sanctions of sickness and death (1 Cor. 11:30).

ARGUMENT 3: GALLANT'S EXEGESIS OF 1 CORINTHIANS 11.

In the third chapter, Mr. Gallant presents his exegesis of 1 Corinthians 11. Again, he argues from various texts for the universalization of the benefits of the new covenant. This exegesis entails the same conclusion and shortcomings of his exegesis of Jeremiah 31. With reference to 1 Corinthians 11 he argues that since children were admitted to all the OT meals, meals which required sanctification (self-examination), and were not barred because of their age or inability, they should be admitted to the Lord's Supper. The weaknesses of this argument have already been outlined above.

In verse 25 Paul cites Christ's words at the first Lord's Supper describing the cup as the new covenant in His blood, and commanding that the rite be done in remembrance of Him. Mr. Gallant understands the remembrance in terms of participation in a memorial rite similar to the many OT memorial rites in which children were allowed to participate, e.g., the Passover. But Christ's command involves a unique and carefully worded statement. He used a Greek word (rendered) "remembrance" that entails a self-conscious activity on the part of the participant. The Greek OT (the Septuagint) used so much by the Apostle Paul, uses a word built on the same Greek root to signify a memorial (cf., Exod. 3:15, 12:15) but Jesus (and Paul) chose another word to describe what is involved in the Lord's Supper. He uses the word entailing an active remembering (*anamnesis*). Bruce Metzger says that this *–sis* ending indicates an action.[5] More precisely, he wrote that it "produces the abstract name of an action." Johannes Behm remarks, "Christians are to enact the whole action of the Lord's Supper—this is the reference of the twofold τοῦτο—in recollection of Jesus, and this not merely in such sort that they simply remember, but rather, in accordance with the active sense of ἀνάμνησις."[6] In other words, they imply that Mr. Gallant's exegesis is in error in this very important point. The word envisions an active intellectual action during the eating and drinking, and not just a passive presence at a memorial ceremony. This understanding is reinforced in the tense of the Greek words used in this verse for "do" and "drink." The first is in the present tense envisioning each of the many future acts as a single ongoing action. This act is not conceived statically as if there were no process within it as is reinforced by the use of the present tense in the word translated "drink." The drinking is viewed as an ongoing activity and the corollary ongoing activity is caught in the word "remembrance." Both the drinking and the remembering entail an active participation by the one doing the observance. Children can actively drink a liquid, but they cannot actively drink of Christ unless the sacrament acts *ex opere operato*, and this is explicitly

5. Bruce Metzger, *Lexical Aids for Students of New Testament Greek* (Princeton, N.J.: Published by the Author, 1960) 55.

6. Gehard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, third printing, February 1968) 1.349.

denied by Christ in John 6:63. Also, if the remembering the significance of a sacrifice is considered against the Old Testament parallels, children cannot actively "remember" the significance of Christ's sacrifice. What 1 Corinthians 11:25 says is especially relevant to Mr. Gallant's argument, because he says that little children such as those brought (carried) to Jesus are, in principle, admitted to the table (26).

This active sense of remembrance is further supported by what is recorded in verse 26. The eating, drinking and proclaiming are all present tense verbs. The first two are in a dependent clause and in the subjunctive mood. The present subjunctive (of the first two verbs), in contrast to the Aorist subjunctive, which envisions a matter puntiliarly, envisions an on-going act. If a memorial act were envisioned then the Aorist tense would have communicated this idea better, but a present tense is used. So, how does one proclaim the death of the Lord? He proclaims it by eating and drinking. If the proclaiming means no more than eating and drinking, a little child might do this, but he cannot do it as personal actions involving "remembering."

Verse 27 moves along the same line of reasoning but it is made more clear that every participant/communicant (whoever eats and drinks) who eats and drinks unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Verse 29 makes the matter clearer yet when, in summary, Paul states that "he (everyone who participates/communicates) who eats (an action conceived as a process) and drinks (also an action conceived as a process)." The idea might be better understood in the translation, "he who is eating" and "drinking"—while the "eating" and "drinking" are occurring—are "eating and drinking" judgment to himself. Little children can eat and drink and simultaneously eat and drink judgment to themselves, but they cannot do this while actively remembering Christ's body and blood. Now, one might cringe at the thought that this necessarily involves more than a mere surface (childish) remembering of the body and blood of Christ, but that a relatively adult understanding is involved is clearly implied. Indeed, those adults who polluted the Lord's table surely had not only a childish but maybe even a very mature idea of the body and blood of Christ. Their problem was that they did not see the necessary connection between the facts themselves and the application of those fact to Christian living. They polluted not only the body which is the church, but, more significantly, the body which is Christ Himself and that not merely as the crucified body and blood, but as the triumphant and kingly body and blood. As seen below, they faced the judgment of the King of the church.

Verse 30 reports that the result of not examining oneself properly is sickness and death. As already said above, these judgments evidence how God attaches the same sanction to the Lord's Supper as He did to Mt. Sinai and entering the Most Holy Place. Thus, He identifies the Lord's Supper as a meal attached to a sacrifice of the first degree. So, in the outward worship of the new covenant church, as in the outward worship of the Old Testament church, death is attached to those rites closest to God's presence. Consequently, holiness must also be attached to both. Also, in the OT, this holiness embraced the entire lives of those who approached God. Israel's ever-present problem was their rejection of "holistic holiness." They had only the outward form of true religion but not its power. Certainly, the NT is not a step backwards from that OT pattern. In the Lord's Supper God requires both outward and inward holiness—holistic holiness.

Mr. Gallant seems to argue that the self-examination envisioned here had to do with one's role in the community and did not involve a careful self-examination with regard to personal holiness. The two points are not clearly distinguished in the discussion—making that discussion somewhat difficult to follow, if not self-contradictory. He provides a rather detailed exegesis of the concept (summarized in the quotation below) represented in the phrase "let a man examine himself" (94):

> The concern of *examine* (*put yourself to proof*) is not, then, whether I am producing the right feelings toward the elements, or know enough theology, or anything of the sort. It is rather, as the relation between the words (*dokimos* and *dokimos/adokimos*) attests, to ascertain whether I am approved (*dokimos*), whether I am in the faith (as is made clear in 2 Cor. 13:5). It has to do with whether I have *broken faith with* Christ (whether by provoking Him to jealousy through idolatry, as in ch. 10, or by rending His body, as in ch. 11).
>
> Where does the Bible call into question whether covenant children are approved (*dokimoi*)? Where are we taught to assume that they have broken faith with Christ?

It should be evident that Mr. Gallant again approaches the position of the Monroe theology in which being in the faith is equated with faithfulness (keeping faith with Christ)—an equation that is overly simplistic. This, in turn, is cradled by the position that those who are in the faith are forgiven of their sin, etc., as discussed above in connection with Jeremiah 31. In other words, again there is a confusion between the work of God in regeneration and the work of man in sanctification. It is interesting that he offers 2 Corinthians 13:5 to make his point clear because this passage appears to contrast Christ being in one[7] (regeneration—a spiritual state), and failing

7. "Examine yourselves *as to* whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? —unless indeed you are disqualified." (NKJV)

to meet the test or being disqualified—a work of man[8] (*adokmos*)—according to Mr. Gallant's exegesis. Indeed, the examination (*perazete*) is of oneself and that not as to one's faithfulness to the covenant, but as to one's faith, i.e., whether Christ dwells in him, whether he is truly regenerate. Paul is defending the authenticity of his ministry (2 Cor. 13:3). The proof that Christ is speaking in him, of the validity of his ministry, is the working of Christ in them, not their working for Christ. Just as Paul lives by the power of God, so they are to examine their inner selves to see if Christ lives in them. Is the power of God displayed in them because they are holding to the faith? If they are holding to the faith in spite of their weakness, this evidences that Jesus Christ is in them. If they are not holding to the faith, they have failed the test (cf., Calvin's comments). This is paralleled by what Paul teaches in Romans 7 and 8. In Romans 7:28 he affirms that he loves the law of God in his heart (he is in the faith, he is holding to the faith), he delights in the law of God (22), even though he finds this inconsistent with his actions (his keeping the faith with Christ). In contrast, the mind (heart) of the ungodly is hostile to God and his law (Rom. 8:7).

So, although Mr. Gallant uses the OT background extensively throughout the book, he misses the obvious in his discussion of "examine." There is no doubt that Paul rebukes them for violating the table with their sin (especially, the sin of the rich lording it over the poor)—for breaking the faith with Christ. Also, it is equally clear that much more is involved, viz., desecrating the body and blood of Christ with other scandalous sins. But, to suggest that Paul is talking only about outward and serious violations of covenantal commands—sins that only the adults could perpetrate, is to significantly miss the point. Indeed, with reference to the adults Paul is not only talking about scandalous sins, but about all sin. The preaching of Jesus has transformed the understanding of God's requirements—at least, it transformed the understanding of many Jews. The foundation of fellowship is both the outward and inward. We should not only wash the cup on the outside but we should, above all, cleanse the heart (the inside of the cup). This is exactly what Jesus came to accomplish. This is exactly what the body and blood of Christ mean to our experience. True observance of the Lord's Supper requires regeneration and sanctification. The Corinthians lack the second but need also to examine the root cause of their outward sin. Truly cleaning the cup ("cleaning up one's act") involves working on the inner man. Thus, preparation for the Lord's Supper involves "examination" of both the outward and inward parts of the "cup." And the imperative to do this extends to all who participate. So, as the death censure on approaching Mt. Sinai applied to whomever would transgress (including the smallest children), so God applies the censure on the Lord's Table to whomever might eat and drink. Finally, true examination in both the OT and NT requires looking not only to the state of the heart but to both active and passive obedience. Small children may do well on passive obedience, but since they are conceived in sin and go forth from the womb in estrangement from God, from birth they do not meet the standard of active obedience. They fail to worship God according to His commandments, to love Him with their entire heart, soul, and mind, etc.

Response: "A Response to Leonard Coppes Regarding *Feed My Lambs.*" By Tim Gallant.

Dr Leonard Coppes has provided us a rather lengthy interaction with my book, *Feed My Lambs: Why the Lord's Table Should Be Restored to Covenant Children*. Although this review is quite irenic, it is rather curious in nature. Despite the fact that Coppes clearly wishes to rebut my thesis, for the most part, he ends up focusing on relatively minor points for much of the review, and elsewhere he simply ignores the fact that I have anticipated and answered his arguments.

Coppes's piece falls into four major sections: an introduction; interaction with my view regarding the redemptive-historical shift from old to new covenant; interaction with my view that children were admitted to old covenant sacramental meals; and discussion of 1 Corinthians 11. We will take up these areas in order, and then move on to discuss more overarching issues.

1. INTRODUCTION

Coppes begins by quarreling with my introduction, where I suggest that the case for paedocommunion has not been carefully examined by the Reformed churches. Coppes responds by acting as if the case against paedocommunion is simply obvious, on the basis of a handful of confessional data. But the issue is not how clear the confessional standards are.[1] The issue is whether the biblical arguments have been weighed in a careful and responsible matter.

Coppes then goes on to say that the anti-paedocommunion position is immovable, because "Scripture is very clear on the matter in passages such as 1 Corinthians 11" as well as "many other texts which deal with related issues, e.g., the

8. Sanctification is also the work of God. God the Holy Spirit is the strength; man is the one doing the action.

1. This is also quite aside from the question of whether the standards have an inner tension that could lead us either toward paedocommunion or away from it. See e.g. the *Belgic Confession's* assertion that children "ought to receive the sign and sacrament of that which Christ has done for them." While in context, that argument is used in defense of infant baptism, it could just as easily be used to defend paedocommunion.

visible and invisible church, the structure and discipline of the church, the nature and use of the outward benefits of the covenant, the nature and observance of the Lord's Supper, etc." Coppes, however, never exegetes most of these texts nor shows specifically how many of them relate to the matter at hand. (One exception is 1 Corinthians 11, which we will examine further below.)

Perhaps most curious of all is the reviewer's claim that "the paedocommunion position has been a moving target since its reappearance in the modern world. The supporting arguments continue to grow and shift." This is not only incorrect on a fundamental level (a comparison of my book to Christian Keidel's opening 1973 salvo will show remarkable continuity),[2] it is a rather strange claim, coming from a man who defends the traditional practice by means of rather idiosyncratic arguments. Who else in Reformed history argued the credocommunion position by claiming that the Lord's Supper is principally a continuation of the Day of Atonement ritual? Who but Coppes argues on the basis of tiered membership in the new covenant, as if the children of believers had less stake in Christ and His Church?[3] If anything, it is Coppes who appears to be scrambling for arguments in support of his position. (Even apart from Coppes, those opposed to paedocommunion have historically not been able to agree on even as basic a point as whether children partook of Passover.)

Coppes then claims that the church's (presumably, "the Presbyterian Church") scholars "both past and present, have carefully and repeatedly exposited biblical passages such as 1 Corinthians 11 demonstrating that the Confessional position is biblical." Coppes adduces no evidence for this claim, and my own investigation of Presbyterian and Reformed commentaries gives me little reason to grant it. From the beginning, going all the way back to Calvin, the Reformed have failed to take into full account the Old Testament background to the language and concepts of matters in 1 Corinthians 11, such as "remembrance" and self-examination. (More on this passage below.) The careful exposition amounting to demonstration of the validity of the traditional position is simply lacking.[4]

2. Keidel, "Is the Lord's Supper for Children?" *WTJ* 37, 301–341 (1975). Something similar could be said regarding any major treatment of the subject by a Reformed advocate, such as Keidel's initial essay, Rayburn's PCA report, the OPC majority report, my book, and numerous other articles.

3. Contrast to e.g. *Belgic Confession* Art. 34, partially cited above: "Christ shed His blood no less for the washing of the children of believers than for adult persons; and therefore they ought to receive the sign and sacrament of that which Christ has done for them."

4. On the point of historical examination of the issue, see especially the overview provided in Robert Rayburn's minority report to the PCA.

5. Coppes does also refer to my discussion of Galatians 3:27–28, but does not interact with my argument. The chapter as a whole runs some twenty pages (22–42).

2. redemptive-historical shift from old to new covenant

In connection with my pivotal first chapter, it is interesting that Coppes focuses nearly exclusively upon my reading of Jeremiah 31, calling this "one of the key passages" in my "universalization argument." In truth, Jeremiah 31 is a second-order text, and Coppes has fundamentally misread the purpose of my initial chapter in *Feed My Lambs*. He identifies the *shift* between covenants as "Argument 1," as if this were the focus of the chapter. And yet, in the book I spent less than two and a half pages on the section called "New Covenant Anticipation: The Impulse of Universalization" (*Feed My Lambs,* 26–28).[5] By keying on one small part of the argument, Coppes ignores the single strongest argument for paedocommunion, and also disconnects the later argument regarding 1 Corinthians 11 from its context. (More on both these points below.)

What, then, of Coppes's quarrel with my reading of Jeremiah 31? In *Feed My Lambs*, I suggested that this chapter promises new power to the covenant, so that covenant-breaking will be an anomaly. "Taken as a whole, the new covenant will bring real spiritual benefit to its whole constituency" (*Feed My Lambs,* 28).

In response, Coppes introduces the subject of regeneration; supposedly, my position entails "that children, by virtue of their being born into a Christian home, are regenerated"—language I have assiduously avoided. But then this is a "strange regeneration," since some may apostatize. Coppes then castigates my position because it "entails a status wherein the new covenant member may have all his sin forgiven (and never to be remembered) but from which he may fall (he may lose this new covenant status)."

Coppes, however, fails to note what I drew attention to: that Hebrews, which draws explicitly upon the Jeremiah passage in the immediate context (Heb. 10:15–18), envisions precisely the scenario I provided. Members of the new covenant may indeed fall away, which is why I cited Hebrews 10:29: "Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy, who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted *the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified* a common thing, and insulted *the Spirit of grace*" (*Feed My Lambs,* 27)? What covenant other than the new covenant promised in the passage just referenced can possibly be in view here? What "Spirit of grace" but the one promised could this be? The passage clearly parallels the old covenant and the new on the point of apostasy, by way of a "how much more" argument (see the transition between verse 28 and 29). If that scenario does not suit Coppes's theology, then let him provide a refutation of that reading of Hebrews 10:29, which is a rather standard one—and also rather hard to avoid.

Coppes apparently supposes that new covenant membership equals membership in the invisible church (another

category he introduces into the discussion). But this will not work, for several reasons: 1) Most of the biblical data (e.g. Rom. 2:27–29; 9.6ff) undergirding the concept of the invisible church refers already to the old covenant situation. But that means that Jeremiah 31's anticipation of the new covenant cannot be used to introduce such a notion. 2) Such a reading reverses Jeremiah 31 from promise ("these are the blessings to anticipate") to a threat ("membership in the covenant will be shrunken"). 3) Coppes's reading flies in the face of the usage made of the passage in Hebrews 10, as noted above. Whatever nuances may be applied to my reading, it is simply not possible to refer Jeremiah 31 to the invisible church and be done with it.

Further, Coppes claims I am unclear regarding whether children are partakers of the benefits by birth or by baptism. But is this so? The warrant for baptism is the promises made to covenant parents.[6] Thus baptism is the sealing of the promise already made, and it is pointless to pit the warranting promise and the sacrament. Nor is it germane to raise the case of children of Baptists, as Coppes does. The failure of Baptists to provide the sacraments to their children is an anomaly which Scripture does not direct its attention to—any more than under the old covenant, God generated principles regarding what to do with males that were not circumcised who belonged to faithful covenant homes. It was not an envisioned scenario; failure to circumcise was normally predicated upon a rejection of the covenant itself (see Gen. 17:14).

3. Old covenant sacramental meals

In much of the next section, Coppes focuses upon a passing remark in *Feed My Lambs*, namely my parenthetical statement that the trespass offering was apparently included in the food eaten by priestly households. I placed absolutely no weight on this remark (the context was dealing more generally with the issue of ritual cleanness), but Coppes places a great deal on this point. Why? Because he is going to claim that the Lord's Supper has direct ties to the guilt offering.

I have no interest in arguing with Coppes whether children partook of the food of the trespass offering, although I consider much of his line of argument questionable.[7]

Nor do I debate the matter of the Passover being unique among the major feasts in that it required circumcision. At the time I wrote *Feed My Lambs*, I probably placed too much weight upon the choice of the Septuagint (LXX) to translate "stranger" as "proselyte." (In later Judaism, "proselyte" was, in the case of males, at least, a technical term for a circumcised convert.) Thus I am willing to concede that, unlike Passover, uncircumcised Gentiles were probably admitted to the Feasts of Weeks and Tabernacles.

Nonetheless, I do not concede what Coppes claimed in his *Daddy, May I Take Communion?*—namely, that pagans were admitted to these feasts. Pagans were not to be allowed to remain in the land, much less participate in Israel's religious festivals (Exod. 23:33). On that level, God expected that such rites be holy, even when non-Israelites were involved. It must not be forgotten that, while salvation focused upon Israel under the old covenant, they were not the only believers in the world. Naaman, for example, converted without becoming circumcised and joining Israel (see 2 Kings 5:15–19). So while Passover focused upon Israel as a priestly nation (and thus required circumcision), the other two major feasts admitted "strangers"—Gentiles sojourning in the land who worshipped the one true God. This was an anticipation of the new covenant, which is why Zechariah 14:16 describes the united worship of Gentile and Jew under the new covenant in terms of the Feast of Tabernacles. Certainly, that prophecy is not talking about pagan Gentiles worshipping with Jews.

None of this does damage to the paedocommunion position. Children partook of all three major feasts, as Coppes himself admits.

In *Feed My Lambs*, I was clear on two things: 1) the general pattern of the covenantal meals of the old covenant included children; and 2) there is a *particular*, but *not exclusive* connection between Passover and the Lord's Supper.[8] In response, Coppes says that it "is hardly the case" that "the Lord's Supper is more closely tied to the Passover than to other OT sacramental meals."[9] Let us examine how he supports this:

1) "While [the Lord's Supper] is especially tied to the Passover (resting on a sacrifice to the fifth degree), it is also especially and directly tied to the covenant initiating meal on Sinai insofar as at the first Lord's Supper our Lord cited the words of that Mt. Sinai meal (Exod. 24:8)." It is interesting that Coppes completely bypasses my discussion of Jesus'

6. Cf. the warrant for circumcision in Genesis 17; the context of the giving of the rite in 17:9ff is the establishment of the covenant "between Me and you and your descendants after you" (17:7).

7. For extensive interaction with the sorts of arguments Coppes is disposed to make regarding old covenant offerings, see especially Peter J. Leithart, *Daddy, Why Was I Excommunicated? An Examination of Leonard J. Coppes, Daddy, May I Take Communion?* (Niceville, Fla.: Transfiguration Press, 1998 [1992]).

8. I would add that the Passover is a particularized case of the peace offering. An important recent article on the connection between the Lord's Supper and the peace offering is C. John Collins, "The Eucharist as Christian Sacrifice: How Patristic Authors Can Help Us Read the Bible" (*WTJ* 66 [2004] 1–23). Incidentally, this article too points out the positive implications for paedocommunion.

9. Coppes's "hardly the case" language is surely insupportable, even were he correct on the points he brings up. In each case I discuss here, he can cite only one questionable reference, whereas the tie between the Supper and Passover can be found in each of the Synoptics, and almost certainly 1 Corinthians 5, as well, quite aside from further allusions (e.g. John 6). I never made Passover the *exclusive* antecedent to the Supper, and Coppes comes nowhere close to disproving my argument that it is the *principal* antecedent.

use of Exodus 24:8.[10] So let me summarize here: the actual quotation refers, not to the covenant initiating meal on Sinai (of which only the leaders of Israel partook), but to the prior sprinkling of the blood *upon the whole congregation*.[11] Thus this citation does nothing for Coppes's case; rather, it supports my contention that the Supper is for the whole people of God.

2) "Moreover, [the Lord's Supper] is especially and directly tied to the guilt offering (resting on a sacrifice of the fourth degree) by Paul in 1 Corinthians 11 where he uses that pattern (and not the Passover pattern!) in presenting the Lord's Supper." Once again, Coppes ignores my extensive treatment of the context of 1 Corinthians 11 and imposes the guilt offering upon the passage without demonstration. But a more responsible reading is to recognize that throughout 1 Corinthians 9:24–10:22, Paul has already established the pattern of sin and judgment in a sacramental context. If there is an Old Testament backdrop to 1 Corinthians 11, it is not the guilt offering (certainly not "especially and directly," as Coppes suggests), but primarily the wilderness manna and water from the rock, referred to by Paul in 10:2–4. This is reinforced (as I argued in *Feed My Lambs*) by the shared terminology of 9:27 (*adokimos*, disqualified) and 11:28 (*dokimazo*—examine, prove). But of course the wilderness meals admitted children, so they do not assist Coppes's case; hence he mentions them only in passing without elaboration.

3) "Also, as pointed out above, it is especially and directly tied to the great atonement by the writer of Hebrews, who specifically alludes to the Lord's Supper as a meal attached to the great altar in heaven (it rests on a sacrifice of the highest degree)." This supposed "direct tie" between the Supper and the great atonement was dealt with extensively in my book. Does Coppes interact? Once again, no. As I pointed out, Coppes minimizes everything else in order to make the most direct link between the Supper and an event that had no meal attached at all. But now he produces as evidence for his "direct tie" one verse: Hebrews 13:10. "We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat."

But let us note well: Coppes's entire case throughout is explicitly built upon the continuity from old covenant to new of *tiered access* to God. Meanwhile, Hebrews itself inverts things, because this "most holy place" is off limits, not because it is hidden away in some "nth" degree of holiness, but precisely because this altar is "outside the camp," just as Christ suffered "outside the gate" (Heb. 13:11–12). The writer's point in 13:10 is that those who serve the tabernacle are, ironically, trapped by the law's own holiness code, so that there is no fellowship with God in Christ. That is why we are to go forth outside the gate to Jesus, because here we have no continuing city (13:13–14). If we are to tie the Lord's Supper to the work of Christ which fulfilled the Day of Atonement (to which I have no objection, since in one way or another, the Supper relates to all of Christ's work), there is nonetheless no lesson to be learned regarding the supposed extra sanctity required that would bar "lower-level" or "immature" Christians. The opposite is the case. Throughout Hebrews, the writer has been calling upon us to *come boldly* to the throne of grace, because our forerunner-High Priest has shared our *weaknesses* (Heb. 4:15–16). He has broken down the dividing walls, and indeed, His own flesh has become the torn veil through which we enter the Most Holy Place (Heb. 10:20). There is therefore no room for Coppes's rules of gradation. If we are in Christ (and that is the testimony of the New Testament regarding all believers, not just mature ones), then we have full access to the Most Holy Place. The Protestant position is the priesthood of *all* believers.[12]

4. 1 Corinthians 11

In *Feed My Lambs*, I demonstrated the conceptual continuity that runs between 1 Corinthians 9:24–10.22 and the key passage in 1 Corinthians 11. As noted above, the backdrop to the judgment in 1 Corinthians 11 is the judgments of Israel in the wilderness, and the key idea of *dokimazo* (rendered by many modern translations as "examine") is borrowed from the *adokimos* ("unapproved") language of 9:27, which in turn plays out in the example of Israel in 10:1ff.

Does Coppes interact with this? No. He isolates 1 Corinthians 11 from its context and attempts to impose a more convenient conceptual context upon it.

First, Coppes appeals to a lexical argument: the term *anamnesis* ("remembrance") "entails a self-conscious activity on the part of the participant." He appeals to one Greek authority: Bruce Metzger says that the Greek *-sis* ending "indicates an action;" it "produces the abstract name of an action." Nobody disagrees with that; yet, Coppes appears to suppose he has demonstrated something important. He then quotes Behm's claim that Christians are to engage in a "recollection of Jesus … in accordance with the active sense of ἀνάμνησις." But of course, Behm is simply making an interpretive assertion which Coppes follows.

10. See *Feed My Lambs*, 87–88; cf. 143.

11. I also showed the parallel between the covenant-initiating meal on Sinai and the Last Supper. Neither provide the ongoing pattern for who participates, since in both cases, the participants are representative of the whole people of God in an initiatory meal. Otherwise, the Exodus 24 meal would set a precedent that only elders and ecclesiastical leaders could partake, and the Last Supper would set a precedent that only apostles could partake. Again, see *Feed My Lambs,* 87–88.

12. On baptism as priestly ordination, see e.g. Peter J. Leithart, *The Priesthood of the Plebs: A Theology of Baptism* (Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock, 2003) and my own "Pentecostal Ordination: The Newness of Christian Baptism" (2004, http://www.biblicalstudiescenter.org/ecclesiology/pentecostalordination.htm).

However, as I noted in *Feed My Lambs*, there is a pervasive Old Testament backdrop to the remembrance/memorial theme (see esp. 83–87). And notwithstanding Coppes's appeal to the supposed uniqueness of ἀνάμνησις,[13] I noted that *this very word* is employed at least twice (in the LXX) in connection with old covenant ritual, and in neither instance is Coppes's reading appropriate. The trumpets at Israel's feasts were to be for an *anamnesis* (Num. 10:10), but it can scarcely be thought that they were engaging in some sort of active recollection. Even more striking in resemblance to 1 Corinthians 11:24, 25 is Leviticus 24:7 (LXX), which includes the same preposition and noun construction (*eis anamnesis*—"unto a memorial"). The bottom line is that in the Old Testament sacramental and ritual context, *anamnesis* does not fundamentally differ in usage from the related terms for remembrance and memorial. Trying to impose such a differentiated meaning in 1 Corinthians 11 is special pleading.

Beyond all this, Coppes completely skirts the issue of the acting subject doing the remembering. Throughout the old covenant, beginning all the way back with the rainbow in Genesis 9:12–17, memorials had first reference to *God's* remembering (see Gen 9:15), and then called for a secondary echo of remembrance from His people. And the construction in 1 Corinthians 11 calls into serious question the presupposition that *eis anamnesin* refers to the subjective remembrance of the people at all. Contrary to the usual English rendering, the text does not say, "Do this in remembrance *of* Me," but "Do this unto *My remembrance*" (or, on the analogy of Leviticus 24:7, noted above, "unto My memorial"). The sacraments and signs are first of all covenantal reminders to God, and whether we see Jesus as the one remembering,[14] or as the one remembered by the Father, we do not have a clear-cut case of subjective earthly human remembrance in any case, no matter what precise meaning we attribute to *anamnesis*. Therefore, Coppes's appeal to this term fails on two crucial counts, all while isolating the text from its conceptual roots in old covenant ritual terminology.

But if the appeal to *anamnesis* is a weak lexical argument, Coppes's next move is downright curious: he suggests that the "active sense of remembrance is further supported by what is recorded in verse 26"—namely, the fact that "eating, drinking, and proclaiming are all present tense verbs." Supposedly, an aorist would be more suitable if a memorial action were in view. Just why that is so is not clear.

Coppes then goes on briefly to discuss the following verses, placing stress upon the eating and drinking of judgment. He adds nothing to his argument here; nor does he interact with my extensive discussion in *Feed My Lambs*.

But perhaps most telling is this analysis of verse 30: "the result of not examining oneself properly is sickness and death." *But that is not what Paul says*. Paul attributes judgment to *eating and drinking in an unworthy manner* (read 27–30 in order). Coppes seems to equate that "unworthy manner" itself with failure to examine oneself.[15] "Just as in the OT, so today, the Lord protects children from the judgment that comes upon all who 'come before the Lord' without examining themselves."

But clearly, the context throughout this chapter, and the epistle as a whole, tells us otherwise. No matter how robust the spin we put on *dokimazo*, it is nothing more than *a preventative measure*. The most soul-searching "self-examination" is with the goal of repenting if necessary. But the "proving of oneself" is in no sense constitutive of the sacrament. Otherwise, this command would not appear in 1 Corinthians 11 in reaction to a crisis; it would rather have been part of the original institution.

But Paul has already shown what unworthy participation and consequent judgment looks like. That, after all, is the story of 1 Corinthians 10—a context that, once again, Coppes has studiously ignored. The Israelites ate manna and drank spiritual drink, but rebelled, committed idolatry and fornication, and fell under judgment. So likewise Paul warns the Corinthians not to attempt to "double-dip"—partake of both the Lord's Supper and the idol feasts, lest they provoke the Lord to jealousy (10:14–22). And so likewise, the divisions at the very table of Christ in 1 Corinthians 11 in themselves constitute unworthy participation. The whole point of *dokimazo* is that those who participate are not disqualified (*adokimoi*; cf 9:27). Even on its strongest reading, self-examination is not itself some sort of entrance exam; it is a means for calling oneself to repentance. And the issue that Coppes only escapes by ignoring 1 Corinthians 10 and my extensive treatment of it is this: *children did not die in the wilderness*. It was the children who possessed the land. They

13. Coppes asserts, "Christ's command involves a unique and carefully worded statement."

14. As I suggested on p. 86 of *Feed My Lambs*.

15. That is also the most positive spin I can put on how Coppes closes his review, where he says that while children may "do well" with passive obedience, they "do not meet the standard of active obedience," since "they fail to worship God according to His commandments, to love Him with their entire heart, soul, and mind, etc." Presumably (?), Coppes is not claiming that adults manage to love God with their entire heart, soul, and mind, either. So I assume he means that only adults can examine themselves and see their failure on the point. Thus, admittance to the table is contingent upon self-examination as such, and failure to engage such self-examination is itself what provokes judgment. If Coppes means something other than that, his problems are even larger, and the Supper becomes pretty much literally an object merited by good works. But even beyond that, the Bible does not countenance the notion that adults are in a superior position to children regarding their holiness or faithfulness (see e.g. Mt 19:13–14, another key passage in *Feed My Lambs* which Coppes does not address).

were the *dokimoi*, the approved ones. Only by an atomistic, decontextualized reading of 1 Corinthians 11 does Coppes avoid being confronted with the salient fact that in the Old Testament, the only time children perished was in connection with sins of their parents (such as the households of Korah and Achan). The notion that covenant children are in serious danger of eating and drinking judgment to themselves is a cop-out that ignores the total witness of Scripture, not least the context of 1 Corinthians itself.

some basic problems in coppes' critique

The "invisible Church." Coppes insists in several places that my central problem is that I do not understand or am not accounting for the distinction between the visible and invisible Church. He seems to assume that simple appeal to the invisible Church somehow buttresses his case. But appeal to this distinction only clouds the issue. Both baptism and the Lord's Supper are visible sacraments given to the visible people of God. Even if we could determine that Coppes and I agreed fully upon the doctrine of the invisible Church itself, not a hair would be added to his argument against paedocommunion. The sacraments are given to the Church as a community in the world, and the children of believers are part of that community.[16] That is why Paul, when developing the typology of sacramental participation and connected judgment, appeals, not to invisible concepts, but to the historical people of Israel, identifying their experience as providing a matrix (*tupos*) for ours (1 Cor. 10:6, 11).

The sacraments as a work. The Scriptures present baptism and the Lord's Supper primarily as the self-gift of the Triune God. We are baptized *into* the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19). The bread and the cup are *koinonia* in Christ's body and blood. They are God's gracious actions toward us. One of Luther's principal critiques of Rome was that the Roman Church had obscured the sacraments as means of grace. Baptism is principally God's action.[17] Coppes everywhere presupposes the opposite. For him, baptism is principally an act of "faithfulness" on the part of the believer; the Lord's Supper is something to be earned by "active and passive obedience." This is simply untrue; God Himself is the one who calls the saints into *koinonia* (1 Cor. 1:9).[18] The sacraments are God's gift of Himself.

Tiered citizenship in the Church. The whole point of Coppes's appeal to the levels of holiness in the old covenant is to claim that there is a similar tiered citizenship in the new. To illustrate this, he points to the fact that not all are pastors or elders; indeed, not all are eligible to become such. But this both stands the Lord's Supper on its head and misconstrues the offices. The offices are not membership benefits, but particularized gifts of the Spirit. And Paul explicitly sets those differentiated gifts (1 Cor. 12:1–11), which the Spirit distributes in a particularized way to whom He wills, over against the sacraments, which are the common inheritance of all the people of God ("all the members of that one body," 1 Cor. 12: 12–13). The offices have nothing to do with tiered measures of holiness or gradations of citizenship.[19] *There is no such thing in the new covenant*. That is the message that rings again and again in Scripture, particularly Paul's writings. The dividing walls have been broken down; God has made one new man in Christ. Attempting to re-erect the old covenant levels of holiness is a partial vindication of the heresy in Galatia, and is to be resisted.

In contrast to Coppes, and in accord with the historic Reformed position, I affirm that "Christ shed His blood *no less* for the washing of the children of believers than for adult persons; and *therefore* they ought to receive the sign and sacrament of that which Christ has done for them."[20] In accord with Christ, I believe that it is *adults* who need to become like little children in order to enter the kingdom and thus receive all its benefits (Matt. 18.3),[21] and not children who need to be adults before they can be "really real" citizens of the kingdom. There is one body, one baptism (Eph. 4:4–5), one calling into the one *koinonia* of Christ (1 Cor. 1:9).

5. the central linchpin in my position

Since Coppes has largely sidestepped the main point of the argument, allow me to state it succinctly: *the Lord's Supper is the table of the body*. The fact that chapter one of *Feed My Lambs* is entitled "One Bread, One Body" should surely have alerted the reviewer to the key place of 1 Corinthians 10:16–17. A glance at the index will demonstrate that it is my most frequently cited passage. Yet, amazingly, Coppes fails to refer to that text even once. Moreover, he ignores the extensive work I did in the epistle as a whole, by which I demonstrated a coherent structure to Paul's approach to the Church and the Supper. Here is a small sample:

1) The children of believers are identified as *hagioi* (saints) in 1 Corinthians 7:14 (*Feed My Lambs,* 34–36).

16. Cf. *Heidelberg Catechism* Q/A 74.

17. E.g. *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*: "Hence we ought to understand baptism at human hands just as if Christ Himself, nay God Himself, baptized us with His own hands" (in *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings*, John Dillenberger, ed; [New York: Doubleday, 1962] 296). Note also the contrast between evangelical sacraments and works on pp. 299–300.

18. Cf. 2 Cor.13:14, where the *koinonia* of the Holy Spirit is placed in parallel with God the Father's love and the grace of Christ.

19. The New Testament bars women from the teaching office. Under the new covenant, do women have a lower level of graded holiness than men?

20. *Belgic Confession*, Art. 34.

21. The notion that one can be the "greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:4) but not have access to the basic gift of the communion table is absurd.

2) *Saints* are specifically *called ones* (1 Cor. 1:2) and the stated object of that calling is calling into the *koinonia* of Christ (1 Cor. 1:9; *Feed My Lambs,* 35).

3) The Lord's Supper is the table of that *koinonia* (1 Cor. 10:16), so that the many members are one bread and one body, because they all partake of that one bread (1 Cor. 10:17; *Feed My Lambs,* 31–34; cf. 35–36).

4) Similarly, the two sacraments are set in parallel as common to the whole body again in 1 Cor. 12:12–13 (*Feed My Lambs,* 36).

In 1 Corinthians 10.16–17, Paul writes,

> The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the *koinonia* of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the *koinonia* of the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we being many are one body, for we all from the one bread partake.

Koinonia means partnership, mutual participation. This is the calling of the saints, the gift of Christ to His whole body as one body united by one bread. The Lord's Supper is therefore not a "special attainment;" it is not the final rung for the really and truly sanctified, a final plateau on some pagan ziggurat to heaven; it is the table of Christ for the body of Christ. One bread, one body: that is the message of 1 Corinthians 10:16–17. This very simple thesis was the main thrust of the argument of the Hussites regarding paedocommunion (as I also noted),[22] and it is the main thrust of my own argument. And no amount of third-order theological rationalization, as Coppes engages in for most of his review, can overthrow what this text plainly says. The table is for the body.

conclusion

While I appreciate the tone of much of Dr. Coppes's review, I am disturbed that he quietly ignores the case that has been put before him. His readers who have not studied *Feed My Lambs* may suppose that a definitive rebuttal to the paedocommunion case has been provided here, but that is not so. Coppes ignores the main argument and the related careful work which I have provided in terms of demonstrating the coherence of numerous themes related to the sacrament in 1 Corinthians. Whereas I have illustrated the coherence of Paul's discussion, Coppes isolates a few elements in chapter 11 and in effect transforms it into its opposite: namely, a means of institutionalizing divisions at the Lord's table—just what Paul was fighting (1 Cor. 11.17–22).

Those who have regard to the context throughout the epistle, however, will not buy this reading. The apostle is concerned for the integrity of the people of God, and that involves not only a pure table (which Coppes is apparently strong on) but a united one, where the whole body shares *koinonia* with Christ.[23] The integrity of the table means not only excommunication and judgment for covenant-breakers (as in e.g. 1 Cor. 5, 10); it means a mutual sharing in Christ's self-gift for the rest. In a word, 1 Corinthians is about *solidarity*. And a table that excludes the weakest members of the Church is not a table of solidarity, but of institutionalized schism.

[Dr. Coppes believed that Mr. Gallant's response required a lengthy reply which he declined to undertake for this issue due to time constraints. Lord willing, this topic will be readdressed in a subsequent volume of *The Confessional Presbyterian.*] ▪

In Brief: **Transcription (see inside back cover): New York, 10 July 1817. Letter from T. & J. Swords to the Rev. Joseph D. Welton, Weston, Connecticut.**

[page 1] "Rev Joseph D Welton, New York 10th July 1817.
Bought of T. & J. Swords

50 Society's Prayer Books, May 22—	19.00
30 & — & — this day	11.40
	30.40

Rev. Sir

The 30 Prayer Books mentioned in the above bill have this day been sent? To Bridgeport per packet Lapwing.—to the care of the Rev. Mr. Shelton—We presume they are intended for gratuitious distribution, & have therefore put them at the price stipulated by the Board of Managers of the New York Aux.ry Bible P. Book Society.—The Board expect that all orders of this description will be accompanied by the amount,—the books being put at a very trifling advance above the cost.—You will have the goodness to remit in the amount of the above bill by an early conveyance; and if the Prayer Books which you took on Sale in May have met with purchasers, be pleased also to include [page 2] payment for them in the same remittance. Bill of these is annexed.—If they are not sold, there will be no necessity of your remitting for them unless you find it perfectly convenient so to do.—

Yours very respectfully

T. & J. Swords"

Here follows in another hand, presumably that of Mr Welton (not shown on the inside back cover), a detailing of the books purchased on May 22, 1817 for a total of 38.50.

Continued on Page 255.

22. "Hussite paedocommunion was based in part upon a sacramental reading of John 6, but more particularly, by the communal force of passages such as 1 Corinthians 10:16–17. The sacrament is for the *whole people of God*" (*Feed My Lambs,* 129).

23. This way of putting things, of course, is itself misleading. According to 1 Corinthians 11, disunity is itself a violation of the Church's purity.