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EDITORIAL

Archbishop James Ussher on the cover of *The Confessional Presbyterian*? It actually is not too surprising a choice. While an episcopal/conformist and a royalist at the time of the English Civil War, Ussher had been a friend to Presbyterians in Ireland and had much in common with English Puritans, and he arguably had perhaps the most influence of any individual living at the time on the productions of the Westminster Assembly. While called to be a member, the Archbishop of Armagh did not attend by order of the king. However, he impacted the Assembly's work through the Irish Articles and his *Body of Divinity*, and thus had indirect influence on the doctrinal standards of Presbyterianism. Therefore, it is fitting that James Ussher grace the cover of this sixteenth issue and form the subject of the opening articles and several bits throughout its pages. The editors are particularly pleased to feature writers in the vanguard of renewed and significant interest in Ussher, his works, and the manuscript material that survives.

In addition to the Ussher material, the editors are pleased to offer up an exegetical piece by Stewart E. Lauer, "The Role of 'The Great Commission' in the Apostolic Churches." This is

followed by a large section of articles on historical or historical-doctrinal topics. Two of these, as well as the back-of-issue features, benefit from research and work appearing in the new Naphtali Press Special Editions series of books co-published by Naphtali Press and Reformation Heritage books. In addition to Chris Coldwell's article on the new critical edition of the London Provincial Assembly's *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici*, Matthew Vogan describes and gives historical background to the 1628 manuscript sermons of David Dickson on the book of Jeremiah's Lamentations, a group of sermons extraordinarily current to the year that is 2020. Angelo Valle provides readers with an article on John Owen's pastoral theology in an examination of his ordination sermons and Clif Daniell gives a look into English Radicalism at the time of the Westminster Assembly. There is a notice of the 400th anniversary of the Pilgrim's arrival on the *Mayflower* and a lengthy but still very useful and detailed piece by Thomas M'Crie on the Marrow Controversy. *Articles* is closed out by a doctrinal piece by Dr. Willborn, an extract by R. A. Webb, and a sermon by Thomas E. Peck.

We have a good selection of reviews in this issue that should be of interest, as well as another entry in the recurring *Psallo* feature. The recurring translation feature, *In Translatiōne*, has been replaced with *Opuscula Selecta*, which will be as regular a feature as there is material to offer up of interest to our readers. New also this issue, *Et Mortuus Adhuc Per Eam Loquitur* will appear as needed to fill out a signature to a proper close.

Please enjoy this issue of *The Confessional Presbyterian*! ■

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Archbishop James Ussher (1581–1656): His Life and Work, the Scholarship about Him, and His Significance for Confessional Presbyterians

By Harrison Perkins

INTRODUCTION

James Ussher, the seventeenth-century Archbishop of Armagh, is arguably the foremost voice for Reformed theology in the entire history of the church in Ireland, and one of the more significant figures for Reformed theology in England as well. Despite his theological prowess in the early-modern period, Ussher is now usually most associated with debates about the doctrine of creation and the age of the earth. Although world chronology was certainly one of his interests, it would be a shame to limit Ussher's importance to such a narrow issue. Ussher strove for real Reformation in the established churches of Ireland and England, continually and fiercely refuted Roman Catholic doctrine, and carried sway with some of the most prominent figures in seventeenth-century Presbyterianism. Ussher is, therefore, worth wide-ranging consideration.

This essay intends to provide a brief introduction to Archbishop James Ussher and the various important issues that necessarily arise when studying his life and writings. The first section outlines Ussher's biography but also highlights some of Ussher's major contributions throughout his ministry. The second section then describes the major issues being presently discussed in the secondary literature about Ussher in hopes that readers may have a better idea about what the field of Ussher studies has currently addressed. The final major section explores some of the theological themes in Ussher's thought that may raise the most questions for confessional Presbyterians. Ussher was an archbishop after all and held some views on doctrine and practice that would be out of accord with what most readers of this journal would hold. What are confessional Presbyterians to make of Ussher in this regard, and how can we still appreciate him despite those differences?

USSHER'S LIFE AND WORK

Ussher lived a long life according to the seventeenth-century expectancy and made many significant contributions to the life of the church. His life can be divided roughly into three periods: his early life, his career in Ireland, and his career in England.¹ The least information is available to us from Ussher's early life up until his graduation from university. He was born in Dublin on January 4, 1581, into a prominent family that had long served the English government in Ireland. He attended a school founded by two Scottish presbyterians, James Fuller and James Hamilton. In 1594, he entered the newly founded university of Trinity College Dublin, where Fuller and Hamilton were also Fellows.

Ussher's time at Trinity College is not the most eventful period of his life, but it does certainly show that Ussher was always on a trajectory of academic success. He became a fellow of the university in 1598, graduated with a BA in 1599, and obtained an MA in 1600. Also in 1600, actually prior to obtaining his MA, Ussher had a pivotal debate with Henry Fitzsimon, a Jesuit missionary then imprisoned at Dublin Castle. The public encounter with this Jesuit theologian would prove at least

THE AUTHOR: Harrison Perkins (PhD, Queen's University Belfast), is the assistant minister at London City Presbyterian Church (Free Church of Scotland), a visiting lecturer in systematic theology at Edinburgh Theological Seminary, and the author of *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works: James Ussher and the Reformed Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 2020).

1. There are three biographies of Ussher that are most useful. The most academic account is Alan Ford, *James Ussher: Theology, History, and Politics in Early-Modern Ireland and England* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007). An older, but still useful biography that is not quite as overwhelming in detail is R. Buick Knox, *James Ussher Archbishop of Armagh* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1967), 7–79. A more introductory level biography that is easily available is Crawford Gribben, *The Irish Puritans: James Ussher and the Reformation of the Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003).

in some ways formative for the rest of his career. Ussher was only nineteen-years-old at the time, but this series of debates forced Ussher to consider at length the writings of the Jesuit apologist, Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621). Ussher would, for the rest of his life, emphasize refuting specifically the Jesuit brand of Roman theology, even as he instructed ministry students in 1643–44, “Reade no Jesuites at all, for they are nothing but ostentacion and never understood the Scriptures.”² His first debate with Fitzsimon was about whether the Pope is the Antichrist, which was an obvious early indication of Ussher’s lifelong anti-Catholicism.

At this point, Ussher’s early life and the beginning of his career in Ireland begin to overlap. In the first years of the seventeenth century, Ussher’s emphasis was on his involvement in the local church. In 1602, he was appointed as Catechist and Proctor at Trinity, but, in that same year, the Archbishop of Armagh, Henry Ussher, ordained Ussher as Deacon and Priest on the same day, which was at least an unusual practice.³ During a particularly pointed effort in 1602 to impose Protestantism upon Irish Catholics, Ussher was assigned as the preacher to St. Katharine’s in Dublin.⁴ In 1605, Archbishop Adam Loftus appointed Ussher as chancellor of St. Patrick’s, Dublin, and Ussher devoted himself to preaching weekly in his church in Finglas. This devotion contrasted with many of Ussher’s contemporaries who sought to obtain multiple benefices

rather than committing themselves to care well for a single charge. Ussher also “lectured” regularly on Sunday afternoons at Christ Church, Dublin, which simply means that he gave the catechetical instruction in Protestant doctrine.⁵ In both preaching tasks, Ussher showed himself enthusiastic about teaching a majority Roman Catholic population to believe in Reformed theology.

Ussher had not, however, set aside his academic pursuits, which took on renewed focus in 1607 when he received his BD from Trinity College. Soon after receiving this degree, Ussher was appointed as the Professor of Theological Controversies at Trinity. The notes that remain from his weekly divinity lectures beginning in 1607 show how he used this post to continue a focused refutation of Robert Bellarmine.⁶ It is most likely that Ussher composed his famous catechetical work, *A Body of Divinitie*, which he likely intended for use in instructing parishioners and for use in preparation for university lectures during this period as the Professor of divinity.⁷ In 1612, Ussher received his DD from Trinity College, completing his years of supervised study at the college.

The next several years saw Ussher develop both his academic and ecclesiastical interests. In 1613, he published his first major work, *Concerning the Gravest Question about the Christian Church*, which argued for the church’s continuity even since the New Testament era.⁸ This point about the church’s historical unity into Protestantism would remain a significant part of Ussher’s anti-Catholic polemical writings for the rest of his career. In 1614, Ussher married Phoebe Challoner, the daughter of another significant Fellow at Trinity College Luke Challoner (1550–1613).⁹ In 1615, however, the Irish Convocation met, which resulted in the production of the Irish Articles as the Church of Ireland’s confession of faith. Although it has been somewhat debated, it is most likely that Ussher was the primary author of the Irish confession, which included some confessional developments of blatantly Reformed theology.¹⁰

It is worth noting some of the important aspects of the Irish Articles since they highlight some of Ussher’s chief concerns for the advancement of Reformed theology. This confession was the first to explicitly state the doctrine of the Covenant of Works explicitly, although here referred to as “the covenant of the law.”¹¹ Ussher emphasized the doctrine of the Covenant of Works as an important feature of Reformed theology throughout his entire career.¹² This confession also included the express statement that the Pope is the Antichrist. Article 80 reads,

2. Queen’s College, Oxford MS 217, fol. 42v. See the transcription of this manuscript published in this issue as “Archbishop Ussher’s Recommended Reading,” on page 32.

3. Knox, *James Ussher*, 9.

4. Ford, *James Ussher*, 30–31.

5. Ford, *James Ussher*, 33.

6. James Ussher, *The Whole Works of the Most Rev. James Ussher*, ed. by C.R. Elrington and J.H. Todd, 17 vol. (Dublin, 1829–64), 14:383–523.

7. Harrison Perkins, “Manuscript and Material Evidence for James Ussher’s Authorship of *A Body of Divinitie* (1645),” *Evangelical Quarterly* 89.2 (2018): 133–61.

8. James Ussher, *Gravissimae Quaestionis de Christianarum Ecclesiarum* (London, 1613).

9. Knox, *James Ussher*, 9.

10. Ford, *James Ussher*, 85–103; Harrison Perkins, “The Westminster Assembly’s Probable Appropriation of James Ussher,” *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 37 no 1 (Spring 2019): 51–52. For an extensive defense of Ussher’s authorship of the Irish Articles, see the introduction to “The Summary Method of the Christian Religion” in Harrison Perkins (ed.), *James Ussher’s Theological Manuscripts: Critical Texts with Commentary* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, forthcoming).

11. [Church of Ireland], *Articles of Religion Agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops and the Rest of the Cleargie in Ireland, in the Convocation* (Dublin, 1615), article 21.

12. Harrison Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works: James Ussher and the Reformed Tradition* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020).

The Bishop of Rome is so farre from being the Supreme head of the universall Church of Christ: that his workes and doctrine doe plainly discover him to bee *that man of sinne*, foretold in the holy Scripture, *whome the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and abolish with the brightness of his comming*.¹³

Ussher had publicly initiated this concern during his debates in 1600 with Fitzsimon, but he had clearly maintained his vigorous antagonism for popery. Although it is easy to overlook, even this article's reference to the "Bishop of Rome" is polemical, since it denies the legitimacy of the papal title itself. It makes sense that the Irish Reformed community would be the first to confess that the Pope is the Antichrist since they would very pointedly fear the majority Roman Catholic population and its allegiance to the Roman pontiff. They did likely see themselves in an essentially eschatological faceoff for the spiritual fate of their nation. On a more upbeat note, however, the Irish Articles also include a particularly Reformed mention of the Lord's Day. Article 56 says,

The first day of the weeke, which is the *Lords day*, is wholly to be dedicated unto the service of God: and therefore we are bound therein to rest from our common and dayly buisnesse; and to bestowe that leasure upon holy exercises, both publike and private.¹⁴

Although this article may not seem very striking to confessional Presbyterians, in the context of the established church of Ussher's day, this was an express statement of sympathy with some notable puritan concerns. After all, England's Thirty-Nine Articles had no such endorsement of the Lord's Day, and the issue was becoming a point of contention within the debates about conformity.¹⁵ It could be that the confession used the terminology of "Lord's Day" rather than "Sabbath" in order to omit more inflammatory language, but the omission is not all that significant, especially since Ussher himself referred to the Lord's Day in Sabbatarian language.¹⁶ It is notable, however, that the Irish Articles do not address polity even though the Church of Ireland was episcopal, since there were many ministers who favored and promoted Presbyterian polity laboring in Irish charges.¹⁷ Ussher's role in producing the Irish Articles itself makes him significant in many branches of the ongoing Reformed tradition, considering the Westminster Assembly used the Irish Articles as a particularly important source document in preparing the Westminster Confession.¹⁸

Although Ussher was not personally involved, the next major event in this timeline would be the Synod

of Dort, which met 1618–19 to address the Arminian controversy in the Netherlands. The British sent a delegation of theologians to the synod, which included Ussher's close friend Samuel Ward (1577–1640). The British Delegation's main focus seemed to be in their contribution regarding the extent of Christ's satisfaction on the cross. Some, such as Ward and John Davenant (1572–1641), argued for a version of hypothetical universalism that posed that Christ died in some way for every member of the human race, even though the benefits of His death were applied only to believers in Christ. Ussher most likely wrote his letter about the extent of Christ's satisfaction at this time, which came into the hands of the British delegates to Dort.¹⁹ In this letter, Ussher argued that Christ's death does have some sort of universal significance in rendering human nature savable, even though only those who are elect become partakers of Christ's death, which is an issue that will be revisited in the final section of this essay.²⁰ It has been reasonably argued that Ussher's opinion and this letter were important in shaping the British Delegation's arguments at the Synod of Dort.²¹

13. [Church of Ireland], *Articles of Religion*, article 80 (italics original).

14. *Ibid.*, *Articles of Religion*, article 56 (italics original).

15. Kenneth L. Parker, *The English Sabbath: A Study of Doctrine and Discipline from the Reformation to the Civil War*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: CUP, 2010).

16. E.g. James Ussher, *a Body of Divinitie* (London, 1645), 124; *The Correspondence of James Ussher, 1600–1656*, ed. by Elizabethanne Boran, 3 vol. (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2015), 2:706–7 (letter to William Twisse), 2:715 (letter to John Ley).

17. Knox, *James Ussher*, 21–24; Ford, *James Ussher*, 41–47.

18. Richard A. Muller, "Inspired by God—Pure in All Ages: The Doctrine of Scripture in the Westminster Confession," in Richard A. Muller and Roland S. Ward, *Scripture and Worship: Biblical Interpretation and the Directory for Public Worship* (Philipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2007), 40–42; J.V. Fesko, *The Theology of the Westminster Standards: Historical Context and Theological Insights* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 60; A.F. Mitchell, *The Westminster Assembly: Its History and Standards* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publications, 1884), 372–85; Robert Letham, *The Westminster Assembly: Reading Its Theology in Historical Context* (Philipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2009), 62–82; Benjamin B. Warfield, *The Westminster Assembly and Its Work* (Philipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1959; repr. Still Water Revival Books, 1991), 59; Perkins, "The Westminster Assembly's Probable Appropriation of James Ussher," 51–63.

19. *Correspondence of James Ussher*, 1:139–47 (letters to Ezekiel Culverwell); published in the early-modern period as James Ussher, *The Judgement of the Late Arch-Bishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland*, 1. *Of the Extent of Christ's Death, and Satisfaction*, 2. *Of the Sabbath...* 3. *Of the Ordination of Other Reformed Churches* (London, 1657), 1–40.

20. For discussion of Ussher's view of Christ's death, see Richard Snoddy, *The Soteriology of James Ussher: The Act and Object of Saving Faith* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014), 40–92; Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works*, 179–205.

21. Jonathan D. Moore, "James Ussher's Influence on the Synod of Dort," in Aza Goudriaan and Fred van Lieburg (eds.), *Revisiting*

Ussher's career took a significant, although not necessarily unexpected, shift when King James I appointed him as the Bishop of Meath in January of 1621. He had to resign from Trinity College to take the bishopric, and yet Trinity continued with its inclination toward puritan theology.²² Ussher preached before the House of Commons at Westminster's St. Margaret's Church on February 18, 1621, which further marked his accession in political favor.²³ Upon return to Ireland, he embarked upon arguing in favor of recusancy fines for Roman Catholics who absented from Protestant worship. Ussher's vigor on this issue was partly due to his enthusiasm to find ways to fund the administrative burden of the churches, but partly due to his ongoing anti-Catholic efforts.²⁴ His concerns in that regard were most clearly expressed in his next two publications, the 1622 book, *An Epistle concerning the Religion of the Ancient Irish*, which was later reprinted in 1631 in London as *A Discourse of the Religion Anciently Professed by the Irish and the British*, and his 1624 work, *An Answer to a Challenge Made by a Jesuite in Ireland*.²⁵ This book was one of Ussher's more directly theological publications, and it focused on refuting eleven different Roman doctrines. He sounded the anti-Catholic note again, even if more moderately, in his 1624 sermon before the king.²⁶ Even with Ussher's limited reach as bishop, the clear emphasis of his role in 1621–24 was on doing his best at administration in the face of threats to Protestantism.

the Synod of Dort (1618–1619) (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 163–79; Michael J. Lynch, "John Davenant's Hypothetical Universalism: A Defense of Catholic and Reformed Orthodoxy" (PhD diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 2019), 127–80.

22. Ford, *James Ussher*, 42–43.

23. The most accessible version of this published sermon is in *James Ussher and a Reformed Episcopal Church*, ed. by Richard Snoddy (Moscow, ID: The Davenant Press, 2018), 22–61.

24. Knox, *James Ussher*, 27–32.

25. James Ussher, *An Epistle concerning the Religion of the Ancient Irish* (Dublin, 1622); James Ussher, *A Discourse of the Religion Anciently Professed by the Irish and the British* (London, 1631); James Ussher, *An Answer to a Challenge Made by a Jesuite in Ireland* (Dublin, 1624).

26. *James Ussher and a Reformed Episcopal Church*, 62–96; Ford, *James Ussher*, 63, 76.

27. Bodleian Library, Oxford MS Eng.th.e. 25. For the context and content of these sermons, see in this issue Richard Snoddy, "'The Mysteries of Christ': James Ussher Among the Puritans, 1626," p. 33.

28. Knox, *James Ussher*, 34.

29. Ford, *James Ussher*, 144–64.

30. Knox, *James Ussher*, 97.

31. Knox, *James Ussher*, 38–44.

32. Ford, *James Ussher*, 150–51.

33. James Ussher, *Gottschalci et praedestinationae controversiae ab eo Motae Historia* (Dublin, 1631).

34. Ford, *James Ussher*, 155–61; Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works*, 153–57.

In 1625, however, the limitations of Ussher's role diminished when James I, as one of his final acts before he died, appointed Ussher to be the Archbishop of Armagh, the highest See in the Church of Ireland, which was a charge that Ussher held until his death. Ussher had traveled to England in 1624 and remained there for some time due to illness and the king's encouragement to stay to advance his studies. It was during this time that Ussher wrote his *Answer to ... a Jesuit*. At the beginning of 1626, Ussher preached a series of sermons in various pulpits on Christology, which is full of rich doctrinal exposition of the mystery of the Incarnation and Christ's work as our covenantal Mediator.²⁷ Ussher returned to Ireland to take up his prelate in March of 1626. Soon, however, he was back in England in May of 1626 when he was made DD at the University of Oxford.²⁸ By the end of 1626, though, he was back in Ireland and more settled into his duties as Archbishop.

The following years saw Ussher thoroughly engaged with the business of the Church of Ireland, primarily against the rising problems of Arminianism and Roman Catholicism.²⁹ Beginning in 1627, he worked to have William Beddell, a graduate of the puritan-leaning Emmanuel College, Cambridge, installed as the Provost of Trinity College.³⁰ He continued to work for the success of Protestantism over the Roman Catholic majority, but his endless efforts on this front were also constantly strained.³¹ In 1628, he began a regular correspondence with William Laud (1573–1645), who would later become the Archbishop of Canterbury. Although Ussher would end up in tension with Laud over the church's theological direction when both occupied the highest positions in the established churches of Ireland and England, Ussher earlier seemed to work well with Laud for the Church of Ireland's administrative well-being.³²

The Arminian problem came to the forefront in the early 1630s, which is more than evident in Ussher's publications from that time. In 1631, he reprinted his work on the ancient religion of the Irish and British, which included a chapter on predestination (see *Discourses*, 11–21). Even more significantly but also in 1631, Ussher published a book about the medieval monk, Gottschalk of Orbais (808–868).³³ At times, Ussher presented this book as a dispassionate description of a ninth-century controversy over predestination; other times, he was very clear that this work was meant to vindicate the doctrine of double predestination as a part of the orthodox and Augustinian heritage.³⁴ In 1632, he followed this book up with another historical work on the continuity of the church,

Veterum epistolorum. This string of publications shows Ussher's efforts to situate Reformed Protestantism on a solid historical footing in the face of growing challenges against it, even from within the established churches.³⁵

In 1634, the issue of imposition from the Church of England became a problem that Ussher had to face. Although Ussher himself was content with most of the features of the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Book of Common Prayer, and English canon law, he also clearly had more specific views along Reformed lines than those documents required. He knew that many of the other clergymen in Ireland had more stringent opposition to conformity to the English church than he did. Even apart from theological issues, however, Ussher had worked for the Church of Ireland's freedom in doctrine and practice, which was a significant motivation behind the Irish Articles of 1615, of which Ussher was at least the primary author. Thomas Wentworth was the newly appointed Lord Deputy of Ireland and the soon-to-be Earl of Strafford, who championed the cause of the Church of Ireland's uniformity with the Church of England. The 1634 Convocation saw the Church of Ireland adopt England's Thirty-Nine Articles as a confessional standard; however, Ussher interpreted the lack of repealing the Irish Articles to mean that the two confessions stood in tandem in the Church of Ireland.³⁶

The other issue that developed from the problem of Wentworth's push for uniformity was the production of Irish canon law.³⁷ Canon law is essentially a set of rules about church practice, something akin to a book of church order, but, from the puritan perspective, which mandated things contrary to Scripture.³⁸ England had possessed binding canon law since 1604, but Ireland had no such set of laws.³⁹ Ussher helped develop a set of canon laws that were specific to the Church of Ireland, and, even if they went further than some of the more thoroughly puritan-minded preferred, Ireland's canon laws were much less rigorous on conformity—especially in some of the hotter points of tension—than if the church had simply received England's canon law.⁴⁰ The Church of Ireland's canons were published in 1635. In the wake of the Convocation issues, however, Ussher had been quickly drawn into another controversy around Arminianism, which ended up setting him at least somewhat at odds with Wentworth and Laud for the remainder of the decade.⁴¹

Ussher's major achievements for the 1630s, however, were likely his various publications. In 1638, he published his theological work on Christology, *Immanuel*.⁴² This book is a fascinating statement of ecumenical Christology interlaced with the thoroughly Reformed

themes of covenant theology. In some ways, it appears to be a revision of some of the material that Ussher had preached in England as part of his series of sermons on Christology in early 1626. Ussher followed this publication with another work about the history of British churches.⁴³ This was a massive work, spanning 1196 pages that Ussher intended to use to settle the discussion about the origins of Christianity in Britain and Ireland with an emphasis on the attempts to excise Pelagian errors.⁴⁴ This work, however, was the last major point in Ussher's career in Ireland.

In mid-1640, Ussher traveled to England, bringing his family, for a not unusual visit to make use of the great English libraries, but the eruption of the Irish Rebellion of 1641 prevented him from ever returning to the shores of Ireland. Ussher, however, essentially mounted a renewed second wave of his career in England. This era would produce some of Ussher's most significant publications, contain some of his most turbulent interactions, and also leave us some of the most important manuscript sources from Ussher's long ministry.

Ussher's scholarly work throughout the 1640s and 1650s focused on his favorite issues of church history. He produced several works about the antiquity of church polity, which were clearly intended to support episcopacy in the face of those who were challenging it during and after the English civil war.⁴⁵ He also produced studies in biblical-philological and more general historical works, one of which was his famous *Annales of*

35. James Ussher, *Veterum Epistolorum Hibernicarum Sylloge quae partim ab Hibernis, partim ad Hibernos vel rebus Hibernicis sunt Conscriptae* (Dublin, 1632). Alan Ford, "Shaping History: James Ussher and the Church of Ireland," in Mark Empey, Alan Ford, and Miriam Moffitt (eds.), *The Church of Ireland and Its Past: History, Interpretation and Identity* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2017), 19–35.

36. Ford, *James Ussher*, 175–97; Knox, *James Ussher*, 44–53.

37. Ford, *James Ussher*, 184–97.

38. Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works*, 7–9.

39. [Church of England], *Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical* (1604).

40. [Church of Ireland], *Constitutions, and Canons Ecclesiastical* (Dublin, 1635); Ford, *James Ussher*, 188.

41. Ford, *James Ussher*, 197–207.

42. James Ussher, *Immanuel, or the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God* (Dublin, 1638).

43. James Ussher, *Britannicarum Ecclesiarum Antiquitates* (1639).

44. Ford, *James Ussher*, 208–20.

45. James Ussher, *A Geographical and Historical disquisition touching the Asia properly so called, the Lydian Asia...* (Oxford, 1643); James Ussher, *In Ploycarpianam Epistolarum Ignatianarum Syllogen Annotationes* (Oxford, 1644); James Ussher, "The Original of Bishops and Metropolitans," in *Confessions and Proofes of Protestant Divines of Reformed Churches...* (Oxford, 1644); James Ussher, *Polycarpi et Ignatii Epistolae* (Oxford, 1645); James Ussher, *Appendix Ignatiana* (London, 1647).

the *World*, wherein he outlined the world's chronology as beginning on the evening before October 23, 4004 BC.⁴⁶ When he died, he was working on another history spanning work of recovering the ideas of the ancient church, but this work was never published.⁴⁷ Clearly, Ussher had a prodigious output while he had time to access the resources of England's major universities and libraries more freely.

This period of Ussher's career was also marked with a renewed focus on preaching and teaching theology. When Ussher first arrived in England, he spent time in Oxford and Cambridge before coming to London late in the year.⁴⁸ Once he had settled into the capital, he also settled into a regular pattern of preaching. He began preaching weekly at John Hacket's church in Cheam.⁴⁹ Ussher then preached at St. Paul's Church in Covent Garden from February 1641 until November 1642. There remains a good manuscript record of these sermons, which is a critically important source for examining Ussher's theology and his preaching.⁵⁰ Although Ussher had many close relationships with Parliamentarians, when the civil war erupted in 1642, he relocated to Oxford to be with the royalist party that made its home base there.

Ussher remained in Oxford from late 1642 until early 1645. His time there is worth noting, simply because this is the period in which the Westminster Assembly convened and did the bulk of the work in writing

the Westminster Confession. Ussher had been summoned to attend the Assembly as a representative from Oxford University, but he absented, since, as he made clear in a 1643 sermon, his royalist politics wherein he believed that God had sovereignly appointed the monarch outweighed any risks that came with disobeying Parliament.⁵¹ He threw himself into his studies while in Oxford, but also made two important theological contributions during this time. The first is a set of theological lectures that were recorded sometime in 1643–44.⁵² In these lectures, which were primarily delivered and recorded in Latin, Ussher outlined the entire body of divinity. He used a distinction typical of his theological works of separating theology into the topics of God's nature and God's kingdom. After discussing the doctrines of Scripture and theology proper, Ussher turned to God's relationship with humanity. It can legitimately be claimed that this section of these lectures on God's kingdom is close to being a treatise on covenant theology. Ussher emphasized the importance of the Covenant of Works as the framework in which to understand the law and Christ's work as the second Adam. After his section on the body of divinity, Ussher gave a brief discussion about how to compose a sermon, which demonstrates that he was always concerned with how even heavy doctrine should be preached. The last section of these lectures contains Ussher's recommendations for what divinity students should be reading on various topics.⁵³ These little considered lectures are a critically important source that displays Ussher's mature and thoroughly Reformed theology as he explained it relatively late in his life.

The other contribution that Ussher made during this period in Oxford, which is arguably even more directly related to the Westminster Assembly, is a series of eighteen sermons that were recorded and published by some of his auditors.⁵⁴ Some have thought that Ussher preached these sermons while visiting Oxford in 1640. I have argued elsewhere that there is a substantial case to be made that the timing of Ussher's various trips makes that 1640 date unlikely and that the content of the sermons indicates that Ussher most likely preached them while in Oxford during 1643–44.⁵⁵ The importance of this timing is crucial for Ussher's relationship to the Westminster Assembly. Although granting that he did not attend, the content of some of these sermons makes it appear as though Ussher was indirectly addressing some of the very debates that the Assembly had, namely about justification. Thomas Gataker (1574–1654) was a Westminster divine who rather forcefully questioned the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's

46. James Ussher, *De Romanae Ecclesiae Symbolo Apostolico Vetere* (London, 1647); James Ussher, *De Macedonum et Asianorum anno Solari Dissertatio* (London, 1648); James Ussher, *Annales Veteris Testamenti* (London 1650); James Ussher, *de Textus Hebraici* (London, 1652); James Ussher, *Annalium Pars Posterior* (London, 1654); James Ussher, *De Graeca Septuaginta* (London, 1655).

47. British Library, London MS Harleian 822; Bodleian Library, Oxford MS e. Mus. 46; Bodleian Library, Oxford MS e. Mus. 47.

48. Ford, *James Ussher*, 227–28.

49. Ford, *James Ussher*, 228; Knox, *James Ussher*, 57.

50. Cambridge University Library MS MM. 6.55.

51. Chad van Dixhoorn (ed.), *The Minutes and Papers of the Westminster Assembly, 1643–1652*, 5 vol. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 1:141; James Ussher, *The Sovereign Power, and the Subjects Duty: Delivered in a Sermon, at Christ-Church in Oxford, March 3 1643* (Oxford, 1643).

52. Queen's College, Oxford MS 217, fol. 31r–42v.

53. The portion of these lectures containing Ussher's recommended reading is published in this issue of *The Confessional Presbyterian* as "Archbishop Ussher's Recommended Reading." The sections containing Ussher's Latin lectures on divinity and sermon composition are included in the aforementioned edition of Ussher's manuscripts that I hope will be published soon.

54. James Ussher, *Eighteen Choice Sermons Preached in Oxford in the Time of the Wars, Before His Late Majesty of Blessed Memory* (London, 1662).

55. Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works*, 29–32.

active obedience, which sparked a lengthy debate on this topic. Daniel Featley (1582–1645), another Westminster divine, and a fellow Reformed episcopal, actually sent material from the Assembly debates about justification to Ussher in a letter. Ussher would then verifiably have had some knowledge of this debate, aside from a general assumption that he likely would have heard the news from the Assembly debates anyways. In one of Ussher's Oxford sermons, in the midst of a set of fairly pastoral and practical addresses, he vigorously attacked a view of imputation that seems remarkably like Gataker's with a set of reasonably technical arguments.⁵⁶ In sum, it is likely that Ussher used his preaching opportunities in Oxford, at least on occasion, to make his contribution to the Assembly, even though he was a non-attending member.

It was also during this period that John Downame (1571–1652), a clergyman linked to the Westminster Assembly's licensing of publications, printed Ussher's rather well-known catechetical works, *A Body of Divinitie* and *The Principles of Christian Religion*.⁵⁷ The trouble was that he printed these without Ussher's permission, which aroused Ussher's displeasure. Ussher even tried to distance himself from the *Body*, but there is a formidable case that demonstrates how Ussher regularly used material from the *Body* in his sermons and other writings, so much so that the *Body* clearly represents his theological positions, at least what he held in the early 1600s when he composed the book.⁵⁸ Given a long tradition of claiming that Ussher's *Body* was supremely influential on the Westminster Assembly, it could even be that Downame's reason for printing it was to make it easily available to the Westminster divines. After all, Ussher's library had been confiscated and was among those which Parliament gave the Assembly permission to ransack.⁵⁹ There is still a manuscript copy of the *Body* that exists among Ussher's papers that is dated August 8, 1643.⁶⁰ Although Ussher let the issue about the *Body of Divinitie* go, he did revise the shorter catechetical work and republish it with his approval as a mature statement of his theology in 1653.⁶¹ These works contain some of Ussher's more significant theological material and are still well worth consulting.

As Parliament began to gain the upper ground over the royal forces in the civil war, Ussher was forced to leave Oxford in early 1645. He fled throughout the country and spent some time at St. Donat's in Wales, near his daughter, Elizabeth, and son-in-law, James Tyrrell. When his retreat became obviously futile, Ussher returned to London in 1647. Despite his lack of loyalty to the Parliamentary cause, it was not long before Ussher

was preaching again. He was appointed as a lecturer at Lincoln's Inn, where he preached nearly weekly until 1653 when his health seemed too frail to continue.⁶² He eventually retired to the house of Lady Peterborough in Reigate, where he continued to study and write as his sight permitted. It seems that Phoebe, who had apparently been with him for much of his time in Oxford, Wales, and London, died sometime in 1654.

On March 21, 1656, James Ussher passed into glory; his last words recorded as, "O Lord forgive me, especially my sins of omission."⁶³ He was buried in Westminster Abbey on April 5. Oliver Cromwell temporarily rescinded the ban on the Book of Common Prayer so that it could be used at Ussher's funeral.

Ussher's legacy was disputed almost immediately from his death. The most fantastic claims were that he had secretly converted to Roman Catholicism, and had even planned to relocate to Rome when he was prevented from escaping England.⁶⁴ Ussher had sustained his anti-Catholic polemic even late into his ministry, and some of his final sermons were marked with thoroughgoing Reformed theology. His chaplain, Nicholas Bernard, wrote the first biography just after Ussher died in which he painted him as a political moderate with puritan leanings.⁶⁵ That portrait was, of course, well suited to the tastes of the Cromwellian Interregnum. Richard Parr wrote the second biography of Ussher in 1686, who was this time portrayed in a more "Anglican" hue with a spotlight on his royalism.⁶⁶ That description was obviously very palatable during the Restoration period when those with more avid puritan tendencies were seen unfavorably, if not worse.

56. I have given detailed discussion of these sermons and the links to Gataker and the Assembly in Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works*, 225–42.

57. James Ussher, *A Body of Divinitie* (London, 1645); James Ussher, *The Principles of Christian Religion Sumarily Sett Downe according to the Word of God: together with a Breife Epittomie of the Bodie of Divinitie* (London, 1645).

58. Perkins, "Manuscript and Material Evidence for James Ussher's Authorship of *A Body of Divinitie*," 133–61.

59. Perkins, "The Westminster Assembly's Probable Appropriation of James Ussher," 57–58.

60. Trinity College Dublin MS 773.

61. James Ussher, *The Principles of Christian Religion with A Briefe Method of the Doctrine thereof* (London, 1653).

62. Ussher's sermons from Lincoln's Inn are also recorded in Cambridge University Library MS Mm. 6.55.

63. Ford, *James Ussher*, 271.

64. Knox, *James Ussher*, 77–79.

65. Nicholas Bernard, *Life and Death of the Most Reverend and Learned Father of Our Church, Dr. James Usher* (London, 1656).

66. Richard Parr, *Life of the Most Reverend Father in God, James Usher* (London, 1686).

Charles Elrington's nineteenth-century biography described Ussher as the quintessential high-churchman, who overcame his youthful infatuations with Reformed theology for more moderate ecumenism.⁶⁷ Undoubtedly, the nineteenth-century Anglicans of the Church of Ireland would have greatly appreciated that narrative, which roughly resembled the very history of their denomination. Alan Ford's magisterial biography is the most recent, wherein Ussher comes across as a politically savvy, yet theologically gifted figure navigating the complexities of working for reform within his various contexts of the established church.⁶⁸ There is most likely some truth in all of these portraits of Ussher, although the myths of his conversion to Romanism and his outgrowing Reformed theology should be entirely abandoned. Varying biographical emphases, however,

should not lead us to think that we can make Ussher into whatever each of us wants him to be. He was a complex yet brilliant theologian, historian, and churchman with his successes, strengths, failures, and flaws like the rest of us. On the other hand, although we should not try to make Ussher into whatever we might want him to be, we should assume that he does have something to teach each one of us if we would well consider his life and works.

THE STATE OF USSHER SCHOLARSHIP

Recent years have seen a relative boom in studies about James Ussher. Although it comes nowhere near the amount of literature about someone like John Calvin, there is a small but growing field of research centered around Ussher and his work. This section will by no means give a detailed summary of all the secondary literature, but it does provide a brief sketch of the major issues that are presently active in Ussher studies.⁶⁹

Although older secondary literature focused on Ussher by trying to enlist him in some rather tired debates about the dating of creation and church polity, more recent research has developed three newly fruitful areas of inquiry.⁷⁰ The first area involves Ussher's theology, but this is the most limited area. Richard Snoddy's work on Ussher's soteriology was pivotal in charting a fresh course through his nuanced grasp of complex doctrines related to the Reformed understandings of salvation.⁷¹ My work has focused on Ussher's covenant theology, and his role in codifying the Covenant of Works-Covenant of Grace distinction within confessional Reformed theology, along with that distinction's implications for various other doctrines.⁷² Jack Cunningham has also compared Ussher's theology with his contemporary John Bramhall (1594–1663), although this book has received less critical success.⁷³ Although Snoddy treated the issue of Ussher's views on hypothetical universalism, Jonathan Moore and Michael Lynch also discussed this issue.⁷⁴ In terms of theological investigation, Ussher's view about the extent of Christ's satisfaction is certainly the most rapidly developing question in the literature.

The two other areas of inquiry are easier to summarize, even though there are more sources. The second area of inquiry in Ussher studies has to do with his work as a historian. These studies have shown how Ussher implemented his historical work in order to shape a specific Irish Protestant identity and to function as a polemic against claims about the antiquity of the Roman Catholic faith.⁷⁵ The third area highlights Ussher's

67. *Work of James Ussher*, 1:1–322.

68. Ford, *James Ussher*.

69. I have outlined these areas of scholarship in more detail in Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works*, 11–20.

70. On creation: Robert Letham, "In the Space of Six Days: The Days of Creation from Origen to the Westminster Assembly," *Westminster Theological Journal* 61 (1999): 171–72; K. A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 441; Mike Fluent, "James Ussher: Champion of Piety and Scholarship," *Fundamentalist Journal* 6 no 7 (July–August 1987): 31–33; Colin Groves, "From Ussher to Slusher, from Archbishop to Gish: or, Not in a Million Years . . .," *Archeology in Oceania* 31 no 3 (1996): 145–51; Peter Hiscock, "The Creation of Time," *Archeology in Oceania* 31 no 3 (1996): 101–2. On ecclesiastical polity: William M. Abbott, "James Ussher and 'Ussherian' Episcopacy, 1640–1656: The Primate and His Reduction Manuscript," *Albion* 22 no 2 (1990): 237–59; Henry Sloane Coffin, "An Anglican Precursor of the 'Basic Principles,'" *Anglican Theological Review* 26 no 1 (January 1944): 49–51; Knox, Ussher, 113–89; R. Buick Knox, "Archbishop Ussher and Richard Baxter," *Ecumenical Review* 12 no 1 (1959): 50–63; R. Buick Knox, "A Caroline Trio: Ussher, Laud, and Williams," *Church Quarterly Review* 164 no 353 (October–December 1963): 451–52; Jack Cunningham, "The Eirenicon and the 'Primitive Episcopacy' of James Ussher: An Irish Panacea for Britannia's Ailment," *Reformation and Renaissance Review* 8 no 2 (2006): 128–46.

71. Snoddy, *Soteriology of James Ussher*.

72. Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works*; Perkins, "The Westminster Assembly's Probable Appropriation of James Ussher"; Harrison Perkins, "Reconsidering the Development of the Covenant of Works: A Study in Doctrinal Trajectory," *Calvin Theological Journal* 53.2 (2018): 289–317.

73. Jack Cunningham, *James Ussher and John Bramhall: The Theology and Politics of Two Irish Ecclesiastics of the Seventeenth Century* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007).

74. Jonathan D. Moore, *English Hypothetical Universalism: John Preston and the Softening of Reformed Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 175–86; Michael J. Lynch, "John Davenant's Hypothetical Universalism: A Defense of Catholic and Reformed Orthodoxy," (PhD diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 2019), 133–43.

75. Alan Ford, "Shaping History: James Ussher and the Church of Ireland," in Mark Empey, Alan Ford, and Miriam Moffitt (eds.), *The Church of Ireland and Its Past: History, Interpretation and Identity*

activities as a scholar in the networks he formed and sources that he collected. Scholars in this area have shown as well that Ussher often developed friendship connections and fostered the collection of manuscript sources to further his polemical purposes.⁷⁶ These two areas of research on Ussher focus more on his scholarly habits and purposes in writing than on explaining his actual ideas; they are nonetheless fascinating and important avenues of investigation that shed light on the complex figure of James Ussher.

USSHER AND HIS SIGNIFICANCE FOR CONFESSIONAL PRESBYTERIANS

This last section highlights some issues that will be of particular interest to regular readers of this journal. The three issues discussed concern Ussher's views that are in conflict with the confessional Presbyterian position. The purpose of discussing these issues is to think through how confessional Presbyterians might still think appreciatively about Ussher, despite our disagreement on important topics. It should be noted again at this point how Ussher undoubtedly played a positive role within the early-modern Reformed tradition. I have mentioned already how the Westminster Assembly itself likely made significant use of Ussher's theology in developing its confessional standards. His catechetical works are still very useful expositions of Reformed theology. Ussher articulated creedally orthodox doctrines of God and Christology, which tends to be a critically weak point even among some modern confessional Presbyterian theologians. He also vigorously defended the doctrines of predestination and justification by faith alone. He also played a role in codifying mature Reformed covenant theology into the confessional tradition. None of these points are meant to reduce theological agreement to the lowest common denominator, but simply to indicate that Ussher was truly a substantial figure in the confessionally Reformed tradition. In that light then, it seems best to consider how we might understand our disagreements with Ussher while maintaining a more appreciative perspective.

CHURCH POLITY

The first issue discussed here, which is perhaps most obvious from his biography, is that Ussher advocated for episcopal church government. There is a complicated history of debate about how precisely he related to presbyterians in Ireland—ranging from claims that he covertly supported them to suggestions that any seeming concessions he made for them were due to oversight or his weaknesses as an administrator.⁷⁷ The

truth, however, is as usual somewhere in between those interpretations. Ussher's context is critically important in understanding him on this issue, and is arguably even preeminently significant in grasping why he would so thoroughly value episcopacy when so many of his Reformed compatriots on the Continent and in Scotland had embraced some form of presbyterial polity in their churches.

The context of late-sixteenth-century Ireland was rife with complexity, dispute, and even difficulty across the ecclesiastical landscape. The Reformation in Ireland always struggled to take hold, so much so that some have even argued that it failed from the beginning, but this strain owed at least a great deal to the overlap of religion and politics.⁷⁸ Ireland fell under Elizabethan governance, which meant that there was a political divide between the native Irish and the ruling English.

(Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2017), 19–35; Alan Ford, "James Ussher and the Creation of an Irish Protestant Identity," in Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (eds.), *British Consciousness and Identity: The Making of Britain, 1533–1707* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), 196–207; Ute Lotz-Heumann, "The Protestant Interpretation of History in Ireland: The Case of James Ussher's Discourse," in Bruce Gordon (ed.), *Protestant History and Identity in Sixteenth-Century Europe*, vol. 2, *The Later Reformation* (Aldershot: Scholar, 1996), 107–20; Coleman M. Ford, "Everywhere, Always, by All: William Perkins and James Ussher on the Constructive Use of the Fathers," *Puritan Reformed Journal* 7 no 2 (2015): 95–111; Crawford Gribben, *The Puritan Millennium: Literature and Theology, 1550–1682*, rev. ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008), 87–113; Saul Leeman, "Was Bishop Ussher's Chronology Influenced by a Midrash?," *Jewish Biblical Quarterly* 31 no 3 (July–September 2003): 195–96; Robert W. Smith, "James Ussher: Biblical Chronicler," *Anglican Theological Review* 41 (1959): 84–94.

76. Elizabethanne Boran, "The Libraries of Luke Challoner and James Ussher, 1595–1608," in Helga Robinson-Hammerstein (ed.), *European Universities in the Age of Reformation and Counter Reformation* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 75–115; Elizabethanne Boran, "Ussher and the Collection of Manuscripts in Early Modern Europe," in Jason Harris and Keith Sidwell (eds.), *Making Ireland Roman: Irish Neo-Latin Writers and the Republic of Letters* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2009), 176–94; Bernadette Cunningham and Raymond Gillespie, "James Ussher and His Irish Manuscripts," *Studia Hibernica* 33 (2004–5): 81–99; Katherine Birkwood, "Our Learned Primate and That 'Rare Treasure': James Ussher's Use of Sir Robert Cotton's Manuscript Library, c. 1603–1655," *Library and Information History* 26 no 1 (2010): 33–42; Bernard Meehan, "The Manuscript Collection of James Ussher," in Peter Fox (ed.), *Treasures of the Library, Trinity College Dublin* (Dublin: Trinity College, 1986), 97–110; James G. Fraser, "Ussher's Sixth Copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch," *Vetus Testamentum* 21 no 1 (January 1971): 100–102; Peter Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin* (Cambridge: CUP, 2014), 6–33; William O'Sullivan, "Ussher as a Collector of Manuscripts," *Hermathena* 88 (November 1956): 34–58.

77. Knox, *James Ussher*, 166–89

78. The literature on the Reformation in Ireland is immense, but filled with significant points of debate. I have summarized the present shape of this literature in Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works*, 26–29.

The Irish perceived Protestantism to be part-and-parcel with what they considered to be English intrusion, which entailed that acceptance of Reformed religion was a betrayal of national loyalty. This obstacle to a genuine Irish Reformation was never truly dismantled, and it meant that the Reformation in Ireland was distinct at least in that most of the European Reformations grew from the ground up, whereas the Irish Reformation was being brought in from the top down. This created a tension between the established church and the populace, which infused church affairs with an immediate difficulty for bringing laity into the activities of church governance. Presbyterianism, however, advocated precisely that premise.

Despite how Ireland legally fell under the regulations of the Elizabethan Settlement, the Church of Ireland, in the late-sixteenth-century, contained some inconsistencies with the more thoroughgoing establishment. Archbishop Adam Loftus (1533–1605) was admittedly “weak” in his dedication to English rites and ceremonies. Walter Travers (1548–1635) was a Scottish presbyterian who became the first provost of Trinity College Dublin in 1594. James Hamilton and James Fuller, other Scottish presbyterians, also taught at Trinity. The Irish church in the late-sixteenth-century was, therefore, at least lenient with those who disagreed with their polity.⁷⁹

The early-seventeenth-century saw that situation of presbyterians in the ranks become more complicated. In 1609, James I began the Plantation of Ulster, which officially provided means for Scottish and English families to settle in what was then Ireland’s northern province.⁸⁰ The Plantation of Ulster meant that even during Ussher’s tenure as Archbishop—Armagh notably being in Ulster—the Scottish presence entailed a significant population of presbyterians. There were a significant number of Scots, having presbyterial ordination, who took Irish charges without receiving ordination from a bishop. Even throughout Ussher’s ministry in Ireland, presbyterians received charges in Church of Ireland parishes. The context of ministry in Ireland included a mix of those committed to

a more English model of church and those who were presbyterian.

There are questions and multiple interpretations of Ussher’s relationship to the presbyterians in Ireland. Still, it ought to be clear that Ussher did not live in tension with them regardless of how we understand his support for them. He was, after all, happy enough to name Robert Rollock (1555–99) and Thomas Cartwright (1535–1603), two notable presbyterian theologians, as some of the more important writers from whom he drew in developing his theology.⁸¹ It is most likely that ministry in the Church of Ireland, even in Ussher’s time as Archbishop, attracted presbyterians because of its known, if relative, leniency for them. Irish Protestantism was certainly in need of solid ministers who could help disseminate the Reformed faith well, which almost inevitably eclipsed passion for procedural concerns of polity, at least to some degree for men like Ussher.⁸²

Even then, the compromises are more complex than might be imagined. In the early modern period, the issue of ordination was one of the thorniest issues between episcopals and presbyterians, namely in the issue of whether the bishop or the presbytery ordained someone to ministry through the laying on of hands. It does not seem that many of the presbyterians who came to Ireland had to go through “re-ordination” under the bishop’s hands. Even then though, the Book of Common Prayer had never forbidden other ministers to lay hands on the ordinand with the bishop, which meant that episcopal ordinations could look remarkably like presbyterial ordinations while satisfying everyone’s conscience if the ordinand was willing to accept that flexibility while knowing the bishop properly did the ordination.⁸³ Although some have attempted to explain away Ussher’s actions as though he maintained a thoroughgoing episcopal practice, it is hard to get around that he at least made some knowing concessions and happily allowed presbyterian clergy to function within the Church of Ireland.

Ussher’s flexibility with presbyterians, however, does not dilute that he truly believed in episcopacy. His actions and publications, while in England in the 1640s, make it perfectly clear that he advocated for episcopal polity, and his defense of episcopacy should be understood in light of the Root and Branch Petition of 1640 that proposed that Parliament utterly abolish episcopacy.⁸⁴ Situated within the raging debates between King and Parliament, which did significantly involve issues of church polity especially when the Scots became involved, Ussher issued several publications in defense of episcopacy, the two foremost being *The Original of*

79. Ford, *James Ussher*, 44–47.

80. Philip Robinson, *The Plantation of Ulster: British Settlement in an Irish Landscape, 1600–1670*, 2nd rev. ed. (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 1984); S.J. Connolly, *Contested Island: Ireland 1460–1630* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 289–308.

81. Queen’s College, Oxford MS 217, fol. 42r (see in this current issue of *The Confessional Presbyterian*, pp. 24–26); Correspondence of James Ussher, 3:880 (letter to John Downname).

82. Ford, *James Ussher*, 164–74; Knox, *James Ussher*, 166–89.

83. Ford, *James Ussher*, 169.

84. Ford, *James Ussher*, 223–56; Knox, *James Ussher*, 119–45.

Bishops and Metropolitans (1644) and *The Reduction of the Episcopacy* (1657).⁸⁵ Both works show how he advocated a moderate, supposedly more primitive form of episcopacy. Even though the second of these treatises was not published until after Ussher's death, it seems that he had prepared it in 1641 as a solution to the dispute between warring factions. Early in the war, King Charles I rejected it because it was not episcopal enough. When Ussher raised his proposal again in 1648 while visiting the King as a Parliamentary envoy on the Isle of Wight, the King accepted it but no longer had the position to negotiate with Parliament.

Ussher's publications, however, show that he was a moderate episcopal with a thought-out argument for the existence of ecclesiastical hierarchy. In *The Original of the Bishops and Metropolitans*, he argued that God had clearly mandated a hierarchy among the Old Testament clergy. There was a high priest, but then the priests were above the Levites. He then argued that the New Testament confirms that structure's abiding validity for the church. He interpreted Titus and Timothy to be bishops sent to ordain elders (presbyters) in the churches. He also interpreted the angels of the seven churches in Revelation 1:20 to be the bishops for these seven regional churches. He believed that the churches of these major cities in Revelation were not individual congregations, since the Apostles' ministry would have reached far further, but that these were diocesan churches, and their bishops (angels) had jurisdiction over the regional areas. Ussher supported this exegetical argumentation by appealing to the practice of the early church, especially the letters of Ignatius.

In *The Reduction of the Episcopacy*, Ussher outlined how he thought he vision of a moderated episcopal structure could work. In the original edition of this work, the margin included notes about how this proposal had similarities to the structure used in Scottish presbyterianism.⁸⁶ At the local level, Ussher's proposal does not look all that different than a presbyterian structure. The rector (pastor) of a congregation must work with churchwardens and sidesmen (lay leaders) to lead and discipline in the local church.⁸⁷ Above the local congregations then is a diocesan synod, headed by a bishop who must work with the other presbyters, which is to handle matters of more serious discipline as well as address matters related to the doctrine and practice of the presbyters.⁸⁸ With the requirement that the bishop work alongside the other presbyters—and Ussher would even concede the title of bishop could be “moderator”—these diocesan structures would have worked similarly to presbyteries. The provincial synods, moderated by the

archbishops, consisted of “clergy as should be elected out of every diocese within the province.” Their matters were further to be “ordered therein by common consent as in the former assemblies.”⁸⁹ These looked rather like a general assembly, although held less frequently.

Ussher's proposal never took root, perhaps precisely because it was not strictly presbyterian or episcopal enough for each side. Presbyterians would still object to a hierarchy of concentrated authority in the bishops and archbishops; episcopals would reject the notion that the bishops and archbishops need to work in tandem with and for the consensus of the presbyters of their region. Either way, Ussher's view was clearly planted in his own exegetical and historical studies and aimed for the betterment of the church, regardless of any assessment of those arguments.

Confessional Presbyterians will undoubtedly reject Ussher's exegetical and historical argumentation. A reconsideration of Ussher's ecclesiastical context might help foster some sympathy for what drove him in his desire for episcopacy. It was noted above how the Reformation in Ireland was notably different from the Reformations in Europe, in that it was driven from the top down. Whereas the Continental Reformations were often, in many ways, populist movements that petitioned their magistrates, the Irish Reformation can, in some ways, be seen as a matter of imposition upon the people. Imposition has never sat all that well with people, and the case was no different from the Reformed religion in Ireland. Religion was too easily confused with politics—from both sides—and Protestantism became associated with English rule. That perception, in some ways at least, became truer to the fact. Even when William Beddell (1571–1642) avidly worked to foster a ministry of Reformed religion in the Irish vernacular to try to overcome the linguistic barrier that, no doubt, at least in some ways contributed to a political divide that crept into the church. Even Ussher eventually withdrew his support for that plan out of fear that it might foster a sense of Irish nationality.⁹⁰ The Irish Reformation's lack of roots among the people meant that it had to be administratively and institutionally maintained.

That need for official maintenance obviously

85. The most accessible editions of these works are in *James Ussher and a Reformed Episcopal Church*, 118–54.

86. Richard Snoddy has provided those marginal notes in his new edition of this work in *James Ussher and a Reformed Episcopal Church*, 148–54.

87. *James Ussher and a Reformed Episcopal Church*, 152.

88. *James Ussher and a Reformed Episcopal Church*, 152–53.

89. *James Ussher and a Reformed Episcopal Church*, 153.

90. Knox, *James Ussher*, 87–90

conflicted with the presbyterian system that, even then, relied heavily upon the consent of the people in a way that would be easy to think that full presbyterianism would mean the end of the Reformed faith in Ireland. It is impossible to know if that would have been true. Certainly, it is easy to sympathize with Ussher's likely fear that handing church polity into the hands of the people, who were predominantly Roman Catholic, would mean the end of Irish Protestantism. Ussher did argue exegetically and historically for episcopacy, which indicates he did believe it by conviction, but it is hard to see how he could have believed otherwise. In Ireland, where Reformation and even puritanism took on a different hue than at least most other places, Ussher likely perceived that episcopacy was the best way to preserve and propagate the Reformed faith. Confessional Presbyterians may have our critiques of his views these four centuries later, but Ussher's commitment to growing a robust Reformed church in his homeland should not be questioned.

THE REGULATIVE PRINCIPLE OF WORSHIP

Ussher's stance toward the regulation of worship is perhaps where he appears most mixed from the perspective of some Continental and especially the "puritan" and presbyterian traditions. His view here is likely best described as holding some version of the regulative principle, but with some concessions in *adiaphora* matters and even some aspects of ceremony.

Ussher did argue against humanly devised innovations in worship, and his writings clearly indicate that he had an impulse toward the regulative principle. His 1624 book *An Answer ... to a Jesuite* contained a chapter written directly against human traditions, especially those like Rome had developed.⁹¹ Notably, he also forcefully

argued against making images of any person of the Godhead, which is one of the preeminent issues related to the regulative principle.⁹² On the other hand, in his recommended reading to divinity students in Oxford, Ussher remarked that "Hooker is good for ceremonies," which refers to Richard Hooker's anti-puritan defense of retaining some of the ceremonies and rites within the Church of England, even though Rome had practiced them.⁹³ Scottish presbyterian, George Gillespie, took foremost aim at this position in his *Dispute Against the English-popish Ceremonies*.⁹⁴ It is likely that Ussher's comment should be read as a limitation, meaning that he was clarifying that he did not endorse everything that Hooker said, but only the section of Hooker's *Law of Ecclesiastical Politie* that argued that some things of the ancient rite should be retained.⁹⁵ Ussher's citation of Hooker presents an obvious sort of tension, at least with a consistent and thoroughgoing application of the regulative principle.

Still, Hooker's argument in that specific section did not outline the exact ceremonies and rites that should be retained, and Ussher did not adhere to nearly as many of the ceremonies and rites that other conforming clergy did. Even in making use of things that would certainly bristle confessional Presbyterians as part of the liturgy, Ussher still manifested an impulse to consider those parts of the liturgy in light of the regulative principle. In his personal journal, Ussher wrote a long series of notes about why Scripture demands congregants to kneel during parts of corporate worship. He began this section, "adoration is the devoc[i]on of the heart & is inward worship: p[ro]trac[i]on & kneeling is the outward worship." He cited Augustine and made a comparison with inward and outward aspects of fasting and giving alms before continuing "in publike & solemne adorac[i]on here must be both inward devotion & outward kneeling." He then made brief notes about a host of passages that described how God's people knelt when they encountered God.⁹⁶ He closed this section by writing,

Adorac[i]on is an art of inward reverence & sacrifice to God w[ith] w[hic]h in the intention of the heart is called Devotion & in the attention thereof is called piety. as the heart is first framed & then the outward partes, so grace first offereth the harte in devoc[i]on to God & then tendreth the bodie in bowing and kneeling in his service.⁹⁷

The point here is not about whether Ussher's exegesis and conclusions were correct, but that this portion of

91. Ussher, *An Answer*, 35–44. *Discourse*, 30–44.

92. Ussher, *An Answer*, 447–64; Ussher, *Body of Divinitie*, 221–36; Ussher, *Principles*, 28.

93. Queen's College, Oxford MS 217, fol. 42v; see in this issue of *The Confessional Presbyterian*, p. 29.

94. George Gillespie, *A Dispute Against the English-popish Ceremonies* (Leiden, 1637).

95. Richard Hooker, *Of the Lawws of Ecclesiastical Politie*. *Eyght Bookes* (London, 1593), 169–209 (book IV).

96. These notes appear in Cambridge University Library MS Add. 69, fol.16r–17r. The passages that Ussher cited are: Gen. 17:3, 17; Deut. 9:18; 1 Chron. 21:16; Psal. 95:6; 2 Chron. 6:13; 1 Kings 8:21; 1 Kings 18:42; Dan. 6:10; Matt. 2:11; Matt. 8:2; Mk. 1:40; Lk. 9:12; Matt. 9:18; Mk. 5:22; Lk. 8:41, 47; Matt. 15:25; Mk. 7:25; Acts 9:40; Acts 20:36; Acts 21:5; Acts 7:60; Eph. 3:14; Matt. 26:3; Mk. 14:35; Lk. 22:41; Phil. 2:10; Mk. 3:11; then comparing Scripture with Scripture through Is. 45:23 with Rom. 14:11 and Phil. 2:10; 1 Kings. 19:7 with Rom. 11:4.

97. Cambridge University Library MS Add. 69, fol. 17r.

his notes indicates that Ussher did think through the lens of some version of the regulative principle concerning what ought to be done in worship. He later noted in this journal that “p[ro]trac[i]on & kneeling is not so much a ceremonie as a p[ar]t or duty in divine worship, not to be omitted but in case of necessity as Christ could not kneele at he prayers in the cross, yet kneeled in the garden. Luc. 22:41.” In some cases regarding rites to which others would strongly object, it is not that Ussher disregarded the regulative principle, but rather that he believed that Scripture warranted some things that others did not.

A more complex issue relates to the Book of Common Prayer and Ussher’s retention of some of its features. The Book of Common Prayer—and prescribed liturgies in general—was one of the major issues between conformity and puritanism. The foremost issue relevant here is that of holy days other than the weekly Lord’s Day. The Book of Common Prayer forbids the practice of keeping the invented holy days, but listed exceptions that were to be maintained.⁹⁸ Ussher seemed to observe those that were mandated by the establishment, as evidenced by the series of sermons on Christology that he preached at the beginning of the feast of Christ’s circumcision.⁹⁹ Ussher, therefore, either went beyond the regulative principle regarding holy days or somehow thought that they were consistent with it.

Still, Ussher was no full-blown ceremonialist, nor did he slavishly follow every ceremonial and ritual practice that the Church of England maintained, even when William Laud mandated that he did. Ussher did preach in his episcopal habit, enforced wearing the surplice while preaching, and maintained practices from the Book of Common Prayer, but he refused to set communion tables “altarwise,” as they had been when the church was under papal authority.¹⁰⁰ It is notable that the Irish canon law of 1634 that Ussher helped compose omitted some of the more controversial aspects of English canon law, such as the defense of making the sign of the cross at baptism. In fact, Ussher’s resistance to some aspects of ceremony can be seen in his participation in 1641 on a Parliamentary committee about “innovations” in the Church of England’s doctrine and practice.¹⁰¹ This committee published a list of proceedings, many of which addressed deviation from Reformed theological doctrines, but some also dealt with ceremonial practice. For example, the proceedings listed turning communion tables altarwise, bowing to the altar, using candlesticks, compelling communicants to come to the rails to receive the elements, using crucifixes and images, requiring ministers to turn their back to the congregation during

communion, and the use of the sign of the cross at baptism as issues that were innovations in the established church or things that needed to be amended from the Book of Common Prayer.¹⁰² Although Ussher seemed to use canon law to some degree as the measure of his conformity, there were some issues where he rejected certain English canons and even parts of the Book of Common Prayer.¹⁰³ In issues of actual *adiaphora*, such as what a minister wears while preaching, he did seem to defer to what his authorities had decided, which is not surprising given his immense respect for God’s providence in appointing those in authority, as is evident in his arguments for episcopacy and divine right royalism. At the same time, Ussher did manifest a pattern of thinking biblically about issues of worship practice, and held some version of the regulative principle, even if he practiced some things that confessional Presbyterians should find incompatible.

THE EXTENT OF CHRIST’S SATISFACTION

Secondary literature on early-modern theology is rapidly developing material about the issue of hypothetical universalism, which is a doctrine that taught that Christ died in some sense for the sins of the whole world, even if the elect were the only ones who would ultimately partake of the benefits of Christ’s death. The interest in this doctrine began with Jonathan Moore’s investigation of John Preston’s doctrine of hypothetical universalism, which he argued was a “softening” of the Reformed tradition. Moore included a significant discussion of Ussher’s view, arguing that Ussher had essentially invented the doctrine.¹⁰⁴ Richard Snoddy, however, documented Ussher’s shift from holding to particular redemption in the early 1600s to his view of hypothetical universalism, which Ussher seemed to develop sometime just before 1618.¹⁰⁵ That change is notable in his already-discussed letter from 1618 that

98. [Church of England], *The Booke of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments* (London, 1615), sig. A11v.

99. Bodleian Library, Oxford MS Eng. th.e 25; see Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works*, 205–7; see Snoddy’s essay in this issue.

100. Nicholas Bernard, *Clavi Trabales* (London, 1661), 57–61; Ford, *James Ussher*, 56, 164–73, 205–6; Kenneth Fincham, “The Restoration of Altars in the 1630s,” *Historical Journal* 44 no 4 (December 2001): 919–40.

101. Ford, *James Ussher*, 247–48.

102. *A Copie of the Proceedings of Some Worthy and Learned Divines... Touching Innovations in the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England. Together with Considerations upon the Common Prayer Book* (London, 1641), 2–4, 6.

103. Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works*, 6–8, 13–16.

104. Moore, *English Hypothetical Universalism*, 173–86, 208–13.

105. Snoddy, *Soteriology of James Ussher*, 40–92.

was connected to the British Delegation to the Synod of Dort. Snoddy's argument that Ussher developed his view in conversation with sources from the ancient tradition and, especially, the more recent English divines effectively undermined Moore's claim that he originated hypothetical universalism. Michael Lynch has more recently discussed Ussher's view of this doctrine in connection with his research on John Davenant.¹⁰⁶ Lynch rightly argued that Ussher formulated his doctrine in contrast to Arminian views of the atonement, which Ussher said too universally applied Christ's death. Although Ussher thought that Christ's satisfaction had a universal aspect of procuring the possibility of salvation, he limited the application according to God's decree. Even with this set of literature already treating his view on Christ's death, this area will undoubtedly become one of the most researched questions in studying Ussher's theology.

There are some obvious questions that confessional Presbyterians will raise about Ussher's view of Christ's death since it is doubtful that presbyteries in NAPARC denominations would allow candidates for ministry to share his view. There are some points of theological analysis that are worth raising here. In my research on Ussher's doctrine of the Covenant of Works, I have noted how he emphasized Christ's role as the last Adam.¹⁰⁷ Whereas Adam naturally had a "Principall dett" of active obedience in the Covenant of Works, he also came to have an accrued debt of penalty as the consequence of his sin.¹⁰⁸ I also argued that Ussher had a strong view of nature, meaning that God created things to be a certain way, and the patterns of providence and salvation had a strong accord with that nature. Concerning Christ's role as the last Adam then, Ussher grounded the pattern of Christ's representation after the pattern of Adam's in the Covenant of Works. In itself, then, that original pattern had an obvious universality to it, which explains why Ussher would give Christ's death a type of universality as well.

Still, Ussher had the Reformed sensibility that God had to be sovereign over who received the benefit of Christ's death. His Reformed impulse here is clear in the

way that, although he argued a universality to Christ's death in one sense, he placed the aspect of particularity in Christ's work of intercession. He wrote,

In his Justice, His Satisfaction, And His Intercession. His Satisfaction Is Indefinite, tis not only Sufficient, but is proposed as a Comon Remedy to all men: 22 Revel. 17. Let whosoever will, take of the water of life, freely. Every Body is Invited: But Intercession is more restrayned: Intercession, for those whome God hath given him: 17. John. 24 Father, I will that They w[hi]ch thou hast given mee, be with mee, even where I am, that they may behold my Glory, w[hi]ch thou hast given mee. His Justice first satisfied: And His mercy Implored. God must finde a Ransome: A Propitiation. And this satisfaction must bee performed In a state of Humiliation.¹⁰⁹

Ussher did emphasize the particularity of salvation, although he did not locate it antecedent to Christ's death, but in Christ's application before God's throne of his death.

Since part of Ussher's formulation of hypothetical universalism had reference to his strong doctrine of the Covenant of Works, confessional Presbyterians should commend him in that regard. We can further note, however, that the missing formulation from Ussher's doctrine that could have relocated particularity to God's full purpose for Christ's death rather than in Christ's intercession is the Covenant of Redemption. The doctrine that says that the persons of the Godhead covenant together in the plan of salvation for the redemption of the elect would have provided Ussher with the mechanism to maintain his strong link between Christ's work and the Covenant of Works without taking a voluntarist route about the extent of Christ's satisfaction. Since the Covenant of Redemption establishes Christ's reward and obedience, then that reward could have simply been forgiveness for the elect, and the obedience is dying for the elect. Although Ussher emphasized the Covenant of Works and Christ's recapitulation of the Adamic mandate, the Covenant of Redemption did not fully develop until late in his ministry. J.V. Fesko has posited 1638 as the earliest use of the terminology, which would likely make it too late in Ussher's career for him to incorporate it fully into his doctrinal system.¹¹⁰ Although this is more theological than historical analysis, confessional Presbyterians can sympathize with Ussher's consistency with his doctrine of the Covenant of Works, while recognizing that he lacked the structure of the Covenant of Redemption that may have helped make his doctrine of Christ's satisfaction more consistently particularist.

106. Lynch, "John Davenant's Hypothetical Universalism," 133–43.

107. Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works*, 166–208.

108. Cambridge University Library MS Mm.6.55, fol. 54r (sermon on Philippians 2:8, dated January 16, 1647 [1648]); Bodleian Library, Oxford MS Eng. th.e. 25, fol. 39v–40r, 55v–61v (two sermons on Hebrews 9:15, dated 1625 [1626]).

109. CUL MS Mm.6.55, fol. 53r (sermon on Philippians 2:8, dated January 9, 1647 [1648]).

110. J.V. Fesko, *The Covenant of Redemption: Origins, Development, and Reception* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016), 30–31.

CONCLUSION

James Ussher still casts a long shadow into Reformed theology, even if some of his contributions have been overlooked or forgotten. He was not a confessional Presbyterian, but still served the church well in developing the Reformed faith. There are certainly ways in which confessional Presbyterians will disagree with his doctrine and practice, but there are many more ways in which they can appreciate his lifetime of labor for the sake of Reformed theology. ■

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The main areas of inquiry from the secondary literature were surveyed in the article above, but even though the footnotes direct readers to the most important sources, there is a significant amount of other literature that is devoted to Ussher. Since Ussher's death in 1656, there have been a few cycles of interest in him, even if modern scholarship is only just now picking up steam for Ussher research. Because some of the literature on Ussher can be fairly old, rare, or niche, it can be difficult to find the best entry point into the research. Although the brief outline of where the field currently stands and the more extensive discussion about the literature concerning Ussher in my book are meant to provide some holistic statement about how to understand the body of secondary sources, that is no substitute for having a full knowledge of those sources, if one wants to pursue serious scholarship in Ussher studies. This bibliography, therefore, collects the most complete list of secondary sources on Ussher available in print. To the best of my knowledge, it is exhaustive, although there are likely rare or unknown articles or entries that I have overlooked. Not all of these sources are of equal importance, but having a comprehensive list of the secondary literature can be one of the most helpful starting places for new researchers on a topic.

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Archbishop Ussher's Reading List

By Harrison Perkins

INTRODUCTION

Most historians and theologians recognize Archbishop James Ussher (1581–1656) as an obvious polymath. His learning spanned disciplines from textual criticism, patristic and medieval ecclesiastical developments, historical chronology—which was masterful regardless of what you think of his conclusions in tracing that back to the creation events—constructive theology itself, and of course preaching. The manuscript transcribed for first-time publication here confirms the truth of his broad learning.¹ This document originated during Ussher's time in Oxford during the English civil war, which can be seen from several pieces of internal evidence. Bishop Thomas Barlow (1608–91) notated these lectures. Barlow left the physical manuscript to Queen's College, Oxford, which confirms that the manuscript certainly belonged to him, and the handwriting matches Barlow's. Barlow's notes mentioned that Ussher had not read John Davenant's commentary on Colossians, and that book was published in 1627. Ussher was not in England between 1626 and 1640, which means Ussher delivered the material recorded in Barlow's manuscript at least after 1640. Ussher spent the most time in Oxford during 1643–44 when he moved there during the English civil war to be with the royalist camp. Ussher's lectures that Barlow notated were mostly about various topics of theology, but the section transcribed here focused on the reading habits that Ussher thought that ministers-in-training needed to have.² In this section, Ussher began by outlining what he thought were necessary linguistic skills, then described what he thought were important devotional and preparational practices, and finally spoke at length about books that he recommended, approved, or disapproved for these students to be using. The transcription here contains full bibliographic notes to help readers decipher and make use of Ussher's recommended reading.

Some may question what value it is to publish a transcription of what amounts to a bibliography with some interspersed comments. Actually, there are several points of value. From a strictly academic perspective, this document provides access to material that tells us more about Ussher himself, more about the contours of early-modern Reformed theology, and more about the preparation for ministry in ages past. It is important to preserve documents that contain the indisputably personal views of significant intellectual figures, and publishing transcriptions of them both helps preserve the manuscript versions and allows more scholars to access them, if those scholars are not able to travel to the library where the individual manuscript is held. In an era when historical theology is a rapidly developing field, there is a continual need to improve our research methods. It used to be the case that researchers had to access a specific work by going to a particular library that has it and reading it there, but that need has disappeared through the embarrassment of riches

THE AUTHOR: Harrison Perkins (PhD, Queen's University Belfast), is the assistant minister at London City Presbyterian Church (Free Church of Scotland), a visiting lecturer in systematic theology at Edinburgh Theological Seminary, and the author of *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works: James Ussher and the Reformed Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 2020).

1. I am grateful to the Provost, Fellows, and Scholars of Queen's College, Oxford for permission to publish the transcription of material from MS 217.

2. I have elsewhere defended the dating and origins of this manuscript extensively. Harrison Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works: James Ussher and the Reformed Tradition* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming), 33–34; Harrison Perkins, "Manuscript and Material Evidence for James Ussher's Authorship of *A Body of Divinitie* (1645)," *Evangelical Quarterly* 89.2 (2018): 142–44. Another portion of this manuscript is transcribed in Perkins, "Manuscript and Material Evidence," 157–61, and the most substantial portion, which consists of lengthy theological lectures in Latin, is nearly ready for publication in an edition of Ussher's theological manuscripts.

that we have through online databases like the Post-Reformation Digital Library.³ The wide availability of resources means that historical research must now push further into its objects of inquiry than *simply* summarizing documents that most can freely access if it wants to remain at the forefront of technical investigation. At this point in the development of the historical-theology discipline, the best scholarship now has to engage in archive work to produce the most precise and informed conclusions. The publication of documents that were previously available only in manuscript form does help alleviate the costly travel burden for scholars to make use of material like that published here.

There is, moreover, a methodological concern that drives the investigation and publication of manuscripts like this one that contains extensive information about what sources Ussher demonstrably used and consulted. There is a common problem in historical theology, wherein scholars create links between two authors but do so arbitrarily and without demonstrable evidence to establish that link. For example, perhaps I suggest that, since Ussher lived in the seventeenth century and was a Reformed theologian, he consulted or drew material from works by the now well-known Reformed author John Owen (1616–83). There are, however, several problems with this proposal as it stands from a methodological standpoint. It was perhaps more understandable for a past generations of scholars who did not have access to countless titles through online databases since they had to rely on whatever primary sources they could access, but modern researchers in historical theology still make the significant mistake of assuming that just because a book is important to us in the modern era, it must have been equally valued in the early-modern period. That assumption is in many ways unsustainable, but even when it is sustainable as a conclusion, it rests on flawed methodological premises. Instead, we need to demonstrate that a title was valued in the early-modern period before we assume that it was influential. Even then, we cannot assume that an important work was valuable to everyone. To continue the example, Owen may have produced many works that were important to seventeenth-century readers, but we still have not demonstrated that any of his works were important to Ussher.

In addition to the flawed methodological assumption about importance, it is also easy to make methodological

mistakes about transmission. That same embarrassment of riches that we can so easily access through online databases could lead us to assume that everyone in the early-modern period had access to all of those titles as well, but that is again not the case. In Ussher's case, for example, he spent most of his ministry in Ireland. If a book was published in Amsterdam, and was even demonstrably important among theologians in England, it still has yet to be shown that it was even available for Ussher to read in Ireland. The dissemination of ideas in the early-modern period was far more bound to the limitations of distributing physical media than it is today and historians have to reckon with that fact if we are going to produce methodologically responsible conclusions.

In regards to these methodological concerns that intellectual historians argue for demonstrable links between various authors and texts that avoid the fallacies of assumed importance and assumed access, documents like Ussher's list of recommended reading are immensely valuable. It may not be overly exciting to read this list line-by-line for entertainment or for content, but this sort of document is supremely significant if you want to do any sort of historical research about Ussher. Although there are other ways to establish what books Ussher was or could have been using, since there are good records of the books that were in his personal library and his correspondence contains many discussions about various books and authors, this manuscript of Ussher's recommended reading offers insight beyond what he owned, to those he definitely read and at times even evaluated.⁴ In other words, this manuscript is a treasure trove for establishing without speculation those historically demonstrable links between Ussher and the works that he consulted. The publication of this manuscript, then, provides for the advance of Ussher research in facilitating ready access to those demonstrable links that will create the tightest and most informed conclusions about Ussher, his theology, his sources, and the developmental context for all of the above.

In addition to the strictly academic perspective, this manuscript should also have value to readers of this journal from an ecclesiastical viewpoint. The breadth of Ussher's reading is striking. Ussher was a Reformed conformist within the established Church of Ireland, but made positive and emphatic use of Presbyterian writers. More pointedly, Ussher also read and endorsed Lutheran writers and even Roman Catholic biblical commentators. There are historical lessons there and churchly lessons. Historically, the fact that Ussher was making such obvious, appreciative use of Presbyterian and Lutheran

3. The Post-Reformation Digital Library can be accessed free of charge at www.prdl.org.

4. Trinity College Dublin MS 5; *The Correspondence of James Ussher, 1600–1656*, edited by Elizabethanne Boran, 3 vols. (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2015).

theologians reveals more of the early-modern pan-Protestant dynamic. Undoubtedly, there were fiery debates between these camps, but men like Ussher were still able to see the immense doctrinal overlap between theologians within the Reformation heritage. This observation undermines, historically, the notion of “distinctly Reformed” approaches to various topics outside of those exact issues that separated the Reformed from other confessional traditions. Even then, Ussher, who was robustly anti-Catholic, was even still able to glean truth from Romanist authors. Again, historically, this point suggests that the early-modern Reformed understood that all truth is God's truth, no matter the source.

In terms of our own practice as confessional Presbyterians, Ussher's vast reading should show us that, if we are truly going to be the most diligent in arguing the truth, we need to be as well rounded as we can be. The fact that Ussher thought that “good skill in Greeke and some Hebrew, a litle Syriach and Chaldee” was the need for a normal minister easily shows how far things have progressed. Although I am personally not convinced that every minister needs knowledge of Syriac and Chaldean, good linguistic skills are certainly required. Beyond that, however, Ussher was in touch with secular history, the sciences, current philosophy, and theology outside his own narrow tradition. Although we can and should find great worth in the array of books (original or reprint) put out by narrowly Reformed publishers (and I am narrowly Presbyterian),

too many lay people and even ministers think that they are deeply well read because they have a shelf full of works from these publishers. That myopic focus actually damages our Reformed tradition because the lines of debate start to get drawn closer and closer. If we read *only* works from modern Presbyterians, then of course the Lutherans and genuinely Reformed Anglicans are the outright enemy, but even other Presbyterians who disagree about intra-confessional issues become the targets of heated dispute. There is certainly need for discussion and real debate, but that needs to be set within a wider awareness of theological trends and traditions. The scope of Ussher's reading reminds us that we are not the only ones with something to say, and, regardless if we were, it is good to be knowledgeable of what is happening widely in theology and even broader academics as much as possible.

The critical transcription preserves everything as it was written in the manuscript with any expansions or emendations noted in square brackets. The modernized version, however, has been substantially edited for readability. Punctuation and spelling were standardized. Names were Anglicized at least to the most common way modern works refer to them. Book titles or phrases that were originally in Latin were translated in English. Book titles were also italicized. In some places, words have been added or phrases reworked for clarity and readability. Those who have scholarly interest in this work should consult and cite the critical version.

Transcription of Queen's College, Oxford MS 217, fol. 41v–42v

[41v] For a Divine there is necessary good skill in Greeke & some in the Hebrew, a litle Syriach & Chaldee would doe well too.

Thus Prepare

1 Reade [th]e Bible w[i]th 2 Readings. 1. Dayly 3 or 4 chapters to have gone over all [th]e Canonical Scriptures w[i]thin the yeare: then begin again, though you misse one daie, make amends [th]e next. This, though it seem but a superficiall kinde of reading, yet it will benefitt much. Use to give a prick at such a place as toucheth you. Reade [th]e doctrinall Bookes thrice over for the Historiall once, bec[ause] they are harder to be remembered

2 Reade it w[i]th Expositors, & here you need not be so tied to your dayly task, but reade as you have leasure: to this purpose, get Junius & Tremelius's

A Modernized text of Archbishop Ussher's Recommended Reading List

For a Divine, there is a necessity for good skill in Greek and some in Hebrew, and a little Syriac and Chaldean would do well too.

Thus Prepare:

1. Read the Bible with two Readings. (1) Daily read three or four chapters to have gone over all the Canonical Scriptures within the year, then begin again. Though you miss one day, make amends the next. This, though it seem but a superficial kind of reading, yet it will benefit much. Use it to give a prick at such a place as touches you. Read the doctrinal books three times for every one time in the historical because they are harder to remember.

(2) Read it with Expositors, and here you need not be so tied to your daily task, but read as you have leisure. To this purpose, get Junius and Tremelius'

notes and Geneva Notes, & Piscator all hee hath: Clearer on [th]e Proverbs & Cartwright on [th]e m. Ames on [th]e Psalmes. Mollerus on [th]e Psalmes & Isaiiah. The Psalms & Isaiiah are oftener quoted then all [th]e rest of [th]e old Test[ament]. beside Ainsworth on [th]e Pentateuch & Psalmes. Hee is good for parallel places. Get Beza's notes on the N[ew]. Test[ament]. Printed without [th]e text. In yo[ur] owne reading set downe parallell places in your Bible: bec[ause] to expound Scripture by Scr[iptur]e is [th]e best com[m]ent.

2 For a body of Divinity gather it yo[ur]self out of these three & keep to them. viz[elice]t Zanchius, Sohnius in confessionem Augustina[m], & [th]e Epitomy

notes¹ and the Geneva Notes,² and Piscator—all that he has:³ He is clearer on the Proverbs⁴ and get Cartwright on them.⁵ Ames on the Psalms.⁶ Möller on the Psalms and Isaiiah.⁷ The Psalms and Isaiiah are more often quoted then all the rest of the Old Testament. Beside Ainsworth on the Pentateuch and Psalms,⁸ He is good for parallel places. Get Beza's notes on the New Testament,⁹ printed without the text. In your own reading, set down parallel places in your Bible because to expound Scripture by Scripture is the best comment.¹⁰

2. For a body of divinity, gather it yourself out of these three and keep to them, namely, Zanchi,¹¹ Sohn in the august confession,¹² and the epitome of Calvin's

1. *Biblia Sacra, Sive Testamentum Vetus, ab Im[manuel] Tremellio et Fr[anciscus] Junio ex Hebraeo Latinè redditum. Et Testamentum Novum, à Theod[ore] Beza è Graeco in Latinum versum.* (Amsterdam, 1634).

2. *The Bible and Holy Scriptures Conteyned in the Olde and New Testament. Translated According to the Ebrue and Greeke, and conferred with the best translations in Divers languages. With Moste Profitable Annotations upon all the Lord places, and other things of great importance as may appear in the Epistle to the Reader* (Geneva: Rouland Hall, 1560).

3. Johannes Piscator (1546–1625) was a German Reformed theologian who taught in Strassburg, Heidelberg, Neustadt, and Herborn. Although he wrote many full-length commentaries on many books of Scripture, the most likely reference here is to a several-volume set of annotations on the Old and New Testaments. Since all the volumes that I located of this set, except the one on the New Testament, were all printed in the 1640s, clearly they were based on works that Piscator composed earlier such as the full commentaries on each book. *Johannis Piscatoris, Commentariorum in Omnes Libros Veteris Testamenti Tomus Primus: Quo continetur Pentateuchus Mosaica, videlicet: Genesis. Exodus. Leviticus. Numeri. Deuteronomium.* (Herbornae Nassoviorum, 1643); *Johannis Piscatoris, Commentariorum in Omnes Libros Veteris Testamenti Tomus Secundus: Quo continetur libri historici reliqui, scilicet Liber Joshuae. Liber Judicum. Liber Ruth. Libri Duo Samuelis. Libri Duo Chronicorum. Liber Esdrae. Liber Nehemiae. Liber Estherae.* (Herbornae Nassoviorum, 1643); *Johan[nis] Piscatoris, Commentariorum in Omnes Libros Veteris Testamenti Tomus Tertius: Quo continetur libri poetici, scilicet Liber Jobi. Liber Psalmorum. Proverbia Salomonis. Ecclesiastes. Canticum Cantorum.* (Herbornae Nassoviorum, 1644); *Johannis Piscatoris, Commentariorum in Omnes Libros Veteris Testamenti Tomus Quartus: Quo continetur omnes Prophetiae, majores & minores, videlicet Esaias. Jeremias. Ezechiel. Daniel. Hosea. Joel. Amos. Obadja. Jona. Michaea. Nahumus. Abacucus. Sophonias. Haggaeus. Zacharias. Malachias.* (Herbornae Nassoviorum, 1645); *Johann[nis] Piscatoris, Commentarii In Omnes Libros Novi Testamenti* (Herbornae Nassoviorum, 1613).

4. Johannes Piscator, *In Proverbia Salomonis, Itemque in Canticum Cantorum Commentarius* (Herborn: Nassoviorum, 1617).

5. Thomas Cartwright (1525–1603), *Commentarii succincti & dilucidi in Proverbia Salomonis* (Amsterdam: Henrici Laurentii, 1632).

6. William Ames (1576–1633), *Lectiones in Centumquinguinta Psalmos Davidis* (Amsterdam: Ionnem Janssonium, 1635).

7. Heinrich Möller (1530–89), *Enarratio Psalmorum Davidis*, 3 vol.

(Wittenberg: Johannes Crato, 1574); Heinrich Möller, *In Iesaiam Prophetam Commentarius* (Zurich: Officina Froschoviana, 1588).

8. Henry Ainsworth (1569–1622), *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses, the booke of the Psalmes, and the Song of Songs, or, Canticles* (London: M. Flesher and J. Haviland, 1627).

9. This work was printed in Immanuel Tremellius (1510–80) and Francis Junius (1545–1602), *Biblia Sacra, Sive Testamentum Vetus, ab Im[manuel] Tremellio et Fr[anciscus] Junio ex Hebraeo Latinè redditum. Et Testamentum Novum, à Theod[ore] Beza è Graeco in Latinum versum.* (Amsterdam: Guiljel Janssonium Blaeuw, 1634).

10. It is worth noting that there was no mention of the annotations produced on the whole Bible by the committee commissioned by Parliament to develop a work to replace the comments from the Geneva Bible. Several men who served as members of the Westminster Assembly contributed to this work and Ussher actually contributed to notes on Genesis in a later edition. Instead of reading this as an intentional omission of endorsement, it is actually more likely another clue to the date of this manuscript. This is simply because these lectures were given at the latest in 1644, but the annotations were not printed until 1645. *Annotations upon all the books of the Old and New Testament wherein the text is explained, doubts resolved, Scriptures paralleled and various readings observed by the joynt-labour of certain learned divines, thereunto appointed, and therein employed, as is expressed in the preface* (London: John Legatt and John Raworth, 1645). The later contributions Ussher made to additional notes on Genesis are in John Richardson, *Choice Observations and Explanations upon the Old Testament ... To which are added some further Observations upon the Whole Book of Genesis* (London: T.R. and E.M., 1655). See Richard A. Muller, “The “Whole Counsel of God” and “An Entire Commentary ... the Like Never Before Published in English,” in Richard A. Muller and Roland S. Ward, *Scripture and Worship: Biblical Interpretation and the Directory for Public Worship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2007), 3–29.

11. The reference here is likely to Girolamo Zanchi (1516–90), *De Religione Christiana Fides* (Neustadt: Matthaus Harnisch, 1588). Zanchi, however, was a prolific writer and produced multiple volumes that covered much of the system of theology. Ussher elsewhere referred to several of them and his intent here could have been to point to many of Zanchi's works. Harrison Perkins, “Manuscript and Material Evidence for James Ussher's Authorship of *A Body of Divinity* (1645),” *Evangelical Quarterly* 89.2 (April 2018): 157.

12. Georg Sohn (c.1552–89) taught at the universities in Marburg and Heidelberg. His theological works most immediately relate to

of Calvin's Institutions; Out of these take propositions w[hi]ch must be as so many Doctrines; & to p[e]rou[s] e [the]m by apposite Scripture use Chemnitius's Common places: add notes of your owne observac[i]on, as you meet with them, that so [th]e comon places may be full and furnished, & so your matter will be ready all but for dressing when you are to come to any auditory.

3 A Divine can[n]ot be compleat without much reading but 'tis [th]e Country makes a preacher: Hee must be able in controversies against [th]e Papiſts, eſpecially if hee live among such. Use onely Whitaker & Chamier. preach [th]e body of Divinity ([th]e 52 heads) over once a yeare, or as soon as you can.

[42r] In [th]e pulpit alwaies beware of

1 Heresies, never tell w[ha]t they were or who were ye Authors: for many had never knowne Arrianisme nor w[ha]t Arrius was, had not [th]e minister told them.

2 Controversies, state t[he]m but make not any objections, for many take such hold of that coming first that [th]e Answer does not satisfy t[he]m.

To set you right, often visit [th]e sick, & know how they use to be affected.

Practical Authours Suc[cessa]

Ought of Kemedontius is good but eſpecially so verbo Dei. All Rollock, Perkins, Dent's-pathway. Hildersham, reade him & hee will make you a preacher indeed.

his task of lecturing from the *Common Places* by Phillip Melancthon (1497–1560); *Loci Communes* (1521). The work to which Ussher referred here was most likely Sohn's *De Trinitate Personarum Divinarum Theses Theologicae* (Heidelberg: Jacob Mylil, 1585). Although the title is obscured by Ussher's reference, this work was determined by the reference he made to this book in this same manuscript when he outlined the fifty-two heads of divinity. Queen's College, Oxford MS 217, fol. 32r. Ussher's reference to Sohn's doctrine of the Trinity did come from this work, but in that place he called it "August Confession." These fifty-two heads were printed with precise bibliographic references in Perkins, "Manuscript and Material Evidence," 157–161.

13. John Calvin (1509–64), *An abridgement of the Institution of Christian religion* (Edinburgh: Thomas Vautrollier, 1585).

14. Martin Chemnitz (1522–86), *Loci Theologici* (Wittenberg: Wolfgang Meisner, 1615). Chemnitz was one of the leading second-generation Lutherans.

15. Ussher's point here was that a preacher needed to know the controversies of his own land so that he might refute the errors that surround him. This is clear from the next sentence when he emphasized the need to be able to refute Roman Catholicism "eſpecially if hee live among such." Undoubtedly, Ussher was thinking of his own homeland in Ireland, which was not only predominantly Roman Catholic, but had only recently exploded in the Irish Rebellion of 1641, which is exactly why he had needed to remain in England until the time that he was giving these lectures.

16. Ussher modeled this readiness in one of his early works, *An Answer to a Challenge Made by a Jesuite Living in Ireland* (Dublin: Society of Stationers, 1624). No doubt this published debate against William Malone was rooted in his earlier readiness as a young man

Institutes.¹³ Out of these take propositions, which must be as so many doctrines; and to peruse them by apposite Scripture use Chemnitz's *Common Places*.¹⁴ Add notes of your own observation, as you meet with them, that so the common places may be full and furnished, and so your matter will be ready all but for dressing when you are to come to any auditory.

3. A Divine cannot be complete without much reading but it is the country that makes a preacher.¹⁵ He must be able in controversies against the Papiſts, eſpecially if he lives among such.¹⁶ Use only Whitaker and Chamier.¹⁷ Preach the body of divinity (the 52 heads) over once a year, or as soon as you can.¹⁸

In the pulpit always beware of

(1) Heresies; never tell what they were or who were the authors. For many had never known Arianism nor who Arius was, had not the minister told them.

(2) Controversies; state them but make not any objections, for many take such hold of that coming first that the answer does not satisfy them.

To set you right, often visit the sick, and know how they are affected.

Practical Authors to be followed:

Aught of Kemedoncius is good but eſpecially so in *Concerning God's Written Word*.¹⁹ All Rollock,²⁰ Perkins,²¹ Dent's *Plain Man's Pathway*.²² Hildersham, read

to debate the Jesuit missionary to Ireland, Henry Fitzsimon, in person; Alan Ford, *James Ussher: Theology, History, and Politics in Early-Modern Ireland and England* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 11–14.

17. William Whitaker (1548–95), *Disputatio De Sacra Scriptura; Contra Huius Temporis Papiſtas* (Cambridge: Thomas Thomas, 1588); Daniel Chamier (1565–1621), *Panſtratae Catholicae Corpus*, 4 vol. (Geneva: Roverianis, 1626).

18. Ussher did not practice *lectio continua* preaching. Rather, he worked his way through the doctrines of theology in a systematic fashion. This can be seen most clearly in the weekly sermons he preached in London in CUL MS Mm. 6.55. For the fifty-two heads he mentioned here, see Perkins, "Manuscript and Material Evidence," 157–161.

19. Jacob Kimedoncius (c.1550–96), *De Scripto Dei Verbo, Libri Octo* (Heidelberg: Abraham Smessmanus, 1595). Ussher's reliance on Kimedoncius has been examined in Richard Snoddy, "The Sources of James Ussher's Patristic Citations on the Intent and Sufficiency of Christ's Satisfaction," in Jon Balsarak and Richard Snoddy (eds.), *Learning from the Past: Essays on Reception, Catholicity and Dialogue in Honour of Anthony N.S. Lane* (London: T&T Clark, 2015), 112–18.

20. Robert Rollock (1555–99) was the first principal of the University of Edinburgh. Ussher recommended reading all his works.

21. William Perkins (1558–1602) was professor of theology at Christ's College, Cambridge and the preacher at St. Andrew's the Great in Cambridge. Ussher recommended his entire works.

22. Arthur Dent (1553–1607), *The plaine mans path-way to heauen* (London: Melchiside Bradwood for Edward Bishop, 1607).

Cartwright's last Booke, it goes [th]e preacher's way: Hee is good on Rhemish Test[ament]. Use Fulks notes chiefly for Apocalyps. Pareus is good about justification. Greenham's workes. Roger's 7 treatises. Dr. Airay on [th]e Philippians. Dod & Cleaver's sermons, Brinsley's true watch Whately Balle of faith. Dan.[iel] Dyke's works Thom.[as] Taylour Item suis in N.[ew] Test.[ament] Cameron de Ecclesia is good, for hee goes not [th]e leate[r] way.

him and he will make you a preacher indeed.²³ Cartwright's last book goes the preacher's way.²⁴ He is good on the Rhemish Testament.²⁵ Use Fulke's notes chiefly for the Apocalypse.²⁶ Pareus is good about justification.²⁷ Greenham's works.²⁸ Roger's *Seven Treatises*.²⁹ Dr. Airay on the Philippians.³⁰ Dod and Cleaver's sermons,³¹ Brinsley's *true watch*,³² Whately,³³ Ball of *faith*.³⁴ Daniel Dyke's works.³⁵ Likewise, Thomas Taylor's works in the New Testament.³⁶ Cameron *Regarding the Church* is good, for he goes not the later³⁷ way.³⁸

23. Although this statement does seem to be a general recommendation of Hildersham's works, the most likely referent here is either Arthur Hildersham, *Lectures upon the Fourth of John* (London: G.M. for Edward Brewster, 1629) or Hildersham, *CLII Lectures upon Psalm LI* (London: George Miller for Edward Brewster, 1635). These were the two works by Hildersham listed among Ussher's books when they were returned to Trinity College Dublin after his death; TCD MS 5, fol. 82r.

24. Thomas Cartwright (1534–1603) was a controversial English Presbyterian, who was not well received among the English establishment. He taught at Cambridge, but many of his later years were spent in full or quasi exile. Many of his works of biblical exposition were published after his death in multiple editions, released in several countries, which makes Ussher's exact reference here difficult to pinpoint. Cartwright's final work to be published in English was *A plaine explanation of the whole Revelation of Saint John Very necessary and comfortable in these dayes of trouble and affliction in the church. Penned by a faithfull preacher, now with God, for more private use, and now published for the further benefit of the people of God* (London: T.S. for Nathaniel Newbery, 1622). Given the emphasis even in the title on the preaching quality of this work, Ussher did likely mean this title, since he too emphasized that the book he was commending went "the preacher's way." For a very useful, even if older, account of Cartwright's writings, see A.F. Scott Pearson, *Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism 1535–1603* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925), 398–406.

25. Thomas Cartwright, *A confutation of the Rhemists translation, glosses and annotations on the New Testament* (Leiden: W. Brewster, 1618).

26. William Fulke (1538–89), *In sacram diui Ioannis Apocalypsim praelectiones* (London: Thomas Puroetij, 1573).

27. Either David Pareus (1548–1622), *Roberti Bellarmini Politiani Societatis Jesu Theologi Cardinalis De justificatione impij Libri V* (Heidelberg: Johannem Lancellotum, 1615) or David Pareus, *Positiones Theologicae de Iustificatione fidei & operum* (Heidelberg: Johannem Lancellotum, 1603). The former is more likely given Ussher's proclivities.

28. Richard Greenham (c.1542–94), *The works of the reuerend and faithfull seruant of Iesus Christ M. Richard Greenham* (London: Felix Kingston for Robert Dexter, 1599). Ussher did not here endorse Greenham's full corpus, as he did with Perkins and Rollock, since it appears that he was actually referring to specific volume of Greenham's collected works.

29. Richard Rogers (1551–1618), *Seven Treatises containing such direction as is gathered out of the Holie Scriptures, leading and guiding to*

true happines, both in this life, and in the life to come (London: Felix Kyngston, 1603).

30. Henry Airay, *Lectures upon the Whole Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians, delivered in St. Peter's Church in Oxford* (London: Edward Griffin and Richard Field for William Bladen, 1618).

31. John Dod (1550–1645) and Robert Cleaver (c.1561–c.1614) jointly published a number of sermon collections. *A Plaine and Familiar Exposition of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Chapters of the Proverbs of Solomon* (London: Roger Jackson, 1608); *Seven Godlie and Fruitfull Sermons* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1614); *A Plaine and Familiar Exposition of the Ten Commandments*, 15th ed. (London: Richard Field, 1622); *Ten Sermons, Tending chiefly to the fitting of men for the worthy receiving of the Lords Supper* (London: Thomas Harper, 1634).

32. John Brinsley (1581–1624), *The true watch Or A Direction for the Examination of our Spirituall Estate* (London: G. Eld, for Samuel Macham and Matthew Cooke, 1606).

33. Since Ussher was here recommending works of practical divinity and the surrounding books were primarily published sermons, it is most likely that he had in mind the published sermons by William Whately (1583–1639). *The Redemption of Time* (London: T. East for Thomas Man, 1606); *Sinne no more* (London: George Edwards, 1630); *The New Birth: Or, a Treatise of Regeneration Deliuered in Certaine Sermons; and Now Published* (London: Thomas Man, 1630).

34. John Ball (1585–1640), *A Treatise of Faith*, 3rd ed. (London: Edward Brewster, 1637).

35. Daniel Dyke (d.1614), *The Workes of that Late Reverend Divine Master Daniel Dyke, The First Part* (London: John Beale, 1635); Daniel Dyke, *The Second and Last Part of the Workes of the late faithfull Servant of God Daniel Dyke* (London: Robert Milbourn, 1633). In this instance again, Ussher was not necessary endorsing Dyke's whole corpus, but a specific published collection of his works. Ussher apparently had some correspondence with Dyke; *Correspondence*, 1:79, 88.

36. Thomas Taylor (1576–1632) published many works of biblical exposition, but none of them were titled as a full New Testament work. Ussher most likely referred either to *A commentarie vpon the Epistle of Saint Paul written to Titus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1619) or *Christ revealed: or The Old Testament explained* (London: Miles Flesher for R. Dawlman and L. Fawne, 1635).

37. It is possible that the word here was "beate[r]," as Barlow's cursive "l" and "b" could look remarkably similar. Admittedly, the rendering "later" in the modernized version is interpretive.

38. This work is found in John Cameron (c.1579–1625), *Praelectiononi in Selectiora Quaedam Novi Testamenti Loca*, 3 vol. (Salmurii, 1626), 1:57–316.

For Catechising (a thing very necessary) use Balles Catechisme and Crookes Guide.

For Fathers. 1. Greeke. Get Chrysostom and his Expositor Theodoret. 2 Latin. Cyprian, Augustine, especially his 4th tome.

For History. 1. Ecclesiasticall, Eusebius with Socrates, Evagrius, Sozomen &c. 2 prophane History of Augustus, put out by J. Gruterus.

For cases of conscience, Ames, Perkins, Rivet on [th]e 20th of Exodus.

For method of preaching, see Perkins's Art of prophesying, Bernards Faithfull Shepherd.

Chronologie, Sethus Caluisius, Dr. Pies hourglasses of time.

For body of divinity reade Sohni[us], Perkins on [th]e Creed & Ursin's Catechisme

For Catechizing (a thing very necessary) use Ball's Catechism³⁹ and Crooke's Guide.⁴⁰

For Fathers. 1. Greek. Get Chrysostom⁴¹ and his Expositor Theodoret.⁴² 2. Latin. Cyprian,⁴³ Augustine, especially his fourth volume.⁴⁴

For History. 1. Ecclesiastical, Eusebius with Socrates and Evagrius,⁴⁵ Sozomen⁴⁶ etc. 2. Prophane, the history of Augustus, put out by J. Gruter.⁴⁷

For cases of conscience, Ames,⁴⁸ Perkins,⁴⁹ Rivet on Exodus 20.⁵⁰

For method of preaching, see Perkins' Art of Prophesying,⁵¹ Bernard's Faithfull Shepherd.⁵²

Chronology: Seth Kalwitz,⁵³ Dr. Pie's hourglasses of time.⁵⁴

For body of divinity: read Sohn,⁵⁵ Perkins on the Creed,⁵⁶ and Ursinus' Catechism.⁵⁷

39. John Ball, *Short Questions and Answers Explaining the common Catechisme in the Booke of Common Prayer* (London: E.G. for Henry Overton, 1639).

40. Samuel Crooke (1575–1649), *The Guide unto True Blessednesse* (London: John Pirdley, 1613). Samuel Crooke's catechism was one of the books that Ussher named as a source of material to compose his own *Body of Divinitie* (London: M.F. for Thomas Downes and George Badger, 1645); *Correspondence of James Ussher*, 3:880.

41. John Chrysostom (d.407) was the famous "golden-mouthed" preacher in Constantinople.

42. Theodoret of Cyrus (c.393–c.457) wrote works of biblical exposition, although he was entangled in the Nestorian controversy.

43. Cyprian (c.200–58) was the bishop of Carthage, who is likely most notable for his contributions to the doctrine of the church while she experienced persecution.

44. It seems clear that Ussher was referring to the fourth volume of St. Augustine's collected works, most likely Aurelius Augustine (354–430), *Opera omnia*, edited by Desiderius Erasmus, 10 vols. (Basel: Froben, 1528).

45. Eusebius (c.260–c.340), Socrates (c.379–c.440), and Evagrius (b.536) were ancient historians. An early-modern edition of their work would have been available as *The Auncient Ecclesiastical Histories of the First Six Hundred Yeares after Christ* (London: Richard Field, 1619). Ussher also referred to this work in a letter to Francis Junius (July 3, 1651); *Correspondence*, 3:1002.

46. Salminius Herias Sozomenus (c.400–c.450) was an ancient historian, who built upon the history by Socrates et al. Still a useful introduction to this work is Henry Wace and Philip Schaff (eds.), *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series*, 14 vols. (Oxford: Parker and Company, 1891), 2:191–232. Ussher also referred to this work in letters to Thomas Jones (October 19, 1609) and to Francis Junius (July 3, 1651); *Correspondence*, 1:68; 3:1002.

47. Jan Gruter (1560–1627), *Inscriptiones antiquae totius orbis romani*, 2 vols. (Heidelberg, 1603). Ussher also referred to this work in a letter to Francis Junius (July 3, 1651); *Correspondence*, 3:1002. It is interesting that Ussher mentioned all three of the historical works that he cited in this section of the lectures in that same letter to Junius.

48. William Ames, *Conscience with the power and cases thereof Divided into V. bookes* (Leiden and London: W. Christiaens, E. Griffin, J. Dawson, 1639).

49. William Perkins, *A discovrse of conscience: wherein is set downe the nature, properties, and differences thereof: as also the way to get and keepe good conscience* (Cambridge: John Legate, 1596).

50. André Rivet (1572–1651), *Praelectiones in Cap[ut] XX Exodi* (Leiden: Franciscum Hegerum, 1632).

51. William Perkins, *The arte of prophesying, or, A treatise concerning the sacred and onely true manner and methode of preaching* (London: Felix Kyngston for E.E., 1607).

52. Richard Bernard (c.1568–1642), *The faithful shepherd* (London: Arnold Hatfield, 1609).

53. Sethus Calvisius (1556–1615), *Opus Chronologicum*, 3rd ed. (Frankfurt: Johann Thymius, 1629).

54. Thomas Pie (1550–1610), *An houre-glasse contayning I. a computation from the beginning of time to Christ by X. articles. II. A confirmation of the same for the times controuersed before Christ* (London: John Wolfe, 1597).

55. The work by Sohn, the theologian who ended up lecturing at Heidelberg after Ursinus died, that Ussher most likely had in mind was Georg Sohn, *Synopsis Corporis Doctrinae* (Heidelberg, 1588).

56. William Perkins, *An exposition of the Symbole or Creed of the Apostles* (Cambridge: John Legatt, 1595).

57. Zacharius Ursinus (1534–83) was one of the leading theologians in Heidelberg during the early confessional period. Ussher may have been referring to a few of his works though. It may have been the actual confessional document known as the Heidelberg Catechism, which Ursinus wrote with Caspar Olevian (1536–87) as a public document; *Catechesis Religionis Christianae* (Heidelberg: Joannes Mayer, 1563). It also may have been Ursinus' own published smaller or larger catechism; *Catechesis Minor in Opera Theologica*, ed. by Quirin Ruterus, 3 vols. (Heidelberg: Johannes Lancelot, 1612) 1:34–39; *Catechesis Summa Theologiae per Quaestiones et Responsiones Exposita in Opera*, 1:10–33. Most likely, however, since Ussher was recommending full treatments of the body of divinity, he intended Ursinus' lectures on the Heidelberg Catechism; *Doctrinae Christianae Compendium: seu Commentarii Catechetici* (London, 1586).

More Authours—Babington, Bifield, Will.[iam] Coupor, Downam's Warefare. Gataker. Gouges whole Armor. Goodwin. Harris. Hieron. King on Jonah. Pemble [42v] Dr. Reignolds, especially against Hart. Rivet. Sanderson, Sands. Dr. Sibs. Wilson on [th]e Romanes. Scavenius on [th]e Rom[ans] can be bad. Scharpii

More Authors—Babington,⁵⁸ Byfield,⁵⁹ William Cowper,⁶⁰ Downame's *Warfare*.⁶¹ Gataker.⁶² Gouges whole Armor.⁶³ Goodwin.⁶⁴ Harris.⁶⁵ Hieron.⁶⁶ King on Jonah.⁶⁷ Pemble.⁶⁸

Dr. Rainolds, especially against Hart.⁶⁹ Rivet.⁷⁰ Sanderson,⁷¹ Sandys.⁷² Dr. Sibbes.⁷³ Wilson on the Romans.⁷⁴ Scavenius on the Romans can be bad.⁷⁵ Scharp

58. Gervase Babington (c.1549–1610) was a Reformed conformist, who wrote several works of biblical exposition that Ussher likely had in mind here. *A very fruitfull exposition of the Commaundments* (London: Henry Middleton for Thomas Charde, 1583); *A profitable exposition of the Lords prayer* (London: Thomas Orwin for Thomas Charde, 1588); *Certaine plaine, briefe, and comfortable notes upon everie chapter of Genesis* (London: A. Jeffes and P. Short for Thomas Charde, 1592); *Comfortable notes vpon the bookes of Exodus and Leuiticus* (London: H. Lownes and T. Purfoot for Thomas Chard, 1604).

59. Nicholas Byfield (1579–1622) was a prolific writer, who published several works of biblical exposition, which were most likely to what Ussher referred here.

60. William Cowper (1568–1619) was probably most known for his *Heaven Opened* (London: William Stansby, 1632).

61. John Downame (1571–1652), *The Christian Warfare* (London: Felix Kyngston for Cuthbert Burby, 1604).

62. Thomas Gataker (1574–1654), was a controversial participant in the Westminster Assembly, who opposed the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's active obedience. Ussher took issue with his theology on that point, but apparently appreciated it on others.

63. William Gouge (1575–1653), *The whole-armor of God* (London: John Beale, 1619).

64. Ussher was undoubtedly referring to Thomas Goodwin (1600–80), who was a prominent Independent theologian during the civil war and Interregnum period, a member of the Westminster Assembly, and a major contributor to the Savoy Declaration (1658) along with John Owen (1616–83). The alternative would be John Goodwin (c.1594–1665), who was a staunch Arminian, but this Goodwin's anti-Reformed theology makes it unlikely that Ussher would have recommended him. Ussher did not name any of Goodwin's specific works and put him here under the heading of "more authors," so it is impossible to know which of Goodwin's works, if any, he had particularly in mind.

65. Ussher's reference here was most likely to Robert Harris (1580/1–1658), who was a member of the Westminster Assembly and the later president of Trinity College, Oxford. He published numerous sermons.

66. Samuel Hieron, minister of Modbury in Devon, was a highly regarded but nonconformist puritan whose pieces against conformity were not included in his collected works: *The Workes of Mr. Samuel Hieron, the late Pastor of Modbury in Devon*, 2 vol. (London: William Stansby and John Beale, 1635).

67. John King (d.1621), a Reformed conformist, *Lectures upon Jonas delivered at Yorke in the yeare of our Lord 1594* (London: Humphrey Lownes, 1611).

68. William Pemble (c.1591–1623) wrote several theological treatises.

69. John Rainolds (1549–1607), *Summa Colloquii Johannis Rainoldi cum Johanne Harto De Capite & Fide Ecclesiae* (London: John Norton, 1611); English version in John Rainolds, *The summe of the conference betwene John Rainoldes and John Hart touching the head and the faith of the Church* (London: John Wolfe, 1584). John Hart (d.1586) was a Roman Catholic missionary to England; Mordechai Feingold, "The Reluctant Martyr: John Hart's English Mission," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 6 (2019): 627–50.

70. More likely André Rivet, whose commentary on Exodus Ussher had recommended above, rather than that Rivet's brother, Guillaume Rivet (1580–1651). Ussher had also recommended André Rivet's book on the Sabbath in a letter to William Twisse (c.1636); *Correspondence*, 2:707; André Rivet, *Dissertatio de origine sabbathi* (Leiden, 1633). Ussher also sent letters to this Rivet, although there are no extant replies; *Correspondence*, 3:870–72, 874–75. André Rivet was a French Reformed theologian who taught at Leiden and then became the first rector at the Orange College of Breda when it was founded in 1646. Rivet was involved in drawing up the very influential collaborative work, *Synopsis Purioris Theologiae*, 3rd ed. (Leiden: Elzevier, 1642) that was widely used in the early-modern Reformed world. It is notable that the Rivet brothers co-authored a polemical book against Moses Amyraut (1596–1664), who advocated a revised explanation of God's decrees that incorporated a use of middle knowledge; André Rivet and Guillaume Rivet, *Epistolae Apologeticae, Ad Criminationes et Calumnias Mosis Amyraldi* (Breda: Joannis a Waesbrge, 1648). Ussher's recommendation of Rivet's work, which well may have been in regard to this book against Amyraut, because older scholarship linked Ussher's versions of hypothetical universalism to Amyraldianism; Brian G. Armstrong, *Calvin and the Amyraut Heresy: Protestant Scholasticism and Humanism in Seventeenth-Century France* (Milwaukee, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969). Ussher clearly appreciated authors who refuted Amyraldianism, and this appreciation is further reason to draw a starker contrast between Amyraldianism and versions of hypothetical universalism held by Reformed theologians. Ussher may also well have been referring to André Rivet's anti-Catholic works, but his recommendation of either work is not necessarily mutually exclusive; *Catholicus Orthodoxus, Oppositus Catholico Papiſtae*, 3 vols. (Geneva: Petri Chouët, 1644).

71. Robert Sanderson (1587–1663) was a prolific Reformed conformist.

72. Edwin Sandys (c.1516–88) was a Reformed Church of England clergyman. Some of his sermons were published; *Sermons made by the most reuerende Father in God, Edwin, Archbishop of Yorke* (London: Henrie Middleton for Thomas Charde, 1585). Sandys was at times called Sands, as Ussher referred to him here; *A proposal of union amongſt Proteſtants, from the laſt-will of the moſt Reverend Doctour Sands ſometime Archbiſhop of Yorke* (London 1679).

73. Richard Sibbes (c.1577–1635) was a well-known Reformed preacher. Ussher recommended Sibbes for his preaching more than any given published work in a letter to George Abbot (January 10, 1627); *Correspondence*, 1:383.

74. Thomas Wilson (c.1562–1622), *A Commentarie upon the Moſt Divine Epiſtle of S. Paul to the Romanes containing for matter, the de-generation of our nature by Adams Fall; and the reſtauration thereof, by the grace of Chriſt* (London: W. Iaggard, 1614).

75. Petrus Scavenius (1623–85) was a Danish Roman Catholic, who actually wrote to Ussher a few times; *Correspondence*, 3:963–65, 969–70; Nicholas Hardy, *Criticism and Confession: The Bible in the Seventeenth Century Republic of Letters* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), 296–304.

Symphonia indifferent. Good. Reignerus Predini[us]. Gallatius in Exod.[us] Levit.[icus] Hiperii methodus Theologie. Scarcerius Lutheran good Pagninus's great Lexicon is best for [th]e Old Test.[ament]

Buxtorf's Bibles. Arca Noe. Schindleri Pentaglotton Paulus Fagius his Notes on [th]e Chaldes Paraphrase; On [th]e Pentateuch. Mercer. Masius Septuagint, Vulgar Latine, for [th]e Papiſts use it. Bradwardine de ca[us]a Dei. Field of [th]e church. B[isho]p Jewel's Workes put out by one [tha]t was B[isho]p of Norwich after. Dudley Fenner is good, but hee will trouble you with distinctions. Hooker is good on ceremonies.

These are disliked or at least not so well approved of. Elton on [th]e Colossians. B[isho]p Hall.

76. Johannes Scharpius (1572–1648), *Symphonia prophetarum et apostolorum*, 2 vols. (Geneva: Petri Chouët, 1623).

77. Regnurus Praedinius (c.1510–59) was a Dutch humanist scholar in Groningen who sought to unite secular science and theology; *Opera Omnia* (Gronigen, 1567); F. Poſtma, "Regnurus Praedinius (c.1510–1559), Seine Schule und Sein Einfluss," in F. Akkerman, G.C. Huisman, and Arjo J. Vandejat (eds.), *Wessel Gansfort (1419–1489) and Northern Humanism* (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 291–324.

78. Nicolas des Gallars (c.1520–81), *In Exodum, Qui secundus est liber Moysis* (Geneva: Jean Cresin, 1560). Des Gallars' commentary on Exodus was an important publication in its time; E.A. de Boer, "Origin and Originality of John Calvin's 'Harmony of the Law,'" *The Expository Project on Exodus–Deuteronomy (1555–1563)*, *Acta Theologica Supplementum* 10 (2008): 41–69. I have not been able to locate a commentary that he wrote on Leviticus.

79. Andreas Hyperius (1511–64), *Methodi Theologiae, siue praecipuorum Christianae religionis Locorum Communium* (Basel, 1574).

80. Erasmus Scarcerius (1501–59) was a Lutheran professor at Nassau. His name was alternatively spelled Scarcerius and Scarcerius. Since Ussher was naming works on interpretation and grammar in the proximate section, the work he likely had in mind here was Erasmus Scarcerius, *Methodus divinae Scripturae locos praecipuos explicans* (Halle, 1539). Below Ussher mentioned that he had not consulted his commentaries on Paul's epistles.

81. Santes Pagnino (1470–1536), *Thesaurus linguae sanctae sive lexicon hebraicum* (Leiden: Sebastianus Gryphius, 1529). Pagnino, a Roman Catholic, also composed a briefer Hebrew lexicon, which is why Ussher referred to his "great lexicon;" *Epitome thesauri linguae sanctae* (1609).

82. Johannes Buxtorf (1564–1629) was a Protestant Hebraist who compiled an edition of the Hebrew Bible from the Masoretic Text and the Aramaic Targum; *Biblia Sacra Hebraica & Chaldaica* (Basel: Ludovici König, 1618).

83. Most likely a reference to the work Johann Jakob Grynaeus (1540–1617), *Anagoge Prior, de Arca Noe* (Basel: John Oporin, 1587).

84. Valentin Schindler (1543–1604), *Lexicon Pentaglotton* (Hanover: Johannis Jacobi Hennei, 1612). Schindler was a Lutheran Hebraist at the university in Wittenberg and Helmstedt.

85. Paul Fagius (1504–49), *Thargum, hoc est, Paraphrasis Onkeli Chaldaica in sacra Biblia* (Strassburg: Georgium Machaeporeum, 1546). Fagius was a Lutheran Hebraist, who taught in Strasbourg, Heidelberg, and Cambridge.

86. Jean Mercier (c.1510–70) was a Roman Catholic Hebraist, whose commentary on Genesis Theodore Beza prefaced; *In Genesis* (Geneva:

Symphonia is indifferent.⁷⁶ Good: Regnerus Praedinius.⁷⁷ Gallars in Exodus and Leviticus.⁷⁸ Hyperius' *Method of Theology*.⁷⁹ Scarcerius Lutheran [is] good.⁸⁰ Pagninus' bigger lexicon is best for the Old Testament.⁸¹

Buxtorf's Bibles.⁸² *Ark of Noah*.⁸³ Schindler *Pentaglotton*.⁸⁴ Paul Fagius his Notes on the Chaldean Paraphrase;⁸⁵ On the Pentateuch, Mercer.⁸⁶ Masius' Septuagint,⁸⁷ the Latin Vulgate, for the Papiſts use it.⁸⁸ Bradwardine *Regarding God's Cause*.⁸⁹ Field, *Of The Church*.⁹⁰ Bishop Jewel's *Works* put out by one that was Bishop of Norwich after.⁹¹ Dudley Fenner is good, but he will trouble you with distinctions.⁹² Hooker is good on ceremonies.⁹³

These are disliked or at least not so well approved of. Elton on the Colossians.⁹⁴ Bishop Hall.⁹⁵

Matthaei Berjon, 1598). He also had a book on the Ten Commandments; *In Decalogum commentarius doctrina et eruditione non carens* (Paris: R. Stephani, 1568).

87. Andreas Masius (1514–73) was a Roman Catholic Hebraist who produced a new critical text of the Greek text of the book of Joshua; see Theodor Dunkelgrün, "The Hebrew Library of a Renaissance Humanist Andreas Masius and the Bibliography to his 'Iosuae Imperatoris Historia' (1574), with a Latin Edition and an Annotated English Translation," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 42/43 (2010–2011): 197–252.

88. Ussher likely meant here to consult the Latin Vulgate so that Protestant ministers would be familiar with the specific text of Scripture to which Roman Catholics appealed.

89. Thomas Bradwardine (1300–1349) was a medieval theologian who taught at Oxford. He was known for reviving Augustinianism. This work, although an early modern edition, is Thomas Bradwardine, *Thomae Bradwardini Archiepiscopi olim Cantuariensis, De causa Dei, contra Pelagium, et De virtute causarum, ad suos Mertonenses, libri tres* (London: Ex officina Nortoniana, apud Ioannem Billium, 1618).

90. Richard Field (1561–1616), *Of the Church, Five Bookes*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: William Turner, 1628).

91. John Jewel (1522–1571), *The Works of the Very Learned and Reverent Father in God John Jewell, not long since Bishop of Sarisburie* (London: John Norton, 1609). This collection was edited by Daniel Featley (1582–1645), who had correspondence with Ussher during the Westminster Assembly.

92. Dudley Fenner (1558–1587) wrote several works on a variety of topics. Ussher most likely meant Fenner, *Sacra theologia, sive, Veritas quae est secundum pietatem ad vnicam & versae methodi leges descripta & in decem libros* (S.L.: T. Dawson, 1585); Fenner, *The whole doctrine of the Sacraments plainlie and fullie set downe and declared out of the word of God* (Middelborg: Richard Schilders, 1588); or Fenner, *The artes of logike and rethorike plainelie set forth in the English tounge* (Middleburg: R. Schilders, 1584). Richard Snoddy claimed that Ussher's critique that Fenner used too many distinctions may have indicated that Ussher had moved past his fondness for heavily dichotomized writing; Richard Snoddy, *The Soteriology of James Ussher: The Act and Object of Saving Faith* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014), 141n15.

93. Richard Hooker (1554–1600), *Of the lawes of ecclesiastical polittie eight bookes* (London: John Windet, 1604), bk. 4.

94. Edward Elton (c.1569–1624), *An Exposition of the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Colossians*, 2nd ed. (London: Felix Kyngston, 1620).

95. Joseph Hall (1574–1656) was a member of the British Delegation

Marlorat. Henry Mason. Mayer's Catechisme, and on [th]e N.[ew] Test.[ament] Reeues on [th]e Church Catechisme. Topsall. Weeme's Christian Synagogue, yet it takes Boyes. Berchorii opera. Hee never saw Bucer's com[m]on places nor Parre's grounds. Canisuis. Erasmi An[n]otationes in N.[ew] Test.[ament] & his paraphrase. Rogers on Judges. Hee never saw Sarcerius in Epistolae. Canini[us] Estius Schottus. Stella Primoda. A Lapide. Fer[us] Lorinus. Aquinas. Scotus Arrimensis. Flacius Illir[ius] in NT. Selnecorim Gen. Fabricius in

Marlorat.⁹⁶ Henry Mason.⁹⁷ Mayer's *Catechism*,⁹⁸ and on the New Testament.⁹⁹ Reeve's on the Church Catechism.¹⁰⁰ Topsell.¹⁰¹ Weeme's *Christian Synagogue*, yet it takes Boys.¹⁰² Berchori *Opera*.¹⁰³ He never saw Bucer's common places,¹⁰⁴ nor Parr's *Grounds*.¹⁰⁵ Canisuis.¹⁰⁶ Erasmus' *Annotations* in New Testament¹⁰⁷ and his paraphrase.¹⁰⁸ Rogers on Judges.¹⁰⁹ He never saw Sarcerius on the epistles.¹¹⁰ Caninius¹¹¹ Estius¹¹² Schott.¹¹³ Estella¹¹⁴ Primaudaye.¹¹⁵ A Lapide.¹¹⁶ Ferus¹¹⁷ Lorin.¹¹⁸ Aquinas.¹¹⁹ Scotus Arrimensis.¹²⁰ Flacius

to the Synod of Dort (1618–19). Michael Robarts, a student who would have known Ussher by studying Trinity College Dublin and at Oxford when Ussher was there, wrote to Ussher in commendation of Hall's work; *Correspondence*, 2:412. Ussher spoke well of Hall's work when he wrote to Hall; *Correspondence*, 3:931.

96. Augustin Marlorat (1506–60) was a French Reformed theologian, who wrote many works of biblical exposition.

97. Henry Mason (c.1575–1647) was an Arminian theologian.

98. John Mayer (1583–1664), *The English Catechism Explained* (London: Aug. Matthewes for John Marriot, 1623).

99. John Mayer, *A Commentarie upon the New Testament* (London: Thomas Cotes for John Bellamie, 1631).

100. Edmund Reeve (d.1660), *The Communion Book Catechisme Expounded* (London: Miles Flesher for Humphrey Mosley, 1636).

101. Edward Topsell (1572–1625) wrote several histories of various animal species.

102. Ussher's reference here was to John Weemes (c.1579–1636), *The Christian synagogue*, 4th ed. (London: Thomas Cotes for John Bellamy, 1633) and to the works of John Boys (1571–1625). It is difficult, however, to determine precisely what Ussher meant by "yet it takes Boys." It could be that Ussher thought that Weemes had borrowed from Boys' works in composing his *Christian Synagogue*, but the nature of Boys' works focused on exposition of biblical texts used in the established church's liturgies. On the other hand, Ussher may have meant that Weemes' book, which was about the true nature of interpreting and teaching Scripture, needed to be supplemented with Boys' expositions of liturgical passages; John Boys, *An Exposition of All the Principal Scriptures Used in our English Liturgie* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1610); John Boys, *An Exposition of the Dominical Epistles and Gospels Used in our English Liturgie* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1610); John Boys, *An Exposition of the Last Psalme Delivered in a Sermon Preached at Pauls Crosse the fifth of Nouember, 1613* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1613); John Boys, *An Exposition of the Festiuall Epistles and Gospels Used in our English Liturgie* (London: Edward Griffin, 1615).

103. Petri Berchori (or Pierre Bersuire, c.1290–1362), a French medieval classicist, *Opera Omnia*, 2 vols. (Cologne, 1620).

104. Martin Bucer (1449–1551) was first generation Reformed theologian. Apparently, a student asked Ussher if he had ever consulted Bucer's *Loci Communes*, but Ussher had not. The work to which is being referred here was likely one of two books: Martin Bucer, *Enarrationes In Evangelia Matthaei, Marci, & Lucae: Loci communes syncretioris Theologiae supra centum* (Herwagen, 1527); *De regno Christi Iesu servatoris nostri, Libri II* (Basel: Joannem Oporinum, 1557), which has the subtitle *Habes hic, candide Lector, praeter complura haud vulgaria, locum communem de coniugio & divortio*.

105. Elnathan Parr (1577–1622), *The Grounds of Divinitie Plainely Discovering the Misteries of Christian Religion* (London: John Norton for Samuel Man, 1633).

106. Peter Canisius (1521–97) was a Jesuit theology and prolific author in defense of Roman Catholicism, e.g. *Summa Doctrinae Christianae* (Vienna, 1555); *Summa Doctrina Christianae per Quaestiones Tradita et Ad Captum Rudiorum Accomodata* (Ingolstadt, 1556); *Catechismus Minor seu Parvus Catechismus Catholicorum* (Vienna, 1558). Canisius' catechetical works went through many editions, often published under slightly different titles.

107. Desiderius Erasmus (c.1466–1536), *In novum Testamentum ... annotationes* (Basel, 1527).

108. Desiderius Erasmus, *Tomus primus Paraphraseon Des. Erasmi Roterodami in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1541); Desiderius Erasmus, *Tomus secundus continens Paraphrasim D. Erasmi Roterodami in omnes epistolas apostolicas* (Basel, 1532). Erasmus' paraphrases of New Testament books were originally published individually.

109. Richard Rogers, *A commentary upon the whole booke of Iudges* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1615). Ussher above had recommended Rogers' *Seven Treatises*.

110. Erasmus Sarcerius, *In Epistolam ad Romanos Scholia* (Frankfurt: Chr. Egenolphus, 1541); Erasmus Sarcerius (1501–59), *In epistolas D. Pauli ad Philippenses, Colossenses, et Thessalonicenses* (Frankfurt, 1542).

111. Angelo Caninius was a sixteenth-century grammarian who taught in Paris; Pierre Bayle, *A General Dictionary, Historical and Critical*, 10 vols. (London: James Bettenham, 1736), 4:94–95.

112. Guilielmus Estius (1542–1616) was a Roman Catholic professor of theology at Douai.

113. Gaspar Schott (1608–66) was a German Jesuit who worked in the natural sciences.

114. Diego de Estella (1524–78) was a Spanish Franciscan.

115. Pierre de la Primaudaye (1546–1620) was a French Protestant who wrote an influential book about the state of natural and philosophical sciences in France; *L'Académie Française* (Geneva: Chouët, 1617). The work became popular in English translation; *The French Academie Fully discoursed and finished in foure bookes* (London: Thomas Adams, 1618).

116. Cornelius a Lapide (1567–1627) was a prolific Roman Catholic commentator.

117. Johann Ferus (1495–1554) was a Roman Catholic commentator.

118. Jean de Lorin (1559–1634) was a Roman Catholic commentator, who wrote numerous commentaries on Old and New Testament books.

119. Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) was a medieval theologian who taught in Paris (twice) and Cologne, and is now most famous for his *Summa Theologiae*. Ussher drew from Thomas' theology in several ways; Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works*, passim.

120. The reference(s) here are difficult to pinpoint precisely. First, it could be read as a single reference "Scotus Arrimensis" or it could be taken as two separate references "Scotus [full stop] Arrimensis [full

Psal. Bullinger in Isa. Luther. Melanchthon. Zwinglius. Husse. G. Gualter[us] is indifferent. Maimonides. P. Galatinus. Sigoni[us] de Rep.[ublica] Hutteri Miscellanea. Munsters notes & on [th]e Old Test. Lyras glosses is starke nought.

Broughton. Bibliotheca Patrum.

Hee said nought to Fox his Martyrpology. Sir Walter Rawleigh's History Sextus Senensis has nothing but out of the Fathers and Schoolmen. Gerard's worke

Illyrius in New Testament.¹²¹ Selnecker *Genesis*.¹²² Fabricius in Psalms.¹²³ Bullinger in Isaiah.¹²⁴ Luther.¹²⁵ Melanchthon.¹²⁶ Zwingli.¹²⁷ Huss.¹²⁸ Gravius Gualterus is indifferent.¹²⁹ Maimonides.¹³⁰ P. Galatinus.¹³¹ Sigonio *On the Republic*.¹³² Hutter Miscellanea.¹³³ Munster's notes¹³⁴ and on the Old Testament. Lyras glosses is stark naught.¹³⁵

Broughton.¹³⁶ *The Library of the Fathers*.¹³⁷

He said naught to Fox, his Martyrology.¹³⁸ Sir Walter Raleigh's *History*.¹³⁹ Sextus Senensis has nothing but out of the Fathers and Schoolmen.¹⁴⁰ Gerhard's

stop.] If taken as two separate references, they may have been to John Duns Scotus (1265/6–1308), a medieval theologian who taught at Oxford and Paris, and Gregory of Rimini (c.1300–58) – also known as Gregory Ariminensis – a medieval Augustinian who taught in Paris. The reference to Rimini would be expected among Ussher's recommendations, but this is a mixed list in regards to Ussher's approval, so the mention of Scotus is not ruled out. It also simply could have been that the reference was incorrectly said/heard/written and that Ussher meant Gregory of Rimini. If this is a single reference, then Ussher most likely meant Marianus Scotus (1028–82), a medieval Irish chronicler. This section of the manuscript is regularly punctuated, so the dual reference faces that difficulty, even though the reference to Rimini by "Arrimensis" is most satisfying in terms of what is written on the page. The single reference has the perhaps greater difficulty in explaining how "Marianus" became construed as "Arrimensis." On the other hand, Ussher did have known plans to publish an edition of Marianus Scotus, which makes the demonstrable link between Ussher and this Scotus' work tighter; e.g. *Correspondence*, 2:477. Ultimately, the point of these notes is more to give readers and scholars direction for future investigation rather than to untangle these mysteries completely. Thanks to Michael Lynch and Richard Snoddy for their crucial input on this reference.

121. Matthias Flacius Illyrius (1520–75) was a Lutheran scholar; *Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1570). Ussher also made use of Illyrius' historical works; *Correspondence*, 1:98, 210 [mistakenly identified as Marcus Illyrius Flaccus].

122. Niklaus Selnecker (1532–92), *In Genesis* (Leipzig: Rhambau, 1569).

123. Stephanus Fabricius (1569–1648), *Sacrae conciones in centum quinquaginta Psalmos Davidis regis* (Geneva: Franciscus Nicolaus, 1622).

124. Heinrich Bullinger (1504–75), *Isaias Excellentissimus Dei Propheta* (Zurich: Christophorus Froshoverus, 1567).

125. Martin Luther (1483–1546).

126. Phillip Melanchthon (1497–1560), *Loci Communes Theologici* (Strassburg: Johan Albrecht, 1536).

127. Ulrich Zwingli (1484–1531) was a first-generation Swiss Reformer.

128. Jan Huss (c.1372–1415) was a Czech Reformer and often considered to be a precursor to Protestantism.

129. Gravius Gualterus was a sixteenth-century Dominican prior who wrote treatises against Erasmus; e.g. *Apologiam adversus libros Erasmi* (Antwerp, 1525).

130. Maimonides, also known as Moses ben Maimon (1138–1204), was a medieval Jewish philosopher. Thomas Aquinas interacted with his works. Ussher cited Maimonides in reference to work on the Hebrew Masoretic Text; *Correspondence*, 3:1035.

131. Pietro Colonna Galatinus (1460–1539) was a Roman Catholic philosopher and theologian. Ralph Skynner mentioned Galatinus'

work on the Talmud in a letter to Ussher (January 26, 1624); *Correspondence*, 1:296.

132. Carlo Sigonio (c.1520–84), *De Republica Hebraeorum* (Frankfurt: Andrea Wecheli, 1583).

133. Ussher most likely referred here to Leonard Hutter (1563–1616), a Lutheran scholastic theologian, who wrote a tremendous number of books, but none of them were titled *Miscellanea*. Ussher likely meant that Hutter's various works were mixed in quality. Hutter did write works against Robert Bellarmine, which Ussher would of course appreciate; Leonard Hutter, *Roberti Bellarmini libri II de sacrificio Romanensium missatico* (Wittenberg: Zacharius Schurenius, 1604); Leonard Hutter *Controversiae duae Theologicae: 1. De Verbo Dei scripto, & non scripto. 2. De persona Christi Jesu Servatoris nostri unici* (Wittenberg: Gormannus, 1610). He also wrote works addressing "Calvinism;" Leonard Hutter, *Calvinista Aulico-Politicus: Das ist Eigentliche Entdeckung, vnd gründliche widerlegung, etlicher Calvinische[n] Politischen Rathschlege, durch welche Johann von Münster* (Helwig, 1613).

134. Sebastian Munster (1488–1552), a theologian at Heidelberg, published a Hebrew Bible with corresponding Latin translation in a parallel column, and notes for each chapter. *Biblica Latina Planeque Nova* (Basel, 1534).

135. Nicolaus de Lyra (c.1270–1349), *Biblia Sacra cum glossis*, 7 vols. (Lyon, 1545). The first four volumes contain the Old Testament coverage that Ussher mentioned here.

136. Richard Broughton (1558–1634) was a Roman Catholic historian in England, who wrote several works on antiquity, especially as it related to Britain. Several of this Broughton's historical works may possibly have been in Ussher's mind, and certainly they would be of interest to Ussher, even if just to refute them. Hugh Broughton (1549–1612), a Reformed Hebraist, was often mentioned in Ussher's letters; *Correspondence*, 1:317, 328, 336, 360; 2:689; 3:1116, 1154. Ussher's next recommendation is a book about history, which makes the former Broughton the more likely reference here.

137. Marguerin de la Bigne (1546–95), *Magna Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum*, 13 vols. (Cologne: Anthony Hierat, 1618).

138. The reference here was to John Foxe (c.1516–87), *Actes and Monuments of These Latter and perillous dayes* (London: John Day, 1563), which Ussher apparently did not mention. For analysis of this work's historical relevance, see Crawford Gribben, *The Puritan Millennium: Literature and Theology, 1550–1682*, rev. ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008), 61–71. Ussher's neglect of this title could well have related to its implied anti-royal polemic.

139. Sir Walter Raleigh (1552–1618), *The History of the World* (London: William Stansby for Walter Burre, 1614).

140. Sextus Senensis (1520–69), *Bibliotheca Sancta ex Praecipuis Catholicae Ecclesiae Auctoribus Collecta* (Venice, 1566). Ussher also

P. Arisius but indifferent. He never saw Davenant on [th]e Coloss[ians].

Reade no Jesuits at all for they are nothing but ostentac[i]on and never understood [th]e Scr[iptur]es.

Scaliger did too much presume upon his owne knowledge, w[hi]ch layd his errorrs open to his Adversaries. I may repent my time I spent in his booke de emendatione temporum. Dr. Reynolds is too rhetorical, a pen full of inke. Ascham's Epistles have many state matters in them.

work.¹⁴¹ P. Aresius but indifferent.¹⁴² He never saw Davenant on the Colossians.¹⁴³

Read no Jesuits at all for they are nothing but ostentation and never understood the Scriptures.

Scaliger did too much presume upon his own knowledge, which laid his errors open to his Adversaries.¹⁴⁴ I may repent my time I spent in his book *Regarding the Emendation of Times*.¹⁴⁵ Dr. Reynolds is too rhetorical, a pen full of ink.¹⁴⁶ Ascham's *Epistles* have many state matters in them.¹⁴⁷ ■

referred to this work in a letter to Francis Junius (July 3, 1651); *Correspondence*, 3:1002.

141. Johann Gerhard (1582–1637) was a highly significant Lutheran theologian who taught in Jena. One of his more important works was his multi-volume treatment of divinity; Johann Gerhard, *Locorum Theologicorum Cum Pro Adstruenda Veritate, Tom*, 9 volumes (Jena, 1610–1623).

142. Paulus Aresius (d. 1645) was the Roman Catholic bishop of Tortona, who wrote a commentary on Song of Solomon: *De Vero Sacri Cantici Salomonis tum Historico tum Spirituali Sensu Novae Quaedam Velitationes* (Milan, 1640); also the later published *Velitationes in Apocalypsim* (Milan, 1647). One may somewhat expect that the reference would be to the more famous and respected Benedictus Aretius (1505–74), the Reformed theologian who taught Greek, Hebrew, and theology at Bern, and wrote numerous commentaries. However, this requires a greater degree of misspelling on Barlow's part, and the clarifying "P." as well as Ussher's indifference, seem to preclude this.

143. John Davenant, *Expositio epistolae D. Pauli ad Colossenses, per reverendum in Christo Patrem Ioannem Sarisburiensem Episcopum jam primum edita* (Cambridge: Thomas and John Bucke, 1627).

144. Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540–1609) was a French Protestant

historian, who taught in both Geneva and Leiden, and worked extensively on chronology, which was of course one of Ussher's many interests. Clearly, Ussher disapproved of his chronological work in tone and content, as the next sentence clarifies.

145. Joseph Scaliger, *Opus de Emendatione Temporum* (Leiden: Franciscus Raphelengij, 1583). Ussher also commented on his dissatisfaction with this book in a letter to Arnold Boate (June, 1651); *Correspondence*, 3:1001. He critiqued some of Scaliger's chronological specifics in a letter to John Selden (November 30, 1627); *Correspondence*, 2:403–7.

146. Edward Reynolds (1599–1676) was a preacher at Lincoln's Inn (1622–27), a member of the Westminster Assembly who sided with Presbyterians, dean of Christ Church, Oxford and vice-chancellor of the university (1648–50/1). He later became chaplain to Charles II (1630–85), the bishop of Norwich, and contributed to the Book of Common Prayer. He was a prolific author and it is not obvious which particular work(s) Ussher had in mind here.

147. One of two works: Roger Ascham (c.1515–68), *A panoplie of epistles* (London: Henry Middleton, 1576); Roger Ascham, *Disertissimi viri Rogeri Aschami Angli, Regiae olim Maiesitati à Latinis epistolis, familiarium epistolarum* (London: Henry Middleton, 1578).

“The Mysteries of Christ”: James Ussher Among the Puritans, 1626

By Richard Snoddy

In the early days of 1626, James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland,¹ preached a series of six sermons from a number of English pulpits. His chosen text was Hebrews 9:14, “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered up himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.” This gave Ussher a starting point for the consideration of a range of doctrines from the person and work of Christ through to the conscience and Christian service. This article explores these sermons which have never been published and survive in manuscript in the Bodleian Library at the University of Oxford, having been acquired at auction in 1915.² The content of the sermons is fascinating and the reader will be given a taste of Ussher’s preaching style, but before we consider what Ussher says, we must give some attention to the context in which Ussher says it. It would be all too easy to abstract these sermons from their historical context and appreciate their instruction, edification, and challenge, but our understanding will be enriched by giving some attention to the nature of the audience and the events of the mid-1620s.

The manuscript looks less like a set of auditor’s notes than a presentation copy with a frontispiece and a title, “The mysteries of Christ unfolded and applied. Together with the nature, offices, acts and errors of the conscience declared. // In six sermons by the right reverend Father in God Dr Usher Lord Primate of Armagh and Metropolitan of all Ireland.” At the bottom of this page there is the note “Taken in characters and transcribed by W.I. [or W.J].” There is no indication of where the series begins but the date of the first sermon, and presumably the second, is 1 January 1626. The third sermon, and presumably the fourth, are undated but were preached at Felsted in Essex. The fifth sermon was preached at Bishopsgate St. in London and there are good grounds

to infer a date of 29 January. The sixth sermon takes us to Islington, then lying outside London to the north. A further sermon is included on the text 1 Peter 4:17, at Great St. Bartholomews, London, on 2 July 1626. As it is not part of the series, and for reasons of space, it will receive only brief attention in this article’s conclusion.

There is one unusual feature about this collection which explains why these sermons, preached in several different locations, cohere together and can be regarded as a series. It is clear that some of Ussher’s

THE AUTHOR: Richard Snoddy is an Associate Research Fellow at London School of Theology, and Visiting Research Fellow at Queen’s University, Belfast. He lives in County Down, Northern Ireland. He is grateful to Colin Campbell and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church for the invitation to present the early stages of this research in a lecture at Knock EPC, Belfast in November 2019.

1. For Ussher’s biography, see Alan Ford, *James Ussher: Theology, History, and Politics in Early-Modern Ireland and England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). Other important sources are Nicholas Bernard, *The Life & Death of the Most Reverend and Learned Father of Our Church Dr. James Usher, Late Arch-Bishop of Armagh, and Primate of All Ireland* (London, 1656), 19–20. Other biographical accounts can be found in Richard Parr, *The Life of the Most Reverend Father in God, James Usher, Late Lord Arch-Bishop of Armagh, Primate and Metropolitan of all Ireland* (London, 1686); Charles R. Elrington, “The Life of James Ussher, D.D., Archbishop of Armagh,” in *The Whole Works of the Most Rev. James Ussher, D.D., Lord Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate of All Ireland*, ed. Charles R. Elrington and J. H. Todd, 17 vols (Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1829–64), 1:1–324; R. Buick Knox, *James Ussher: Archbishop of Armagh* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1967); Hugh Trevor-Roper, “James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh,” in *Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans: Seventeenth Century Essays* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1987), 120–65.

2. “The mysteries of Christ unfolded and applied,” Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Eng.th.e.25. Apart from the appearance of the title in the footnotes, the spelling and punctuation in citations from the manuscript are lightly modernized. For acquisition, see Falconer Madan and H. H. E. Craster, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford ... Vol. VI (Accessions, 1890–1915) Nos. 31001–37299* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), 488 (#36905). An edition of these sermons is in preparation for publication.

hearers moved with him. There are references at the beginning of the final two sermons to indicate this: “Heretofore in another place I have entered into the explication of these words of the Apostle before some honourable personages here present”; “I have at other times and places entered into the explication of this text before some honourable personages present in this congregation.”³ It can be safely assumed that these must be the same people addressed as “right honourable and beloved in Christ” in the first sermon, and the third: “In these words (right honourable, &c) is contained (as heretofore in another place I have declared)...”⁴ The address points to people of elevated station, and some of them are travelling from Essex, to London, and on to Islington. There is enough here to make some solid deductions about the circles Ussher was moving in at this time and to conclude that he was closely associated with the Earl of Warwick.

The third, and presumably the fourth, sermons were preached at Felsted in Essex. This was at the heart of the territory of Robert Rich, second Earl of Warwick, whose residence at Leighs (or Leez) Priory was on the parish boundary. He was one of the greatest landowners in England. His father, the third Baron Rich, was a zealous Protestant who funded a private fleet to prey on Spanish shipping in the Caribbean. When England made peace with Spain in 1604 he moved his base of operations to Flushing and Middleburg in the Low Countries, and when the Dutch made peace with Spain five years later, his ships sailed under commission of the Duke of Savoy. This was a work of righteousness, taking the fight to papal antichrist; as a bonus it could be highly profitable. He was able to purchase the earldom in 1618 during a temporary breach in relations with

Spain when King James was short on funds, but he never enjoyed the confidence of the King and he died in 1619, his son becoming the second Earl. Even before this young Robert was engaged in private maritime warfare against Spain. This ran against the king’s foreign policy and was highly risky.⁵ Walter Raleigh was executed to appease Spain after his men, against his orders, attacked a Spanish outpost on the Orinoco River.

Warwick was also one of England’s most powerful ecclesiastical patrons. His patronage extended far beyond his twenty-two advowsons, the right to present a candidate to vacant benefices, through more informal means of encouragement, protection, and financial support. He was at the centre of a complex web of friendship and patronage, and in years to come would be closely linked to Edmund Calamy, Stephen Marshall, Obadiah Sedgwick, Jeremiah Burroughs, and other preachers who would be vocal advocates of the Parliamentary cause in the 1640s, but whose own disagreements would contribute to the downfall of that cause.⁶ Whilst known for his good humour, he had a sincere concern for his own spiritual welfare, and obviously valued the counsel and friendship of godly preachers. Sharing an eschatologically-charged anti-popery, Ussher and Warwick must have gotten on well. Recent historians have come to a greater appreciation of the leading role of nobles such as Warwick and William Fiennes, Viscount Saye and Sele in the run up to the Civil War. John Adamson, in his book *The Noble Revolt*, describes Leighs Priory in 1640 as the “topographical and moral centre” of opposition to the King.⁷ We see here, through this manuscript, the precursor of that opposition, a circle around Warwick with deep concerns about the direction of state and church.

The venue of the sixth sermon, Islington, also has a strong connection to Warwick. His first wife having died in 1623, Warwick had recently remarried. Susan, widow of the wealthy London alderman William Halliday, brought into the new union Halliday’s forty-four-acre estate, later known as the Mildmay Estate, on the south side of Newington Green and a little under a mile north east of St. Mary’s Church on the eastern extremities of the parish boundary.⁸

As the Warwick connection comes into sharper focus, an ideal candidate for the role of scribe steps forward. “W.J.” is likely William Jessop. After training as a clerk in law, he became man of business to Warwick, and later served as secretary to the Providence Island Company and as a senior official in the Commonwealth.⁹ With his legal training he had fluency in stenographic systems such as charactery, and the

3. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 91r, 109r.

4. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 4r, 53r.

5. Sean Kelsey, “Rich, Robert, second earl of Warwick (1587–1658),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004); William Hunt, *The Puritan Moment: The Coming of Revolution in an English County* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 160–67.

6. Barbara Donagan, “The Clerical Patronage of Robert Rich, Second Earl of Warwick, 1619–1642,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 120, no. 5 (Oct 1976): 388–419. See also Kenneth Shipps, “Lay Patronage of East Anglian Puritan Clerics in Pre-Revolutionary England” (PhD diss., Yale University, 1971), 167–212.

7. John Adamson, *The Noble Revolt: The Overthrow of Charles I* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 2007), 26.

8. A. P. Baggs, Diane K. Bolton, and Patricia E. C. Croot, “Islington: Other estates,” in *A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 8, Islington and Stoke Newington Parishes*, ed. T. F. T. Baker and C. R. Elrington (London: Victoria County History, 1985), 57–69.

9. G. E. Aylmer, “Jessop, William (bap. 1603, d. 1675),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004).

records of the Providence Island Company show that he made extensive use of shorthand.¹⁰ Such systems enabled listeners to record what they heard with much greater accuracy than had previously been possible.¹¹ Many of the published collections of Puritan sermons actually come from auditors’ notes. For example, large numbers of the sermons of Richard Sibbes and John Preston, lecturers at the Inns of Court where these skills were learned and honed, survive for precisely this reason. Jessop is a perfect fit for the identity of our scribe, taking down the sermon in characters and then writing out a neat copy, perhaps for the personal use of his master, the Earl of Warwick.

Given this, it is possible that the venue for the first, and possibly second, sermon is Leighs Priory, Warwick’s residence. This would be a plausible explanation for the venue not being specified. Another strong possibility is Hatfield Broad Oak in Essex. We know that in late December 1625 Ussher and John Preston preached there at what William Hunt suggests was “a sort of regional synod of the godly.” We do not know what went on there or who was present and the manuscript notes of Ussher’s and Preston’s sermons on that occasion are in rather poor condition and somewhat jumbled.¹² But it is the last sighting of Ussher in the historical record before the New Year; just two days before. Hatfield Broad Oak was the seat of Sir Francis Barrington, a Member of Parliament who worked closely with Warwick in protecting and promoting godly preachers. He would later refuse to act as a collector for the king’s “forced loan” and died in 1628, his life shortened by a spell in prison. His wife Joan was a formidable woman, and aunt to Oliver Cromwell. Sir Francis had family connections to Ussher, was instrumental in Ussher’s invitation to preach before the House of Commons in 1621, and described Ussher as his “most noble friend.”¹³

This gives some idea of the circles Ussher was moving in at the beginning of 1626. The previous year had brought his elevation to the archiepiscopal see of Armagh and leadership of the church in Ireland, one of the last actions of King James. It had also seen the death of James and a new king, Charles, come to the throne amid serious concerns about the direction taken in church and state.¹⁴ The rise of a ceremonialist faction in England threatened the word-centred piety of the Puritans.¹⁵ The doctrinal tenets of Arminianism were also perceived as a threat to the Reformed character of the established church, with the writings of Richard Montagu sparking debate in Parliament.¹⁶ Warwick had been pushing the new king’s confidant George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham to come off the fence on religious policy, and a disputation before

Buckingham at his London residence, York House on the Strand, was just a few weeks away.

The evidence presented here is further confirmation of Ussher’s connections with English Puritanism, not only its clerical, but also its political manifestation, and would seem to link him even more closely to the Essex network than suggested by previous scholarship.¹⁷ A faction was emerging which would oppose and resist royal policy.¹⁸ The manuscript gives a glimpse of a group hearing sermons, and no doubt praying and fasting, and meeting in conclave,¹⁹ in advance of the York House Conference.

I. A NEW YEAR’S GIFT²⁰

Ussher begins his first sermon observing that this season

10. Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Providence Island, 1630–1641: The Other Puritan Colony* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 371. See British Library, Add. MS 10615.

11. For a judicious discussion of shorthand as a recording medium for early modern sermons, its accuracy, and the evidential value of auditors’ notes, see Arnold Hunt, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and Their Audiences, 1590–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 142–47.

12. Hunt, *The Puritan Moment*, 193. See also, Tom Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England: The Caroline Puritan Movement, c. 1620–1643* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 9–10. Essex Record Office, D/DBa F5/1, fol. 4r. The notes are in the hand of John Kendall, steward to Sir Thomas Barrington. Ussher’s sermons are dated 28 and 30 December.

13. Ford, *James Ussher*, 112; *Barrington Family Letters, 1628–1632*, ed. Arthur Searle, Camden Society 28 (4th series) (London: Royal Historical Society, 1983), 12.

14. An excellent orientation to the history and historiography of the English church in this period is *The Early Stuart Church, 1603–1642*, ed. Kenneth Fincham (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993).

15. Peter Lake, “Lancelot Andrewes, John Buckeridge, and Avant-Garde Conformity at the Court of James I,” in *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, ed. Linda Levy Peck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 113–33; Charles Prior, *Defining the Jacobean Church: The Politics of Religious Controversy, 1603–1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 158–203.

16. Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c. 1590–1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 125–64. For a re-appraisal of Montagu, see Jay T. Collier, *Debating Perseverance: The Augustinian Heritage in Post-Reformation England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 93–123.

17. On Ussher’s Puritan connections, see Elizabethanne Boran, “An Early Friendship Network of James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh, 1626–1656,” in *European Universities in the Age of Reformation and Counter Reformation*, ed. Helga Robinson-Hammerstein (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 116–34.

18. Christopher Thompson, “The Origins of the Politics of the Parliamentary Middle Group, 1625–1629,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 22 (1972): 71–86.

19. On such practices, see Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England*, 60–74.

20. These section headings are for the reader’s convenience. They do not appear in the manuscript where the sermons are simply numbered.

of the year is a time “wherein by ancient custom” the incarnation is celebrated, so there is no more appropriate theme to take up than the “end,” the purpose of the incarnation—that Christ was sent to die for us to purge our consciences from dead works—and to meditate on the great gift that God has given us in Christ.²¹

This particular day, moreover, is a “special day,” Ussher announces, a day “by the appointment of the Church set apart,” to commemorate the circumcision of our Saviour, the Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord. It seems like a small detail as we read the Christmas story but the Church in her wisdom considered it a matter of some weight, “a thing not to be lightly passed over,” for Christ here gave us “an obligation both for his active and passive obedience.” This is a bond to his Father, signed in his blood, by which he humbled himself, put himself under the law on our behalf, binding himself to perform that obedience which we could not perform ourselves.²² This motif was commonplace. It is reflected in the Collect for 1 January in the Book of Common Prayer: “Almighty God, who madeſt thy blessed Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law for man; Grant us the true circumcision of the Spirit...” etc.²³ But beside our “principal debt of obedience” there is “a debt of penalty” and Ussher, developing an idea found in the Fathers, believes that Christ,

by circumcision gives obligation that he will pay that debt too. That day when the foreskin of his flesh was cut off was the first blood of our Saviour shed, and it was a pawn and pledge that all the rest should follow, that all the blood in his veins should be shed for the redemption of his Church.²⁴

So right from the opening comments, Ussher is setting forth the purpose of the incarnation in terms of

Christ’s active and passive obedience, the active obedience of his perfect, sinless life, and his passive obedience, the obedience of his suffering and his death, both set forth to deal with the sinner’s double debt. This is rich theological fare, opening up themes to which Ussher will return.

Ussher then turns from marking the place in the liturgical calendar to observe that in the secular calendar it is the “opening of the year, and all things are new.”²⁵ Christ makes all things new. A new commandment, a new and living way to enter the most holy place, a new creature in union with Christ, the old things passing away.²⁶ Christ makes a new year too, being anointed to proclaim the gospel, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord in which the captives are to be set free.²⁷ “Will you have a new year’s gift?” asks Ussher, alluding to the courtly custom of gift giving on 1 January.²⁸ “He is that too. To us a child is born, to us a son is given.”²⁹ He gives not only remission of sins and heaven, he gives himself. This truth is strikingly conveyed in the sacrament, where we are offered not Christ’s benefits, but Christ himself, his body and his blood.

The occasion is thus an invitation to meditate on the mystery of Christ, this Christ who gives himself in his active and passive obedience. Ussher acknowledges this is a “deep point.” He might be “censured for making choice of it,” something “somewhat secret and abstruse,” but this is the glory of the gospel and it is a cause for shame if these things are strange to us:³⁰

if we have been ignorant before let us be sorry for it, and think that Christ checks us in that speech of his to Philip. Have I been thus long with thee and knowest thou not me? Hath Christ been above sixteen hundred years with thee (at the beginning whereof this mystery was made manifest) and art thou as ignorant as if it were locked up still? This may not be.³¹

The fulfilment of the minister’s calling, its “height and perfection,” is the unfolding of this mystery, to make it understandable. He reminds his hearers that these are things that angels longed to look into. He pictures the two cherubim on the Ark of the Covenant, their faces turned towards the mercy seat, or “propitiatory” as Ussher calls it—a type of Christ’s passive obedience, of course—it seems as if he does not even feel the need to spell this out—and the tables of the law within, which Ussher sees as typifying Christ’s active obedience. It is as if they desired to see into the secret which is now made known by the Church.³²

All this is by way of exordium. “Now to the point,”

21. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fol. 4r.

22. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 4v–5r.

23. *The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662*, ed. Brian Cummings (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 281.

24. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fol. 5r–v. Cf. for example, Ambrose, *Epist.* 78.2–4, in *Sancti Ambrosii ... Opera Omnia ... Tomi Secundi Pars Prior*, ed. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologiæ Latina* 16 (Paris: Migne, 1880), cols 1323B–1324A.

25. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fol. 5v.

26. John 13:34; Heb. 10:20; 2 Cor. 5:17.

27. Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18–19.

28. Felicity Heal, *The Power of Gifts: Gift Exchange in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 68–84.

29. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fol. 6r.

30. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 7r, 8r.

31. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fol. 7v; John 14:9.

32. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 8v–9r.

says Ussher.³³ We need to know Christ in his person, and to know him in his office.

Ussher then begins to set out a clear exposition of a two-nature Christology. "It is but one person, but one He, but one Jesus, but one Christ. See the text; how much more shall the blood of Christ who through his eternal spirit offered up himself, etc." It is not one person offering and another being offered. He offered up *himself*. There is one Christ, but in this one person there are two natures: eternal spirit, and flesh and blood; one nature eternal, and the other having a beginning in time, that is flesh.³⁴

I beseech you think not that these are curiosities, and things more fit for the learned than others. Assure yourselves they be things the substance whereof must be known by the meanest of all God's children. I would not trouble you with them if they were not necessary to be known. He that shall think there are two persons in Christ or but one nature shall not come to heaven. Therefore bend your attentions a little in this case that you may be able in some sort to understand this great mystery, and know it is a part of your glory that God is pleased to make you schoolfellows with the angels. They are glad to learn it, to look into it.³⁵

Ussher reassures his hearers that he will not enter into "school distinctions" that they would not understand. Clearly there are laity present; this is not a clerical conference. "Yet notwithstanding," insists Ussher, "unless you understand the substance of it you cannot be saved. To think that Christ hath two persons and but one nature is a fundamental error and one that holds such an error pertinaciously cannot come to salvation."³⁶

Ussher then turns to Colossians 2:9, "in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." "In him," in Christ, in the person, dwells the "fullness of Godhead," the fullness of the divine nature, and the fullness of manhood too. These are two distinct things dwelling in one person. Ussher, echoing creedal language, affirms, "I believe him to be very God, and I believe him to be very man." Two natures in one person, but neither mingled one with the other, nor changed one into the other: not mingled, so that it is neither one thing, nor the other that it was before, but a "third kind of thing," as in an apothecary's mixture; nor changed or transmuted, as the water when Christ changed water into wine, ceased to be water. Without bringing in technical terms, Ussher is trying to convey a Chalcedonian understanding of the two natures in the person of Christ.³⁷

But how did this happen? How did the word become

flesh? "By assuming into the unity of his person that which was not there before. He took to himself what he was not and remained what he was." This is an incomprehensible mystery: "the strangest thing that ever was." Our dust and ashes taken in, to dwell in "the same room, under the same roof," as the everlasting Godhead. Christ took a nature, but he had no person other than the second person of the Trinity. He assumed no person, but took a nature to the person. Ussher admits, "This is hard." He tries to draw an analogy with the water of the Thames flowing into the sea to show how something may lose its subsistence, its particular existence, and yet retain the nature of water. But unlike the Thames "Christ's human nature had no other existence at all but in the second person of the Trinity."³⁸ Again, Ussher avoids technical language but this is a clear affirmation of *anhypostasia*, the doctrine that Christ remains one person because the human nature he assumed was impersonal, having no previous independent, autonomous, or personal existence.³⁹ He insists once more on the importance of this teaching:

These are not speculations unnecessary, idle and curious, and such as are fit only for the schools. It is a mystery revealed to all saints. All saints must know the very substance of the point though they be not able to express it as I do or as the schools do. It is the great mystery kept secret from the foundation of the world, and now by the commandment of God to be revealed.⁴⁰

He reminds his hearers that the "first letter of Christ's name is 'Wonderful'" and adds that there are some things in religion that God would have us wonder at.⁴¹

Ussher recalls the apparitions of Christ in the Old Testament, to Abraham, to Manoah, and others. Pointedly, as Ussher retells the story of Manoah, the Angel of the Lord's name is not "secret" (as per the King James Version, Geneva Bible, etc), but "wonderful" (which most modern translations now seem to prefer). On these occasions the second person of the Trinity did not assume flesh into the person as in the incarnation,

33. "The mysteries of Christ," fol. 9r.

34. "The mysteries of Christ," fols. 9v-10r.

35. "The mysteries of Christ," fol. 10r-v.

36. "The mysteries of Christ," fol. 10v.

37. "The mysteries of Christ," fols. 11v-12v.

38. "The mysteries of Christ," fol. 13r-v.

39. For a helpful explanation of this doctrine, see Donald Macleod, *The Person of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 199-201.

40. "The mysteries of Christ," fol. 14r.

41. "The mysteries of Christ," fol. 14v; cf. Isa. 9:6.

but as a garment that a man puts on and then takes off again. Like Ussher's cloak, it sits loosely, and for a time, not with "fast and inseparable union."⁴²

How can this be? How could such a union be attained and maintained. When the Serpahim stand before God's presence they cover their faces and their feet, crying "Holy, holy, holy."

The angels that excel in strength and might, most admirably without all human infirmity of flesh, when they come into the presence of Almighty God they cannot endure the brightness of his glory that fills the world, they cover their faces not daring to look on that sun, yet what is that to this, that flesh and blood should be brought in and dwell there, that it should be able to subsist there and not be consumed with that brightness which the angels are not able look on.

The discussion moves on to the burning bush and to the manner in which God's glory was present in tabernacle and temple and how difficult it was to approach him. All these things were but figures of the great mystery of the incarnation.⁴³

Christ is God and man conjoined. He is Immanuel, God with us, with respect to his person, but he is also Immanuel with respect to his office. He is the medium, the mediator of a new covenant by which God and man might be reconciled. Ussher's language has shades of Anselm's as he says:

God was highly dishonored and it was not for his honour to pass by this indignity from sinful flesh, therefore he must redeem us with a price, and that not of silver and gold, but he must bring an oblation, a propitiatory sacrifice, even himself.⁴⁴

So as priest Christ offered himself by his eternal spirit, a sacrifice without sin. Man alone could not make such a sacrifice; God could not die, nor be subject to the law on our behalf.⁴⁵ This is the priestly part of Christ's office, in things pertaining to God. In things pertaining to men, Christ exercises prophetic and kingly office. The prophetic office makes known this mystery to our

42. "The mysteries of Christ," fols 14v-15r.

43. "The mysteries of Christ," fols 15v-18r; Isa. 6:2-3.

44. "The mysteries of Christ," fols 19v-21r.

45. This is the essential argument of Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo*. For a modern translation, see *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works*, ed. Brian Davies and G. R. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 260-356.

46. "The mysteries of Christ," fol. 22r-v.

47. "The mysteries of Christ," fols 23r-25v.

understanding and conscience, and the kingly office works on our will and affections. So he clearly sets out the *munus triplex*, the threefold office of the mediator, anticipating many of the notes of the sermons that would follow in the series.⁴⁶

Aware that the time is pressing, Ussher promises to speak more on these things, but pleads,

in the meantime consider the mighty love of God and admire it. Thou hast offended God to the death; to work thy reconciliation one must die whose death must be of that worth that in exact justice; it must be of more value than thy death and the deaths of all the sons of Adam world without end. Oh, the Son of God loved thee, and he would fain have died for thee but he could not; how can life die? How can he that was God everlasting and the author of life be subject to any change? Therefore because he could not die as he was remaining equal with the Father he took thy nature that he might die. How much then art thou bound to the Son of God that loved thee so dearly, that was touched with thy infirmities when he was God unchangeable, unpassable. Before his incarnation he had a mind to lay down his life for thee (take heed to the Church which is redeemed with the blood of God; so it was the blood of God) but being not able to shed blood as he was God alone he will look in the other nature for this end, that whereas the Father was ready to cleave thee in pieces with the sword of his wrath he will go between and take a nature that the dint of the blow should light on his precious body and soul.

Ussher assures his hearers that he will press on to the cleansing of the conscience, God providing "a bath of his own son's blood" to cleanse our consciences and purge us from dead works. Without this cleansing our works come out of a "muddy stream." Before, works were "fuel that should burn me in hell"; now they shall be fruitful, they shall "follow me into another world" and "I shall be rewarded for them." "But the time is past," he sighs, and closes in prayer.⁴⁷

This sermon is a richly-textured treatment of the incarnation and the relationship between the two natures in the person of Christ. Typical for Ussher, it brings in many biblical references and allusions. The material is conceptually dense but it is no dry exposition of abstruse doctrine. Ussher repeatedly insists on the importance of this knowledge of Christ, and the climax is a direct personal appeal. He ends with a sketch of the trajectory of the series, closing on a bright note of gospel hope.

II. GOD’S OWN BLOOD

Ussher’s second sermon develops the Christological discussion by considering the necessity of the incarnation, more specifically why our Mediator had to be God as well as man, before closing with a lengthy and moving meditation on Christ’s sufferings.

He opens with a brief recapitulation of the points made previously. The brevity and the direct address—“I declared to you ...”—suggest that he is speaking to the same audience, possibly later the same day and that this is an afternoon sermon, a common Lord’s Day practice.⁴⁸

He develops a point previously touched on, the nature of the one who made atonement for us, through discussion of the propriety of language predicated on a Reformed understanding of the *communicatio idiomatum*:

thereof whatsoever is performed in either nature is most truly verified of the whole person. And that makes the price of our redemption of infinite value, whatsoever is done by the divine or human nature is properly verified of the whole person of Christ so that, it is as true that the second person of the Trinity shed his blood as it is true the second person of the Trinity created the world: not by any trope or figure (as some unadvisedly interpret it) the foundation of our salvation stands on the property of that speech. That is, that without all tropes or figures the blood of the second person of the Trinity was shed, for this is the ground, whatsoever is done in either nature is verified of the whole person.⁴⁹

Since the action is the action of the person, not merely a nature, this is a proper way of speaking. He does not cite it until later the sermon, but no doubt Ussher has Acts 20:28 in mind, where Paul addresses the elders of “the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” It is this that makes the ransom payment of infinite value.⁵⁰

Ussher returns from here to a more thorough discussion of the Anselmic or soteriological case or for why Christ had to be both divine and human, and now the discourse takes an unusual turn. Ussher speaks of the representative headship of Adam and Christ, quoting from 1 Corinthians 15:47: “The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.” The redemption must be accomplished by someone in whom we have as great an interest as we have in Adam. Why is Adam’s sin made ours? There is a bond in nature. He was the “stock and foundation of the natural life which I have.” Christ acts in a similar way; our being

has a foundation in him. It must if he is to be the solution to our plight in Adam. “So that mankind,” Ussher claims “have as near a union unto Christ in respect of their natural existence as they could have in Adam.” But how can that be so? This is why it is important that Christ is not merely man, but eternal spirit. In every act God concurs more to its production than any second cause. Our natural existence is owed to Adam, but even more so to Christ due to his divinity, and just as what Adam did in falling is made common to all, so is Christ’s work made a “common thing.” Since this is such an unusual argument, it is worth giving the core of it here:

This is a ground in natural philosophy that as God is the first cause of all so he doth concur to the producing of every act more immediately than any second cause. A man may think God puts heat into the fire and the heat works of itself when straw is put to it. But it is not so, fire will not burn if God makes it not to burn, it is not the infusion of the first quality that is able to produce an act. God must concur. He is not like the builder who though he be gone the house stands, but God must stand by it else the house falls. He is not an idle gazer on, but the earth stands by thy word, if he uphold it not all things must come to nothing again: so when our Saviour Christ would incite us to be kind to our enemies, “That you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven for he maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good.” The word in the original is ἀνατέλλει; he riseth the sun, that is the nature of the word, he not only causeth the sun to rise or set, but he is the actor, he doth rise the sun. All we do drive at is this, that God doth more immediately concur to the producing of any act than any secondary cause can do. So here is the point. I am of his generation (take me in respect of natural existence) and much more than of Adam’s, therefore whatsoever Christ did for me may be likewise more than what Adam did for me. Therefore when Paul came to speak among the philosophers at the university of Athens he cites a saying of their poet they are God’s generation in respect of their natural being, and he confirms the saying of that poet. Seeing then we are the generation, the offspring of God we ought not to think the Godhead to be like gold or silver or stone; so that seeing he that was to be our redeemer had an eternal spirit, and that we are the offspring of God and

48. “The mysteries of Christ,” fol. 26r.

49. “The mysteries of Christ,” fols 26v–27r.

50. Stephen R. Holmes, “Reformed Varieties of the *Communicatio Idiomatum*,” in *The Person of Christ*, ed. Stephen R. Holmes and Murray A. Rae (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 70–86.

in a more effectual manner than Adam's and so are more beholden to God for generation than to Adam, then whatsoever Christ did is not done by him as a private man but by the one who hath the very stock of our being in him, so that what our Saviour hath done is made a common thing, he being one in whom all the stock consists.⁵¹

Ussher roots Christ's representative headship in divine concurrence. He contrasts God, the first cause, who is also immanently proximate in concurrently causing our existence and all of our actions to the good, with Adam, a remote secondary cause. Whilst he does not directly address the question, it is clear that this fits nicely with, and is perhaps driven by, his hypothetical universalism, the view that Christ died for all, not merely the elect, but within a predestinarian framework in which only God's chosen elect come to enjoy all the benefits of his work.⁵² This novel argument from concurrence extends the scope of redemption to all created humanity.

This argument is later reproduced in *Immanuel* (1638), a short work on Christology derived from sermonic material which covers much of the same ground as the 1626 sermon series. It was dedicated to Thomas

Wentworth, Lord Deputy of Ireland, and presented to him as a New Year's gift. In *Immanuel* it is introduced with the following words regarding the redemption: "what should the purchase of a stranger have been to us? Or what should we have been the better for all this, if we could not derive our descent from the purchaser, or raise some good title whereby we might estate ourselves in his purchase?" This leads to the argument from concurrence: "God doth more immediately concur to the generation and all other motions of the creature, than any natural agent doth or can do." He is thus closer to us than Adam, and even our "very next progenitors," and can be accounted our true next of kin, our kinsman redeemer.⁵³ Ussher's nineteenth-century editor, Charles Elrington, comments that in *Immanuel* "there does not seem any thing peculiar in his view of the subject,"⁵⁴ but on this point Ussher appears to be venturing into the speculative realm. The doctrine of concurrence is not a new idea, and in *Immanuel* Ussher makes a marginal reference to Thomas Bradwardine (d. 1349), Oxford theologian and, very briefly, Archbishop of Canterbury to bolster the point,⁵⁵ but the application of this doctrine to representative headship and by extension to questions around the intent and extent of Christ's satisfaction does appear to be a novel speculative move on Ussher's part.⁵⁶

Returning to the 1626 sermons, Christ had to be an eternal spirit, furthermore, so that his human nature would be sanctified, kept and preserved in the midst of temptations, and so that great value would be conferred on the sacrifice; a value that, put in the scales, would outweigh our sins. Just as the altar gives value to the sacrifice made on it, Christ's divine nature gave value to the human nature. It was the altar, the brass altar, on which the sacrifice was made, which sustained it in the midst of the fire of God's wrath that would come upon him, a punishment of such weight and force that if Christ had been a mere creature he could not have borne it.⁵⁷

All this is nothing of course if Christ does not rise again. As Paul reasons, if Christ is not risen from the dead, our faith is in vain and we remain dead in our sins. So Ussher proceeds to show how the resurrection makes "Christ's death of force," and this is another reason why he had to be both God and man. Man alone can suffer, but cannot overcome death.⁵⁸

But this is still not sufficient. The sacrifice must be applied, again something that can be done only if Christ is an eternal spirit. Ussher uses one of his favourite patristic analogies here: a medicine cannot help by being prepared, but by being applied.⁵⁹ But almost as if he appreciates a weakness in the analogy, he says,

51. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 31v–33r; Matt. 5:45; Acts 17:28–29.

52. On Ussher's hypothetical universalism, see Jonathan D. Moore, *English Hypothetical Universalism: John Preston and the Softening of Reformed Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 173–86; idem, "James Ussher's Influence on the Synod of Dordt," in *Revisiting the Synod of Dordt (1618–1619)*, ed. Aza Goudriaan and Fred van Lieburg (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 163–80; Richard Snoddy, *The Soteriology of James Ussher: The Act and Object of Saving Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 52–92; idem, "The Sources of James Ussher's Patristic Citations on the Intent and Sufficiency of Christ's Satisfaction," in *Learning from the Past: Essays on Reception, Catholicity and Dialogue in Honour of Anthony N. S. Lane*, ed. Jon Balsarak and Richard Snoddy (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), 107–29.

53. *Immanuel, or, The Mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God* (Dublin, 1638), 38–41; Ussher, *Works*, 4:600–01. For discussion of this work, see Ian Hugh Clary, "'The Conduit to Conveigh Life': James Ussher's *Immanuel* and Patristic Christology," *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 30 (2012): 160–76; Ford, *James Ussher*, 206.

54. Elrington, "Life," in Ussher, *Works*, 1:201–02.

55. Thomas Bradwardine, *De causa Dei contra Pelagium et de virtute causarum*, 1.3–4. See, for example, Henry Savile's edition (London, 1618).

56. I am grateful to Richard Muller and Michael Lynch for discussion of this point. They have seen nothing similar in the early modern sources.

57. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 35r–36r; with discussion of Matt. 23:19; Job 6:12.

58. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 37r–38r; cf. 1 Cor. 15:14, 17; 1 Pet. 3:21; John 2:19.

59. "The mysteres of Christ," fol. 38v. Other occurrences in this series can be found on fols 54r, 55r, 74v, 91v, 112 v; and elsewhere,

Now mark what our case is, when Christ comes to us he finds us utterly dead in sins and trespasses. Let the skillfullest physician come and apply the most precious and sovereign medicine to a dead man he will do us no good neither his skill nor the preciousness of the physic. What then? He that is to be our Redeemer when he comes to apply this salve, must be able to put life into us; how is that? By sending the spirit of God into our hearts.⁶⁰

Here then is another reason Christ had to be an eternal spirit. What creature could send the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity? Christ has received the Spirit without measure, and just as Aaron the high priest was anointed with oil, from the head of our high priest “the self-same Spirit may drop and be conveyed to the lowest hem of his garment,” bringing life to the dead.⁶¹

Ussher now turns to the work done in Christ’s human nature? He offered himself a bloody sacrifice, an oblation “without spot” in our text, pointing to his active obedience, the purity of his nature and actions. But in the offering itself we see his passive obedience. As well of our debt of obedience, we owe a debt of penalty.

For still remember, we lie under a double debt, first the principal debt that Adam owed to God every day and hour and minute though he had not fallen, that was the debt of obedience, we are debtors not to the flesh but to the spirit, we are bound to the performance of good works. Besides that there is another debt that is accessory or accidental which we call *nomine pœnæ*, which comes by way of penalty, which by reason of Adam’s fall is come upon us; now though a man pay *nomine pœnæ* it doth not discharge him from the principal debt, and the payment of the principal discharges not from the penalty. Therefore they are over curious that will make one debt to swallow up another, as if he pay the main debt it is no matter for the penalty and if he pay the penalty it is no matter for the principal. The payment of the *nomine pœnæ* discharges not the principal, neither doth the payment of the principal discharge the other.⁶²

The “principal” debt is the ongoing obedience Adam owed. *Nomine pœnæ* (“in the name of penalty”) is a term from the common law, denoting a penalty for non-performance, for example a fine for failure to pay rent (the rent itself still being owed), and here applies to the punishment for Adam’s failure to obey. Both these debts are owed, and Christ deals with both through his active and passive obedience, the obedience of his perfect life and the obedience of his sacrificial death. Some theologians, such as Johannes Piscator of Herborn, believed

that Christ’s active obedience was not vicarious. It was the obedience that he himself owed to the Father and simply qualified him to be our Mediator, “a lamb without blemish or spot” (1 Pet. 1:19). What is imputed in justification is Christ’s passive obedience.⁶³ This type of position was later held by Thomas Gataker and Richard Vines, who both denied the imputation of Christ’s active obedience in justification, and this sparked a lengthy debate in the Westminster Assembly.⁶⁴ Ussher flatly disagrees, believing that such a view fails to provide a solution for the double plight of the human predicament: “he that must be my surety discharges both my debts.”⁶⁵

No wonder Paul exclaimed, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Gal. 6:14). “That is,” says Ussher, “the foundation of our rejoicing.” He wants to linger on this topic, and he spends the remainder of the sermon at the foot of the cross, contemplating Christ’s work of oblation. “Give me leave therefore to press it, and let it cost you a little pains to hear and think of it.” He suggests that God created

Balliol College, Oxford, MS 259, II, fol. 227v (Sermon on 1 Cor. 11:28, c. 1624); Ussher, *Works*, 13:160–61 (Sermon on John. 1:12, c. 1640), 176 (Sermon on Eph. 1:13, c. 1640), 270 (Sermon on Rom. 5:1, c. 1640); Cambridge University Library, MS Mm.6.55, fols 53 r (Sermon on Phil. 2:8, 1648), 60 r–v (Sermon on Rom. 8:34, 1648). Ussher derives the analogy from Prosper of Aquitaine, *Pro Augustini doctrina responsiones ad capitula objectionum Vincentianarum*, 1: *habet quidem in se ut omnibus prosit; sed si non bibitur, non medetur*. See S. Prosper of Aquitaine ... *Opera Omnia*, ed. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologiæ Latina* 51 (Paris: Migne, 1861), col. 179A; for English translation, see “Answers to the Vincentian Articles,” in *Prosper of Aquitaine: The Call of All Nations*, trans. P. de Letter, *Ancient Christian Writers* 32 (New York: Paulist Press, 1963), 164.

60. “The mysteries of Christ,” fol. 38v.

61. “The mysteries of Christ,” fol. 39r; cf. John 3:34; Exod. 29:21.

62. “The mysteries of Christ,” fols 39v–40r.

63. Heber Carlos de Campos Jr., *Doctrine in Development: Johannes Piscator and Debates over Christ’s Active Obedience*, Reformed Historical-Theological Studies (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2017), 107–75.

64. For the minutes of these sessions in September 1643, see *The Minutes and Papers of the Westminster Assembly, 1643–1652*, ed. Chad Van Dixhoorn, 5 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 2:48–107. On this debate and its relation to the stance subsequently adopted in the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, see also Jeffrey K. Jue, “The Active Obedience of Christ and the Theology of the Westminster Standards: A Historical Investigation,” in *Justified in Christ: God’s Plan for Us in Justification*, ed. K. Scott Oliphint (Fearn: Mentor, 2007), 99–130; Robert Letham, *The Westminster Assembly: Reading Its Theology in Historical Context* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2009), 250–64; Alan D. Strange, “The Imputation of the Active Obedience of Christ at the Westminster Assembly,” in *Drawn into Controversy: Reformed Theological Diversity and Debates within Seventeenth-Century British Puritanism*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin and Mark Jones (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 31–51; de Campos, *Doctrine in Development*, 177–225.

65. “The mysteries of Christ,” fol. 40v. For further consideration of

the world in six days rather than in one act so that we would consider his work of creation piece by piece as we meditate.⁶⁶ He counsels that we should take the same approach as we reflect on the greater work of redemption. When we think of the cross we should not consider it “in general” nor Christ’s blood “simply,” but rather consider the “sorrow on sorrow, and we shall find it a marvellous means to extend our love to Christ, and to fasten our hearts to him.”⁶⁷

Ussher is recommending a methodical process of meditation, and he walks his hearers through this process, elaborating how it was a “dolorous” or painful death, a “shameful death” beneath the dignity of a Roman citizen, and moreover, a “cursed” death on a tree, the highest degree of humiliation, “that God blessed for ever should of all deaths suffer a death on which the curse of God lay, and this he did that thou mightest not be cursed.”

Though thou hast an heart of adamant, if thou weighest the death of Christ aright it will make it melt not only in a natural kind of compassion to Christ, but considering that thou didst it, thy sins laid hold on the Lord of glory, hailed [dragged] him from heaven, prostrated him on the ground gasping even for life, and wrestling with his Father, that thou liftedst him up to the cross, and that thy sins pierced his side; if a man considered this rightly his heart would rise at it. It is the devil’s policy to draw a man’s heart away from consideration of this.⁶⁸

Christ was charged with “foul capital sins,” as a traitor

Ussher’s stance on the imputation of Christ’s active obedience in his wider corpus, see Snoddy, *The Soteriology of James Ussher*, 116–20.

66. This idea is found in Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses called Genesis*, trans. John King (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1847), 78, 92.

67. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 40v–41r.

68. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 41r–42v.

69. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 43r–44v.

70. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 45r–46r.

71. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 46r–47v.

72. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 47v–48r.

73. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 49r, 50v.

74. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 50v–51r. For further discussion of Ussher’s view of the cry of dereliction, see Snoddy, *The Soteriology of James Ussher*, 47–48.

75. Horton Davies, *Like Angels from a Cloud: The English Metaphysical Preachers, 1588–1645* (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 1986), 167–68. Davies writes, “As for his powers of description, I know of no parallel passage which, refusing to play with paradoxes, reveals the agony of the Cross as memorably as Ussher ... This was the vertebral quality of his Calvinism which saved him from baroque or rococo theatricality.” The sermon in question on Philippians 2:8 can be found in Ussher, *Works*, 13:140–59.

and “stirrer up of commotion,” and blasphemous against God, so he was regarded as one who had sinned against both the first and second tables of the law. He suffered outside of the camp; he was sold for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave; he had Barabbas preferred before him; he was crucified between two thieves, in front of the world as “a great company of every nation” was present for the Passover feast. In the end his own disciples deserted him.⁶⁹

And Christ knew what would happen to him; from the beginning, every circumstance. “Therefore all his joys in this world were many times eclipsed with the consideration of it.” He knew the bloody baptism that would come to him: “this was a continual crucifixing to him, and dashed all the pleasures that might have given him content during his life.” He did this that these fears might be taken from us. For Ussher Christ’s passive obedience is not the work of a weekend: “he suffered before he suffered.”⁷⁰

Ussher considers Christ’s parts stretched upon the cross, the fastening of his hands, the lifting up and dis-jointing, the six long hours that followed, his “sensible feeling ... a full apprehension of the pain,” his laying down of his life.⁷¹ But all of this “is the outside of the cross.” Ussher insists that “the main dolour [pain] of the cross stands in the apprehension of those unspeakable tortures that the soul of our Saviour did suffer.”⁷²

He explains that “our Saviour received the sword of God up to the very hilts in his soul, not in the soul by sympathy with the body; but my soul is περιλυτός, beset with sorrow or sorrowful, even to the death.” It was this prospect more than anything else that explains his anguish in Gethsemane. The Christian martyrs, who did not have his strength, faced a bodily death; they went to it singing. What Christ faced shook him to his soul. “Christ made his soul an oblation for sin as much as his body, his soul had blows from the Father, he did break him, there was not only the hand of the Jews but the hand of God also.”⁷³

Ussher closes this second sermon with a reflection on the cry of dereliction, contrasting “the speech of sense” (“why have you forsaken me?”), with “the speech of faith” (“My God, my God”). He reads out the first ten verses of Psalm 22 and concludes that “our Saviour Christ gasped for every thing that might sustain him.”⁷⁴ What Horton Davies says of an Ussher sermon on the cross from the early 1640s could equally be applied here: “Ussher has resisted all impertinent attempts at rhetorical effect; he is concerned only with the unvarnished horror of the cruelty of men and the anguish of the eternal Son of God.”⁷⁵

III. THE COURT OF CONSCIENCE

Ussher moves on to Felsted and the third sermon, in which the focus is on Christ's active obedience, on how that obedience is performed on our behalf and also serves as example to us, before turning to the intricate workings of the conscience.

He briefly summarizes the argument so far, choosing to foreground the medicinal analogy. The medicine is prepared but not applied. Why? Because people take such delight in sin they will not be cured. So Christ needs "a persuasive power, the tongue of the learned, the persuasions of the Spirit," to wean them from their corruptions and show them the vanity of their preoccupations.

Here again we see Ussher's hypothetical universalism show through a little:

it is not the shedding of our Saviour's blood on the cross barely that saves us *for then all the world should be saved*, but the blood of Christ shed on the cross *to the contentment of his Father's justice must be applied particularly* to the washing away of my sins; who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his blood; his blood as it was shed on the cross gives contentment to his Father's justice, there is *a way made thereby to God's mercy*, and his justice is no loser but thou are not washed from thy sins if it be not applied to thee, though there be in it *a faculty and power to cleanse* yet it actually cleanses not.

It is not Jesus' act of dying on the cross that takes away sin but the application of his work of redemption through the activity of the Holy Spirit. The redemption itself is couched in more universalist language, its application more particular. Christ "prepared a medicine ... so effectual that it hath appeased the wrath of the Father, that is, if any man will come and use the medicine and submit himself all his sins shall be done away." He can say of those who prefer to remain in the transitory pleasures of corruption, "a price was put into the hands of fools."⁷⁶

That is as much as Ussher wants to say about Christ's passive obedience, his payment of the accidental debt that arises from our default. He now turns to Christ's active obedience which satisfies our principal debt of obedience to our Creator, and to this end Christ not only kept himself without spot from sin, but performed all duties to God and all duties to man. As Ussher begins a lengthy discussion of this point he considers the beauty of virtue. He cites "the Philosopher" on the point that "if virtue should be beheld with bodily eyes it would make all men, even its enemies, to be in love with it,

such is its beauty."⁷⁷ If we consider Christ in his purity it will make us love him. But we must not stop there, simply admiring him. Ussher urges us,

to listen after the motion of the spiritual match between thee and him, and know further, thou dost not only behold these virtues as in him, but if thou art matched to him thou mayest challenge them; when a woman is married the riches of her husband are hers.

In Christ, these virtues are reckoned ours. When we see the fullness of some particular grace in Christ there will be "an impression made in thee" of that same grace. He is "the wellhead, the spring, of a good nature."⁷⁸

Ussher contrasts Christ's pure nature with the corruption of Adam's, "a fountain of troubled waters, a foul puddle," which conveys pollution to all who descend from him. How was Christ, as man, exempt from this taint? To prevent this, Christ had to be born in a special manner. The "ordinary means whereby Adam's sin was traduced" was circumvented. This traditional idea of natural generation or propagation being the means by which Adam's sin was passed to his descendants was still widespread in Reformed thought, though the view that Adam's descendants incurred the guilt of original sin through divine volition worked out in covenantal terms was becoming more widely adopted.⁷⁹ The Holy Spirit "frame[d] the human nature of Christ out of the Virgin Mary without the help of a man."⁸⁰ Beyond the natural holiness that Christ had at the beginning, there "was also as much holiness as a creature could be capable of, which Christ infused into himself ... Himself in one nature did infuse into himself, into his human nature all graces which a human nature could be capable

76. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 54r-55v, emphasis added; cf. Prov. 17:16.

77. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 56r-v. Whilst "the Philosopher" would generally denote Aristotle, in this case Ussher has Plato in mind. The original source is the discussion of wisdom in Plato's *Phaedrus*, 31/250D, but Ussher is likely thinking of the application of this passage to virtue in Cicero's *De officiis*, 1.5, where Plato is cited. See Plato, *Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, trans. Harold North Fowler, Loeb Classical Library 36 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914), 484-85; Cicero, *On Duties*, trans. Walter Miller, Loeb Classical Library 30 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1913), 16-17.

78. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 56v-57r.

79. On this question, see Aaron C. Denlinger, *Omnes in Adam ex pacto Dei: Ambrogio Catarino's Doctrine of Covenantal Solidarity and Its Influence on Post-Reformation Reformed Theologians*, *Reformed Historical Theology* 8 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2010), esp. 245-80.

80. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 57v-58v.

of.”⁸¹ Later Puritan theologians such as John Owen and Thomas Goodwin would shift the emphasis to the Holy Spirit’s role in Christ’s sanctification.⁸²

Alongside teaching the doctrine of Christ’s active obedience, in his abstaining from evil and doing of good, in all his duties to God and to man, Ussher keeps pushing on application to Christ’s disciples. “He hath given thee a pattern,” says Ussher, “tread in his steps.” It is the way of our Saviour: “Must he glorify the Father on earth before he looks to be glorified in heaven, and dost thou wretched man think to be glorified in heaven, and yet hast no care to glorify God on earth? Deceive not thyself, it cannot be, it is impossible.” Christ himself insisted that he had not come to destroy the law and the prophets. On the contrary, “I am come to fulfil the law, to give grace to my followers, that they may do as I have done.” If we do not conform to his pattern we are not living under his kingship. We are traitors.⁸³

Ussher moves on to the next point in his text: the purging of the conscience. The conscience is the ability that God has given the soul to reflect on itself, to reflect on particular actions, past and to be done. So if I am intending to do something the conscience should guide: shall I do it? And when I have done something, it tells me if I have done well or ill. If the conscience is straight it will be a true rudder for our actions:

when the conscience is right in things to be done it is a guide and director; for things that have been done

81. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 58v–59r.

82. Joel R. Beeke and Mark Jones, *Puritan Theology: Doctrine of Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2012), 341–45.

83. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 63r–64r; cf. John 17:4–5; Matt. 5:17; fol. 65v.

84. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 66r–67v. Although Aquinas did not deal with the subject of conscience at length, there are very clear echoes of his discussion as Ussher begins his description of the action of conscience. See Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia, q. 79, a. 13. For Latin text and English translation, see *St. Thomas Aquinas: Summa Theologiae, Volume 11, Man: Ia. 75–83*, trans. Timothy Suttor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006 repr. edn), 190–94. Given its importance in Puritan piety, it is remarkable that relatively little scholarship has been published on the conscience in the Puritan tradition. For a useful introduction, see Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 909–26.

85. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 82r–84r. The use of this extended metaphor is not unique to Ussher and can be found in the sermons of contemporaries such as Richard Sibbes. The idea goes back as far as Philo of Alexandria, for example in *De Decalogo* 17 (87). See *The Works of Richard Sibbes*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart, 7 vols (Edinburgh: J. Nichols, 1862–1864), 3:210. Philo, *On the Decalogue. On the Special Laws, Books 1–3*, trans. F. H. Colson, Loeb Classical Library 320 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1937), 50–51.

86. “The mysteryes of Christ,” fols 67v, 84v.

the conscience keeps a court within a man, and takes all offices to itself, it is a register to note down all thy actions, it doth accuse or excuse and so is a witness, it is a judge to condemn or acquit thee, it is an executioner too, not only to give judgement but to torture and torment when God lets it loose, so that when a man’s conscience is most faithful, when the sting of it is taken out by the blood of Christ it shall lead thee in the ways of life and comfort thee, it shall guide well, shall accuse and excuse where it should and all things shall be straight.⁸⁴

The image of a court within is taken up again and developed in the next sermon as Ussher explains these different functions, describing each personification in turn with a lively sketch of its role.⁸⁵ There are many striking images in these sermons, always clear and direct, as when the reflexive act of a man’s conscience is like “a musket” or “a piece overcharged,” and the recoil “blasts him back and turns him over and over.”⁸⁶

Ussher describes the various ways in which conscience may fail or misdirect, how it can give us false direction, or no direction at all. He gives many examples of false direction given by the impure conscience. It is worth observing that the first he gives is of the conscience reasoning, “Sure I must be no odd person. And must I go against the stream? Will you have all the world wonder at me? That which is the ordinary course of the most, must be the safest course.... This was done before you were born and will be done when you are dead and rotten.” This would seem to speak to the singularity of the Puritans in visible godliness, mocked for their precise obedience to God’s law, and their aversion to “the traditions of the fathers” not prescribed in Scripture. The impure conscience may observe “dangerous rules,” “axioms of the Devil’s making,” such as “thought is free,” and “I may make as much as I can of mine own.” In matters of religion a false conscience is particularly dangerous and Ussher recalls Christ’s warnings that a time would come when those who killed his disciples would think they were doing God good service. The conscience should restrain them from such action, but instead “puts them on it.” He suggests that

it were better for a man to fall into adultery than into a smaller sin upon a false ground of conscience, for if he fall into adultery the light of conscience will help him out, it will tell him this is not well done. If I do that I shall never come to heaven, and so it is a means to help him out of the mire. If the fountain or vice of the action be a false principle it plunges him over head and ears

... and in this case the conscience makes a man to run galloping to hell.⁸⁷

Sometimes the conscience gives light but not the kind of full direction where one has certainty and all objections are answered. Ussher explains that "every natural man hath some sparkles of divine truth planted in his mind, to enlighten his conscience, when the word of God comes it adds more light to it." Truths are "imprinted in the soul of a natural man." They should "sit as a queen" and command the obedience of the will. However, "my delight in unrighteousness imprisons that light of truth, that spark of divine verity." This impairs the soul's power to reflect on itself, a deficit which is in part corrected by the light of special revelation.⁸⁸ Although he does not use the technical language of *synthesis*, the imagery Ussher did use reflects a traditional discourse running back through medieval scholasticism to the patristic period. The image of the "spark" or "sparkle" has a long pedigree within the tradition, as does his use of the metaphor of "the candle of the Lord" elsewhere.⁸⁹ Of ourselves we can only see what is right before our eyes, "a little glimmering," if at all. Through the action of God's word and Spirit which "dispel all darkness," we can see "things afar off," not just present benefit, but future misery, so that our appetites shall not overrun our judgement.⁹⁰

Ussher describes the two important cases of the "timorous" conscience, one "so scrupulous that it will make more commandments than God hath made," and the conscience that goes too far the other way and ventures on anything hastily. He organizes this discussion around Ecclesiastes 7:16–17: "Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself? Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time?" The one who rightly fears God will steer a course between these rocks.

IV. CONSCIENCE CLEANSED

The fourth sermon, presumably still at Felsted, runs with the theme of the power of Christ's blood applied to cleanse us. It goes further than moral virtue, unaided by grace, can take us. At the root of all our actions is the conscience and Christ will cleanse this. Ussher says:

by this means the things that are done by a Christian come out of a fountain that is purified, so that there is a difference between one and the same actions as they are performed by the Christian and the civil man, for as it is performed by a civil man it is a dead work, coming from a corrupt fountain.

This is not the outward washing wrought by the knowledge of Christ that might cause a man for a time to abstain from the corruptions of the world; because it is only an outward cleansing he returns to his corruptions, like a dog to its vomit or the sow wallowing in the mire, images from 2 Peter 2:22 that recur in Ussher's preaching. Christ's blood reforms not only our outward actions but cleanses our very nature, our conscience. Yes, Christians will fall in the mire, but there is a difference between falling in the mire and wallowing in the mire.⁹¹

Ussher re-treads some of the categories of the previous sermon and then develops the courtroom imagery at some length.⁹² He adds some new cases, the "benumbed" conscience that is only troubled by more serious sins, and the "seared" conscience that passes over even these as nothing, and then he describes how the conscience will be "awaked" before the judgement seat of Christ. All of our sins are on record; they shall be remembered; "they shall be produced one after another":

if thou couldst consider (which I beseech you often do) that a day shall come when all the things thou now takest pleasure in, and all the world shall be on a flame before thee, and thou shalt be taken before the judgment seat of Christ, that then thou wouldest give a thousand worlds that thy conscience might speak a comfortable word to thee then it will be known what a good conscience is, then lift up your heads saith Christ for your redemption draweth near, a good conscience shall lift up his head, and look for Jesus Christ and rejoice when others shall hang down their heads wishing for the hills and mountains to fall on them, when they see the Lord Jesus whom they have crucified again, and of whom they have said, this man shall not be Lord over me I will be mine own master; the devil's policy is to keep us from having time to consider what need I shall have of a good conscience at that day when no other thing shall be admitted, and when Christ my only adversary shall be my judge.⁹³

87. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 67v–70r; cf. John 16:2.

88. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 70r–71r.

89. Robert A. Greene, "Synderesis, the Spark of Conscience, in the English Renaissance," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 52 (1991): 195–219; idem, "Whichcote, the Candle of the Lord, and Synderesis," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 52 (1991): 617–44; cf. Cambridge University Library, MS Mm.6.55, fol. 46 r–v (Sermon on Rom. 8:16, 1647).

90. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 71v–72r.

91. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 74r–77r; cf. fol. 88v.

92. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 82r–84v.

93. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 85r–87v.

The works of the Christian are no longer dead works. Those that die in the Lord should know and be encouraged that their works shall follow them. Their friends will leave them at the graveside but their works shall follow them into another world. At judgment their works shall be brought in, and their evil shall not be spoken of.

Let the Papiſts think that at the day of judgment the archangel ſhall come with a pair of ſcales and ſhall put the good deeds in one balance and the evil deeds in the other balance, and the Virgin Mary may come and help to pull down the ſcales, theſe we know be toys, if you canſt turn to almighty God all thy tranſgreſſions ſhall not be mentioned, and though thy life hath been full of frailties yet thou mayeſt lift up thy head becauſe they ſhall not be mentioned.

But if you turn away from God? What then? The good you have done will not be mentioned and in the ſin you committed you will die. If your heart is falſe, if there is no love for Chriſt, your obedience is worthleſs. You will “loose the benefit of hearing ſo many ſermons, of making ſo many prayers, and of being at ſo much coſt.” Uſſher cloſes with a warning, “Therefore look to yourſelves that ye looſe not your full reward, and that cannot be had unleſs the conſcience be cleaſed.”

V. THE WAGES OF SIN

The fifth ſermon, at Biſhopsgate St. in London, takes up the theme of “dead works,” and how they defile, how they kill. Uſſher contraſts theſe “dead works” with the ſervice of the “living God,” who “quickens” ſinners, giving them new life and purging their conſciences ſo that they might ſerve him. Uſſher ſpends much of the ſermon on the ſinfulneſs of ſin, explaining how it makes us abominable in God’s ſight. It is a thing that is hard for the ſinful mind to graſp but Uſſher believes that “this doctrine . . . is the very opening of life.” He adds “if there be any humiliation that makes a man fit for grace, and prepares way for juſtification it is that which is bred on the ſenſe of this, that ſin is a foul thing, that pollutes and defiles all the parts and powers of ſoul and body.”⁹⁴ This might appear to ſound notes of preparationism,

94. “The myſteryes of Chriſt,” fol. 94r–v.

95. “The myſteryes of Chriſt,” fols 97v–98r.

96. “The myſteryes of Chriſt,” fols 99v–100r. On the etiquette of duelling and the “lie,” ſee Markku Peltonen, *The Duel in Early Modern England: Civility, Politeness and Honour*, Ideas in Context 65 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), eſp. 59–64, 75.

97. “The myſteryes of Chriſt,” fols 101v–102v.

98. “The myſteryes of Chriſt,” fols 104v–105r.

99. Cf. Jer. 2:22, KJV.

but later in the ſermon Uſſher iſſiſts that “the Spirit of God muſt convince thee of ſin. It muſt open thy eyes that thou mayeſt reflect on thy ſelf and ſee the foul corners of thy ſoul.” To come to a knowledge of the ſinfulneſs of ſin is indeed a ſign of God’s work and “a token that God will waſh thee.” What before “thou countedſt a riddle, and to be ſpoken more for amplification than for truth,” merely the preacher’s rhetoric, is now believed and the ſelf loathed for its ſin.⁹⁵

Some would rather brag of their ſin than confeſs it and thus “make their glory of their ſhame.” Uſſher thinks of thoſe who take pride in their “fantaſtical attire,” in their “rapping out of great oaths thinking it to be, as it were, a grace to their ſpeech,” and their maintenance of honour in refusing to “take the lie,” but rather “give a ſtab or challenge.” The “lie” was a challenge to a gentleman’s reputation, often an accusation of lying. In reply he could either iſſue a challenge to a duel, or retort with a blow and thus force the other party to iſſue the challenge. Uſſher therefore would ſeem to have gentlemen of the court in mind, but however high one’s ſtation, ſin makes one “baſe,” “vile.”⁹⁶

Sin cries out to God, “pay me my wages,” and thoſe wages are death. Before we are cleaſed in Chriſt every evil deed “hath a mouth like the blood of Abel, that aſcended to heaven, and gave no reſt.” It will not be quiet. You might ſtop your ears, but “it fills heaven with the cry, and it cries day and night.” We do not look ahead and contemplate the conſequences of our ſins: “Thou art but acting a tragedy all the while thou art committing a ſin. Thou lookeſt not to the cataſtrophe, to the end. Will it not be bitterneſs in the end?”⁹⁷ There is a means to purge and cleaſe, a “bath,” “a fountain that is open for the houſe of David.” The means are provided, the blood of God’s own Son offered, but many would “rather go to the pollutions of the world, than be cleaſed.” Uſſher adds ruefully, “the committing of ſin is not half ſo heinous as thy refusing of the remedy.”⁹⁸

The ſermon is, for the moſt part, taken up with ſuch ideas but then moves towards a cloſe in a ſtriking manner:

the Lord hath vouchſafed you a bleſſed miniſtry. You have had the miniſtry in a powerful manner above all the nations of the world, and this city above other cities. Now you are clean through that word which you have heard, that ſoap and nitre⁹⁹ of Almighty God whereby he cleaſes the ſpots of ſin. Haſt thou had that word ſhowering down on thee ſo long and art thou as foul as thou waſt before? Hath the Lord loſt ſo much labour and coſt on thee? Haſt thou been thus long awaſhing

and not yet clean? Well, the Lord hath his judgment, that is, a thing by which he means to break thee; many shall be purified and made white and tried, ... Art thou no whiter now then before the sickness came? Hast thou lost the great benefit thou mightest have made thereby? Consider that; I am afraid we continue as foul as ever we were; we may be thankful, but no thanksgiving pleases God but such as answers the intendment of his chastisements; his end was that thou mightest be purified.¹⁰⁰

The "sickness" Ussher speaks of is the plague, the year just ended, 1625 (along with 1603 and 1665), being one of London's truly horrific plague years. The metropolis experienced somewhere in the region of 20% mortality, in a population of around 200,000. About 40,000 people died in the capital.¹⁰¹ The plague year is the backdrop of Ussher's closing exhortations. The mention of "thanksgiving" should give us a high degree of confidence in attributing a date to this sermon, as 29 January was a day of public thanksgiving by royal proclamation for the abatement of the plague in London and the surrounding areas (19 February elsewhere).¹⁰² Some of Ussher's hearers would only have recently returned to London after a lengthy absence. In the seventeenth century social distancing often meant flight to the country for those with the means to do so. The withdrawal of the city's big spenders added a significant economic dimension to the misery of those who remained and received more widespread condemnation than in previous plague years. It is worth noting that Ussher evokes the dark spectre of the plague only at the very end of his sermon. He neatly fits the theme in to the progression of his sermon series, rather than construct a whole sermon around it in departure from the text that he had been preaching on over the previous weeks and was not yet finished with.¹⁰³

The Lord is sovereign in and over plague. There is an "intendment," an "end," to what has happened. God uses these trials to purify his people, to sanctify them, to make them "white." Ussher calls his hearers to sober self-examination. Have they experienced, or missed out, on the "benefit" of the trial? He continues to warn that if "these means the Lord hath used," the preaching of the word, the offering of the blood of his Son, and these outward trials "will not work on you, now is the axe laid to the root of the tree."¹⁰⁴ The trial of suffering is placed alongside the preaching of the word as a means of grace, assuming the status of what Ann Thompson calls a "quasi-sacrament."¹⁰⁵ It is right to be thankful that the plague has waned but the danger has not passed, and indeed the plague is not the worst of

the problems facing England. Security in sin is a more serious threat to the nation, and to be complacent is to invite destruction.¹⁰⁶

The Lord is ready to strike and bring judgement on the fruitless tree. Ussher reminds his hearers of Leviticus 26:21, and a harsher judgment to come: "And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins." "That place of Leviticus," says Ussher, "perpetually sounds in mine ears." Ussher lights on a text which had become central in early modern discourse about plague, being ascribed explanatory power even in medical treatises written during the previous great plague year of 1603.¹⁰⁷ The warning continues with Leviticus 26:25, "And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy." England was now at war with Spain. There was genuine alarm about the

100. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 105r–106r.

101. Paul Slack, *The Impact of Plague in Tudor and Stuart England* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985), 150–51; Stephen Porter, *Lord Have Mercy Upon Us: London's Plague Years* (Stroud: Tempus, 2005), 142–43.

102. *A Proclamation for A Generall and Publike Thankesgiuing* (London, 22 January 1626).

103. Something more akin to a full-fledged plague sermon can be found in Ussher's notes in Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Rawlinson D1290, fols 62v–63r. This sermon, on the text Lamentations 3:40–41 ("Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens.") was preached on 2 October 1625 during a period of convalescence at Much Hadham, Hertfordshire, where bishops of London had maintained a country residence since the Norman Conquest. God's dealings with us in judgment are not for "our subversion but our conversion." Ussher laments that "thousands of our brethren fall at our right and left hand," and we witness the "execution" of God's threats "visibly upon others that are better than we." We are suffered to live this long to give us time to repent. He urges, "as therefore he hath given thee space, so entreat him to give thee grace to repent" (emphasis original). The notes speak of God's judgments, rather than plague specifically, but given the content and the date, the plague that was raging in nearby London would have been on everyone's minds.

104. "The mysteres of Christ," fol. 106r.

105. Ann Thompson, *The Art of Suffering and the Impact of Seventeenth-Century Anti-Providential Thought* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 45.

106. This a recurring theme in plague sermons of this period. Kirsty Rolfe, "Fatal and Memorable: Plague, Providence and War in English Texts, 1625–6," *The Seventeenth Century* 35, no. 3 (2020): 293–314. For wider discussion, see Ernest B. Gilman, *Plague Writing in Early Modern England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

107. See, for example, Thomas Lodge, *A Treatise of the Plague* (London, 1603), sig. B3r; Thomas Thayer, *A Treatise of the Pestilence* (London, 1603), sig. B2r.

possibility of a Spanish invasion via the Netherlands, and 1625 had seen the beginning of a program of fortifying coastal defences. If the people continue to walk contrary to the Lord the plague will come again, but this time along with the sword: “when you are besieged, you shall not run into the country at your pleasure, but I will bring a plague upon you when you cannot stir out of your gates.” Leviticus 26:29 depicts the resulting social breakdown and descent into cannibalism in the besieged city: “You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters.”

It is best to “bow in time” and avert the judgment. “God hath done this before to others, and if thou repentest not he will do the same to thee.”¹⁰⁸ Historical consciousness is a feature of early modern plague literature. Ian Munro writes, “The plague city is always plural: London under plague is haunted by Florence, Rome, Jerusalem, Athens, Thebes, the cities of the plain.”¹⁰⁹ At this point in time, however, with Europe embroiled in conflict, the catastrophic fall of the Palatinate and the loss of cities such as Mannheim and Heidelberg to Habsburg forces was a sore point for English Protestants. Thomas Dekker lamented,

Oh *Germany!* what foundations of bloud haue thy Cities beene drowned in? what horrors, what terrors, what hellish inuentions haue not warre found out to destroy thy buildings, demollish thy Free States, and vtterly to confound thy 17. Prouinces? Gods three whips haue printed deepe markes on thy shoulders; the *Sword* for many yeeres together hath cut thy people in pieces; *Famine* hath beene wearied with eating vp thy children, and is not yet satisfied; the *Pestilence* hath in many of thy Townes, in many of thy Sieges and Leagers; plaid the terrible Tyrant.¹¹⁰

Ussher pleads with his hearers to repent, or worse afflictions may come. “Cast down thy weapons, come in to Christ and then thou art safe.”¹¹¹

108. “The mysteres of Christ,” fols 106r–108r.

109. Ian Munro, “The City and Its Double: Plague Time in Early Modern London,” *English Literary Renaissance* 30, no. 2 (2000): 241–61 (243).

110. Thomas Dekker, *A Rod for Run-Awayes* (London, 1625), sig. A3v (emphasis original).

111. “The mysteres of Christ,” fol. 108r.

112. Patrick Collinson, “Elizabethan and Jacobean Puritanism as Forms of Popular Religious Culture,” in *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560–1700*, ed. Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), 32–57.

113. “The mysteres of Christ,” fols 109r–112r.

114. “The mysteres of Christ,” fols 112r–113r.

VI. JOYFUL SERVICE

Ussher, now at Islington, in the sixth and final sermon continues on the theme of “to serve the living God,” “the main end” of Christ’s work. If the conscience remains unwashed our works are dead works, even if the works are good in their own kind. If we are without grace, without life, even our praying, hearing of God’s word, and receiving the sacrament are dead works, things to be repented of. “Notwithstanding thou give alms, art devout to hear the word, careful to repeat sermons, yet thou art reprobate to every good work; God accepts no service at thy hands so long as thou art unpure.” It is worth noting that the examples of activity Ussher chooses are closely associated with Puritan piety.¹¹² It is possible to be counted outwardly amongst the fellowship of the visible saints and yet be devoid of grace and spiritual life.¹¹³

Ussher reminds his hearers of Peter’s exhortation to crave the “sincere milk of the word” so that they might grow. But pollution hinders growth: “if thou hast heard ten thousand of the most powerful sermons that ever were preached by man as long as thou layest not aside these corrupt things, malice, guile, hypocrisy and the like, so long thy services are unacceptable to God and unprofitable to thee. Thou canst not grow by them.” At least not for any good. No, they will grow worse and worse as the word hardens them. What should be for their life becomes a means of death, “and so it were better thou hadst never heard.” The same can be said of public and private duties in prayer; to no purpose for the corrupt in conscience.¹¹⁴

As is typical of his more practical sermons there is some discriminating application with examples and cases. There is even a word for the ministers of the gospel:

foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they engender strife.... A man is given to question, and the minister may think it a disparagement to his learning if he answers not every idle question ... there be questions that do nothing but put countries into combustion and cause strife to God’s dishonour, that be of no other use but to satisfy curiosity and itching humours, and to set men together by the ears. And why shall not I answer them? Because the servant of the Lord must not strive. Art thou admitted into Gods service? Thou must not be a wrangler.... The servant of Christ must not strive but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, which is spoken particularly to the minister and proportionably to all others.

He advises a measure of restraint in theological controversy, alluding, no doubt, to the havoc wreaked by the actions of the Remonstrants in the Dutch provinces. This is all quite conventional, but then comes something more pointed:

Art thou the servant of God in the ministry? Thou must be apt to teach. If thou be the servant of idols, of Jeroboam's calves, do as one that hath service; but if thou be the servant of Jesus Christ thou must be apt to teach.¹¹⁵

This would appear to be a good example of veiled speech, with all its benefits of plausible deniability. One could easily miss the point, but for those with ears to hear the ministers who serve idols, Jeroboam's calves, figure a royally-instituted idol-worship which kept the people from the true worship of God. There is a contrast between a faithful word-centred gospel ministry and a focus on something more tangible. It is surely not reading too much into this to conclude that Ussher is speaking to the situation of the day given the innovations in worship seen, for example, in the royal chapels, where silver crucifixes and murals of the prophets and apostles were seen from the early 1620s, concessions to Catholic aesthetic preferences during a period when King James was still seeking an *entente* with Spain.¹¹⁶ The ultra-conformists' downplaying of preaching in favour of prayer and a greater focus on the Eucharist is also likely in view. Ussher makes his point, but in such a way that he is not clearly stepping beyond the bounds of decorum. The connections between Jeroboam's ceremonial innovations and idolatry and contemporary England are easily drawn, but could there be further resonances in play here? Jeroboam rejected the true priests and Levites, who were then forced to flee to Judah.¹¹⁷ For the fertile typological imagination this could find a parallel in the ejection of godly ministers from their livings, but perhaps a more obvious echo would be the division of the kingdom, about which Ussher sounded more explicit warnings in other sermons in this period.¹¹⁸

Ussher's next main point is fruitfulness. It is not enough to be cleansed and refrain from outward sin. This is what Ussher calls "negative divinity," when we stand like the Pharisee and say "Lord I am not as another man, no extortioner, no whoremonger, nor thief." We must be fruitful, abounding in good works. We do not serve our master and bring him honour by standing idle. An imagined interlocutor responds with horror, "Oh, but if I be zealous of good works I shall be

counted a fool and a Puritan!" Ussher replies, "let not this thing evacuate the death of Christ," the blood that he offered being offered to cleanse us and make us zealous for good works. This is the end of our creation.¹¹⁹ It should be noted that Ussher does not wear the name "Puritan" as a badge. In his sermons it is a word of scorn on the lips of an adversary, and that is, of course, how the word came into use.¹²⁰ However the words "puritan," "purity," and "precise" keep cropping up and are used in such a way that Ussher is seen to be in sympathy with the godly cause and expects the piety that he is advocating to draw this kind of ridicule from the ungodly. He urges his hearers to serve the Lord with gladness, not with whining and "pewling" and complaining; this does not befit God's servants. They should serve with joy, and this will bring credit to their master and invite men to God's service, the most free and comfortable service.¹²¹

He moves towards a conclusion contemplating the "living God." Men act as if he were dead, or able only to walk in the circle of the heavens; but one day they will know he is alive. For the brethren there is assurance that "in the midst of all confusion" we serve a living God.

"The Lord reigns; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof." If we were left to subordinate reignings what might we fear? Could we look for anything but subversion, nay utter abolition? When we see how the sceptres of the world are swayed? No, thou servest a living God. When thou thinkest all shall be turned topside otherwise, yet God reigns. If he did not thou mightest howl and wail, but seeing God lives and reigns for evermore let the world rejoice, let the multitude of isles and most of all England be glad thereof and blessed be my strength.¹²²

115. "The mysteries of Christ," fols 114v-115v.

116. Peter E. McCullough, *Sermons at Court: Politics and Religion in Elizabethan and Jacobean Preaching* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 31-35.

117. 2 Chr. 11:13-14.

118. For a discussion of Jeroboam and Rehoboam typology, focusing more on the 1640s and 1650s, see Kevin Killeen, *The Political Bible in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 135-55.

119. "The mysteries of Christ," fols 117r-v, 119r.

120. Patrick Collinson, "Antipuritanism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, ed. John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 19-33.

121. "The mysteries of Christ," fols 119v-120v. "Pewling" or "puling" is a querulous crying or whining.

122. "The mysteries of Christ," fols 123v-124r, with citation of Psalm 97:1.

And that is how Ussher ends the six-sermon series, having taken his hearers, at least some of them, from Essex to Islington, and from contemplation of mysteries beyond comprehension to the need for faithful, joyful service to the living God.

VII. CODA

This article has surveyed Ussher's sermon series on Hebrews 9:14, registering some key concerns and distinctive features of his preaching. The manuscript witness contains enough clues to act as a lens through which to see something of the context in which he preached these sermons, albeit darkly. He was addressing a group centred around Robert Rich, second Earl of Warwick, a group with grave concerns about threats to the Reformed identity of the Church of England. The events of the following months gave them little encouragement.

The disputation at York House took place on 11 and 17 February. The hoped-for repudiation of Montagu was not forthcoming and Buckingham refused to endorse the articles of the Synod of Dort. An unbridgeable gap began to open between Buckingham and his erstwhile moderate Puritan allies which would have profound consequences in national politics. Although it was not yet clear how fully the new king's sympathies lay with the ceremonialists who would become known as the "Arminian" party, the events at York House gave an early indication of the way the winds might be blowing.¹²³

Ussher continued to sound the note of warning. On

27 March 1626, the first anniversary of King James's death, Ussher preached in St. Mary's, Cambridge on 1 Samuel 12:24–25: "Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you. But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king."¹²⁴ This was one of a number of occasions on which Ussher was later deemed to have spoken prophetically of the national calamity which came in the 1640s.¹²⁵

He preached before King Charles at Greenwich on 25 June 1626 on 1 Corinthians 14:33: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints." He was able to hold up the case of the Netherlands as a country riven by religious faction and almost destroyed. It should serve as an example to England: "We see the prognostication of our ruin before our eyes." He felt aggrieved that "that odious and contemptible name of Puritans" was being foisted on conforming Calvinists in an attempt to taint them with sedition. They were not the fringe but the mainstream, holding to the doctrine of the established church which had been maintained by the late King James. Ussher proceeded to question the wisdom of the recent royal proclamation banning discussion of controverted points such as predestination.¹²⁶ He was well aware of the risk he was taking as he pushed beyond the bounds of decorum: "I need not make an apology for myself, my heart being upright, and it being the last time perhaps that I may ever speak unto you." His absence from England from 1626 until 1640, a period of marginalization, would seem to vindicate his fears of the consequences of such outspokenness at court.¹²⁷

Just one week after the Greenwich sermon, shortly before his return to Ireland, Ussher preached on 1 Peter 4:17 at St. Bartholomew the Great, in Smithfield, London, and the caution that "judgement must begin with the house of God." This sermon is appended to the "Mysteries of Christ" sermon series and it is surely no coincidence that the parish of St. Bartholomew the Great had associations with the Rich family.¹²⁸ Warwick House lay nearby on Holborn, and the advowson along with family property in the parish had been settled on Warwick's younger brother, Henry, now Earl of Holland.¹²⁹ Ussher counselled that the godly should not be surprised at the "fiery trial" that they are experiencing, and worse was likely to come: "Take that for a rule, when God hath suffered the gospel to be preached to a nation and coming to look for fruit he finds none ... then it is the time." God has been patient and looked for fruit year and after year but soon the axe of judgement will fall.¹³⁰

123. For the York House conference, see Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, 164–80; Barbara Donagan, "The York House Conference Revisited: Laymen, Calvinism and Arminianism," *Historical Research* 64, no. 155 (Oct 1991): 312–30; and for a more theologically-nuanced account Moore, *English Hypothetical Universalism*, 141–69.

124. Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Rawlinson D1290, fol. 63v.

125. Bernard, *Life*, 86. See also Ute Lotz-Heumann, "'The Spirit of Prophecy Has Not Wholly Left the World': The Stylisation of Archbishop James Ussher as a Prophet," in *Religion and Superstition in Reformation Europe*, ed. Helen Parish and W. G. Naphy (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 119–32.

126. *A Proclamation for the Establishing of the Peace and Quiet of the Church of England* (London, 1626).

127. The Greenwich sermon was not published in the seventeenth century. It can be found in Ussher, *Works*, 13:335–51, but there are good reasons to suspect that the text here has been redacted in line with the editor Charles Elrington's high-church sympathies. For a slightly punchier account based on two manuscript witnesses, see *James Ussher and a Reformed Episcopal Church: Sermons and Treatises on Ecclesiology*, ed. Richard Snoddy (Moscow, ID: Davenant Press, 2018), 97–117.

128. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 125r–144r.

129. E. A. Webb, *The Records of St. Bartholomew's Priory and St. Bartholomew the Great, West Smithfield: Volume 2* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1921), 292–96.

130. "The mysteres of Christ," fols 125r, 137v–138v.



James Ussher (c.1641), Jesus College, Oxford, attributed to Cornelis Janssens van Ceulen.

Ussher returned to England in the much-changed circumstances of 1640. According to his first biographer Nicholas Bernard, he had “been invited over by some eminent persons, upon the occasion of the then differences between the late king and parliament.”¹³¹ Ussher stayed with the Earl of Warwick whilst in London, and when Ussher was at Oxford Warwick travelled there specially for “a long conference” with him.¹³² Ultimately,

the two men ended up on opposing sides as the country slid towards war. Ussher’s principled royalism, for a time, separated him from many with whom he shared a bond of spiritual kinship. These dark years would witness the destruction that he had foretold. ■

131. Bernard, *Life*, 93.

132. Ford, *James Ussher*, 227–28.

Archbishop Ussher and Old Testament Chronology

By Benjamin Shaw

INTRODUCTION

One of the oddities of biblical research in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was a fascination with biblical and world chronology. Scholars produced chronologies of the world based on data from biblical and classical resources. Perhaps the most influential of the sixteenth century works on chronology was that of Joseph Scaliger, the Dutch polymath.¹ Though the best-known, Scaliger's work was not the only production of the period. Treatises on chronology appeared in Latin and English (and probably French and German) throughout the late sixteenth century and well into the seventeenth century. A friend who had access to Early English Books Online acquired thirty-eight treatises on chronology that were published in English between 1580 and 1620. All of these, Scaliger's included, have largely been lost to history.

The one production on the topic that has remained to some extent in the public eye is that of Archbishop James Ussher. Ussher's work appeared in the 1650s, almost a century after Scaliger's work was published. It has remained known because at some point, the dates from Ussher's *Annals of the World* began to be printed in

the margins of King James Bibles. It is not certain when the practice began, but it is still possible to buy editions of the KJV with Ussher's dates in the margin. It is, perhaps, commonly assumed that Ussher just drew his data from the Bible. This fails to take into account the fact that biblical data cannot be directly connected with our modern Gregorian calendar except through providing connections and correlations with other chronological sources. In the recently published English version of Ussher's work, the list of authors cited by Ussher takes up ten full columns of small print.² The work was the result of some twenty years of Ussher's labors.

USSHER'S ASSUMPTIONS

Any such work must make several assumptions in dealing with the data at hand. For Ussher, some of these assumptions are: He assumed that the first day of creation was a Sunday, making that first Saturday the first Sabbath day. He assumed that creation took place in the fall of the year, which was the beginning of the year in the ancient Israelite non-liturgical calendar.³ He assumed that creation began at the fall equinox. Since Ussher was using the Julian calendar, that put the beginning of creation in October. Ussher also appears to have preferred the Hebrew Masoretic text of the Old Testament to that of the Greek Septuagint. There are many differences between the two texts related to dates. These differences appear most obviously in the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11, but there are also differences in dates and ages of kings in the books of Kings and Chronicles.

USSHER'S CONCLUSIONS

Ussher's correlations between the biblical timeline and classical works on history provided him the material to connect the biblical data to the Julian calendar. His most

THE AUTHOR: Benjamin Shaw is Professor of Old Testament at Reformation Bible College, Sanford Florida. He is a frequent contributor to *The Confessional Presbyterian* journal.

1. For a thorough study of Scaliger and his work, see Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship; Volume II: Historical Chronology*, Oxford-Warburg Studies (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

2. James Ussher, *The Annals of the World*, revised and updated by Larry and Marion Pierce (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2003).

3. God said to Moses, "This month shall be for you the beginning of months" (Ex 12:1-2). It is assumed that this pronouncement then changed the calendar for Israel, putting the beginning of the year in the spring, at least for the ritual calendar. Even today, modern Judaism celebrates the new year in the fall.

notorious conclusion (though it would be correct, given the data with which he worked and the assumptions he made about that data) was that “The beginning of time, according to our chronology, happened at the start of the evening preceding the 23rd day of October, 4004 BC.”⁴ That, in Ussher’s reckoning, was the beginning of the first age of the world. Thus, on Friday, October 28, Adam and Eve were created. Ussher does not speculate on how much time passed before the fall. The next date that he provided was 3874 BC, when Seth was born.

In what follows, I am only selecting from Ussher’s dating of biblical events. He also tied in events from around the known world, based on the writings he had consulted and correlated with chronological data. The reader should also note that Ussher specifies occurrences of Sabbath years and Jubilee years, even though there is no evidence in the Old Testament that either of these was regularly observed throughout the Old Testament period.

The second age of the world began after the flood in the year 2348 BC. On Thursday, December 18 of that year Noah and all that were with him left the ark. The second age of the world continued from Noah down to the time of Abraham.

The third age of the world began with the call of Abram: Thursday, May 5, 1921 BC. The birth of Isaac occurred in 1896 BC. Shem, the son of Noah, died in 1846 BC. This reflects the numbers in the Masoretic text. According to the Septuagint data, Shem died before the birth of Abram. The death of Jacob in Egypt at the age of 147 occurred in 1689 BC and the death of Joseph in 1635 BC. In 1571 BC, Moses was born.

The fourth age of the world began in 1491 BC on the fifteenth day of the first month (Tuesday, May 5, Julian calendar) with the beginning of the exodus of Israel from Egyptian bondage. The tabernacle was first erected on Wednesday, April 21 of the year 1490 BC. In 1451 BC, the Israelites began their move into Canaan under the leadership of Joshua. The period of the judges began after the death of Joshua in 1413 BC. Almost two centuries later, Samson died (1117 BC). Saul was anointed king by Samuel in 1095 BC. In 1048 BC David became king over all Israel, making his capital in Jerusalem. In 1015 BC David was succeeded by Solomon.

For Ussher, the fifth age of the world began with the laying of the foundation of the temple in 1012 BC. In 975 BC, the year of Solomon’s death, Ussher adds the following note: “Toward the end of his life, Solomon forsook the lusts and vanities to which he was addicted in his latter years. He testified of his deep repentance in his book called *The Preacher* and made his peace with

God.”⁵ Thus the kingdom was divided in 975 BC. Ahab began his reign in the northern kingdom in 918 BC and Jehoshaphat began his reign in the southern kingdom in 915 BC. The interregnum of Athaliah lasted from 884 BC to 878 BC. 759 BC was the year of the fourteenth Jubilee. In that same year, Isaiah had his call vision of the glory of the Lord (Isaiah 6). Hezekiah began his reign in 726 BC. Samaria was taken by Shalmaneser in 721 BC. Josiah became king of Judah in 641 BC. In 588 BC, the city of Jerusalem was taken by the Babylonian armies of Nebuchadnezzar, ending the fifth age of the world.

The sixth age of the world began with the destruction of Jerusalem. In 539 BC Babylon fell to Cyrus. In 537 BC, Cyrus issued the decree that allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem. The Jews who returned to Jerusalem, being prodded by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, began the rebuilding of the temple in 520 BC. The temple was completed in 515 BC. In 467 BC Ezra received permission to return to Jerusalem with any who wanted to go. In 454 BC Nehemiah went to Jerusalem.

Ussher did not end his sixth age of the world until 176 BC, before the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes. But we will end here with the end of the Old Testament period. For Ussher, Malachi was the last of the prophets, a younger contemporary of Nehemiah. Ussher attached the date of 416 BC to the last words of Malachi’s prophecy: “And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers” (Malachi 4:6).

MODERN CHRONOLOGIES COMPARED WITH USSHER

In the modern period, the study of biblical chronology has not been ignored. Much of the more recent discussion is due to the fact that Mesopotamian and Egyptian sources, that were unknown in the seventeenth century, are now available. Different sets of correlations between biblical and extra-biblical sources are now being used in the calculation of Old Testament dates. There remain, however, significant areas of disagreement.

First, most modern scholars are hesitant to trace dates back beyond the time of Abraham. Others are hesitant to trace dates back before the rise of the Israelite monarchy. In both cases, the problem is that there is no extrabiblical material to compare with the biblical data. The scholars seem to be reticent to take the biblical data, all by itself, too seriously.

Second, there is disagreement among even evangelical scholars on the date of the exodus. The more

4. *Annals of the World*, 17.

5. *Annals*, 67.

conservative view is that the exodus occurred in the fifteenth century BC. A commonly accepted date for the fourth year of Solomon’s reign is 966 BC. The four hundred eighty years mention in 1 Kings 6:1 takes the exodus back to 1446 BC. For some, the archaeological data, and the standard chronology of the Egyptian kingdoms, prohibits the idea of that fifteenth century exodus. To argue for a later date (thirteenth century) however, requires a figurative reading of the chronological notes in Judges 11:26 and 1 Kings 6:1.

Third, there is a disagreement about the length of time that Israel was in Egypt. If Exodus 12:40 (Hebrew text) is taken at face value, it would seem to indicate that from the time of Jacob’s going down to Egypt to the time of the exodus was 430 years. However, the New Testament data (Acts 7:6 and Galatians 3:17) seem to indicate that the 430 years was from the time of Abram’s entry into Canaan until the time of the Exodus. The Septuagint also renders Exodus 12:40 as follows: “And the sojourning of the children of Israel, while they sojourned in the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan, four hundred and thirty years.” This tends to confirm the New Testament data. Ussher says of the beginning of the exodus, “It was exactly four hundred and thirty years from the first pilgrimage of Abraham’s departure from Canaan to the day they were set free from bondage.”⁶

Fourth, there is disagreement about the chronology of the kings of Israel during the divided monarchy. The relative chronology that is given in the biblical text is not transparent and has given rise to a few proposed ways of making sense of the numbers. As with the numbers in Genesis 5 and 11, there is disagreement between the Hebrew Masoretic text and the Septuagint Greek text at several points.

The result is that even today there is no consensus chronology of the Old Testament period. The following chart shows three modern proposals compared to Ussher. Two of these sets of dates are from evangelical sources, while the third is from a non-evangelical source.

The reader should note the following things. First, there is the obvious reticence to date anything in the Old Testament prior to the time of Abraham. This is primarily because modern interpreters, even the evangelical

Event/Person	Ussher	NBD ⁷	ESVSB ⁸	AYBD ⁹
Flood	2348			
Call of Abraham	1921	1925	2091	
Isaac born	1896	1900	2066	
Jacob died	1689	1700	1859	
Joseph died	1635	1640	1805	
Exodus	1491	1270	1446	
Conquest	1451	1230	1406	
Saul	1095	1050	1050	
David	1048	1011	1010	
Solomon	1015	971	971	
Temple begun	1012	967	967	
Rehoboam	975	931	931	929
Ahab	918	874	875	
Jehoshaphat	915	870	871	870
Athaliah	884–878	841–835	841–835	842–836
Hezekiah	726	716	715	727
Samaria falls	721	722	722	722
Josiah	641	640	640	639
Jerusalem falls	588	587	586	586
Cyrus	539	538	539	539
Second temple	520–515	520–516	520–516	520–516
Ezra	467	458	458	458
Nehemiah	454	445	445	445
Malachi	416	460		

6. *Annals*, 39.

7. *New Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas, 2nd ed (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1982), 194–198.

8. *ESV Study Bible*, ed. Lane Dennis, et al. (Wheaton: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 32, 622–623.

9. Michael Cogan, “Chronology (Hebrew Bible)” *Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*.

ones, do not take the genealogies of the patriarchs in Genesis 5 and 11 as chronologically useful. Since the late nineteenth century, under the influence of William Henry Green, evangelical have taken the view that there are gaps in these genealogies, quite possibly very large gaps.¹⁰ If that were the case, then these writers would be correct in their agnosticism about early dates. Ussher was obviously comfortable with using those genealogies in chronology, as they apparently were intended to be used.

Second, note that up to the death of Joseph, Ussher tracks well with the view of those who argue for a late Exodus. He does not track well with the “early exodus” view primarily because that chronology argues for four hundred thirty years between Jacob’s entry into Egypt and the exodus. After the death of Joseph, Ussher tracks better with those who argue for an early date for the exodus, though Ussher’s dates are about half a century earlier.

Third, from the time of the exodus to the conquest of Canaan, Ussher’s dates continue to be forty to fifty years earlier than the “early exodus” view. Of course, his dates are about two centuries earlier than the “late exodus” dates.

Fourth, from the time of Saul to the middle of the eighth century, Ussher’s dates remain about a half century before those of the modern chronologers. However, the modern chronologers by this point are all within a couple of years of each other.

Fifth, from the time of Hezekiah to the completion of the second temple, Ussher tracks very closely with his modern counterparts. On the dates of Ezra and Nehemiah, Ussher is about a decade earlier.

Finally, Ussher considered Malachi to be the last of the Old Testament prophets, near the end of the fifth century BC. Most modern treatments of Malachi date the book to the first half of the fifth century, just a little before the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.

CONCLUSIONS

The data presented above suggest several things. First, though people commonly consider Ussher something of a joke because of his precise dating of creation, he was, and is, a voice to be taken seriously. He made use of an immense amount of material in his labors. It is not clear to me that the modern chronologers have anything like the mastery of sources that Ussher had. Yes, there are resources available now that were not available to Ussher. Assuming for the sake of argument that Ussher was wrong in those areas in which his figures disagree

with the modern ones, his dates are still respectably close to those of the moderns.

Second, Ussher had a confidence in the biblical text that many moderns do not. The agnosticism regarding the history of Israel that is found among modern historical-critical scholars is also seen in the work of evangelical scholars who refuse to propose dates for Old Testament events before the time of Abraham. I have no doubt that they honestly believe that Genesis 5 and 11 are not useful for chronological purposes because there are gaps in the genealogies. But have they investigated the issue for themselves? I think most have not. In addition, it is clear in reading some of the moderns that there is a greater confidence in the Mesopotamian and Egyptian data than there is in the biblical data.

Third, there are still areas of biblical chronology that could provide a stimulus for fruitful research. The standard Egyptian chronology is perhaps not as certain as most seem to think. David Rohl may not be right in his explanations, but he shows that there are weaknesses in the standard chronology.¹¹ There is the related issue of archaeology and the dating of biblical events. Many archaeologists seem to be more confident of the results of their digs than they are of actual historical sources. Yet the chronology of archaeological material is always subject to reinterpretation.

The date of the exodus as well is a suitable subject for further research. Currently, the consensus of critical scholars is that there was no exodus. They propose different explanations of the origins of that biblical “legend.” The consensus among evangelical scholars seems to be that the exodus occurred in the thirteenth century, rather than the fifteenth century, as Ussher and some modern scholars would have it. For example, James Hoffmeier argues for a thirteenth-century exodus without acknowledging that defenders of a fifteenth century exodus exist.¹² This despite the fact of John Bimson’s *Redating the Exodus and Conquest* in which he argues for a fifteenth century exodus, proposing a date around 1470 BC (a work that Hoffmeier does not cite). This date is about halfway between that of Ussher and that of current fifteenth-century date defenders.¹³

There is also room for a reexamination of the chronology of the divided kingdom. The work of Edwin

10. William Henry Green, “Primeval Chronology,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 47 (1890): 285–303.

11. David Rohl, *Pharaohs and Kings: A Biblical Quest* (Crown, 1996).

12. James Hoffmeier, “The Exodus and Wilderness Narratives,” in *Ancient Israel’s History: An Introduction to Issues and Sources*, ed. Bill Arnold and Richard Hess (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 46–90.

13. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series*, No. 5 (Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1981), 222.

Thiele is currently the consensus in evangelical circles.¹⁴ But there are weaknesses in his treatment as well. It would be interesting to find out why there is a consistent forty to fifty year gap between Thiele's dates and those of Ussher for most of the period of the divided kingdom.

Finally, though Ussher does not directly deal with this, the relationship between the Hebrew Masoretic text and the Greek Septuagint text needs a thorough investigation.¹⁵ ■

In Brief: Did James Ussher Visit Samuel Rutherford?

A recent edition of James Ussher's *A Body of Divinity* (Solid Ground Christian Books, 2007) opens with a narrative account headed "The Eleventh Commandment" (ix-x). It relates an account of a visit made by Ussher to Samuel Rutherford at his home in Anwoth, near Kirkcudbright. The narrative is drawn from *Anecdotes, Religious, Moral, and Entertaining* by Charles Buck (New York: 1843), pp. 135-6. According to this account, having heard that Rutherford spent all night in prayer at times, especially before the Sabbath, Ussher wanted to visit him but being unsure of a welcome visited in the disguise of a beggar. He arrived around dusk and requested shelter for the night, since he could go to no other house at so late an hour for that purpose. He was duly welcomed in for hospitality.

"Mrs. Rutherford, according to her custom on a Saturday evening, that her servants might be prepared for the Sabbath, called them together and catechised them. In the course of examination that evening, she asked the stranger how many commandments there were; to which he answered, 'Eleven.' Upon receiving this reply, she answered, 'What a shame it is for you, a man with grey hairs, living in a Christian country, not to know how many commandments there are! There is not a child of six years old in this parish but could answer that question properly.' She troubled the poor man no more, thinking him so very ignorant, but lamented his condition to her servants; and after giving him some supper, desired a servant to show him upstairs to bed in a garret" (or in other versions the barn).

"This was the very situation in which the visitor wished to

14. Edwin Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, new rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 1994). See also Leslie McFall, "Has the Chronology of the Hebrew Kings Been Finally Settled?" *Themelios* 17, 1 (1991): 6-12.

15. See, for example, Gerhard Larsson, "Septuagint Versus Masoretic Chronology," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 114 no 4 (2002): p 511-521. Also Jeremy Sexton, "Who Was Born When Enoch Was 90?: A Semantic Reevaluation of William Henry Green's Chronological Gaps," *The Westminster Theological Journal*, 77 no 2 (Fall 2015): p 193-218.

be placed, that he might hear Mr. Rutherford at his devotions. However, he was disappointed, for that night the good man went to his bed, but did not sleep for some hours. Ussher did not go to bed, but sat listening, hoping to hear Rutherford at prayer. At length, concluding that all the family were asleep, Ussher thought that if he had been disappointed of hearing another offer up his desires to God at the throne of grace, he would embrace the opportunity himself. In one version Ussher prays in his room and in another goes to pray in 'Rutherford's Walk' (the lane where Rutherford was accustomed to walk and pray). In either case Rutherford overheard Ussher pouring out his heart in prayer. He recognised him as Archbishop Ussher and pressed him to preach. Ussher chose to preach on "the eleventh commandment" (John 13:34).

An article in *The Reformed Presbyterian Magazine* tries to work out the date of the visit on the basis of an assumption that Mrs. Rutherford was using the Heidelberg Catechism and they had arrived at Lord's Day 34 which introduces the Ten Commandments. Yet it wryly observes that the account "is perhaps too romantic to have really taken place. Indeed, it is more like a Scotch ballad in prose than a veritable narrative; yet it is too good a story to have omitted" (August 1, 1866, 292-3).

While irresistible to Victorian writers, the story has an apocryphal ring to it. Recent biographers have been reluctant to give it credence: John Coffey does not mention it in *Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions: The Mind of Samuel Rutherford* (Cambridge, 1998) and Kingsley Rendell is non-committal about it (*Samuel Rutherford: A New biography of the Man and his ministry*, Fearn, 2003, 129).

There are, however, other accounts that appear more plausible. The main possibility is an oral tradition that comes directly from those who lived in the parish of Anwoth during the time of Rutherford's ministry. In 1724, the historian Robert Wodrow recorded an account from a man who had lived in the parish and spoke to those alive at the time. "My informer lived some time in the parish of Anwoth, in Gallo-way, where Mr. Rutherford was Minister, and had the account of Bishop Usher's being there, formerly set down, with thir [these] circumstances, which are firmly believed there; and it's not long since persons were alive who were in the parish at the time. They tell him in the year 1640, the year before the Rebellion in Ireland, (but I think Mr. Rutherford was transported by that time from Anwoth, so that it must have been some years before,) the Primate, having read his books, that *De Gratia* was printed before, and his Letters were in several hands; and having heard of his great success and sweetness in preaching, resolved to come to England by Scotland, and take Anwoth in his way, and came with a servant riding with him. There was no place near the Church where he could stay, that Saturday's night he came to Anwoth, but Mr. Rutherford's house; and so he came to it, and called to know if he was at

home? His wife told he was. He said he was a stranger come from some distance, and designed to stay till Monday, and could find no place to stay in, and asked if he might have access to Mr. Rutherford's house? Mrs. Rutherford, seeing him a gentleman, and in good habit, desired him to alight, and signified that she desired to know his name. He said his name was James Usher. She went up, and acquainted her husband. The Primate struck none of them in the head [None of them recollected or recognised the Primate, under the name of James Usher]; and Mr. Rutherford came down and called for a drink, and made him welcome as a stranger, and left him till supper, where nothing passed to discover him. On the Sabbath, early, he went out to the fields, and came to a thicket of trees, a sweet retired place, where Mr. Rutherford used often to retire. There the Bishop spent some time his alone, and was fallen to prayer. When Mr. Rutherford came out, as was his ordinary, knowing nothing the other was there, till he drew near and heard the voice of prayer; and, listening, he perceived a very extraordinary gift of prayer, and was wonderfully taken with it, and stayed till it was ended; and the other came out. Then, when he saw him, his name his wife told him struck him in the head, and presently addressed him, 'Are you the great and learned Doctor Usher?' The other answered, 'I am he whom some are pleased to term so.' Then Mr. Rutherford embraced him most affectionately, and said, "You must preach for me to-day." 'Nay,' says the other, 'I came to hear you preach, and to be acquainted with you, and I will hear you.' 'Well,' said the other, 'I shall take the forenoon, and you the afternoon.' And so the Primate preached in the afternoon, to each other's great satisfaction." (Robert Wodrow, *Analec̄ta, Or Materials for a History of Remarkable Providences Mostly Relating to Scotch Ministers and Christians*, 4 vols. [Edinburgh]: Printed for the Maitland Club, 1842–43) 132–134).

Wodrow records separately "that Bishop Usher, upon seeing of Mr. Rutherford's books, and hearing accounts of his piety and success, came over in disguise to Anwoth, and heard Mr. Rutherford preach" (*Analec̄ta* II, 364). Ussher's preaching for Rutherford is also recorded in *The humble thoughts, of some sober and judicious Christians, concerning the affair of the Reverend Mr. John Glass, Minister of the Gospel at Tealing: to be before the venerable Assembly, to meet at Edinburgh, May 2d, 1728* (Edinburgh? [1728], 19).

The eleventh commandment does not appear in this narrative and can be therefore discounted. The fact that it is also connected with a shipwreck Ussher was supposed to have experienced supports its dubious authenticity (see *The Whole Works of James Ussher*, ed. Charles Richard Elrington [Dublin 1864], I, 280–1).

According to Ussher's most recent biography, the one occasion when Ussher ventured out of Ireland between 1626 and 1640 was a visit to the coronation of Charles I, July 1633

in Edinburgh (Alan Ford, *James Ussher: Theology, History, and Politics in Early-Modern Ireland and England*, Oxford, 2007, 144). It is possible that they met in Edinburgh when Rutherford may have been at the Parliament. This, however, removes the connection with Rutherford's learned publication *Exercitationes Apologeticae pro Divina Gratia*. This was published in Amsterdam in 1636 and there would be no real opportunity during that year for a visit because he was then confined to Aberdeen in July of that year. It is also unlikely that Ussher would visit at a time when the Scottish bishops were proceeding against the Anwoth pastor. Wodrow's account, however, mentions Rutherford's letters as much as *De Gratia* and this almost certainly requires it to have been after his exile to Aberdeen which had occasioned such a torrent of correspondence.

Rutherford returned from Aberdeen in February or March 1638 and, apart from preaching in other locations, remained there until November 1639. At this point he went to St Andrews (arriving at least by November 22, 1639; see Letter CCLXXXIX) in order to take up his role as professor of divinity. This might seem the most plausible window of time when the visit could have taken place.

Another theory is, however, possible that would make Wodrow's oral tradition potentially viable. Ussher did travel to Oxford after preaching before the Parliament in Dublin in March 1640 (Charles Richard Elrington ed., *The Whole Works*, I, 208). He arrived by May 1640 (Alan Ford, 223). It seems unlikely that he would wish to take the troublesome route of going through Ulster, Scotland and Northern England rather than travel from Dublin to Wales and then to Oxford. It is, however, theoretically possible that he returned to his home near Drogheda from Dublin and went to England via Scotland.

Meanwhile Rutherford was married to Jean McMath (commonly spelled Mackmath in contemporary documents) in Edinburgh on 24 March 1640 (see Edinburgh parish records National Records of Scotland, OPR 685-1/43 <https://www.beefheart.net/research/learning/hall-of-fame/hall-of-fame-a-z/rutherford-samuel> [accessed 09-16-2020]). This was the widow of Hew Montgomerie of Balharie or Ballyhenry in Co. Down, Northern Ireland. If this was Sir Hugh Montgomerie, the first Viscount of the Great Ards (c. 1560–1636), he must have married Jean between the death of his second wife Sara Maxwell on 29 March 1636 and his own death on 15 May of that year. While this may seem unusual, Sara Maxwell had returned to Scotland and did not live with Sir Hugh. The brother of this Hugh Montgomerie had been George Montgomerie, bishop of Meath (1562–1621) who was succeeded in this bishopric by Ussher himself.

It is unlikely that Jean McMath was widow of a second cousin of the deceased earl who was also called Hugh. This

individual represented Newton Town (Newtownards) at the parliament of 1634 (D.B. Montgomery, *A genealogical history of the Montgomerys and their descendants* [Owensville IN, 1903], 26) but is said to have attended a funeral in 1663 (D.B. Montgomery, 386). This Hugh Montgomery was most probably a son of Adam Montgomery, to whom Sir Hugh Montgomery sold, in 1610, the towns and lands of Ballyhenrie and Ballyalton, in the parish of Comber. He was a brother of Charles Campbell and a second cousin (D.B. Montgomery, 249)

A registered deed from July 1653 relating to the ownership of Dunskey Castle, near Portpatrick, Wigtownshire, reveals further information. It identifies Mackmath as the widow of 'the deceased HEW MONTGRUMIE (Montgomery) sometime of BALHARIE in the country of Doune, (co.Down, N. Ireland) gentleman' (*Register of the Great Seal of Scotland. Under the Commonwealth (Cromwell)*. X, 81–82, no.164). This most likely refers to the first Viscount of the Great Ards since he had been owner of Dunskey Castle since 1620. Another factor that links Rutherford to the first Viscount of the Great Ards is that Robert Blair had married the Viscount's daughter, Katharine Montgomerie, in the beginning of 1635 (*The Life of Mr. Robert Blair, Minister of St. Andrews, Containing His Autobiography, from 1593 to 1636*, ed. Thomas M'Crrie [Edinburgh, 1848], 137). It is reasonable to suppose that Robert Blair's subsequent visit to Edinburgh may have helped to connect Jean McMath with the widowed Viscount in 1636. Jean McMath was the daughter of a prominent merchant Burgess in Edinburgh, probably William McMath (see *Abbotsford Club*, Issue 21 [Edinburgh, 1841], xxxvi–xl). It is likely that Rutherford's friendship with Robert Blair and other prominent burgesses in Edinburgh helped form his marriage to Jean.

The Co. Down connection might seem to open up a possibility that Rutherford visited Ulster to meet his future wife. It would be attractive to think that he might have encountered Ussher in travelling back. Time would, however, not have permitted Rutherford to have left St Andrews after 6 March 1640 (see Letter CCXCVI) and have travelled to Ulster, then Anwoth, then Edinburgh, before 24 March. The banns for his wedding were, however, being proclaimed in St Andrews (and presumably Edinburgh also) for the first time from 2 March (see parish records National Records of Scotland, OPR 453/5, <https://www.beefheart.net/research/learning/hall-of-fame/hall-of-fame-a-z/rutherford-samuel> [accessed 09-16-2020]). This might not have made it advisable to take so long a journey. We also know that Rutherford returned directly to St Andrews with his new wife as there is a letter from there dated 27 March (Letter CCXCVII).



A visitor arrives at the Rutherford House, Anwoth (*Letters* [1891], 10).

One further possibility is that Jean McMath was residing (either temporarily or permanently) at Dunskey Castle, Portpatrick rather than back in her native Edinburgh. Rutherford may have taken the occasion of both joining her on her journey towards Edinburgh and of revisiting Anwoth. This would allow for Ussher to have been travelling this way and stopped at Anwoth also, although it does not allow for McMath being Rutherford's wife at the time. It also seems unlikely (though not impossible) that McMath could be married within a parish where neither party was residing (see the opinion of Thomas Murray, *The Life of S. Rutherford* [Edinburgh, 1828], 324).

Another possibility is that a journey to the south west might have been made for some reason during the period of April up to May 28 1640 (see Letter CCXCVIII). It is likely, however, that the first two weeks of April would have been taken up with the Spring Communion in the town and presumably Rutherford would still have had teaching responsibilities in the College up until Whitsun in mid-May. This would allow just about sufficient time, but it seems that Ussher arrived in Oxford by May. The Ulster connection might also seem to make it unlikely that Jean McMath would fail to recognise the Archbishop's name out of context but her temporary sojourn there would help to explain this. This is the only scenario which would allow for all of the details of Wodrow's account to be accurate and certainly requires a significant stretch if it is even possible.

These are only possibilities and not even probabilities and it must be admitted that some of the possibilities are rather tenuous. The information may indeed leave as many questions unanswered as it seeks to address. Yet it does open up the possibility that there may be grains of truth in the oral history that Wodrow reports. We cannot fully verify it, but we should not rush to dismiss the tale of Ussher's visit out of hand.

MATTHEW A. VOGAN ■

The Role of “The Great Commission” in the Apostolic Churches

By Stewart E. Lauer

The articular expression, “ἡ ἐντολή” (the commandment) in 1 Timothy 6:14 and the similar expression “τὴ ἁγία ἐντολή” (the holy commandment) in 2 Peter 2:21 appear in the flows of these two epistles with no antecedent commandment having been identified, that is, with no preceding contextual mention of a particular ἐντολή. Notwithstanding, each author presupposes his original readers would easily, if not automatically, recognize the particular commandment to which he refers. We begin by addressing two questions regarding each instance. What ‘commandment’ (or some have suggested, despite the singular, ‘body of commandments’) is in view, and how did each author expect his readers to know that identity?

The following study of this term in these two epistolary contexts pivots on the fact—as will be shown—that both letters employ the articular construction, “the commandment,” and that despite the fact that in both cases it is the first appearance of that noun in its context.

What Commandment?—Common Answers

IN THE CASE OF 2 PETER 2:21 (AND 3:2)

As to this first question, in the case of 2 Peter, most assert the antecedent of the 3:2 instance to be in 2:21, where they exegete “the holy commandment” along the lines of Calvin: “the doctrine of a holy and virtuous life”; Green: “the moral law which Jesus underlined in his Sermon on the Mount”; Bauckham: “Christianity considered as a body of ethical teaching”; and Davids: “the teaching of Jesus and about Jesus.”¹ ‘Commandment’ (ἐντολή) is thereby taken to have a sense normally expressed by ‘law’ (νόμος): “Christ has given a ‘new law’ for his disciples (see Justin, *Dial.* 12.2).”² According to this interpretation, ‘the holy rule’ [τὴ ἁγία ἐντολή] is taken as parallel with ‘the way of righteousness’ [τὴν ὁδὸν τῆς

δικαιοσύνης],” with the latter functioning exegetically with respect to the former.³ By this understanding, when the false teachers opposed in 2 Peter 2 “had come to Christ they had received a ‘holy commandment.’” Thus, the way of righteousness, “the sacred commandment . . . was passed on to them” (παραδοθεῖσιν αὐτοῖς) when they were baptized.⁴

IN THE CASE OF 1 TIMOTHY 6:14FF

The widespread similarity of opinions with respect to Peter’s referent for ‘the commandment’ stands in stark contrast with the uncertainty and diversity of suggestions evident for ἡ ἐντολή in the case of 1 Timothy 6:14. “The primary question regarding the verse is the identity of the ἐντολή, ‘commandment.’”⁵ On 6:13–14, Fee’s

THE AUTHOR: Stewart Lauer (M.Div. 1983 Westminster Theological Seminary Phila.; Ph.D., 2011, University of Wales) was ordained as a missionary-evangelist by the Presbytery of Ohio (OPC) in 1985 and served in evangelism and church planting in Sendai until 1994. From 1998 until 2007, he was professor of Biblical Studies at Kobe Reformed Theological Seminary, where he lectured part-time until 2014. He was called as missionary-evangelist to Japan in 2015 (Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Presbytery of Ohio), and he continues to lecture at Kobe Theological Hall, and is the missionary-evangelist at the Yamamoto Nozomi Chapel., a mission work of the OPC Japan Mission.

1. See John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Second Epistle of Peter*, *Calvin’s Commentaries*, Vol. XXII, trans. John Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1844–56; repr. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), 411; Michael Green, *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude* (London: Tyndale Press, 1993), 142; Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude–2 Peter* (Dallas: Word, 1983), 278. Regarding 3:2, Bauckham opines: “The ‘commandment’ is used here in the same way as in 2:21” (p. 288). Cf., also, Peter H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 251.

2. Jerome H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude* (NYC: Doubleday, 1993), 224.

3. Davids, 251.

4. Davids, 251.

5. William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 359.

ironic final clause is striking, “Most of the difficulties in understanding the paragraph stem from this charge, which is at once quite ambiguous, yet the point of everything.”⁶ Fee notes five different possibilities for 6:14’s ‘ambiguous’ commandment:

1. the exhortations in verses 11–12, collectively understood;
2. an alleged baptismal charge to which allusion is made in verse 12;
3. an ordination charge;
4. the whole Christian faith thought of as a kind of new law; or
5. a commandment to Timothy to persevere in his own faith and ministry, as in 4:16, so as to save himself and others.⁷

To these Knight adds three more:

1. the whole charge delivered in this letter ...
2. all Timothy has been enjoined to do with respect to the ministry of the gospel and the government of the church ...
3. everything entrusted to Timothy, by analogy with the “deposit” in 6:20....

He continues: “six of the eight views would virtually coincide in their understanding of *the content* of the ‘commandment.’” By the above numbering those six would be (2) through (5), (7) and (8). Knight rightly notes that the other 2 (above 1, 6) “would seem to require that the text read ‘this,’ rather than ‘the,’ commandment.” He also notes “the definiteness and absoluteness of the phrase ‘the commandment,’” highlighting the significance of the (definite) article.⁸ Has that significance of the article

6. Gordon D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1990), 151.

7. Fee, 151.

8. George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 266–68, italics original. Knight’s numbering for 6, 7, 8 is 5, 6, 7, respectively.

9. Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 217–18; emphasis added.

10. Green, 142.

11. Bauckham, 288.

been given adequate attention, and precisely what is its use, here? In 2 Peter 2:21?

IDENTIFYING THE ARTICLE’S USAGE

The most frequent use of the article clearly does not fit in either the 1 Timothy 6 instance or the 2 Peter 2 instance; Wallace explains that “most common use” of the Greek (definite) article:

The anaphoric article is the article denoting previous reference. (It derives its name from the Greek verb ἀναφέρειν, “to bring back, to bring up.”) The first mention of the substantive is usually anarthrous because it is merely being introduced. But subsequent mentions of it use the article, for the article is now pointing back to *the substantive previously mentioned*. The anaphoric article has, by nature, then, a pointing force to it, reminding the reader of who or what was mentioned previously. *It is the most common use of the article and the easiest usage to identify.*⁹

Strictly speaking, the two instances in question do not fall into this (anaphoric) category since *both constitute the first mention of the substantive*, ἐντολή, and yet both are articular.

As is often the case with exegetical problems in NT epistles, the authors and recipients were privy to information to which (much) later readers often have no access, or at least no direct access. Apparently in these two cases, that information includes the identity or identities of what at that time could be identified by merely writing, “the [holy] commandment.” Commentators on both letters strive to overcome our ignorance on this point.

For example, explicating 2 Peter 2:21, Green recognizes this usage is “unusual,” adding, “but paralleled in 3:2; 1 Tim. 6:14; 1 John 3:23.”¹⁰ While the former references are germane, the final is not, since that verse itself expressly identifies (cataphorically references) an “ἐντολή,” to wit, “this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us” (ESV). In 2 Peter 3:2, like 1 Timothy 6, ‘commandment’ is modified by the (definite) article, though in the Petrine context it naturally points the reader back to 2:21’s ‘commandment’—one forsaken by the false teachers, that is, “the holy commandment [which had been] delivered to them” (2:21).¹¹ As in the instance in 1 Timothy, so in 2 Peter, “The primary question regarding the verse is the identity of the ἐντολήν,

‘commandment.’”¹² Despite the semblance of agreement on the identity of “the holy commandment” in 2 Peter 2:21, it is still an open question, for it is the first appearance of ἐντολή, and yet it is articular.

Having noted that the most common use of the article does not apply to either 2 Peter 2 or 1 Timothy 6, three other usages of the Greek article Wallace identifies merit consideration: (1) the “par excellence article,” (2) the “monadic article,” and (3) the “well-known, celebrity, or familiar article,” with (3) being defined as follows,

The article [usage (3)] points out an object that is well known, but for reasons *other* than the above categories (i.e., not anaphoric, deictic, *par excellence*, or monadic). Thus it refers to a well-known object that has not been mentioned in the preceding context (anaphoric), nor is considered to be the best of its class (*par excellence*), nor is one of a kind (monadic).¹³

Since obviously there are various divine commandments that Peter and Paul could have mentioned, monadic usage may be excluded. Unless ‘the commandment’ is that of Deuteronomy 6:5—precluded by considerations below—it seems impossible that “the [holy] commandment” could be viewed as “the best of its class,” i.e., the best commandment (cf. Mat 22:37 and parallels). That leaves “well-known” usage as the presumptive reason for the article modifying ἐντολή—in both 1 Timothy 6:14 and 2 Peter 2:21, with the referent repeated in 2 Peter 3:1–2, where the commandment’s article’s usage is anaphoric. Mounce implies well-known usage of the article: “The articular τὴν ἐντολήν, ‘the commandment,’ suggests something of independent existence that is *well known*.”¹⁴ Indeed, the fact that different authors presume their (different) readers will intuitively recognize the particular commandment to which each refers by the articular expression constitutes additional confirmation that “the [holy] commandment” had a specific meaning, one that was well known by that appellation among multiple apostolic churches.¹⁵

An example of the use of the English definite article, “the,” vividly illustrates this (very similar) Greek usage. If one uses the term, “the white house”—absent any prior reference to a particular white house—in oral communication with virtually any native English speaking person from any country worldwide, the reference will be immediately understood, and that without the *hearer* knowing the modified words normally begin with upper case letters. The term, with its precise referent, is simply so “well-known” worldwide that, with

the definite article but no prior contextual mention, it is effectively a proper noun.

In short, it seems that “ἡ ἐντολή” (the commandment) was similarly so well-known in the first century church that Paul and Peter could use the term and assume that their readers—Timothy in one case, and some specific church or group of churches in the other¹⁶—would instantly know to what commandment each author was referring.

While hypothetically by “the [holy] commandment” Peter and Paul might be referring to differing commandments, virtually by definition the “well-known” use of the Greek article implies that both are likely referring to same commandment—then famous in the milieu of some (or all) apostolic churches. Indeed, Thayer believes all three instances have a common referent (he supports the most common view of that identity), “ἡ ἐντολή, collectively, of the whole body of the moral precepts of Christianity; 1 Tim. vi.14; 2 Pet. ii.21; iii.2.”¹⁷ It is, at minimum, logical that one begin the search for the referent commandment(s) by assuming that all three instances refer to “the [same well-known] commandment.” If this assumption is correct, it should tend to be vindicated by pinpointing one commandment (or body of commandments) that plausibly fits all three contexts.

Despite Thayer’s recognition of a common referent, most interpreters implicitly, if not explicitly, seem to study the Pauline and Petrine instances separately, that is, in isolation from each other. They search the nearer or broader context for demands Paul is making on Timothy, or other evidence of fault for which Peter is accusing the false teachers who are the subject of 2 Peter 2. Yet, if the referents are identical, they may surely be analyzed together, collecting data from all three contexts. Then,

12. Donald Guthrie, *Pastoral Epistles: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP, 1990), 130. Mounce agrees on this question’s primacy (p 359).

13. Wallace, 225.

14. Commenting on 1 Timothy 6:14: Mounce, 359; italics added.

15. Wallace (p 225) offers six instances from a variety of NT literature where the article’s usage falls into the category, “well-known”: Matthew 13:55, Galatians 4:22, James 1:1, 2 John 1, 3 John 15, and Acts 2:42.

16. Under the rubric, “Destination and Audience,” D. A. Carson and D. Moo opine, “the lack of specifics led Christians in the past to classify 2 Peter as a ‘general’ or ‘catholic’ letter, it being thought that it was addressed generally to the church worldwide. But the letter suggests a definite and restricted destination”; *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2005), 663–64. Cf. Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (NYC: Doubleday, 1997), 768.

17. Joseph Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1889), s.v.

if a single hypothesis for the referent fits all three well, one may surely be more confident of its correctness than if he analyzes each letter on its own.

Furthermore, the usual exegetical strategy presumes *not* that the readers already know the identity of ‘the commandment,’ but rather that the authors expect them to infer that identity from context. Such appears to be the case in exegetical suggestions (1), (2), (5), (6) and (7) for interpreting 1 Timothy 6:14, listed above. In the case of 2 Peter 2:21, the usual approach is to define ‘the commandment’ by the expression τὴν ὁδὸν τῆς δικαιοσύνης, earlier in the verse. For example, “‘The holy commandment’ is here used in the same way as ‘the way of righteousness.’”¹⁸ In any event, the most common approaches to these instances treat the article more like “anaphoric instances” than “well-known” ones. Assuming the usages are indeed “well-known,” rather than expecting to find some sort of antecedent for “the commandment” in the immediate or broader context, it makes more sense simply to look for how it is used in the three contexts.

What Commandment?—Discerning Its Characteristics from Context

2 PETER 2:21 AND 3:1–2

“The main reason for writing [2 Peter] is the appearance of false teachers in the community (2:1–3).”¹⁹ In fact, the whole of chapter 2 is about false teachers. In 1:16–18 Peter recalls the true teaching, his apostolic testimony to the “power and coming” of Christ. Then, in 2:1ff, that authentic eyewitness testimony is contrasted with the insidious error promulgated by imposters: “But . . . there will also be false teachers among you,” and ends with two vivid metaphors likening those teachers’ behavior to that of unclean animals—pigs and dogs—returning to mire and vomit, respectively. Despite frequent interpretation of 2:21 as (only) about simple apostasy, the context leading up to v 21, vv 1–20, is about false teachers, as vv 14, 25, and 18 clearly show. If 2:21’s “turning away from the holy commandment” and abandoning the “way of righteousness,” were referring to apostasy from that ‘way,’ as many assert, why would Peter have not simply written, “it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having

known it to turn away from it,” or the like? Indeed, 3:3ff, too, warn about those who raise doubts about the return of Christ, which is also false teaching.

To be sure, the false teachers are (also) apostate, as 2:21a and 2:22 indicate. Nevertheless, the focus of the letter, like that of a previous sending (3:1), is not to win *them* back to the truth, but to warn and protect those whom they teach (3:9)—those to whom both letters have been sent—with respect to their deviant doctrine. It is the corruption of their teaching, their service *as teachers* in the church that is at the heart of Peter’s concern. As such, it seems “the holy commandment” that had been “passed on” (NRSV) or “delivered” (ESV) (παραδοθείσης) to them, but from which they have now “turned away” is presumably a command pertaining to their teaching duties, an understanding evident in Fee’s interpretive suggestions (3) and (5), above.

The verb παραδίδωμι is “a religious technical term for passing along traditions, decisions, teachings.” Here it is a commandment that is delivered to the teachers pertaining to their teaching. Since Peter labels “the commandment” “holy” or “sacred,” one may infer that Peter believes the command to be God-given. Moreover, since we are assuming the commandment of 3:2 to be the same, then the holy commandment is Jesus-given: “the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles” (ESV, 3:2). So the commandment is one given by Jesus, through the apostles, to the churches’ teachers, and it pertains to their teaching.

Furthermore, we can infer something about the commandment’s content from 2:21; the commandment is one that compels teachers to teach, “the way of righteousness,” since *by their false teaching* (contrary to that way) these teachers have “turn[ed] away from the holy commandment delivered to them.” The commandment must be an imperative from lips of Christ charging teachers to teach the way of righteousness. That commandment was formally delivered to them when they became teachers, making adherence their personal responsibility, but as Peter writes, these false teachers have now “turn[ed] away from the holy commandment delivered to them” (2:21 NASB).

1 TIMOTHY 6:14–16

Very similar to the purpose of 2 Peter, 1 Timothy’s “author is concerned [in 1:3–3:16], as he is throughout the letter, largely (but not exclusively) with the question of heresy in the church and the antidote to it.”²⁰ “This injunction [6:13–16] rounds off the whole content of the letter as solemn instruction to Timothy.”²¹ It should

18. Bauckham, 278. See also Davids, cited above.

19. Carson/Moo, 657.

20. I. Howard Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), 359; emphasis added.

21. Marshall, 661.

come as no surprise, then, that Paul would, in a section of the letter in which “true and false teachers [are] contrasted,”²² charge Timothy that he should keep the same teaching-related commandment away from which Peter declares such heretical teachers have fallen (2 Peter 2:21), and that the church to whom Peter writes (that is being troubled by them), “should remember” that same commandment (2 Peter 3:2).

1 Timothy 6:14ff reveals additional information about “the commandment”: first, the duty to keep it has an expiration date, that is, “the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” (6:14b)—something that cannot be said about most major commandments in Scripture. This is by no means trivial or coincidental. For Paul spends the next two verses heavily emphasizing Christ’s sovereignty over the date of his return.

Finally, there is a notable difference between the way in which Peter urges the church to whom he writes to respond to “the commandment,” over against the way Paul urges Timothy to do so. Peter explains his purpose in this (and also a prior) letter is to

“sti[r] up your sincere mind ... *that you should remember* ... the commandment”

Paul writes: “I charge you ... *that you keep* the commandment”

An Apostle urges the members of a church (merely) to remember “the commandment,” but another (calling God and Christ as witnesses) binds Timothy actually to keep it. So, for Timothy, the commandment is duty, for ordinary church members, it is important to remember, but they are not personally bound to it as duty. Furthermore, it had been ‘delivered’ to the (now) false teachers—presumably at ordination—who have since forsaken it.

Here is a list of characteristics about this commandment deduced from the two letters that refer to it. It,

1. imposes a duty on teachers to teach “the way of righteousness”
2. originated as a command given by Jesus to his Apostles
3. is important to other members of the church, but they are not personally bound to keep it
4. was very well known, at least in the Apostolic churches

5. was formally delivered to the churches’ teachers when they became teachers, thereby making adherence their personal responsibility

6. remains binding upon the churches’ teachers until Christ returns

What Commandment?

—Searching the Gospels and Acts

As a well-known commandment of the Lord Jesus—known both to Peter and his readers and to Paul and his (Timothy/Ephesian churches)—one might expect it to have made its way into the canonical Gospels. Only two places in Matthew through Acts record such imperatives coming from the lips of the Lord (cf. 2 Peter 3:2) and commanding those charged to give instruction: Matthew 28:19–20 and Mark 16:15–16. The latter appears in the Majority Text, but is rejected as spurious by critical texts such as Nestle-Aland (NA). However, even if one accepts the Majority Text’s longer ending for Mark, the imperative in Mark is κηρύξαιτε (‘preach’ or ‘proclaim’); of the two, only Matthew 28:19f explicitly mentions “teaching” (διδάσκοντες), a participle carrying imperatival force from the command, “make disciples (μαθητεύσατε).”²³ Hence the TEV reasonably renders the participles as imperatives in vv 19–20 “baptize!” and “teach!”:

Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age.

In short, Matthew 28:19–20 records Jesus commanding his Apostles to teach everything he had commanded them previously. As such, the verses commonly labeled “the Great Commission” are the better candidate for the referent of τῆ ἐντολή.

1. Moreover, the Great Commission manifests or is consonant with all 6 characteristics found above to be present in “the commandment” of 2 Peter 2 and 3, and 1 Timothy 6:

22. 1 Tim 6:2b–21a. Marshall, x.

23. “The commission itself is given by means of one main imperative verb, μαθητεύσατε, “make disciples,” together with three syntactically subordinate participles that take on an imperatival force ... because of the main verb”; Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14–28* (Dallas: Word, 1995), 886.

2. Clearly, the Great Commission imposes a duty on teachers to teach “the way of righteousness,” since it requires those bound by it to teach disciples “to obey everything [Jesus] ha[s] commanded” (NIV). “V. 20 interprets Jesus as the authoritative bringer of revelation: he brings the *nova lex* ... which embraces the *antiqua lex*: [Mat]5:17–20; cf. Eusebius, *Dem[onstratio] Ev[angelica]* 24c.”²⁴ “‘Righteousness’ for Matthew finds its final and authoritative definition in the teaching of Jesus, who is the *one* teacher (23:8, 10).” According to Matthew’s Gospel that is a “righteousness that surpasses *that* of the scribes and Pharisees” (Mat 5:20).

3. As presented in Matthew 28, the command of vv 19–20 originated as a command given by Jesus to his Apostles: “the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, ... And Jesus came up and spoke to them” (Mat 28:16, 18).

4. As recorded in Matthew, the Great Commission was delivered to the eleven living Apostles of Christ. It is obviously important to the churches to keep *in mind*, since it is by its teachers keeping it that the church will be built and its members will be discipled and saved (cf. 1 Tim 4:16; Jas 1:21), but the Apostles alone were *personally* commanded to “keep” it in practice.

5. That the Great Commission was well known in the Apostolic churches is apparent from Pentecost day. Putting aside Mark 16, Matthew 28 reports the only recorded institution of Christian baptism by Christ in the New Testament, and according to the record of Acts 2, all 12 Apostles of Christ were involved in the baptism of 3000 people on that first day alone (vv 42–43). Furthermore, according to Acts 8, they remained in Jerusalem even when most of the Jerusalem church was scattered following the martyrdom of Stephen. The evidence of admission to the church being by

baptism (“... were baptized, there were added”), beginning from Pentecost, is best accounted for by the Great Commission having been well known and practiced by all the Apostles, from the very beginning of the church. According to Acts 2, they did exactly what Jesus had (recently) charged them to do: the Apostles made disciples by baptizing (v 41) and then teaching (v 42).

6. That the duties of teachers are not inherent in simply being a Christian is evidenced in the warning of James 3:1, since it is only the teachers who “will incur a stricter judgment,” presumably pertaining to how they have carried out those duties. Jesus personally bound his eleven Apostles to obey the Great Commission, but subsequent teachers are bound to it upon their ordination. Timothy is a good example: “by the laying on of hands by the presbytery” (1 Tim 4:14b), Timothy received a gift (χάρισμα). “What is surely meant is the spiritual gift to enable Timothy to perform his specific task in the church.”²⁵ That task clearly involves teaching, and other forms of oral instruction (1 Tim 4:15–16; 2 Tim 4:1–3).

7. The expiration date on “the commandment,” namely, “the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,” is implied in the Great Commission, since Matthew 28:20 concludes with, ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος (until the end of the age). Even though the prepositional phrase is generally construed with nearest finite verb, εἰμι (I am), rather than directly modifying, and hence limiting, the imperatival μαθητεύσατε (make disciples), several considerations indicate that it implicitly also limits the earlier verb: (A) “In context,” the function of the promise of the presence of Christ is to assure “the successful completion of the mission.”²⁶ Thus, the promise of the presence of Christ until the end of the age, i.e. the return of Christ (cf. Mat 24:3) implies the (successful) end of the mission. “The time for the disciples to act in Jesus’ stead is bounded on one side by the commission of the resurrected Jesus and on the other side by his final eschatological role.”²⁷ (B) If the effective force of the phrase is truly to modify the promise of the presence of Christ with his church, why would he imply that he will no longer be present with them after he returns. Thus, the phrase is effectively to be understood as modifying the imperatival, “make disciples.”

24. W.D. Davies, and D.C. Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, Vol. III (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 686, fn 48.

25. Marshall, 564–65.

26. R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 1119.

27. John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 1271. Matthew 24:3 reads, “what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age (αἰῶνος),” effectively identifying the latter with the former; see Nolland, 961.

To summarize, the three references to “the commandment,” two in 2 Peter and 1 in 1 Timothy, are all to what we call “the Great Commission.” Apparently, to the apostolic churches it was well known simply as “the commandment.”

A ‘loose end’ remains with identifying “the commandment” of 2 Peter 3:2 with the Great Commission, that is, the meaning of 2 Peter 3:2’s expression, τῶν προειρημένων ῥημάτων ὑπὸ τῶν ἁγίων προφητῶν (lit. the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets). On the face of things, v 2 declares this and a previous letter to have as their identical purpose provoking the recipient church to remember two things:

that you should remember [1] the predictions of the holy prophets and [2] the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, (ESV)

However, the problem is solved if one recalls that, according to Luke 24:46–47, Jesus taught that the (Old Testament) Scriptures predicted not only “that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead” (prophecies already fulfilled as Jesus spoke), but “that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations.” Nolland opines, “this activity too has been anticipated in the Scriptures (cf. Acts 13:47; 15:15–18).”²⁸ In other words, what the OT predicted was to be fulfilled by obedience to “the commandment.”²⁹ What else can we learn about its role in the churches of the first century A.D.?

The Role of “The Commandment” in the Apostolic Churches

The fact that the Great Commission came to be so well known as to be distinguished from other commandments merely by a preceding definite article highlights its centrality in the life of the churches of the first century A.D. The commandment was “delivered” to new teachers, presumably at their ordination through the laying on of hands by other elders, empowering and compelling them to make disciples of others by the dual means of baptizing and teaching. What was previously the duty of others, going back to the apostles, becomes the work and mission of the newly ordained teacher. Members of a church vexed by teachers who were no longer teaching the true message, were repeatedly reminded by Peter to take the commandment to heart, presumably as he sought to have them replace the apostate, false teachers with faithful ones. Similarly, Paul ‘re-charges’ Timothy, whom he had previously

ordained, to keep the commandment as he, too, deals with false teachers (1 Tim 1:3–7), disciplining them as needed (5:19–20), and replacing them with qualified ones (1 Tim 3:1–7; 5:22). It would seem that what we call the Great Commission was the heart of the ordination vows taken by new teachers, committing themselves to keep the commandment Christ had personally imposed upon the church’s 12 original teachers. Out of respect to the (normative) example of Christ and his Apostles, churches today ought to consider modifying their ordination vows so as to give Matthew 28:19–20 the same central role it had in defining the duties, work and authority both for the Apostles and for those whom they ordained to disciple the nations.

On a final note, the teaching of the Westminster Confession of Faith that those being baptized are “to be baptized, ... by a minister of the Gospel, lawfully called thereunto” (28.2), is supported not only by Matthew 28:19 and 20, both given by the assembly as proof texts, but also by the import of that commandment evident in the foregoing exegesis of “the commandment” in 1 Timothy and 2 Peter. It is in ordination to the ministry that both the duty and the authority to make disciples is personalized to the ordinand. ■

28. John Nolland, *Luke 18:35–24:53* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993), 1244.

29. Peter seems to show an awareness of this understanding of OT prophecies in 1 Peter 1:10–12.

In Brief: James Ussher, The Infallible Marks of a True Visible Church.

What are the marks and infallible notes, whereby to discern a true visible Church with which we may safely join?

First, and principally, the truth of doctrine which is professed, and the sincere preaching of the Word, together with the due administration of the sacraments, according to the commandments of Christ our Saviour (Matt. 28:19, 20).

Secondarily, the right order which is kept, with sincere and conscionable obedience yielded to the Word of God.

Why do you make the first to be the principal mark of visible profession?

Because they are the only outward means appointed of God for the calling and gathering of His Saints, and which prove the Church to be a pillar of truth (1 Tim. 3:15).

Can the Church want this, and yet be a Church?

Yea; it may want these in the time of war or persecution; and in such a time we may safely join ourselves to a company which allows of the public ministry of the Word of God, and administration of the sacraments; howsoever the exercise of the same by reason of these garboils [turmoils] are wanting for a time.

Are we to join with all Churches that have these marks?

Yea; neither must we separate from them any farther then they separate from Christ (Phil. 1:18; Song of Sol. 1:5), as shall be shown.

What say you to the other notes that are commonly given of the Church?

Either they are accidental, and in great part separable, or utterly impertinent and forged, for the upholding of the Romish synagogue.

But is not antiquity a certain note of the Church?

No; for errors are very ancient, and the Church when it began, was a Church; yet had no antiquity.

Is not multitude a note?

No; for Christ's flock is a little flock (Luke 12:32), and Antichrist very great (Rev. 13:4, 8; 18:3).

Are not miracles a mark of the Church?

No; for beside that wicked people may work them (Matt. 7:22, 23), the Church of Christ hath been without miracles, and the coming of Antichrist is foretold to be with all power, and signs, and lying wonders (2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:13, 14). Such as those are whereof the Papiests brag and boast of, which are indeed no true miracles.

Whether the Church may err.

May the Church err and be corrupted, or fall, and become no Church?

First, we must distinguish of errors: some are fundamental, such as raze the foundation of the Church (as the denying that Christ came in the flesh, or the denying of the resurrection) and in these the Church cannot err; others are of less moment, and in these it may ere.

Secondly, the Catholic Church, considered in her true

members, can never utterly fall (Matt. 16:18; Psalm 1:6; 1 Thess. 5:24). Howsoever no Congregation be so pure, that it may be said at any time to be free from all corruption (Song of Sol. 1:4), or so constant, but that at times it may be shaken in the very foundation of truth, as it may appear by the Church of Corinth, Galatia, etc. (1 Cor. 15:12, 13; Gal. 3:1).

Thirdly, the Church being considered with respect of the place, God doth not always continue a succession of true believers within the same limits and borders; and hence we say, that divers Churches are fallen, as those of Asia, etc. Neither is any place so privileged, but that for sin the candlestick may in time be thence removed (Rev. 2:5).

How may we judge of a Church corrupt, or ceasing to be a Church?

Where God utterly taking away the means of His Word and Worship (Acts 13:46), hath apparently given the bill of divorce (Isa. 50:1), there are we not to acknowledge any Church at all, as at this day in Jerusalem, once the holy city: But where these means are yet continued, we are to acknowledge a Church of Christ (Rev. 2:12, 13), howsoever more or less corrupt, according to the greater or less abuse of God's Word and Worship.

In what cases we may separate from a corrupt Church

Since Churches may be so diversely corrupted, from which, and how far are we to separate?

From Churches mortally sick of heresy (Titus 3:10, 11), or idolatry, as it were a contagious plague or leprosy, we are to separate (Rev. 18:4). Howbeit whiles there is yet any life, rather from the scab or sore then from the body; that is, from the prevailing faction, maintaining fundamental errors, and forcing to idolatrous worship: Such is our separation from the present Church of Rome, not from such therein, who either meaning well in general, are ignorant of the depth of Satan (Rev. 2:24), or secretly dissent from the damnable corruptions (1 Kings 19:18), with whom, as a body yet retaining life, we desire to join (Phil. 1:18), so far as we may with safety from the foresaid contagion.

Are we to continue fellowship with all other Churches, not so deadly and dangerously corrupt?

From Churches holding the foundation in substance of faith and worship, though otherwise not free from blemish, we are not to separate (1 Kings 15:14, 22:43), farther than in dislike and refusal of that wherein they do apparently separate from Christ, in respect either of manners, doctrine, or form of public worship.

James Ussher, *A Body of Divinitie* (1645), 397–398, text modernized. *A Body of Divinity* is unquestionably Ussher's work. See Harrison Perkins, "Manuscript and Material Evidence for James Ussher's Authorship of *A Body of Divinitie* (1645)," *Evangelical Quarterly* 89.2 (2018): 133–161, and extensive new evidence is forthcoming in Harrison Perkins (ed.), *James Ussher's Theological Manuscripts: Critical Texts and Commentary* (Reformed Historical Theology Series; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, forthcoming). ■

David Dickson's *Sermons on Jeremiah's Lamentations* (1628)

By Matthew A. Vogan

A fresh publication of a rare book by an eminent writer often generates considerable interest. A new edition gives another lease of life to a volume that has been out of print for a long time. David Dickson's *Sermons on Jeremiah's Lamentations* were, in fact, never published. Instead, they were carefully recorded at the time of preaching by an attentive parishioner. Few have had access to them over the years. Eventually, they passed out of private hands into the special collections of the University of Glasgow Library. They were transcribed in 2017–18 and have now been prepared for publication.¹

In this rare volume, we witness Dickson's application of Scripture to a turbulent domestic and international context. It is remarkable that these expositions are being published in a year when the entire world has been afflicted by the highly contagious coronavirus for which there is, currently, no known cure or vaccine. This crisis has witnessed not only disease but large numbers of deaths and also created economic and social upheaval. Uniquely also, churches have been closed for public worship. These unprecedented circumstances have drawn some to the book of Lamentations which has often seemed remote to the Western experience of prosperity and peace.

There had been warning signs for Judah, such as the exile of the northern kingdom. But as Dickson observes, where we have not responded to lighter chastisements, heavier strokes must be applied, especially where we have received greater light and knowledge.

If God were not doing the same things from age to age, which we hear is done to the kirk, men would think it incredible. But seeing the like things are executed from age to age when His kirk provokes Him, we have reason to credit these things the better, and we have to look if this odd [*extraordinary*] stroke which lighted [*fell*] upon the kirk of the Jews make us not wise to turn to God,

[else] that we shall find the proof of the like or heavier strokes in our own experience, seeing these things are written for our learning [Rom. 15:4]. But rather, look for the like stroke to come upon this land, for we are so sleepy and secure that nothing but a heavy stroke will awaken us. Frequent telling of judgment avails not. Gentle visitations on our children, goods, and persons avails not. But [we are] as those who are overtaken with sleepiness, touched by any[one], gliffens [*glances*] up a little, but incontinent falls asleep again. Therefore, God will visit with heavy judgments. Let him that has an ear hear. We cannot set a time. But be sure that God will do all to us that He has done to His kirk in former times, and will strike with heavier judgments, seeing our light has been clearer than others' [light] has been (p. 256).

Jeremiah had also warned, but they would not pay any heed, and now he must describe in sorrowful detail

THE AUTHOR: Matthew A. Vogan. Mr. Vogan is General Manager at Reformation Scotland and lives near Edinburgh, Scotland. He is the author/editor of two volumes on Samuel Rutherford and contributes articles to a variety of Reformed publications. This article derives from the introduction providing the historical background on David Dickson, his times and the content of the *Sermons on Jeremiah's Lamentations* (Naphtali Press and Reformation Heritage Books, 2020). These sermons are published as the third title in the 2019–2020 new book series, Naphtali Press Special Editions, and page references are to the contents in that volume. To this material has been added an extensive bibliography by the same author.

1. ["Sermons upon Jeremiahs Lamentationes gathered from Master David Dicksons Mouth by one of his hearers: from the beginning to the end thereof" Glasgow University Library, Special Collections, GB 247 MS Gen 3. Sermons of David Dickson. The manuscript (MS) is either a refined or "fair copy" of notes taken "in situ" or a copy of such a fair copy. Dickson writes in the preface to his 1635 sermons on Hebrews that his hearers were sharing copies of his sermons from their own notes (see *On Hebrews*, p. v). An initial draft transcription of the whole text was made from this manuscript by Joanna Gillies. The draft was collated again with the original via photographs and significantly corrected, revised and edited for publication by Chris Coldwell.]

“the desolation of God’s kirk which they would never believe was to come” (p. 266). The desperate situation of Jerusalem involved devastation, severe famine, and the destruction of the temple.

To use Dickson’s own striking phrase, “the Lord has cast this book in our hand to make use of it” (p. 45). It is written for the kirk’s edification in all ages, and its teaching is “very necessary (p. 47). It shows how God chastises a church that has departed from Him in large measure and how to turn back to Him. The temporary removal of the whole system of the ceremonial law caused the greatest grief to Jeremiah, and Dickson argues that the afflictions of the Church should also cause us greatest sorrow. But he also notes how Lamentations gives those with such heavy hearts words with which to sorrow in hope.

It is not only remarkable that expositions of such appropriate truths should come to light at such a time as this but that they also come from such a remarkable expositor. Dickson’s commentaries have been valued for their concise insight and application. The same features marked his preaching. David Dickson’s outstanding pulpit ministry was accompanied by revival and a large number of conversions over an extended period. People flocked from both local and more distant

districts to hear him preach. Who was David Dickson, why was he so popular, and why is this set of sermons such a significant discovery?

DICKSON’S EARLY LIFE AND MINISTRY

David Dickson (c. 1583–1662) was one of the most significant ministers and theologians of the Second Reformation period in Scotland. He played a leading role in the events surrounding the signing of the national covenant and the Glasgow Assembly in 1638. A professor of theology at both Edinburgh and Glasgow, he published the first commentary on the Westminster Confession of Faith.² He also produced and inspired many commentaries on Scripture.

John Livingstone describes him as “a man singularly gifted with an edifying way of preaching, and whose painful labours were eminently blessed with success. . . . He made great help at the Reformation 1638, and thereafter some books, printed both in Latin and English, declare in part what a man he was. . . .”³ The eighteenth-century historian and minister Robert Wodrow reports that Livingstone was once asked, “whom he took to be the greatest Gospel Minister in all Scotland. He said he thought Mr. Dickson was the greatest he ever knew.”⁴ Wodrow himself reckoned that “if ever a Scots biography and the lives of our eminent ministers and Christians be published, he will shine there as a star of the first magnitude.”⁵

Dickson was born in Glasgow, the only son of John Dick or Dickson, a wealthy and devout Glaswegian merchant.⁶ His parents were childless for several years after they married and made this a matter of prayer by themselves and with others. They vowed solemnly that if their prayers were answered with a son, they would devote him to the Lord’s service in the church. After a while, their prayers were answered, and David Dickson was born. He was sent to grammar school to learn Latin, but the vow was forgotten. Robert Wodrow records the consequences:

[T]hey sent him away to the sea to be a merchant; but he suffered great losses at sea, so that he was like to bring his parents to a very low condition.⁷ Yet they could not impute this to the youth’s mismanagement, for he was very sober. And then they began to bethink themselves what this sad outward loss at sea might really mean; and then they began to consider that they had broken their solemn vow to God: And so they took him from the sea, and sent him to the College, where he made great proficiency.⁸

2. “Caputi confessionis fidei de Scriptura continet articulos decem assortmentes 33 theses controversas,” translated by George Sinclair and published as *Truths Victory over Error* (Edinburgh, 1684). It was reprinted on various occasions and is currently published by The Banner of Truth Trust.

3. W. K. Tweedie, *Select Biographies, Edited for the Wodrow Society*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: Printed for the Wodrow Society, 1845, 1847), 1.316. Antiquated spellings in quotations in this Introduction have been modernized without notice.

4. Robert Wodrow, *Analecta: Or Materials For A History Of Remarkable Providences Mostly Relating To Scotch Ministers And Christians*, 4 vols. (1842–1843) 3.8–9.

5. *Select Biographies*, 2.5.

6. *Select Biographies*, 2.5–28. *Analecta*, 3.2–12. *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae; the Succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation*, edited by Hew Scott, volume 1, new edition (1915), 1.64–5; 3.98. *The Records of the Commissions of the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland*, ed. A. F. Mitchell and J. Christie, 3 vols., Scottish History Society 11, 25, 58 (1892–1909). *Register of the Consultations of the Ministers of Edinburgh*, 2 vols., ed. W. Stephen, Scottish History Society, 3rd ser., 1, 16 (1921–30). *Records of the Kirk of Scotland*, ed. A. Peterkin (1838). D. Stevenson, *The Scottish Revolution, 1637–44: The Triumph of the Covenanters* (1973). *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie*, ed. D. Laing, 3 vols. (1841–2). D. Calderwood, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, ed. T. Thomson and D. Laing, 8 vols., Wodrow Society (Edinburgh: for the Wodrow Society, 1842–9). *The Historical Works of Sir James Balfour*, ed. J. Haig, 4 vols. (1824–5).

7. Wodrow records elsewhere that he lost “several thousands” of his father’s money.

8. *Analecta*, 3.2.

It seems that it was about this time that David Dickson also came under concern of soul. His experience seems to have given him a lifelong concern and sympathy for those with spiritual trials, particularly in relation to salvation and assurance. Wodrow records an oral account of this:

Mr Dickson was much exercised when he was young, and went to several Ministers and Christians and discoursed with them; and used to say, when he was going to believe in Christ, he saw an army of Devils standing between him and Christ; and never a person satisfied him till he came to that great and worthy person, the Laird of Carleton, John Cathcart; and the expression he had to Mr Dickson was this, "Though you heard a voice from heaven saying to you, 'Mr David Dickson, see that ye believe not on my Son, Jesus Christ,' you are not to regard it, for you have the written word to warrant you to believe; for if we or an angel from [heaven] preach another Gospel than that you have received, let him be accursed!"⁹

After graduating MA from the University of Glasgow, Dickson taught there as a regent or professor of philosophy for eight years. On 31 March 1618, he was ordained minister of Irvine, Ayrshire. During the first decades of the seventeenth century, King James VI (and I of England) was determined to bring greater conformity between the Church of England and the Church of Scotland. Bishops were introduced, and a greater degree of ceremony. This did not cause any great concern to Dickson at first and it seems he was relatively comfortable with the situation.

The year Dickson had been ordained was the very year that some of the most significant changes were forced on the Church of Scotland. A General Assembly was held in Perth in August of that year, and under manipulation and compulsion from the king, the Five Articles of Perth were passed. These introduced the Roman Catholic sacrament of episcopal confirmation that had been explicitly rejected by the Scottish National Covenant (King's or Negative Confession) of 1580–1. It was required that the Lord's Supper should be received in a kneeling posture, something that the Scottish Church had always regarded as giving idolatrous reverence to the elements. Private baptism and communion were also instituted, as well as the festivals that the Church of Scotland had excluded at the Reformation: Christmas, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost.

PREACHING IN A TIME OF PERSECUTION

Within a year or so of having begun his ministry, Dickson became seriously ill with fever. At this time, he was, as Wodrow puts it, brought to see the "evil of prelacy."¹⁰ In 1621 Dickson himself said that since the Perth Assembly of August 1618, he had been "considering the controversies of our kirk, as the Lord had enabled him; and found, that with a good conscience he could not obey these injunctions."¹¹

Dickson began to speak out publicly against the Articles and to join with others in resisting them. He later describes them as the yoke of popish ceremonies being imposed on his ministry, and no doubt this was the drift of his remarks. He was known for this by October 1620 when he was one of seven on a "leit" [list] of potential ministers to be called to a vacant charge in Edinburgh. Dickson's position as a nonconformist was clear when enquiries were made.¹²

In 1621 the Articles were ratified by the Scottish Parliament, but not without significant opposition. Ministers from around the country gathered in Edinburgh while the Parliament was in session. When they were then banished from the city by royal decree, the ministers convened at a large house near Edinburgh called the Sheens and engaged in prayer together. Wodrow records that "they were all the time greatly straitened [*inhibited*] in prayer till once the Articles of Perth were ratified." After a while, Dickson, a young man, was asked to lead in prayer.

[H]e prayed with great liberty and enlargement of spirit; showing in prayer his great faith and assurance of God's dispersing that black cloud, and that he would once more gloriously appear in his [] ([])

9. *Analecta*, 3.11. John Cathcart of Carleton (1540–1612) was a leading supporter of the Reformation. He built the castle of Killochan near Girvan, Ayrshire.

10. Wodrow, *Analecta*, 3.9. The experience of Robert Blair (almost the same age as Dickson) is comparable. Robert Blair tells us that there was "little controversy in religion in the Kirk of Scotland" before the Articles of Perth. "Though there were bishops, yet they took little upon them, and so were very little opposed until Perth Assembly." In this sense, James over-reached himself with the Articles. Blair was still relatively young at this time and had not investigated matters of church government deeply. The abuses carried out at the Perth Assembly to ensure that they were passed hardened him against Episcopalianism. *The Life of Mr. Robert Blair, minister of St. Andrews, containing his autobiography, from 1593–1636: with supplement of his life and continuation of the history of the times, to 1680 by his Son-in-Law, Mr. William Row*, ed. Thomas M'Creie, D. D. (Edinburgh: for the Wodrow Society, [1848]), 12.

11. Calderwood, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, 7532.

12. Calderwood, *ibid.*, 7.448.

present,) told Mr James Rouat, Minister at Kilmarnock, who told it me, that when Mr Dickson had prayed, they were all as sure of a glorious delivery as if they had it in their hand.¹³

Samuel Rutherford later spoke of David Dickson as one that “both prayeth and doeth for our dying kirk.”¹⁴ Dickson was going to be required to add suffering to his prayers and actions. During the period 1618–1625, forty-three ministers were summoned for nonconformity, and of these thirty were imprisoned, confined, deprived or suspended. This draconian approach proved ultimately to be counter-productive. The more that the authorities proceeded against the ministers, the more such proceedings were publicised and the more it became difficult to impose effective sanctions in the face of growing public opinion. The reign of Charles I would witness further similar actions.

On 8 June 1620, an act of the Privy Council was passed for “a proclamation for keeping the acts of the last Assemblies of the Kirk,” in which every minister who violates the said acts, it is stated, does so under the pain of being “called and convened before the Lords and others of the High Commission, and other ordinary judges of the kirk, and to be punished by deprivation, suspension, confining, and warding, at the discretion of the said judges of the Kirk.”¹⁵ Now, in 1621, with the weight of legislation behind the king’s agenda, the net was closing around those who resisted. About the end of October, Spottiswoode (Bishop of St Andrews) intimated that he had received a letter from the king. It gave instructions that all ministers, readers and schoolmasters without exception, must conform to the Articles of Perth or be deposed. John Murray, minister of Dunfermline, and John Row of Carnock were confined.

13. *Analecta*, 3.11–12. The bracketed spaces for missing words are original.

14. Letter XXII to John Kennedy dated Feb. 2, 1632, in *Letters of Samuel Rutherford*, ed. Andrew A. Bonar (Edinburgh, 1891).

15. The High Commission was a court established in 1610 specifically for dealing with nonconformists. It was, of course, a civil court and not ecclesiastical, despite being composed largely of bishops. Some people referred to it as the Scottish Inquisition, and this comparison was not entirely hyperbolic. Its powers were not limited by law, and it was not answerable to parliament or any other public body. “This commission,” says David Calderwood, “and execution thereof, as it exalted the aspiring bishops far above any prelate that ever was in Scotland, so it put the king in possession of that which he had long time hunted for; to wit, of the royal prerogative, and absolute power to use the bodies and goods of the subjects at pleasure, without form of process of the common law.” Calderwood, *History*, 762.

16. Calderwood, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, 7531.

17. Calderwood, *ibid.*, 7532.

It was therefore clear what was awaiting Dickson when he encountered the Bishop of Glasgow while in that city on 6 December 1621. The bishop showed Dickson a letter from the king instructing him to put Dickson and others on trial. This was “not only because they had not embraced the ceremonies, but also because they had done what they could to hinder the enacting of the articles of Perth Assembly at the parliament.”¹⁶ The bishop said that he was “loathe to trouble [Dickson] because he was diligent in his ministry,” but that Dickson would be deposed if he did not conform. David Dickson responded: “If ye will trouble me, I trust in God I shall have peace in my suffering.” The bishop wanted to know his reasons for opposing the Articles of Perth. He referred to Dickson’s time teaching philosophy at Glasgow. “I wonder that one whom I know to understand reason ... should have taken such a course as ye have done.” Dickson responded with a robust defence of the regulative principle of worship. He said, “whatsoever is imposed upon the flock of Christ, universally, solemnly, and ordinarily, to be done in and about the worship of God, and may not be left undone, behoveth either to have a known and sufficient reason for the injunction of it, or else, lawfully a man may refuse to give obedience.”¹⁷

Dickson’s parting words to the bishop were that he “was ready, by the grace of God, to suffer what flesh and blood could do to him.” The citation to the High Commission was certain to come; it was only a matter of time. On 2 January 1622, while Dickson was engaged in prayer and fasting with others in relation to this prospect, the summons arrived. The bishop’s page delivered the message in person. Dickson was called to appear before the High Commission in Edinburgh on 9 January. It seemed as though the date had been set to prevent the ministers summoned from having a last Lord’s Day in the pulpit. They would have to begin their journey before then.

Dickson preached in Irvine the day after receiving the summons. His first sermon at Irvine had been on 2 Corinthians 5:11, “Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.” Calderwood says, “It was ever his earnest desire since that time, that before it pleased the Lord to remove him, either by death or otherwise, it might please His majesty to enable him to teach the other half of the verse.” The remainder of the verse is, “But we are made manifest unto God.” His sermon on this text was accompanied by “extraordinary power and singular movings of emotions.” Evidently, there was a significant bond between pastor and congregation.

During the whole time of the sermon, there was weeping and lamentation: scarce one within the doors could hold up their heads. That whole day, the women were going up and down the kirk-yard, and under stairs, greeting [*crying*], as if their husbands had been newly buried.¹⁸

The next morning Dickson set off on horseback accompanied with the same degree of weeping. The town authorities and others sent representatives with a supplication subscribed by most citizens "bearing testimony to his faithful labours and holy conversation; and, consequently, to let the Commission see how injurious they would be to God and their souls if they removed him." Initially, it seemed that this overture had some impression on the bishops, but ultimately it was ignored. When they broke their journey at Linlithgow, a message came from the bishop of Glasgow that Dickson could remain in his parish if he would request to continue until he came to clearer conclusions on the matter at stake. If Dickson continued obstinate, he would be banished to over a hundred miles distance. Dickson sent back the response that while he desired to remain with his flock, he could not pretend to be unclear since he was "fully resolved in that matter."¹⁹

Dickson declined (refused to acknowledge the authority of) the jurisdiction of the High Commission court since he was being tried in relation to a purely ecclesiastical matter. The Archbishop of St Andrews attacked him, saying, "ye are led by the spirit of the devil; there is more pride in you, I dare say, than in all the bishops of Scotland. I hanged a Jesuit in Glasgow for the like fault" (presumably referring to John Ogilvie, who was hanged for treason in 1615). Speaking to the men of Irvine, Spottiswoode called Dickson "a schismatic, an Anabaptist, one that had misled them, and filled them with fantasy." He continued with more invective towards Dickson directly accusing him of pride and rebellion. Dickson responded, "I have been eight years a regent in the College of Glasgow, and four years a minister: these amongst whom I have lived knows I am not the man ye call me. Say to my person what ye please; by God's grace it shall not touch me."²⁰

Enduring the reality of slander against one's person is a form of suffering that must not be underestimated, and Dickson is conscious of this. Christ says, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake." Dickson later commented on these words:

[1.] Reviling or speaking any manner of evil against Christ's servants is, in our Lord's estimation, persecution, for so he expounds it, saying, when men revile you and persecute you.

[2.] Christians must beware to give just ground for troubling of themselves, for that is not persecution when ill is spoken against men truly and justly, but when ill is spoken against them falsely, and for Christ's cause. Therefore Christ says, Blessed are ye when they speak ill of you falsely for my sake...²¹

Dickson goes on to write, "Whosoever endures any trouble, were it but so much as evil words for Christ's cause, he shall be enrolled among the martyrs and holy prophets, who from the beginning of the world have suffered for righteousness. This is our Lord's reckoning, saying, "For so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

He was sentenced to be removed from his parish the day immediately following the trial and confined to Turriff, Aberdeenshire. "The will of the Lord be done," said Dickson. "Though ye cast me off, yet the Lord will take me up. Send me where ye please. I hope my Master shall go with me; and as he hath been with me heretofore, he will be with me still, as with his own weak servant." Dickson had liberty to preach, but the ground was not so fertile spiritually. He found greater difficulty in getting his sermons prepared at Turriff compared to Irvine. He "used to say that the devils in the north were much worse than the devils in the west; for, studying one day would have served him at Irvine, but he would take two days studying for preaching at Turriff."²²

Many representations were made to bring him back to his charge again, but Dickson would not do anything that would involve compromise and eventually came back to his parish after eighteen months without any conditions. He was permitted to return to Irvine at the end of July 1623.²³ It evidently did not hinder him from continuing to criticise the agenda pursued by the king and bishops. In these sermons on Lamentations (preached in 1628), he breaks out, "What schisms and

18. Calderwood, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, 7532.

19. Calderwood, *ibid.*, 7533.

20. Calderwood, *ibid.*, 7540.

21. David Dickson, *A Brief Exposition of ... According to Matthew* (1651), 43.

22. *Analec̄ta*, 3.3. Calderwood, *ibid.*, 7540.

23. K. D. Holfelder, 'Dickson, David (c.1583–1662)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com.nls.idm.oclc.org/view/article/7614, accessed 16 Nov 2017].

errors are creeping in our kirk—things adjured and cast out, taken in again?”²⁴

PREACHING IN A TIME OF REVIVAL

Revival had already begun in the district in the parish of Stewarton, which was not far from Irvine.²⁵ Robert Blair, who went to Ulster about the time that Dickson returned to Irvine, records that he was involved in this revival, having been invited to preach in the pulpit by the minister of the parish, William Castlelaw. It was a place says Blair, “where the Lord had a great work in converting many. Numbers of them were at first under great terrors and deep exercise of conscience, and thereafter attained to sweet peace and strong consolation. I preached often to them in time of the college vacation, residing at the house of that famous saint the Lady Robertland, and had much conference with them, and profited more by them than I think they did by me; though ignorant people, and proud secure livers, called them the daft people of Stewarton.”²⁶

Mr Robert Boyd . . . came from his house in Carrick to meet with them; and having conferred with them, both men and women, he heartily blessed God for the grace of God in them. The Countess of Eglinton did much countenance them, and persuaded her noble lord to spare his hunting and hawking some days, to confer with some of them whom she had sent for to that effect. His lordship, after conference with them, protested he never spoke with the like of them; he wondered at the wisdom they manifested in their speech. As many of them as were able to travel went to the Monday market of Irvine with some little commodities such as they had; but their chief intention was to hear the lecture that ended before the market began, and by their example many of that parish (their minister encouraging them to it) and out of other parishes went thither, whereby the power of religion was spread over that part of the country. I bless the Lord that ever I was acquainted with that people, and for the help I

had by interchanging letters with blessed Mr Dickson after he left the college.²⁷

From references given by Robert Fleming and Robert Wodrow, this revival seems to have been at its height in the years 1624–25, though it lasted for some years. Wodrow records that Dickson “had for several years great and wonderful success, especially about 1624, as to a great work of conversion, more than he had at any place he was in afterward, either Glasgow or Edinburgh.”²⁸

This seal upon the ministry of David Dickson seems to be a signal instance of the principle: “Them that honor me, I will honor” (1 Samuel 2:30). People under soul concern flocked to his house after the sermon. On Monday, the Church was even more full than the Sabbath as people from the district came to hear his expositions. Others moved to Irvine from as far away as England to be under Dickson’s ministry. “They came to Irvine from all places of the land, yea even from England. There he opened up the Covenant of Redemption more clearly and distinctly than any that had gone before him.²⁹ He was made use of as a great instrument in a work of conversion in Stewarton, among the people there, which was called by the wicked of that time, and profane, “the Stewarton sickness;” and they said to me, that blessed work was carried on and much cherished by Christians meeting frequently for prayer and mutual Christian conference.”³⁰

Robert Fleming also describes the development of the revival:

This was by the profane rabble of that time, was called the Stewarton sickness, for in that parish first, but after through much of that country, particularly at Irvine, under the ministry of Mr Dickson, it was remarkable; where it can be said, (which divers ministers and Christians yet alive can witness) that for a considerable time, few Sabbaths did pass without some evidently converted, or some convincing proofs of the power of God accompanying his word; yea, that many were so choked and taken by the heart, that, through terror, the Spirit in such a measure convincing them of sin, in hearing of the word, they have been made to fall over, and thus carried out of the church; who after proved most solid and lively Christians. And, as it was known, some of the most gross, who used to mock at religion, being engaged upon the fame that went abroad of such things, to go to some of these parts where the gospel was then most lively, have been effectually reached before their return, with a visible change following the same. And truly this great spring-tide (as I may call it) of the gospel,

24. See page 51.

25. *The Life of Mr. Robert Blair*, 19.

26. *The Life of Mr. Robert Blair* 19.

27. *The Life of Mr. Robert Blair* 19–20.

28. *Analec̄ta*, 4.3.

29. It seems likely that this was the basis for the book *Therapeutica sacra, seu, De curandis casibus conscientiae circa regenerationem, per foederum divinarum prudentem applicationem*. (London, 1656). Dickson’s translation was published posthumously as *Therapeutica sacra shewing briefly the method of healing the diseases of the conscience, concerning regeneration* (Edinburgh, 1664).

30. *Analec̄ta*, 3.2–3.

was not of a short time, but for some years continuance; yea thus like a spreading moor-burn,³¹ the power of godliness did advance from one place to another, which put a marvellous lustre on these parts of the country, the savour whereof brought many from other parts of the land to see the truth of the same.³²

At the same time as the Stewarton revival (1625–30), there were stirrings in Ulster, just over the Irish Sea. Dickson would have had close acquaintance with this since Irvine was a key place for travel to Ireland. He was also a close friend of men like Robert Blair, who had gone there to minister. Robert Fleming gives an account of what took place in Ulster.

I shall here also instance that solemn and great work of God, which was in the church of Ireland about the year 1628, and some years thereafter, which, as many grave and solid Christians yet alive can witness, who were there present, was a bright and hot sun-blink of the gospel, yea, may with sobriety be said to have been one of the largest manifestations of the Spirit, and of the most solemn times of the down-pouring thereof, that almost since the days of the apostles hath been seen; where the power of God did sensibly accompany the word with an unusual motion upon the hearers, and a very great tack [*catch*] as to the conversion of souls to Christ; the goings of the Lord then full of majesty, and the shout of a king was heard in the solemn meetings of his people, that as a judicious old Christian, who was there present did express it, he thought it was like a dazzling beam and ray of God, with such an unusual brightness, as even forced bystanders to an astonishment; a very effectual door opened, with more than ordinary enlargement, which the ministers of Christ there did find in the preaching the word, whilst the people might be seen hearing the same in a melting frame, with much tenderness of spirit; surely this was the very power of God, a convincing seal to the truth and ministry of his servants, who were then persecuted; yea, a thing which, as it was known, had an awful impression, and was a terror to their adversaries. I remember amongst other passages, what a worthy Christian told me, how sometimes in hearing the word, such a power and evidence of the Lord's preface was with it, that he hath been forced to rise, and look through the church, and see what the people were doing, thinking from what he felt in his own spirit, it was a wonder how any could go away without some change upon them. And then it was sweet and easy for Christians to come thirty or forty miles to these solemn communions which they

had, and there continue from the time they came, until they returned, without wearying, or making use or sleep, yea, but little either meat or drink, and, as some of them professed, did not feel the need thereof, but went away most fresh and vigorous, their souls so filled with a sense of God.³³

By 1628, when Dickson was preaching these sermons on Lamentations, the stirrings of spiritual life appeared to be declining, at least in the town of Irvine.³⁴ By October of that year, when preaching some of the final sermons on the book, he observes with sorrow that preaching did not appear to be having the same effect. He notes that "albeit truth be preached by the most part, yet it is not effectual to work a change because the Lord has drawn back His hand and His glory is departing."

Especially you Irvine, that have been a congregation as much labored in as any in the land, also frequently watered with the dew of heaven. Your table has been covered with the best bread, the water of life has flowed abundantly to you as any. But now you have taken a surfeit of it. You are fallen in love with other follies which are poisonous and are not likely to seek a purgation. You are not likely to be humbled nor break your heart in secret. Therefore, you have great need to fear that a sore fall is preparing for you: either the removing of the gospel or God's ministry ... we may well get a meeting with our Lord in our chambers, but cannot find Him in the assembly with you, and this because you are deceived with meikle [*much*] preaching. You have stopped your ears and heard as the voice of a musician [Ezek. 33:32]. How long shall I protest unto you who are asleep in security? How long shall I tell you that God is displeased at your coldrife [*lukewarm*] affections? How long shall I tell you that God is offended with your drawing near with your likes [*sic lips*] when your heart is away? How long shall I challenge your backslidings? Why has your worldliness bewitched you? Shall not your chambers and fields be witness against you, where sometimes you have sought God in secret, who are become secure sluggards? (see page 249).

31. *Moor-burn* (muir-burne): Moorland with the heather on fire.

32. Robert Fleming, *The Fulfilling of the Scripture*, 2 vols. (1661; Edinburgh: John Greig, Johnston & Hunter, 1845. 1850), 95–96.

33. Fleming, *ibid.*, 96–97.

34. Apparently, the impact of the revival on the local population was brief. "I hear it observed that Mr David Dickson, when in Irvine, had much more success in conversion among strangers who flocked to him, than among these of his own charge." *Analecta*, 2.262.

Some perhaps had been encouraged to show more religious interest during the time of revival, but now those temporary effects were wearing off when there was less stirring. “There were some of you that had some tasking of reading, seeking of God in secret prayers in your families, but now these are left off, and instead of these, swearing, backbiting, and the most part of you eat your morsels as beasts without {giving thanks}... . You have cast off Christ’s yoke and bound yourselves in the bonds of sin” (see page 259).

Perhaps Dickson was observing this at the time that reports of spiritual revival were coming from Ulster. Yet in comparison with parishes where there was no gospel preaching, Irvine remained a blessed place.

What is the cause that there is an odds between one congregation and another, but because God is pleased to erect His gospel more in one place than another, so that to a spiritual eye that place is but a barren wilderness, where there is either a fruitless or feckless ministry and God not appearing there. But where the Word is clearly and powerfully preached, where the sceptre of the Word bears sway? This is a beautiful place, where the staff of beauty and bands are not broken, but men are ruled by the Word and discipline; that is a comely thing when people are going the highway to heaven following the lamb Christ whithersoever He goes. That is beautiful indeed. We crave open eyes that you may see this glory and beauty shining among you, for you have here a light shining which may show you the way to heaven.

35. William Struthers, *Scotlands warning, or a treatise of fasting containing a declaration of the causes of the solempne fast, indyted to bee kept in all the Churches of Scotland, the third and fourth sundayes of this instant moneth of May Anno 1628. & the weeke dayes betwixt them, as they may be goodly kepted in Townes. Together with a direction how to proceed in the religious obseruation of any solemne fast* (Edinburgh, 1628).

36. See Struthers, p. 21.

37. Trinity College kirk, Edinburgh session records, National Archives of Scotland, CH2/141/1 f.32, quoted from Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (New Haven, 2002), 347.

38. *The History of the Church and State of Scotland from the Accession of Charles I to the year 1649* (Edinburgh, 1840), 113. At a meeting of the commissioners of the church held the previous year on 17 July 1627 to call a public fast for August 1627, the commission had also declined to act on petitions regarding ministers who had been suspended or banished for their opposition to the Articles of Perth. The bishop tabled these as appropriate for a meeting of the General Assembly. This was merely an evasion since general assemblies had not met since 1618 and would not meet again until the Second Reformation in 1638. “Proceedings of the Commissioners of the Kirk, at a meeting held at Edinburgh in July 1627,” *The Bannatyne Miscellany*, Volume 3 (1845 [sic 1855]), 221.

Seeing this is your commendation among others, and is given to you out of the Lord’s rich bounty, acknowledge your privilege and prerogative and be thankful for it. (see page 259).

Clearly, the closing prayer of Lamentations “turn us” and “renew our days as of old” was highly appropriate. “It is the kirk’s prayer for those within her who seemed to be converts not yet converted and that herself who was converted might be yet more converted.” “In great mercy, turn us O Lord out of this misery and let us rejoice in and enjoy the former joy, peace, favor, and prosperity which sometimes we had” (see pages 293 and 294).

PREACHING IN A TIME OF FASTING

The year 1628 was marked by a time of fasting as well as revival in Scotland. The last two weeks of the month of May were observed as a solemn fast in every church in the land. This was in response to the many reasons for humbling themselves before God as a nation. William Struthers, one of the Edinburgh ministers, had been appointed to publish some of these causes.³⁵ These included the distressed Reformed churches in continental Europe facing war and persecution.

To these were added concern at prevailing iniquity in the land.³⁶ The Edinburgh kirk session, for instance, instructed the people of the city to “abstain from their own ordinary callings the said day and to repair every one to their own parish kirks before and afternoon in most humble and devout manner to put up prayers to almighty God that he might be pleased to avert his most fearful judgments in the threatened agonies against us for our sins.”³⁷

The Presbyterian ministers decided to add their own causes, which included the way that the king and bishops had sought to deform the Church of Scotland and the persecution of faithful ministers and preachers. The historian Andrew Stevenson, a contemporary of Robert Wodrow, refers to this: “To these some few added other causes; as, the innovations, made upon the discipline and worship of our church, the prosecuting of many honest ministers for their opposition to these innovations, and the like; which did not a little foment the differences betwixt the opposite parties.”³⁸

The Victorian historian W. M. Hetherington assumes that this event would have been enlivening to the Presbyterian cause. The evidence he uses for this inference is not altogether clear, but certainly, Dickson’s sermons place an emphasis on mourning for the Church’s condition as well as humbling and strengthening for the future.

Much of the searching power of the Holy Spirit seems to have been granted to both ministers and people during their solemn fast, and many felt that in humbling themselves before God and making an earnest confession of sin, both national and individual, they obtained strength not their own, a spiritual strength preparing them for greater sufferings, and giving earnest of final deliverance.³⁹

Despite revival, the wider situation seemed bleak with the decline in reformation commitments within the Church of Scotland. Gospel preaching was being hindered through episcopal control of parishes that excluded those who were faithful. There was evident concern about the future as these conditions would only grow worse, humanly speaking. Dickson gives vent to this in expounding the book of Lamentations from his pulpit.

The door of the entry to faithful men to the ministry is closed, and preachers that are in, waits [wots; knows] not how long their opposers will give them leave to preach. When void places are to be filled, what ado to get them filled, except this and yon [that] come, the B[ishop] and the P[relate] be pleased, and hardly will any honest man be found to please them, and so churches lie waste, and people as desolate as sheep having no shepherd, or else some hirelings put in. These things are not marked [observed] as the forerunners of Christ's flitting [leaving]. I persuade you He is going to flit ... ye shall be forced to say, "this flitting of Christ was foretold us, and we would not believe or mark [it]." Woe to Scotland when Christ flits. Woe to them that are behind (p. 51.).

At some point during 1628 (probably August) Dickson had decided to expound the book of Lamentations, having come to the end of Jeremiah.⁴⁰ It appears that Dickson was preaching on Lamentations in both the morning and afternoon (see p. 55). Perhaps the causes of the two week fast during May had directed his mind to the immediate application of the book. "The sword rages without and famine and pestilence within," he preached in the course of his sermons. These few words neatly summarise how the exhortations and observations given in these sermons engage with Scripture against the dark backdrop of turbulent times. They offer a unique view of how preaching connected with this period of Scottish history.

It is also possible that there was a further local fast in the autumn in relation to the developing situation in France, especially La Rochelle (August to October

1628).⁴¹ A local fast day was appointed in Edinburgh for the "distressed estate of La Rochelle" and "distress of God's Church everywhere in all Europe. This was similar to a fast the previous year for success for the king's armies and navies (the first La Rochelle expedition of June 1627).⁴² A national fast was called in response to the increase of popery and sin in the kingdom, to prevent a famine, to pray for the distressed Reformed churches of Bohemia, German and the Palatinate and for the king's "most necessary and lawful war" for the maintenance of the "true religion."⁴³

19 July 1627

In every parish of this kingdom the pastors shall exhort their people to humble themselves before the Lord in true repentance, with tears and fasting, for these special causes,—

1. Because of the great increase of popistry, and of all sorts of sin in all degrees of persons within this land, both against law and gospel; which increase, being in the time of so clear a light, cannot but provoke God's heavy wrath against us, which cannot be averted without true and sincere repentance.
2. For the distress and cruel persecution of the Reformed kirks in Bohemia, and the adjoining provinces in Upper and Lower Germany, and the Palatinate, to entreat God that he would be appeased towards his people, and pity them, who are by the enemies' designs destinate to death, and whose blood is shed as water in the streets; that he would cut the cords of the wicked, and turn the rage of his enemies to his praise.
3. Because our King's Majesty is embarked in a most necessar[y] and lawful war, and has armies both by sea and land for the maintenance of the true religion and

39. William M. Hetherington, *History of the Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1842), 239.

40. James Mitchell of Dykes records that Dickson was expounding Jeremiah 2:2 on a fast day on 26 January 1628. *Memoirs of the Life of James Mitchell of Dykes, in the Parish of Ardsrossan* (1759), p. 29. Dickson notes having just finished Jeremiah in sermon one (see p. 45, other dating clues, pp. 235, 272). It is not impossible judging by the number of verses covered per sermon twice a week in Lamentations, that Dickson completed Jeremiah in August 1628.

41. Church records from Irvine from this period do not appear to have survived, and it has not been possible to examine the Burgh records.

42. Trinity College Kirk, Edinburgh session records, CH2/424/1 n.f. and CH2/141/1 ff. 19v., quoted from Margo Todd, *ibid.*, 351.

43. "Proceedings of the Commissioners of the Kirk," *ibid.*, 3.223.

his royal alliance, to pray to the Lord of Hosts that he would lead these and all other armies for the defense of the truth, and pour shame upon his enemies, and smite them through the thigh, that they be not able to stand against him.

4. Because of the extraordinar[y] rains, which now threaten rotting of the fruits of the ground before they be ripe, and so a fearful famine upon this land in so dangerous a time, when the seas are closed be the enemies, and no hope of help from other countries, if God shall send a famine, to entreat the Lord that He would cause the heaven answer the earth, and the earth to answer the corn, and the corns to answer our necessity, and us to answer His will, in faith, repentance and obedience.

PREACHING IN A TIME OF WAR

The May 1628 national fast gave a prominent place to the international context. Dickson seeks to apply the book of Lamentations to the ecclesiastical and social troubles of Scotland against the dark backdrop of the Thirty Years War in Europe. In some ways, it was a further outgrowth of what was experienced in the Netherlands as the Eighty Years' War or Dutch War of Independence (1568–1648). The Scots viewed the war in Europe that had been raging since 1618 as part of the Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation. "Wonder not," remarks Dickson, "to see papiſts seek to root out true professors and to stir up the emperor and King of France for that end" (p. 278).

The Thirty Years War is still regarded as one of the most brutal and destructive conflicts in human history. Eight million people died from either violence, famine, or plague. Many countries in Europe (including Scotland) were drawn into the conflict by supplying troops.

This war began with the crushing of a Protestant revolt in Bohemia. Further phases that caused greatest grief in Scotland were those in the Upper and the Rhine Palatinate of Germany, particularly when Mannheim and Heidelberg fell in 1622. By 1628, things looked especially bleak for Protestants as the Danish forces were repelled, culminating in their defeat in the Battle of Wolgast (September 2, 1628). The Anglo-French War (1627–29) was triggered by a Huguenot revolt at La Rochelle. This town was besieged from August 1627 and was finally captured on October 28, 1628, after various English fleets had failed to provide relief and assistance. Apparently, Buckingham's first expedition carried 3,000 Scots troops led by the Earl of Morton (see p. 59).

Some of these events are referred to in the sermons

that David Dickson preached on Lamentations. These and associated events were uppermost in the reasons for the national fast called in Scotland during May 1628. It is noteworthy that in the following passage from his elaboration of the causes for fasting, Struthers quotes from the opening words of Lamentations as best able to express the condition of continental reformed churches.

First the most lamentable estate of the reformed Churches of Germany, and other Countries in Europe: Where the Gosſpel did shine, and God's worship was exercised fruitfully to his glory: But now by the cruelty of the prevailing Papiſts, fearful desolation is wrought in these places, God's saints bereft of their lives, their blood spilt as water in the streets, their women shamefully abused, their goods taken from them: And the estate of them who have escaped the rage of the sword, worse than the slain. Their liberties lost and themselves either driven from their dwellings or compelled to forsake their God and religion, and take themselves to Romish idolatry, or to banishment. And under the name of an imperial reformation, there is nothing but a godless deformation, setting up the abomination of ignorance, and error where the light hath been.

How many provinces sometimes pleasant, in a peaceable professing of the truth, as the paradise of God, are now turned in a wilderness: And the houses of God prepared sometime on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, whereunto people did flow, are destroyed: And the Lord's displayed banner, under which many did march in comely order, is cast down, and many mothers in Israel, famous colleges and universities are scattered, and the abomination of desolation erected in them.

So we may say with the prophet, *Come, and behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath wrought in the Earth.* Psal. 16.8. *The heathen are come in the inheritance of the Lord, his holy temple have they defiled, and made Jerusalem heaps of stones: The dead bodies of God's saints have they given to be meat to the fowls of heaven and the flesh of thy saints to the beasts of the earth: Their blood have they shed as water about Jerusalem, and there was none to bury them: They have devoured Jacob, and made his dwelling place waste.* Psal. 79.1.3.4.

God hath forsaken the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among them: He delivered his strength in captivity, and his glory in the enemies hand. Psal. 78.61.

And we may lament with *Jeremy*. *How doeth the city remain solitary, that was full of people? She is a widow: She that was great among the nations, And princess among the province is made tributary.* And we may wish with that same prophet, *Oh, that mine head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night, for the slain of the daughter of my people.* Jerem. 9.1.

This work is a part of Antichrist's persecution, for now he is both breathing threatenings and slaughter, against the reformed churches, and executeth his cruelty against them, because of their obedience to God's voice in coming out of Babel, and that according to the bloody decrees of the Counsel of Trent.⁴⁴

News of the war on the continent was in significant demand in both England and Scotland, and popular publications continued to be printed throughout the period.⁴⁵ Over the course of these sermons, David Dickson mentions specific incidents in the siege of La Rochelle as it progressed. This seems to indicate that news was being received without too much delay and in reasonable detail.⁴⁶ Irvine was a port with trade links to Bordeaux and other ports on the Continent. Town cross news (word of mouth) and personal correspondence or reports from other ministers who may have had contacts would have provided other sources of news.⁴⁷ Newspapers from the continent were also directly available.

Edinburgh booksellers and clergy had links, particularly with the churches and book trade in Amsterdam, Leiden, Veere, Middelburg and Antwerp. A direct connection with George Veseler ... meant the Scots were not dependent upon London for a supply of Dutch corantos.⁴⁸

With an estimated 50,000 Scots fighting in Europe between 1618 and 1648, interest was very high.⁴⁹ Scotland was also not without its own anxiety of foreign invasion, and a system of beacons was ordered for the east coast in 1627, which would signal early warning of enemy ships. There were reports of enemy ships being sighted.⁵⁰ These concerns must have especially alarmed a coastal port such as Irvine.

The spiritual lessons Dickson draws from the war and its calamities are rather similar to those that Struthers advances. He sees it as a chastisement on the wider international reformed church for their sins and decline.

What lifts up the emperor, the king of Spain, etc., that the kirk has provoked God to make them strong? Our sins put the sword in the emperor's hand and gives them victory; sin is the means of the kirk's weakness and the greatest means of her adversary's strength (p. 62).

The great danger for the church in Scotland is that it will fail to draw these lessons and mourn for both the calamities of the reformed churches and the sins at home. "Albeit when news comes, they listen a little to it, but few lay it to heart."

We are like drunken men lying in the end of a house that is burning and the burnt timber is falling, yet they lie still and stir not, because the fire has not overtaken them. So now when the other end of Christ's kirk is burnt and a little part of it standing, yet we neither mourn for it nor are afraid. Therefore, it portends a fearful desolation and utter downfall to come upon us ... (p. 47).

"Are not the forerunners of the like coming on ourselves?" (p. 115), he asked ominously. Dickson's growing fear was that war would not be far away for Britain also. Perhaps he saw the unfolding policies of Charles I and Archbishop Laud pointing in this direction. He anticipates accurately the wars that would begin only a decade later.

[T]his land shall be found to be a bloody land. I speak plain talk. The sword shall rage in this land, and the fire that is begun in the kirk and the commonwealth, and is little marked or regarded, shall turn to the overthrow of all ranks and estates (p. 118).

44. Struthers, pp. 5–6.

45. For instance, the following ballad, *A lamentable list of certaine hidious, frightfull, and prodigious signes, which have bin seene in the aire, earth, and waters, at severall times for these 18. yeares last past, to this present* (London, 1638). The following pamphlets also demonstrate the interest: Philip Vincent, *The lamentations of Germany* (London, 1638); L. Brinckmair, *The vvarnings of Germany* (London, 1638).

46. See especially Dickson pages 235 and 272 and the lengthy note on page 53.

47. Dauvit Horsbroch surveys the sources and networks that kept Scotland informed: letters, books, sermons, travelers' tales, even popular songs, familiarized the home public with the war in Europe. 'Wish You Were Here? Scottish Reactions,' in *Scotland and the Thirty Years' War, 1618–1648*, ed. Steve Murdoch (Brill, 2001), 245–270.

48. Jayne E.E. Boys, *London's News Press and the Thirty Years War*, Studies in Early Modern Cultural, Political and Social History (The Boydell Press, 2011), 10.

49. *Scotland and the Thirty Years' War, 1618–1648*, 14.

50. RPCS, 2.1, 620. See the note in these sermons on p.106 and RPC2.2, xiv; RPC2.1, xxix.

Despite this dark and bleak backdrop, Dickson could derive hope for the church from the book of Lamentations. There was even hope for the protestant churches of continental Europe being severely devastated to the point of extinction. He emphasises the words “we are not consumed” (Lamentations 3:22). “God may well correct His kirk and children very sorely, but He will not consume them.” Like Rutherford, who uses this imagery often,⁵¹ he draws encouragement from the bush that Moses saw, which was burnt but not consumed (Exodus 3:2). There is hope in the midst of the darkness that the Lord is working out a purpose that will be for the Church’s good.

All that the Lord does in afflicting His [people] is only to purge away their dross... . Let this comfort the godly against hard afflictions and against the sore strokes which the kirks in France and Germany have gotten, for they shall not be consumed. For the Lord shall reserve a remnant and a seed for a new generation, albeit the whole world combines against His kirk [Ps. 2:2]... . The reason of the not consuming of His kirk and saints is because His compassions fail not, which lets us see that the kindness of the Lord to a people or person fails not, for His compassion and kindness is an enduring and lasting kindness which wears not [away] (pp. 177–178).

PREACHING IN A TIME OF FAMINE

A relatively poor country during this period, Scotland was experiencing economic crisis at this time. Due to

51. Rutherford returns to use this image of the church not destroyed by affliction and persecution dozens of times in his letters, using it first in his second letter dated April 23, 1628, almost exactly contemporary with Dickson’s sermons. In use from the start of the Reformation, it was aptly adopted in 1583 by the persecuted French Huguenot church as an emblem.

52. Matters concerning food prices and poor laws were a recurring concern for the King’s Privy Council in Scotland at this time, especially around 1625, see RPCS, 2nd ser., i, 160–62, and i, 156.

53. *Scottish Population History*, ed. M. Flinn (Cambridge, 1977), 117. Quoted in Laura A. M. Stewart, “Poor Relief in Edinburgh and the Famine of 1621–24,” *International Review of Scottish Studies* 30 (2005): 5–41, 5. See also R. W. Hoyle, “Famine as Agricultural Catastrophe: The Crisis of 1622–4 in East Lancashire,” *The Economic History Review*, New Series, 63, no. 4 (2010): 974–1002.

54. Kevin Hall, “The Great Famine of 1623,” *History Scotland* (June 2018), 120.

55. John Row, *The Historie of the Kirk of Scotland, M.D. LVIII.–M. DC. XXXVII* (Edinburgh: For the Maitland Club, 1842), 330; Calderwood, *History*, 7:377.

56. RPCS, *ibid.*, p. xxxvi (see p. 121).

57. See, for instance, concerns about plague on a ship in 1627, RPCS, 2nd ser., i, 484–5.

crop failure, there were four periods of famine affecting food costs from 1620–1625.⁵² The years 1621–24 were known as the “Ill Years”; they were, as Michael Flinn starkly describes them, “a national disaster.”⁵³ The great famine of 1623 mainly affected Edinburgh and the east coast. A fifth to a quarter of the population of Dunfermline died.⁵⁴ Both John Row and David Calderwood, as contemporary ministers and historians, traced the providential cause of such a disastrous event to the parliamentary ratification of the Five Articles of Perth in 1621.⁵⁵

One of the reasons for a fast in August 1627 was a fear of famine, presumably in expectation of a potentially poor harvest. As Dickson observes, “but one scant year [of harvests] would make us look with a pale face” (p. 235). A letter to the King from his privy council in February of 1628, paints a “picture of a country virtually in a state of bankruptcy and with little prospects of a happier future.”⁵⁶ All this provides the background for Dickson’s direct application to his hearers of the instances of famine mentioned in Lamentations. “Provoke not this blessed God to break the staff of bread and send you cleanness of teeth, so that you have neither food of your own, nor can find it in other countries. This rod has been oft shaken above this land, but few men have stood [in] awe of it” (p. 85).

Dickson was concerned about “spiritual famine,” which is “most dangerous,” yet “marked by few.” He observed with grief that “many congregations in the land lack men to break the bread of life to them” (p. 255). There was a danger of places like Irvine being complacent about the plentiful spiritual food they were receiving. “Be thankful for the spiritual food that is daily broken,” he counsels. “Crave hungry stomachs for it.” Indeed, the two were so linked together that despising the Word could lead to a bodily as well as spiritual famine. “If you have not a stomach for spiritual food ... beware you get not cleanness of teeth [Amos 4:6] and want [*dearth*] of bodily food. If you will not eat of spiritual food, it is justice you want [*lack*] the food you would soon miss and find scarcity of bread for contempt of the Word” (p. 133).

PREACHING IN A TIME OF PESTILENCE

During this time, the bubonic plague made occasional visits to Scotland and the British Isles. Dickson refers to the 1625 plague in London, where 35,000 people had perished (p. 53). Edinburgh was also visited at the same time. Irvine was no doubt concerned about infected ships in the same way as other Scottish seaports, although many of them were on the east coast.⁵⁷ Perth

experienced severe periodic outbreaks of plague and in autumn 1622 "no familie in all the citie wes frie of this visitatioun." On average, Perth lost between ten and twenty percent of its adult population.⁵⁸

When this took place, the church authorities would proclaim a public fast.⁵⁹ They connected such epidemics (as Dickson does) with the judgment of God on the sins of the community (p. 267). Dickson uses the language of the plague to describe God's judgment. "Where the botch [*infection*] is, the cleanger's wisþ [*broom, cleanser of infected places*] must follow. So where sin and the defilement thereof like a pest is among persons, there the plague of God must come" (p. 268). Continuing the comparison between sin and the plague, Dickson observes that God exiled Jerusalem like a person infected with the plague who was quarantined in a temporary house outside of a town (p. 271).

Dickson notes that a true preacher of God's Word has such a love for souls that "if the pest [*plague*] were in the congregation, he would not leave them, but would go as near them as the Lord's law, or preservation of his own life, would permit" (p. 131). False teachers, on the other hand, are like a spiritual plague that troubles the church because they seek to indulge people in their sins (pp. 267–268).

PREACHING IN A TIME OF DECLINE

Preparations were being made for the possible coronation of Charles as King of Scotland in 1628. It was postponed by the privy council in July and in the event, it would not take place until 1633.⁶⁰ The parliament took place in September and perhaps it was thought that if it were a full parliament with the king present, greater changes would be introduced or greater conformity to episcopacy enforced. Samuel Rutherford had an evident concern at this time (July 27, 1628), urging one of his correspondents to,

be careful to present to the Lord the present estate of this decaying kirk. For what shall be concluded in Parliament anent her, the Lord knoweth. Sure I am, the decree of a most fearful parliament in heaven is at the very point of coming forth, because of the sins of the land.

Rutherford's language and sentiments in these years regarding the church is certainly echoed in Dickson's sermons. Rutherford uses the language of Lamentations to express his concerns.

Zion weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are upon her cheeks; amongst all her lovers she hath none to

comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her; they are become her enemies" (Lam i. 2). "Our silver is become dross, our wine mixed with water" (Isa. i. 22). "How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street. The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!" (Lam. iv. 1, 2). It is time now for the Lord's secret ones, who favour the dust of Zion, to cry, "How long, Lord?" and to go up to their watchtower, and to stay there.⁶¹

In these sermons, Dickson traces Judah's trajectory of decline in Scotland's experience. It is a lamentable narrative much like Rutherford's imaginative words in his letters of the time.⁶²

Scotland for a while had such glory that the nations about admired it, and many commended it in their writings, accounting Scotland to be the spot of happiest ground under heaven because God in His ordinance[s] and worship got leave to dwell there in greater liberty than any parts elsewhere. . . . His Word was taught among us in greater purity and plainness, there was greater harmony and consent among us than in any parts elsewhere. But now there is a strange [*estrangement; strain*], for our unity is turned into schism, our golden purity of worship mixed with human inventions (p. 248).

58. Anon., ed., *The Chronicle of Perth; A Register of the Remarkable Occurrences Chiefly Connected with that City from the Year 1210 to 1668* (Edinburgh, 1831), pp. 23–4, quoted in Richard D. Oram. "It cannot be decernit quha are clean and quha are foule." Responses to epidemic disease in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Scotland, *Renaissance and Reformation*, 30, #4, Special issue. Transformative Disorder: Scotland 1550–1650, Fall 2006/2007: pp. 21, 13.

59. See Margo Todd, 174–5.

60. See RPCS, II, p.385. Dickson makes the following reference to Charles. "When we have tolerable kings, be thankful for it and pray for his preservation and continuance and that his faults may be redressed and to be saved from anarchy or want of government" (p. 276).

61. Rutherford, *Letters*. Letter XVII is undated, but Bonar places this in chronological order after 1630. The reference to Henry Burton being imprisoned, however, dates it to 1629.

62. "Wearied Jesus, after He had travelled from Geneva, by the ministry of worthy Mr. Knox, and was laid in His bed, and reformation begun, and the curtains drawn, had not gotten His dear eyes well together, when irreverent bishops came in, and with the din and noise of ceremonies, holy days, and other Romish corruptions, they awake our Beloved. Others came to His bedside, and drew the curtains, and put hands on His servants, banished, deprived, and confined them." Rutherford, *Letters*, Letter XII, July 21, 1630.

A mark of those who were false teachers was that they were enemies to those who would have no worship or government except what God had ordained (pp. 277–278). Dickson was concerned about this rejection in practice of the regulative principle of worship through uncommanded worship (p. 261). Indeed, he identifies this as a mark of the godly—their grief is greater when God’s worship is disgraced (p. 71). The godly have a unique sorrow for the desolation of the church (p. 113). They have their eyes on the future and what will happen to the church and the cause of truth in the “succeeding age” (pp. 104–105).

Dickson refers to the defacing of God’s worship (pp. 61, 81, 117) and the innovations brought in under the Articles of Perth (pp. 51, 77, 117), which was, sadly, hardening Roman Catholics in other countries in their own idolatry. He observes the truth of the result of such corruptions in the worship of God,

Will you then expose God’s people and His glory to shame? He shall expose both you and it to shame, for there is nothing so dear to God, but He will put it in the hand of enemies when His people pollute it. He will pull away the hedge from about His worship when His worship is defiled (p. 81).

These corruptions were provoking God to leave Scotland to themselves. “God is pouring shame upon this land, and God’s glory is departed from us,” he laments. One of the key elements was the episcopal control over who could enter the ministry and which ministers could be called to which parishes. The bishops “let none in whom He would have in.” Instead, they were “thrusting in men of their own who come to the pulpit with a bag of words without the evidence of the Spirit” (p. 248).

Dickson could only anticipate an increase in the existing defection from Reformation doctrine, worship, government, and practice within the Scottish Church.

63. See page 118 for another striking passage almost prophetic of the civil wars that would begin over a decade later.

64. Holfelder. For a reasonably full list of Dickson’s writings see, Matthew Vogan, “David Dickson: Provisional Bibliography,” *Scottish Reformation Society Historical Journal*, 9 (2019), 1–15; infra, 84–92.

65. *An Exposition of all St. Pauls epistles together with an explanation of those other epistles of the apostles St. James, Peter, John & Jude* (London, 1659).

66. Dickson, *A Brief Exposition of the Evangel of Jesus Christ according to Matthew* (London, 1647). *A Brief Explication of the first fifty Psalms* (London, 1653); *A Brief Explication of the other fifty Psalmes, from Ps. 50 to Ps. 100* (London, 1653); *A Brief Explication of the last fifty Psalmes, from Ps. 100. to the end* (London, 1654).

This, in turn, was bringing persecution with it, such as Dickson himself had experienced, and worse.

Wonder not to see such defection in the kirk, as corrupt teachers may be ring leaders in the persecution of the just and yet God have His own among them. It is no uncouth thing to see those who should build the church destroy the church and will persecute those who deserve least at their hand (p. 269).

Dickson anticipates times of greater trouble and conflict. “Persecution has been, and more is to be feared.” He anticipates what would indeed be fulfilled, that there would be bloodshed in the land before persecution by false teachers would cease (pp. 268–269). This would take place ten years later, but in the meantime, the darkness would deepen. His message was one of preparation for the gathering storm, using Scriptural help such as that found in the book of Lamentations.

Let us account these days of peace days of [*sic?* as] preparation for harder days and for a time to gather strength for enduring of persecution (p. 269).⁶³

DICKSON’S SERMONS ON LAMENTATIONS

Within little more than five years of preaching the sermons on Lamentations, Dickson would begin a lifelong and ambitious project to provide popular expositions of Scripture to the average reader. “In the early years of his ministry, Dickson’s expository sermons on various books of the Bible were transcribed by his auditors and widely circulated in manuscript form among the godly. In response to the demand for his sermons, Dickson developed a plan . . . to produce a series of brief popular biblical commentaries, the first instalment of which was *A Short Explanation of the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews* (Aberdeen, 1635).”⁶⁴ It is interesting that while Dickson’s consecutive pulpit exposition provided the basis for his published work, comparatively few of his sermons have been published.

In 1645 he published a Latin commentary on all of the apostolic epistles, *Expositio Analytica Omnium Apostolicarum Epistolarum* (1645), later translated in 1659.⁶⁵ After producing a commentary on Matthew, he also published his three-volume *Brief Explication of the Psalms* (London, 1653–4).⁶⁶

The careful concern to explain clearly the words of Scripture demonstrated in these volumes can also be witnessed in the Lamentations sermons. There was a condensed brevity owing to the fact that the expositions

were designed to be concise explanations for the benefit of the ordinary reader rather than scholarly or exegetical.

It is the quality of suggestive but rich brevity that drew the attention of C. H. Spurgeon, who wrote of his published expositions, "Dickson is a writer after our own heart." "For preachers he is a great ally." Spurgeon regarded Dickson's work as "more suggestive of sermons than almost any other we have met with." This "holy savour and suggestiveness" was the primary attraction. One could find "abundance of suggestions for profitable trains of thought." "There is nothing brilliant or profound; but everything is clear and well arranged, and the unction runs down like the oil from Aaron's head."⁶⁷

Dickson's sermons on Lamentations seem to fit with his usual practice. It is said that he preferred "to take three or four verses for his text." He felt that God's people needed a substantial serving of the Word. He said, "God's bairns [*children*] should get a good blade [*large slice*] of his own bread; and, when the steward, the Minister, was distributing the food, he should sit down and take part of the meat to himself with the bairns!"⁶⁸ He preferred a simple approach to preaching. Not everything could or should be expounded, only that which was most necessary and profitable.

When a man came to a text, it was like a man's coming to a tree; a man should shake the tree, and then that which is ripe would presently fall and come off, and that which was green would bide upon the tree; so a man should not take all out of a text that might be drawn!⁶⁹

In these sermons, Dickson does not bring out all possible interpretations, but focuses on the one to which he is committed. Neither does he seek to parade learning and knowledge of the original language more than what is absolutely necessary. Dickson brings out the fact that Lamentations is written in Hebrew acrostic poetry, a fact which would not have been obvious to his congregation. There are only around four instances in these sermons where he adverts to the meaning of the Hebrew original.

He was not for Ministers bringing out to the people various senses and expositions upon a text; he was only for bringing that which they thought the true meaning of a text; for Ministers bringing out several senses to the people, which they did not like and approve, was just like a cook bringing up a piece of meat to the table, and saying, "This is a good piece of meat, but you must not eat it nor taste it!"— and then he brings another, and

says the same, The cook should bring up no meat but what he is to give them to eat. He was altogether against Ministers bringing Latin sentences and high learned expressions to the pulpit, among poor common people; "for their bringing learned sentences to the people in a pulpit, was like a cook's bringing up the spit and racks to the table! These are fit to be kept in the kitchen, to make ready the meat, but they are not to be brought to the table."⁷⁰

Similar sentiments are clearly found in the Lamentations series of sermons.

Then, here is a rule to discern a good preacher ... if he be studying to dress his language and to vent his learning to tickle the ear and not to reform the mind, though he were never so learned, yet he is but a vain, foolish preacher. For what use serves his blades [*fragments*] of Greek and Latin and sentences of the fathers but to let people know that he is well-read? If he seeks to express his variety of learning and seeks not, by all means, to draw to repentance and a new life, he is but a vain man, albeit he wear a velvet gown.⁷¹

These sermons convey Dickson's homely manner of preaching. One striking feature that is strongly evident in these sermons is the pithy aphorisms that he uses. These proverbial expressions would have been suitably memorable for his flock. Proverbs have a unique power with oral cultures, and so these would have been especially effective with those who were illiterate or semiliterate. Sometimes he quotes an actual proverb (pp. 278–279),⁷² but more often, it seems to be a phrase that he himself has coined, such as: "get God and get all, tyne [*lose*] God and tyne all" (p. 276). Many of these proverbial statements reinforce his application, "as wide as is the measure of sin, as wide are the vials of God's wrath" (p. 77). "His anger is more bitter than any pleasure can be sweet. It is more fearful to have God angry

67. Charles H. Spurgeon, *Commenting and Commentaries* (1876; The Banner of Truth Trust, 1969), 84, 157, 168, 186.

68. Wodrow, *Analecta*, 3:7.

69. *Analecta*, 3:9.

70. *Analecta*, 3:9.

71. See page 139.

72. Let the godly have patience seeing the wicked shall not be spared forever, for they shall greet [*cry*] sore after noon, as those who were stricken before noon (page 279). Another common proverb to both Scotland and England (see Samuel Ward, *Sermons and Treatises*, 1636; repr. 1862. p. 99) is, "blind men swallow many flies" (p. 270). Dickson's favored proverb in these sermons, which he makes use of several times, is, "It is good to learn at other men's cost" (see page 287).

than pleasant to get our own will” (p. 90). He ruefully observes that “when religion is made bitter, all things are made bitter in that land” (p. 62).

Robert Wodrow also records that “Mr Dickson laboured to find Christ in every text that he preached on.”⁷³ This is consistent with what Dickson says in this series. “All doctrine that edifies not, builds not on Christ and drives not to faith, repentance and a new life, will not abide the fire” (p. 139). Although there is scarcely an explicit mention of Christ or the Messiah in the book of Lamentations, Dickson carefully draws Christ-centric application. He refers not only to how the temple sacrifices and altar pointed forward to Christ but also how the Nazarites were types of Christ. He also shows how Christ is the true King of whom all the kings of Israel were types. Lamentations 4:20 refers to “The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord.” Dickson explains this and applies it in a beautiful Christological way without straining the text.⁷⁴

He is called the breath of their nostrils because as [by] the breath of a man his life is kept in, so by the king’s preservation is the preservation of the whole kingdom, and they had promise of the preservation of the kingdom and continuation thereof in David’s house. Therefore, a king of that house being preserved, they think the kingdom shall continue, and they shall have rest under his shadow. If this they expected to be true in any, then especially in Christ the true King of Israel whom all the rest of the kings typified. He indeed is the breath of man’s nostrils, and while He is to you, for the life of all is preserved, even life eternal.

USE. If the Christ of God be the breath of all nostrils, then draw life from Him breath for breath, for a man cannot live if his breath be stopped. So neither can you

73. *Analecta*, 3.8.

74. See page 274.

75. See page 245.

76. These would include Calvin, Lyra, Osiander, Brenz, Ferus, Pareus, Selnecker, Melancthon, Vermigli, Bullinger, and Oecolampadius.

77. John Udall, *A Commentarie vpon the Lamentations of Ieremy* (London, 1593). John Hull, *Exposition upon part of Lamentations* (London, 1618).

78. See notes of these sermons in manuscript in, Collection, Maxwells of Pollok, Glasgow and Renfrew, 16 items/notebooks; T-PM 114/1, Glasgow City Archives, Mitchell Library, Glasgow; Sir George Maxwell, Summaries of sermons at Cathcart, Glasgow and elsewhere, 10 Aug. 1647(?)–31 Dec. 1648; in reverse, notes on Genesis, c.i.–xxxii [chapters 1–31]. The year is supplied by the Mitchell Library from the contents, and the question mark is theirs.

79. See page 246.

live the life of grace but by drawing breath and grace from Christ, for He both gives and holds in life.

Dickson is tender in commending Christ. “Think not to eschew God’s judgments, but under Christ’s shadow, with the coney in the rock seeing judgments are already begun, let us hide ourselves under His covert.” He warns his congregation that,

Christ, who is a lamb for meekness, when His mercy is abused, becomes a fiery lion. For He being that angel that led the children of Israel through the wilderness by a cloud and pillar of fire, spared them not when they provoked Him, but slew them all so that none entered into Canaan but two persons, for they would not be led by Him. Albeit Christ be tender, meek and gentle to the poor and miserable that turn unto Him, yet is He a terrible and fearful Lord to the proud and obstinate. Therefore, in time submit to Him.⁷⁵

Lamentations has been under-represented both in sermons and commentaries over the centuries. This was the case during Dickson’s time also. There were the standard commentaries in Latin that he could have consulted.⁷⁶ If he had wished to draw on any English expositions, however, there was only the volume published by John Udall in 1593 or John Hull’s exposition from 1618.⁷⁷ Only a couple more would follow as the century progressed. Dickson himself would return to preach several sermons from the book in 1648 when a professor of divinity in Glasgow.⁷⁸

CONCLUSION

David Dickson helps us to recover the true glory of the church. The church has a spiritual glory that is defaced when we try to conform it and its ordinances to the world. Jeremiah “compares the kirk to gold being compared with other nations, it lets us see that the glory of God’s people is like gold in comparison with other people, for all other glory is but worldly and perishing, but the glory of the kirk is heavenly and permanent because she is partaker of her Lord’s glory . . . the kirk’s glory is nothing else but a declaration of that which God has bestowed upon her.”⁷⁹

The spiritual beauty of the church consists in the ordinary means of grace that have been appointed for the spiritual nourishment and refreshment of believers and the conversion of sinners. Dickson speaks to our generation and its pursuit of novelties that are devised by man to appeal to man. In the sermon on Lamentations 4:1, he says,

USE. Then look about you and be enamoured with the beauty of the house of God, delight in the fellowship of saints, as David [said,] "How amiable is thy tabernacle" [cf. Ps. 84:1], when he was shut out in the tents of Kedar. Likewise, he calls the kirk the land of the living, for in other places, he saw nothing but mouths [that] smelled like the graves of dead men [cf. Ps. 5:9], full of nothing but sensuality, beastliness, and idolatry, but they thought Judea the land of the living, for there they found the sweet breath of the saints smelling of the incense of praise and of all these ointments where with the vessels of the sanctuary were anointed. He found among the saints the smell of the graces of the Lord's Spirit; yea, everything which might have allured a spiritual eye.

APPLICATION. The same is your glory and prerogative, for your beauty exceeds all the nations of the earth that know not Christ, for you have God for your husband, your Lord and your love; you may kiss the Son of God and not be despised; you may knock at the King of heaven's door and be sure to be let in; you may get the Spirit to inform you and lead you in all truth, the heavenly manna of His Word to your food, the rivers of waters of the Spirit to divide it and digest it when you have fed upon it, that you may grow up as plants of righteousness to Him. Take then a view of this glory and despise all other in comparison of it. Here be made wise by it, put on this beauty and glory, seek the face of your Lord, deck yourself with this glory, lest your gold be turned into a potsherd and vanish and decay.⁸⁰

If this is true concerning the church's glory, how it should make us grieve concerning the church that is so dear to God. "Are there none to be sorry for their afflictions that are so dear to God? If so be, let such beware that they be not dear to God" (p. 50). Dickson indicates why the losses sustained by the church of God should deeply affect us more than anything else. "We should be more sorry to wit [*know; see*] the kirk in a hard state than if our children were slain, our goods spoiled, and our public estate undone, for the greatest evils should move us most ... because the loss of the church is conjoined with the dishonor of God, and loss of spiritual things" (p. 49).

When we grasp the true import of the church's diminished glory in our own generation, we must also say, "How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!" (Lamentations 4:1). Thus, the book of Lamentations continues to be profoundly relevant to a professing church under God's chastisement and in dire

need of repentance and restoration. Here are prayers to weep out before the Lord.

her enemies prosper; for the Lord hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions... . And from the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed ... Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries all her pleasant things that she had in the days of old (Lamentation 1:5-7).

Dickson also helps us to be watchful. When the church experiences chastisement it arises from a pattern of disobedience. God has been chastising unconfessed secret sins by allowing us to commit further secret sins. Whether it is a church or an individual, "where there are hid and secret sins, if they are not repented of, will break out in open sins ... secret sins not being heeded, beget more sins of that kind and leaven the whole lump and at last break out into a running issue to defile others." For instance, decline and departure in God's worship begin in the heart. One thing leads to another, and secret idolatry leads to open idolatry. (pp. 76-77). Leaving our first love may seem like an insignificant secret sin in our eyes, but Christ regards it as a leaven that influences everything. It is so dangerous that a church's candlestick will be removed if we do not repent (Revelation 2:5; see p. 220). We must blow at the little spark that remains to fan it into a flame (p. 53).

Despite a backsliding condition where holiness and godliness are rare, and the worship of God debased, there is hope in turning to the Lord. It would be good for us to learn the humble submission of Jeremiah to God's chastening hand, and then we might also share in his hope.

It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord... . For the Lord will not cast off for ever: But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies... . Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens (Lamentation 3:26, 31, 40).

In Lamentations, Jeremiah pours out his sorrow before the Lord. When he rises to find hope, it is in the character and covenant mercies of God (Lamentations 3:22-24). In the midst of not only change and decay but also ruin and desolation, He remains the same. The "Lord remains still unchangeable, kind, and loving to those

80. See page 247.

that seek unto Him as ever He was.” This is what preserves Jeremiah from being “swallowed up of too much despair and sorrow” (p. 292). This not only gives security and strength in the present, but it also gives a sure and certain hope for the future. In the second sermon on Lamentations 5:8–12, Dickson says,

The unchangeableness of God is an argument that the kirk shall stand stable. Albeit He correct the kirk ... yet still He will raise up a new generation to serve Him and from age to age shall have a kirk as Himself, enduring forever.⁸¹

Dickson indicates that bright hope for the church lies in the way of repentance. “We see that when God gives repentance to an afflicted kirk or person, He can make them in as good case as ever. God can repair all the kirk’s ruins and wash the dirt off her face and rub away their shame” (p. 294). There is hope if we are mourning for sin,

Let not the bitterness of your stroke grieve you so much as sin, but mourn for sin when you are stricken, and it shall be mended... If you be mourning for sin and seeking reconciliation with God, you shall have His favor, which is better than life [cf. Ps. 63:3].⁸²

Spurgeon never had the benefit of Dickson’s exposition of the book of Lamentations. This has been limited to those who were able to access it in manuscript. It is here published for the first time, and gives an insight into the way in which Dickson unfolded the meaning of Scripture in the pulpit as well as in print. It would be a great blessing to the church if David Dickson’s plain but practical and searching sermons were used to engage us with this book of Scripture in a deeper way. Although dead, he still speaks through this exposition. Perhaps it has been brought to the attention of the church at the very time that we most need the repentance and restoration to which it directs us?■

81. See pages 292–293.

82. See page 63.

DAVID DICKSON: A PROVISIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

David Dickson (c. 1583–1662) was one of the most significant ministers and theologians of the Second Reformation.¹ He taught theology at both Edinburgh and Glasgow and was the first to produce a commentary on the Westminster Confession.² Dickson also had produced and inspired many commentaries on Scripture.³ He had a leading role in the events surrounding the signing of the national covenant in 1638 and the Glasgow Assembly. John Livingstone describes him as

a man singularly gifted with an edifying way of preaching, and whose painfull labours were eminently blessed with success... He made great help at the Reformation 1638, and thereafter some books, printed both in Latine and English, declare in part what a man he was...⁴

Robert Wodrow reports that Livingstone was once asked: “whom he took to be the greatest Gospell Minister in all Scotland? He said he thought Mr Dickson was the greatest he ever knew.”⁵ He was a prolific author but it does not seem that a full list has been collected of his published and unpublished writings.⁶

1. This bibliography was first published in *Scottish Reformation Society Historical Journal* 9 (2019), 1–15, to which several additions have since been made. Since it may be of considerable interest to readers, it has been appended to the prior article on Dickson’s *Sermons on Lamentations*.

2. “Caputi confessionis fidei de Scriptura continet articulos decem assertiones 33 theses controversas,” translated by George Sinclair and published as *Truths victory over error*, (Edinburgh, 1684). It was reprinted on various occasions and is currently published by The Banner of Truth Trust.

3. For background on Dickson’s published expositions of Scripture and his project involving fellow ministers see George Christie, “Scripture exposition in Scotland in the seventeenth century,” *Records of Scottish Church History Society* I (1926) 97–111

4. W.K. Tweedie, *Select Biographies* (2 vols., Edinburgh: Wodrow Society, 1845–47), Vol. 1, pp. 316, 319.

5. Robert Wodrow, *Analecta: Or Materials For A History Of Remarkable Providences Mostly Relating To Scotch Ministers And Christians*, (1843) Vol. 3, pp.8–9.

6. Appendix 2 of Nathan D. Holsteen’s thesis helpfully shows the location of many of the early editions of Dickson’s published writings. “The popularization of federal theology: conscience and covenant in the theology of David Dickson (1583–1663) and James Durham (1622–1658),” Unpublished PhD Thesis (University of Aberdeen, 1996).

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7. *A brief exposition of the evangel of Jesus Christ according to Matthew by David Dikson*, (London: Printed for Ralph Smith, 1647).
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10. *A brief explication of the last fifty psalmes, from Ps. 100. to the end by David Dickson* (London: Printed by T.R. and E.M. for Joseph Cranford, 1654).
11. Preface 'To the Reader' in George Hutcheson, *A Brief Exposition of the Prophecies of Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah* (London: Ralph Smith, 1654).
12. *Therapeutica sacra, seu, De curandis casibus conscientiae circa regenerationem, per foederum divinarum prudentem applicationem. Authore Davide Dicsono SS. Theologiae Professore in Academia Edinburgena. Libri tres*, (Londini: Impensis Societatis Stationariorum, 1656).
13. *An exposition of all St. Pauls epistles together with an explanation of those other epistles of the apostles St. James, Peter, John & Jude: wherein the sense of every chapter and verse is analytically unfolded and the text enlightened* (London: Printed by R.I. for Francis Eglesfield, 1659).

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14. *Therapeutica sacra shewing briefly the method of healing the diseases of the conscience, concerning regeneration / written first in Latine by David Dickson; and thereafter translated by him*, (Edinburgh: Evan Tyler, 1664).
15. *The True Comfort of a Christian, or Food for a distressed Soul* (Edinburgh, 1673).⁹
16. *Honey Drops, or Chrystal Streams, Containing A Bundle of precious promises, full of Soul-ravishing comforts, purchased by CHRIST, and belonging to Beleeveres in the Estate of Grace* (published in William Geddes, ed. *The saints recreation, third part, upon the estate of grace containing and methodically [sic] delineating a Christians progress, priviledges, comforts and duties, beginning at conversion* (Edinburgh, 1683).¹⁰
17. *Truths victory over error, or, An abridgement of the chief controversies in religion which since the apostles days to this time, have been, and are in agitation, between those of the Orthodox faith, and all adversaries whatsoever, a list of whose names are set down after the epistle to the reader: wherein, by going through all the chapters of The confession of faith, one by one, and propounding out of them, by way of question, all the controverted assertions, and answering by yes, or no, there is a clear confirmation of the truth, and an evident confutation of what tenets and opinions, are maintaind by the adversaries: a treatise, most useful for all persons, who desire to be instructed in the true Protestant religion, who would shun in these last days, and perillous times, the infection of errors and heresies, and all dangerous tenets and opinions, contrary to the word of God.*, (Edinburgh: Printed by John Reid, 1684).¹¹

7. Contained in William Scot, *An Apologetical Narration of The State And Government of The Kirk Of Scotland Since The Reformation* (Edinburgh: 1846), pp.303-4.

8. This publication was identified by Wodrow in 1726 but now seems impossible to trace. See Wodrow's biographical preface, dated 5th January 1726, in various eighteenth-century editions of *Truth's Victory over Error*, and partly included in *Select Biographies*, Vol. 2, pp. 5-15 (p. 14).

9. For a recent discussion and transcription of this, see Carol Williams, "The True Comfort of a Christian, or Food for a Distressed Soul: David Dickson's Overlooked Work," *Reformation & Renaissance Review*, Vol. 9 (2007): 173-210.

10. This poem is included in several eighteenth-century editions of *True Christian Love*, e.g., Glasgow, 1764 and 1772. Geddes does not attribute it to Dickson, but perhaps publishing material by Dickson at that time would have been regarded as seditious. For an account of Geddes' peculiar volume, with its four variant issues, see N.F. Nash, "A case of declining patronage: William Geddes's *The Saints Recreation* of 1683," *The Bibliothek*, Vol. 11 (1982-83): 59-72.

11. This work was published by George Sinclair (d. 1696) who claimed it as his own. Sinclair's motive in this is uncertain, but see the comment in the previous footnote.

18. *Het euvangelium van Mattheus* (Utrecht: Wed. W. Clerk, 1686). This is item 7, translated into Dutch by Jacobus Koelman.

19. 'Speech against Arminianism', General Assembly, 1638 in Alexander Peterkin (ed.), *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* (Edinburgh, 1838), vol 1, pp.156–159.¹²

20. *An exposition of the tenth chapter of Job*, preached at Irvine 1635. Published in *Select practical writings of David Dickson*, vol. 1 (Free Church of Scotland, 1845). For the manuscript copy see New College, MS DIC.

The following five sermons are all from the Sermon notebook of Professor David Dickson manuscript volume in New College, MS DIC.¹³ They were published in *Select practical writings of David Dickson*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Free Church of Scotland, 1845). They were preached at Irvine beginning 10 October 1635.

21. At a humiliation before the communion (Zephaniah 3:1–2).

22. For preparation to the communion (2 Timothy 2:19)

23. On the first communion Sabbath (Isaiah 52:13–15)

24. On the Monday for direction (Isaiah 41:14–15)

25. On the second Sabbath for the communion (Philippians 3:7–8)

26. On the Monday following the communion (Philippians 3:11–12).

CO-AUTHORED PUBLICATIONS

27. with Alexander Henderson, *The ansveres of some brethren of the ministerie, to the replies of the ministers and professors of divinitie in Aberdene concerning the late covenant* (Aberdeen: Edward Raban, 1638).

28. With Alexander Henderson and David Calderwood, *Directory of Public Worship* (1643).¹⁴

29. with James Durham, *A brief Sum of Christian Doctrine A Brief Summary of Christian Doctrine, contained in Holy Scripture, and Holden Forth in the Confession of Faith and Catechisms Agreed upon by the*

Assembly of Divines at Westminster, and Received by the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland [commonly known as *The Sum of Saving Knowledge*]; included in *The confession of faith, and the larger and shorter catechisme first agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster. And now approved by the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, to be a part of uniformity in religion between the kirks of Christ in the three kingdomes*, (Edinburgh: printed by Gedeon Lithgow printer to the University, of Edinburgh, 1650), pp.255–308.

30. *Reasons vvhy the ministers, elders, and professors, who protested against the pretended assemblies at St. Andrews, Dundee, and Edinburgh, cannot agree to the overtures made unto them at the conference upon the 28 and 29 of July, 1652: together with the instructions given by them to such of the number as were sent to the said conference: and the letter directed to Mr. David Dickson, for communicating their papers.*

31. With George Hutcheson, 'Letter to the reader' in *A brief exposition of the Epistles of Paul to the Philipians and Colossians. By James Fergusson, minister at Kilwinning* (London: Company of Stationers, 1656).

The remaining items in this list, down to no. 80, were printed in W. Stephen (ed.), *Register of the Consultations of the Ministers of Edinburgh and Some Other Brethren of the Ministry: 1652–1660* (2 vols., Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1921–1930). The page numbers refer to these volumes.

32. With Robert Douglas, James Hamilton and George Hutcheson, 'A Letter to Mr Jo: Liviſton [John Livingstone]' 2 December 1654, pp.87–89

33. With Robert Douglas and George Hutcheson, 'A Letter to the L. Broghill, President of the Councill', Edinburgh, 30 January, 1656, pp.184–187

34. With Robert Douglas, James Wood and James Sharp, 'A Letter to the Lord President after the said meeting was dissolved', 23 February 1656, Edinburgh, pp.198–201.

35. With Robert Douglas and James Wood, Instructions to Mr. James Sharp, August 1656, pp.204–210

36. With Robert Douglas and James Wood, Letter to the Lord Broghill, President of the Councill, August 23, 1656, pp.210–212.

37. With Robert Douglas and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Mr. Ja. Sharp concerning the Faſt', Edinburgh, October 1656, pp.215–217.

38. With Robert Douglas and George Hutcheson, 'Letter for Lord Broghill', Edinburgh, 21 October 1656, pp.218–220.

39. With Robert Douglas, James Hamilton, John

12. Published in Alexander Peterkin (ed.), *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*, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh, 1838), pp. 156–159 (no further volume was published).

13. They were most recently re-published in C. Coldwell (ed.), *Anthology of Presbyterian and Reformed Literature*, Vol. 5 (Naphtali Press, 1992), pp. 294–328.

14. See Peterkin, *Records of the Kirk of Scotland*, pp. 349, 368

Smith and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Mr. J. Sharp', Edinburgh, 21 October 1656, pp. 220–222.

40. With Robert Douglas and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Lord Broghill', Edinburgh, 25 October 1656, pp. 224–228.

41. With Robert Douglas, 'Letter to Generall Munk', Edinburgh, 29 October 1656, pp.230–231.

42. With Robert Douglas, James Wood, James Hamiltoun, George Hutcheson, and John Smyth, 'Letter to Mr. Calamy and Mr. Ash', Edinburgh, December 2, 1656, pp.232–239.

43. With Robert Douglas and James Wood, 'Letter to Lord Broghill', Edinburgh, 2 December 1656, pp.240–245.

44. 'Letter to Mr. Desborough', Edinburgh, 2 December 1656, pp.245–246

45. With Robert Douglas and James Wood, 'Letter to Collonell Wetham', Edinburgh, 2 December 1656, pp.246–248

46. With Robert Douglas, James Wood, Mungo Law, James Hamilton, Hugh Mackail, George Hutcheson and Thomas Garven, 'Instructions for our Reverend Brother, Mr. James Sharp, in reference to any who are already at London or shall be sent up from our dissenting Brethren', 24 December 1656, pp.248–255

47. With Robert Douglas, 'Letter to Colonel Wetham', Edinburgh, 24 December 1656, pp.255–256.

48. With Robert Douglas, 'Letter to Colonell Lockart', Edinburgh, 24 December 1656, pp.255–257.

49. With Robert Douglas, James Wood, John Smith, James Hamilton and George Hutcheson 'Letter to Mr. James Sharp', Edinburgh, 25 December 1656, pp.259–262.

50. With Robert Douglas and James Wood, 'Letter to Lord Broghill', Edinburgh, 25 December 1656, pp.262–265.

51. With Robert Douglas, 'Letter to Mr. James Sharp', Edinburgh, 3 January 1657, pp. 265–268

52. With Robert Douglas, James Wood, Hugh Mackail, George Hutcheson and Thomas Garven, 'Letter to Mr. Sharp', Edinburgh, 6 January 1657, pp.268–271

53. With Robert Douglas and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to the Lord Generall Munck', Edinburgh, 19 January 1657, pp.271–272

54. With Robert Douglas, George Hutcheson and John Smyth, 'Letter to Mr. Sharp', Edinburgh, 20 January 1657, pp.273–276

55. With Robert Douglas, Mungo Law, George Hutcheson, John Robertson, James Hamilton and John Smith, 'Letter to Mr. Manton', 22 January 1657, pp.276–280.

56. With Robert Douglas, Mungo Law, George

Hutcheson and John Smith, 'Letter to Messrs. Calamy and Mr Ash' from Edinburgh, 3 February 1657, pp.340–348.

57. With Robert Douglas and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Mr James Sharp', 7 March 1657, Vol. II, pp.18–19.

58. With Robert Douglas and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Lord Broghill', Vol II, pp19–20.

59. With Robert Douglas and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Mr James Sharp', 9 April 1657, Vol. II, pp.34–35.

60. With Robert Douglas, James Hamiltoun and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Messrs. Calamy and Mr Ash' from Edinburgh, 27 April 1657, II, pp.38–39.

61. With Robert Douglas, 'Letter to Mr Gillespie' from Edinburgh, 21 July 1657, Vol.II, pp.45–46.

62. With Robert Douglas and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Mr James Sharp', 27 July 1657, Vol. II, pp.53–54.

63. With Robert Douglas and John Smyth, 'Letter to Mr James Sharp', 1 August 1657, Vol. II, pp.60–61.

64. With Robert Douglas and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Lord Broghill', 4 August 1657, Vol II, pp62–63.

65. With Robert Douglas, John Smith, James Hamiltoun, George Hutcheson, Mungo Law, Robert Lawrie and Hugh McKaile, 'Letter to Mr James Sharp', 4 August 1657, Vol II, pp.65–66.

66. With Robert Douglas, Mungo Law, and Hugh McKaile, 'Letter to Mr James Sharp', 11 August 1657, Vol II, p.86.

67. With Robert Douglas, John Smith, James Hamiltoun, George Hutcheson, Mungo Law, Robert Lawrie, Hugh McKaile and Thomas Garven, 'Letter to M. Godfrey, M. Cooper and M. Manton', 5 September 1657, Vol II, pp.113–114.

68. With Robert Douglas, John Smith, James Hamiltoun, James Wood, Mungo Law, Robert Lawrie, 'Letter to Mr James Sharp', 17 September 1657, Vol II, pp.118–120.

69. With Robert Douglas and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Col. Jones', 29 September 1657, Vol II, pp.121–122.

70. With Robert Douglas and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to the Right Honourable Mr Secretary Thurloe', 29 September 1657, II, p.122.

71. With Robert Douglas, 'Letter to Lord Broghill', 27 February 1658, Vol II, p.137.

72. With Robert Douglas, George Hutcheson and James Hamilton, 'Letter to Messrs. Calamy and Mr Ash' from Edinburgh, 23 March 1658, Vol II, pp.137–138.

73. With Robert Douglas and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Major Robert Beak by resolution of the Brethren' from Edinburgh, 3 June 1658, Vol II, pp.140–141.

74. With Robert Douglas, John Smith, George

Hutcheson and James Wood, 'Letter to Messrs. Edmond Calamie, Simeon Ash, and Thomas Manton' from Edinburgh, 5 February 1659, Vol II, pp.148–149.

75. With Robert Douglas, James Wood and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Lord Broghill', 5 February 1659, Vol II, p.148.

76. With Robert Douglas, James Wood and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Lord Thurloe', 5 February 1659, Vol II, pp.148–149.

77. With Robert Douglas, James Wood and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Lord Jones', 5 February 1659, Vol II, p.149.

78. With Robert Douglas, James Wood, John Smith, James Hamiltoun, Mungo Law and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Lord Major Robert Beake', 5 February 1659, Vol II, p.149.

79. With Robert Douglas, James Wood, John Smith, James Hamiltoun, Mungo Law, A Kerr and George Hutcheson, 'Instructions for our Reverend Brother Mr James Sharp', 7 February 1659, Vol II, pp.149–150.

80. With Robert Douglas and George Hutcheson, 'Letter to Lord Desborough', March 1659, Vol II, p.153.

UNPUBLISHED WRITINGS

81. 'Petition' (1638), (NLS, Wod.Qu.XXIV, f.29).

82. 'Exercitationes aliquot de casibus nonnullis conscientiae et animae renovatae iis nimirum potissimum qui ad statum conditionemque novae creaturae pertinent. XVIIth century'. (University of Glasgow, MS Gen 363).¹⁵

83. 'Caputi confessionis fidei de Scriptura continet articulos decem assortmentes 33 theses controversas', (Glasgow University Library, MS Gen 8) [evidently the latin lectures of *Truth's Victory*, At end of text: 4 Sept. 1651 finis. Charles Mouat—presumably from Glasgow].

84. *Tyronis concionaturi preparatio* (?ca. 1651), (NLS, Wod.Oct.XI, f.15).¹⁶

85. 'Opinion on Patronage', (? ca. 1651), copy, early 18th cent, (NLS, Wod.Oct.XI, f.33).

86. 'A freindlie Conference betuixt two ministers D and B anent the gesture of Communicants in the act of receiving the holie elements of the Lords Supper', [although written by Robert Baillie this includes Dickson's arguments against kneeling] (NCL, Bail MS 1).

87. 'Sermons upon Jeremiah's Lamentationes gathered from Master David Dickson's mouth by one of his hearers: from the beginning to the end thereof. XVII century' (c.1628), (Glasgow University Library, MS Gen 3).¹⁷

88. Sermon on 2 Samuel 23:5 (University of Glasgow, MS Gen 32).¹⁸

89. Sermon on Romans 5:20 (University of Glasgow, MS Gen 32).

90. Sermon on Isaiah 56:6 [1 July, 1660], (NLS, MS.1759, ff.21–26). The sermon notebook was apparently the property of Sir Hugh Campbell of Cessnock.

The following sermons are from copy made in 1673 (probably by John Veitch, minister of Westruther) by (c.1638–9), NLS, Wod.MSS.8, qto.

91. Nine sermons on 1 Timothy 1:5 preached at Irvine (f.1).

92. Sermon on 1 Peter 5:8–10, Irvine 1637 (f.66).¹⁹

93. Sermon on Job 36:11–12, 1639

94. Sermon on Psalm 122:6–9, Irvine 1638 (f.106).

95. Sermon on Matthew 10:29–32 Irvine 1638

96. Sermon on 2 Chronicles 20:1–4

97. Sermon on 2 Chronicles 20:10–11.

98. Sermon on Job 36:21–25, Irvine 1638 (f.143).²⁰

The following are summary notes recorded by George Maxwell in or around Glasgow (Mitchell Library, Glasgow, T-PM/114/1).

99. Summary notes of a sermon on Isaiah 12:1, 22 January 1648. (Mitchell Library, Glasgow, T-PM/114/1).

100. Summary notes of a sermon on 1 Corinthians 11:23, 22 January 1648, preparatory sermon before a communion. (Mitchell Library, Glasgow, T-PM/114/1).

101. Summary notes of a sermon on Lamentations 3:30, Glasgow, 15 May 1648. (Mitchell Library, Glasgow, T-PM/114/1).

102. Summary notes of a sermon on Lamentations 3:30, Glasgow. (Mitchell Library, Glasgow, T-PM/114/1).

103. Summary notes of a sermon on Lamentations 3:41, Glasgow. (Mitchell Library, Glasgow, T-PM/114/1).

104. Summary notes of a sermon on Ephesians 5, Edinburgh, 12 February 1654 (Mitchell Library, T-PM/114/4).

15. This treatise has a close connection with *Therapeutica Sacra* whether or not it is a draft for that treatise.

16. Wodrow speaks of possessing this in 1726; *Select Biographies*, Vol. 2, p. 15.

17. This volume has been transcribed and published by Naphtali Press and Reformation Heritage Books (2020).

18. This MS is entitled 'A collection of seventy valuable lectures and sermons preached mostly in the time of the late persecution by these eminent servants of Jesus Christ'. Transcribed by Jo. Howie from several old manuscripts about the years 1778–79 &c.

19. The NLS catalogue records a sermon on 2 Cor 3:17–18 but this is not in the body of the manuscript.

20. The NLS catalogue suggests that two sermons that follow could be by Dickson but they are unattributed and by no means likely to be by him. They are on Song 6:1 and Song 6:2–3.

105. Maxwell records that he heard a sermon by Dickson in Edinburgh on the afternoon of 25 January 1657 on the person of Christ, why God and why man both in one person (Mitchell Library, T-PM/114/6).

106. Sermon by Dickson in Edinburgh on 1 John 3:23–4 1 February 1657 (Mitchell Library, T-PM/114/6).

107. Sermons on 1 Timothy 1:5–7 NLS, Wod.MSS.8 copy made in 1673, ff.1–45

108. ‘The doctrine of the catechism or a short explanation of the commandes [Ten Commandments], the beliefe [Apostle’s Creed] and the Lords prayer,’ [1641] (NLS, MS.15950). The exposition of the commandments appears to have been begun in Irvine on 29 April 1640 and concluded in 1641. This is likely to be the same as what Wodrow refers to as ‘The Grounds of the true Christian Religion, by way of catechism for his congregation of Irvine.’ It is not certain that a separate document of this title does not exist which may be a catechism in itself.²¹ These short expositions appear, however, to have accompanied occasions of catechising.

109. ‘No Separation of the well-affected from the Army of Covenanters defending Covenant and Kingdom against the factioun of sectaries oppressing both within the land,’ (?1651) (NLS, Wod.Qu.XXXII, f. 57).

In his 1726 preface, Wodrow says, ‘Several of his MSS. remain unprinted. Besides some of his original letters, I have his Preparatio Tyronis Concionaturi, which I suppose he dictated to his scholars at Glasgow,—his Summarium Libri Jesaiae ... I am not sure but some of these may be in print. They are generally pretty large papers, of several sheets in writing.’²² He lists the following as being in his possession, of which there is now no obvious trace in the Wodrow Collections:

110. ‘Summarium Libri Jesaiae’

111. ‘Letter on the Resolutions’

112. ‘First Paper upon the Public Resolutions’

113. ‘Reply to Mr Patrick Gillespie and Mr James Guthrie’²³

Regarding the following, Wodrow says, ‘These I have not seen, but I know they are in the hands of ministers’

114. ‘Precepts for a daily Direction of a Christian’s Conversation’

115. ‘A Compend of his Sermons upon Jeremiah’

116. Sermons on the first nine chapters of the Epistle to the Romans.

117. There is also a sermon in Glasgow University Library MS Gen 441 on [? book hard to decipher] 7:23.

118. In a letter dated 1644, Robert Baillie expresses a desire that David Dickson’s MS ‘Covenant and Method of Preaching’ might be printed, which appears never to have happened. D. Laing (ed.), *Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie* (3 vols., Bannatyne Club, Edinburgh, 1841–42), Vol. 2, p. 196.

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS²⁴

119. Letter (24 May 1647) to Thomas Wyllie then Minister of Mauchline, (NLS, Wod.Qu.XXIX, f.75).

120. Letter (28 June 1647) to Thomas Wyllie then Minister of Mauchline, (NLS, Wod.Qu.XXIX, f.76).

121. Letter (30 June 1647) to Thomas Wyllie then Minister of Mauchline, (NLS, Wod.Qu.XXIX, f.78).

122. Letter (7 July 1659) to Thomas Wyllie, (NLS, Wod.Qu.XXIX, f.231).

123. Letter (5 May 1660) to Thomas Wyllie, (NLS, Wod.Qu.XXIX, f.239).

124. Letters and Papers (1651) (NLS, Wod.Qu.XXXII, ff. 65,149, 155).

125. Letter (1657), (NLS, Wod.Oct.XL, f.20v).

126. Draft letter, Edinburgh, 17 March [1660], of David Dickson, Robert Douglas and George Hutchison to James Sharp, concerning church government, (NLS, Wod.Fol.XXVI, f. 171),

127. Draft letter and postscript, Edinburgh, 20 March [1660], of David Dickson, Robert Douglas and George Hutchison to the Earls of Crawford and Lauderdale and Lord Sinclair, concerning the release from custody of the recipients, (NLS, Wod.Fol.XXVI, ff. 172–173).

128. Scroll letter, 4 June [1661] of David Dickson, Robert Douglas, James Hamilton, John Smith, Thomas Garvine and George Hutchison to Lauderdale concerning fears about a change of church government (NLS, Wod.Fol.XXVI, ff. 116–117).

Letters in University of Glasgow Library

The descriptions provided by the Library catalogue. The letters are of interest in relation to the response of leading churchmen in Scotland to the Restoration. They relate to the activities of James Sharp as their representative in London which would prove to be duplicious. Most of these are referenced and summarised in

21. *Select Biographies*, Vol. 2, p. 15

22. *Select Biographies*, Vol. 2, p. 15

23. It is possible that this is *A Reply To the late Printed Answer Given to the Letter, Directed by the Protesters To Their Brethren, Who are for carrying on of the Publick Resolutions, and for the Authority of the late Pretended Assemblies* (Evan Tyler, Leith, 1653).

24. Lady Anne Halkett apparently records a meditation in relation to David Dickson persuading her to marry James Halkett 1659–1660 (NLS, MS 6489, pp.47–55).

Robert Wodrow's *History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland*.²⁵

129. Copy of letter to General Monck from Mr David Dickson & Mr [Robert] Douglas (MS Gen 210, p. 1) Edinb: January 10 1660. Concerning the passing of information about the 'state of this church' to 'Brother Mr James Sharp' [Notes at the bottom of the page in another hand stating that the General before receiving the letter had 'some thought to this same purpose for [recording?] information of the affairs relating to Scotland']

130. Copy of 'Instructions for Mr Sharp'. From 'Mr David Dickson, Rot Douglas, James Wood, John Smyth, Geo: Hutcheston, An: Ker' (MS Gen 210, p. 3). 6 February 1660. Instructions include details that Mr Sharp is to '[?] the 'prejudice this church doth suffer by the [?] of the banking stipends' and that they should be applied according to the '20 act of parliament 1644'. Also he is to endeavour that ministers 'may have the benefits of the 39th Act of the Parliament [?] Act'

131. Copy of letter to L. General Monck From 'Mr David Dickson, Mr Rot Douglas, Mr Ja: Wood, Mr John Smyth, Mr Geo: Hutchestone' (MS Gen 210 - Item: pp. 3-4), Edinb:1656 [not a copy of no. 37 above. Glasgow University Library catalogues it as 1666 in error], Letter includes thanks to the Lord General for the 'passe' for Mr Sharp and the confidence that he will 'suffer no prejudice is so necessary and so innocent and undertaking.'

132. Copy of letter to 'Coll. Wotham [sic]' from 'Mr David Dickson, Mr Robert Douglas, Mr James Wood, Mr John Smyth, Mr Geo. Hutchestone (MS Gen 210, p. 5), 'Edinb: 1660' Mr Sharp to be sent to Lord General Monck and Collonell Wotham in the hope that 'the Lord who hath put one opportunity into your hands, will help you to [impress?] upon it for the advantage of the Gospel'. Hoped that through Mr Sharp's negotiations and their help relief will be given to 'this poor nation'

133. Copy of letter to Mr Calamy and Mr Ash from 'Mr David Dickson, Mr Robert Douglas, Mr Ja: Wood, Mr John Smyth, Mr Geo: Hutchestone', Edinburgh 6 February 1660, (MS Gen 210, pp. 5-6). Discusses Mr. Sharp in London.

134. Copy of letter to Mr. Sharp from Mr. David Dickson, Mr. Robert Douglas and Mr. George Hutchesone.

(MS Gen 210, pp. 24-25), Edinburgh March 17 1660. Noting surprise at goings on in London concerning them and their 'brethren' and their judgement on the coming government. States that 'We do now wonder at the information' as some of the group had never spoken to 'those who speak so in our name'. Appear to defend themselves against 'stories' regarding their opinion on the government. Summarised in Wodrow, *History*, Vol. I., p.11

135. Copy of letter to General Monck from Mr. David Dickson, Mr. Robert Douglas and Mr. George Hutchestone, (MS Gen 210, pp. 25-26), Edinburgh March 17 1660. Acknowledges the 'favourable return to our last (letter), wherein so much is expresses of your respect not only toward our selves in particular, but toward our office and calling and the work of the Gospel'. Discusses the settlement of the nation and the authors' high opinion of General Monck.

136. Copy of letter to the Earles of Crawford and Lauderdale and Lord Sinclair from Mr. David Dickinson [sic], Robert Douglas, James Hamilton, John Smyth and George Hutchestone. (MS Gen 210, pp. 32-33), Edinburgh [20]March 1660. Concerns the release of the recipients from the Tower of London. States that 'It hath not a little refreshed our spirits & encouraged us to bless the Lord our God that we hear of your Honours Liberation from your long captivity.' (see no.123 above).

137. Copy of letter to Mr. Sharp from Mr. Dickson and Mr. Douglas. (MS Gen 210, pp. 42-43), Edinburgh 24 March 1660. Summary of contents of letter from Broghill (12 March 1660).

138. Copy of letter to L. Genll. Monck from Mr. Dickson and Mr. Douglas. (MS Gen 210, p. 43), Edinburgh 24 March 1660. Concerns letter from Broghill and possibility of Sharp going to Broghill in Ireland. Suggests that Monck could give this some consideration.

139. Copy of letter to Lord Broghill from Mr. David Dickson and Mr. Robert Douglas. (MS Gen 210, pp. 43-45), Edinburgh 27 March 1660. Concerns the possibility of Sharp going to Ireland, stating that Broghill shall either see or hear from Sharp, noting that 'He (Sharp) is able to give you an account of the Generalls undertakings'. Also discusses the parliament, the government and the church.

140. Copy of letter to Lord Broghill from Mr. David Dickson, Robert Douglas and George Hutchestone. (MS Gen 210, pp. 45-47), Edinburgh 28 March 1660. Thanks Broghill for last letter and states that could not miss opportunity of messenger going straight to Ireland 'to express jointly some of the thoughts of out heart.'

25. Robert Wodrow *The history of the sufferings of the church of Scotland from the restoration to the revolution*, ed. Robert Burns, 4 vols. (Glasgow: Blackie, Fullarton & co., and A. Fullarton & co., Edinburgh, 1828-30), 1.4ff. See *Register of the Consultations of the Ministers of Edinburgh and Some Other Brethren of the Ministry: 1657-1660* (Edinburgh, 1930), vol. II p.193ff., for supplementary passages.

Discusses mutual sympathies such as the state of the church and religion and the settlement.

141. Copy of letter to the King Majesty from Mr. Robert Douglas, David Dickson, James Hamiltoun, John Smyth and George Hutcheſtone. (MS Gen 210, pp. 94–96), Edinburgh 8 May 1660. Short note before the letter states that ‘Receive the inclosed to the Kings Matie, with a true copie thereof for your ſelf to read. Deliver the letter at a fitt opportunity.’ Letter begins with comments of veneration toward the King, ſtating that they hope ‘to enjoy your majeſties perſone in your own domains, as a bright ſunſhine after a long and tempeſtuſous night.’ Discusses role which Sharp has played in events. States that the miniſters of ‘this church’ will ‘continue in their loyalties to authority and the maintenance of your full rights.’ Reproduced in Wodrow, *History*, Vol. I., pp.22–23.

142. Copy of letter to The King Majesty from Mr. Robert Douglas, David Dickson and George Hutcheſtone. (MS Gen 210, pp. 102–104), Edinburgh 10 May 1660. Discusses message from the King to the Houſes of Parliament. They wiſh to take the opportunity the expreſs their affection for the King and ſtates that they can inform the King of their afflictions whilſt under bondage. Expreſses pleaſure at the reſtoration of the King. Also diſcusses the Kings adherence to Presbyterianism. Reproduced in Wodrow, *History*, Vol. I., pp.24–25.

143. Copy of letter to Mr. Calamy, Aſh and Manton from Mr. David Dickson, Robert Douglas, James Hamiltoun, John Smyth and George Hutcheſtone (MS Gen 210, pp. 106–108), Edinburgh 12 May 1660. States that in paſt correſpondence have been reſreſhed regarding the English miniſters ſympathies toward their cauſe. Therefore, ‘we hold it our duty to pour out our hearts unto you upon occaſion of this ſignall revolution of affairs’. Continues that the Lord ‘is putting in our hands a bleſſed opportunity of advancing his Kingdome’. Discusses the King and the fate of Presbyterianism in England. Also concerns their obligations regarding the Covenant and the ſettling of the Government. Reproduced in Wodrow, *History*, Vol. I., pp.26–27.

144. Copy of letter to Mr. Sharp from Mr. David Dickson, Robert Douglas, James Hamiltoun, John Smyth and George Hutcheſtone. (MS Gen 210, pp. 124–125), Edinburgh 7 June 1660. States that they regard it as their duty, on account of their ‘ſolemne engagement to God, and of our brotherly affection and...to expreſs the thoughts of our hearts to ſome Reverend Miniſters of the City of London, for our owne exoneration, reſolving no further to intermeddle in the affairs of others.’ Discusses Sharps activities in London. Continues ‘We ſupport it is not

a deſperate work humbly to deal with Maj. (who is ſo excellent and moderat a prince) for the preventing of Episcopacy and the liturgy, which by experience they have found ſo bitter and prejudicial to themſelves, & many others in England.’ This ſeems to be the letter related in Wodrow, *History*, Vol. I., pp.34–35.

145. Copy of letter to Mr. Sharp from Mr. David Dickson, Mr. Robert Douglas, Mr. James Hamiltoun, Mr. John Smyth and Mr. George Hutcheſtone. (MS Gen 210, pp. 125–126), Edinburgh 9 June 1660. Discusses the ſettling of the Church.

146. Copy of letter to Mr. Sharp from Mr. David Dickson, Mr. Robert Douglas, Mr. James Wood, Mr. James Hamiltoun, Mr. John Smyth and SS Kerr. (MS Gen 210, pp. 138–139), Edinburgh 21 July 1660. States ‘Since his Matie hath thought it fitt that you ſhould returne and give us information of the ſtate of his affairs there (which we pary the Lord may be happily ſettled for the glory of his great name), the hone of the King Matie and the good of his ſubjects we are ſatisfied with your home coming upon that account.’ Says that they never intended to preſs Presbyterianism upon other Kirks. Again diſcusses the uſe of the ſervice book, preclacie and the ſynod of Divines.

147. Copy of letter from the ‘preſbyterie of Edinburgh their humble Returne to his Majeſties.’ (MS Gen 210, pp. 189–191), Edinburgh 20 September 1660. Acknowledges receipt of letter from the King ‘and, in obedience to your Royal command, therein contained, have tranſmitted copies thereof to all the preſbyteries in this your Matie ancient Kingdome’. States that it has revived their ſpirits to know that their church will be preſerved and protected without violation. Discusses how good people are comforted in the expreſſions for moderation, ‘your abhorrence of profanity and your tender favour to faithful miniſters’. Also concerns the ſettling of the Church Government. 32 ſignatories including Douglas, Dickson, Hamiltoun and Smyth. This ſeems likely to be the letter printed in Wodrow, *History*, Vol. I., pp.82–83.

148. Copy of letter to the Earle of Middletoun from Mr. David Dickson, Robert Douglas, Robert Lawrie, Geo: Hutcheſone & John Smyth. (MS Gen 210, pp. 195–197), Edinburgh 13 November 1660. Letter begins ‘Tho we have not had the opportunity theſe years paſt to expreſs to your Lo/ how much we ſympathizes in your afflictions which you chearfully endured amongſt others in his Matie cauſe of ſervice’ ſtates that they conſidered it their duty to let Middletoun know of their affections. Discusses Middletouns poſt as Commiſſioner for the King.

149. Wodrow references a letter written by Dickson and Hutcheson to Lauderdale on 10 November 1660, Vol.I, p.86

POETRY

In addition to the poems already mentioned [items 1, 4, 15, 18], Wodrow attributes the following to Dickson. It is likely that these were printed as chapbooks or broadsides because printed copies do not seem to have survived.

150. *Sight through a Glass, and Face to Face.*

151. *The Christian Sacrifice.*

152. *O Mother Dear Jerusalem!*²⁶

MISATTRIBUTED

The Advantage Of Being In The House Of Mourning (1818)²⁷

CONCLUSION

Dickson was prolific in his published writings, but a fuller picture of his writings has not been possible thus far due to the lack of a bibliography of this nature. This brief note has identified many more than one hundred items. Some items clearly identified as extant during Robert Wodrow's time may well still emerge in a more

thorough search and indexing of the archives held by various libraries and institutions. Items such as the expositions of Isaiah, Jeremiah and the bulk of Romans would be particularly attractive to those who have valued his other publications.

In the meantime, fruitful avenues of research are possible. It is a little strange that Dickson has been neglected while there have been scholarly intellectual biographies of Dickson's contemporaries such as Samuel Rutherford, Robert Baillie and Alexander Henderson. Indeed, there has been little direct focus on his writing beyond a focus on his covenant theology and aspects of his writing on the subject of conscience. He was a central figure in the movement resisting the Articles of Perth, the Second Reformation and the Public Resolutions controversy.²⁸ He was a key theologian and preacher during this period. There is extensive correspondence available for those who may wish to explore the events of the Resolutions controversy and the political repercussions leading up to the Restoration.

Dickson's preaching has received little attention, yet he was regarded as one of the foremost expositors of his time. An appreciation of the wider body of material available for research should help to facilitate this sort of study. ■

26. The history of this poem is complicated. The earliest English version is probably that of William Prid, *The glasse of vaine-glorie: faithfully translated (out of S. Augustine his booke, intituled, Speculum peccatoris) into English* (London, 1585), p. 60ff. A related poem by 'F.B.P', beginning 'Hierusalem my happie home', is nearly contemporary, and shares common patristic sources; see J. Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology* (London, 1907, reprinted 1957), pp. 580–583. The version attributed to Dickson seems to be a combination of these two. For further discussion, see Horatius Bonar in *The New Jerusalem: a hymn of the olden time* (Edinburgh, 1852), pp. xxi-xxii; William C. Prime,

O Mother Dear Jerusalem! The Old Hymn, its Origin and Genealogy (New York, 1865), pp. xxxi-xxxii.

27. This was a sermon preached in 1818 by Rev David Dickson (1780–1842), Nathan D. Holsteen incorrectly identifies it as by the earlier Dickson.

28. David Stevenson identified Dickson as belonging to what he calls 'the radical Kirk party' which was associated with opposition to read prayers and promotion of conventicles. David Stevenson, "Conventicles in the Kirk: The Emergence of a Radical Party, 1619–37," *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, 18 (1974), pp.99–114.

The Westminster Assembly and 17th Century English Radicalism: Resolutions and Reformations

By Clif Daniell

INTRODUCTION

“Resolutions are easily made but difficult to keep.” Such a statement can be simply verified by examining one’s progress with New Year’s goals or commitments to lose weight and eat healthier. However, it is also true on a larger scale with political or religious institutions. Amidst governmental and social upheaval, on June 12, 1643, England’s Parliament resolved to begin ecclesiastical reforms “as may be most agreeable to God’s holy word, and most apt to procure and preserve the peace of the Church at home, and nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland, and other Reformed Churches abroad; and for the better effecting thereof, and for the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the Church of England from all false calumnies and aspersions, it is thought fit and necessary to call an Assembly of learned, godly, and judicious divines.”¹ This was a resolution that from the outset would be difficult to achieve due to the nature of the religious problems in England. It was a statement calling for unanimity in an environment where conflict had become standard fare.

To bring this unity, the polity structure of the church needed to be reconditioned, along with its measures for disciplining pastors and members of congregations. Mechanisms for evaluating prospective ministers required attention, as did the fleshing out of preexisting doctrinal formulations—the Thirty-nine Articles.² All of these endeavors posed significant challenges for the Assembly. Yet, the divines were also summoned for the purpose of dealing with “false calumnies and aspersions.” They were charged with responding to, what was deemed, the aberrant views of religious groups like Roman Catholics and Arminians, and more recent ones that, in the early 17th century, began to emerge in England. In the 1630s, a small number of radical religious groups had found their way from the continent into London and the surrounding areas. By the time

the Assembly gathered in 1643, the ground had become fertile for radicalism to sprout with numerous sectarian communities emerging. In the mind of many, they were like gangrene—bringers of death. Given their growth in the 1640’s, and the danger they posed, how did the Assembly interact and respond to 17th century English radicalism? And why did they do so with earnestness and forthrightness? What do the minutes and papers of the Assembly reveal? What do the writings of the divines suggest? This essay will seek to respond to such questions and show: 1. The divines *realized* the serious threat to religious unity that these groups presented. 2. The nature of how the Assembly *opposed* them. 3. And an *explanation* as to why they were adamantly against sectarian groups gaining a foothold in England.

1. REALIZATION

By the time of the Assembly, fighting between Parliamentary forces and King Charles I was in full swing. One of the consequences was a breakdown of the religious censorship that had developed in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. Not only did this cause tension between Laudian and Puritan parties, as polemical tracts were passed between the two, but it also allowed ideas that earlier were regarded as heretical to come to the surface of English society. At the outset of the war, there were still repercussions for publicly espousing unorthodox views; however, they were less stringently and widely enforced. Consequently, newfound freedoms were experienced by radical groups, especially

THE AUTHOR: Clif Daniell (MDiv RTS-Atlanta, 2011) is an Associate Pastor at Grace Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Douglasville, GA. He is pursuing a ThM at Westminster Philadelphia.

1. William Beveridge, *A Short History of the Westminster Assembly* (Greenville: Reformed Academic Press, 1993), pp. 1–2.

2. Chad Van Dixhoorn, *God’s Ambassador’s* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2017), p. 34–35.

in disseminating their ideas in print. The seemingly chaotic and less-centralized nature of the war allowed for greater circulation of a variety of political, religious, and social perspectives. In 1640, just 22 tracts were published promoting radical ideas. In 1642, one year before the meeting of the Assembly, 2,000 were printed and distributed.³ As the Westminster Divines gathered on

3. Andrew Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell's England* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), xii–xiii.

4. J.S. Morrill, "The Puritan Revolution," *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, ed. by John Coffey and P. C. H. Lim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 76–77.

5. See Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 1972).

6. D.R. Como, *Blown by the Spirit: Puritanism and the Emergence of an Antinomian Underground in Pre-Civil War England* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 393.

7. George Hunston Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Kirkville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2000), pp. 1197–1211.

8. Perhaps a more basic question is, "what is a radical?" Or "what constitutes radicalism?" It's a question that holds much significance for the modern world considering the bombings, shootings, and territorial conquests of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Such actions are often identified as 'radical.' Yet, it is a word that is hard to define. Originally, it referred to the root of something or what was fundamental. However, in the 18th century, 'radicalism' began to be associated with political and social innovation. And today, it is a term applied to people and groups seeking change distinctly different from the status quo. Though the word was not employed as a reference to sectarian movements until the 19th century, it is used by historians to describe earlier individuals and communities seeking political, social, and religious change—like 17th century English radicalism. Contra a more nominalistic understanding of the view of language development and usage, justification for calling 'Protestant groups' (not Roman Catholic nor Orthodox) like Ranters, Diggers, and Familists radical is that there is not another word which better conveys their nature pre-1800. What makes this discussion even more complex is that these various communities identified one another as imbibing radical ideas. This goes to show that history is knotty and messy. For the purposes of this essay, I am using radicalism within the context of mid-17th century England to describe different groups that were not only or simply Arminian in their theology or Independent in their polity. I am doing this not to exclude them from the discussion, but to help narrow the focus of this treatment of English sectarianism. To include, Arminianism and Independency, is to bite off more than I can chew. An example would be John Goodwin. Was he a radical? Many said yes given his Arminian and Independent bent. And yet, he vehemently argued against Antinomians, Socinians, and Quakers. For more on this debate see *Radical Voices, Radical Ways*, ed. Laurent Curelly and Nigel Smith (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016) 1–37; Andrew Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell's England*, xi–xxvi; *Varieties of 17th and Early 18th Century English Radicalism in Context*, ed. Ariel Hessayon and David Finnegan (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2011) 1–29; John Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution* (Rochester: Boydell Press, 2006).

9. See, John White, *The First Centvry of Scandalous, Malignant Priests, Made and Admitted Into Benefices by the Prelates, in Whose Hands the Ordination of Ministers and Government of the Church Hath Been* (1643) and Chad Van Dixhoorn, *God's Ambassadors*, pp. 4–5.

July 1, 1643, aberrant views were continuing to grow. The extent to which is a source of debate. Some have argued that the emergence of sectarianism is overblown with "the vast majority of the population [going] into their own parish churches."⁴ Others seem to indicate that England was on the verge of a populist revolt with religious fanatics leading the way.⁵ Perhaps, a more modest description is best. While most people did attend a local congregation on a weekly basis, nonetheless, radicalism was more freely espoused and embraced, with the documentary evidence from the time representing "the tip of the historical iceberg."⁶

Much of the radicalism that flowered during the 1640's and 50's originated from various strands of continental Anabaptism. They took root during Edward VI's reign and remained largely hidden, until the onset of the Civil War. Yet, there is something distinctly 'English' about some of the sectarianism that flourished on the island. It was not simply a repackaging or re-expression of earlier ideas. Perhaps that was part of the reason why they were growing.⁷ However, the fact that these communities were becoming more prevalent leading up to Parliament's summoning of the divines proposes some important questions—who were these radical groups, and what were their views?⁸ In response, one could take a systematic method, outlining each. Yet, to do so might lend itself to unnecessary repetition, given the similarities between sectarians like Muggletonians and Socinians. Therefore, a general approach will be undertaken, centered on three distinct and, at times, overlapping areas of thought in 17th century English radicalism.

Ethical

To the divines gathered at Westminster Abbey, morality seemed to be in decline within the nation. And nowhere did that appear more evident than in London itself. Leading up to their summoning, Parliament had already established a committee to remove ministers in the area whose lives were scandalous. And a few months after, John White, a member of the Assembly himself, catalogued numerous cases of London clergy engaged in womanizing, rape, battery, verbal abuse, misogyny, foul language, and much more.⁹ However, the ethical concerns did not stop nor start with ministers. The divines recognized that various groups had emerged, which either diminished the Law's application to the Christian life or dismissed Scripture's teaching on its importance altogether. Such false instruction was having an impact in London and throughout the country. On July 19, 1643, just a few weeks after starting, the Assembly quickly petitioned both houses of Parliament to

declare a national fast for July 21. One reason for doing so was to stress the effect of various ‘anti-Law’ groups.

In connection to this, Parliamentary forces had lost a series of battles against the king during the early summer of 1643. It was seen as a sign of God’s judgment upon the nation, which the Assembly believed, in part, stemmed from an open door to “all Libertinisme and disobedience to God and man,” resulting from the “bold venting of corrupt doctrines.” Moreover, they saw fornication, adultery, incest, and other moral heinousness as particularly prevalent.¹⁰ ‘Ranter’ sectarian communities had developed and were thriving, especially those using biblical categories to twist traditionally orthodox positions. Ethically, their ideals centered on the article, “There is no sin,” because, in their minds, the moral aspects of the Mosaic Law had been abrogated.¹¹ Furthermore, they asserted, “There is no such act as drunkenness, adultery and theft in God.... Whatever act soever is done by thee in light and love, is light and lovely, though it be called that act of adultery.”¹² A true Believer was indwelt by the Spirit and was therefore made unable to sin, via a kind of quasi-divinization. For some, this expressed itself in sexual promiscuity. Abiezer Copper provocatively noted, “I can if it be my will, kiss and hug ladies and love my neighbor’s wife as myself, without sin.”¹³ For others moral laxity expressed itself in public swearing, even while preaching.

However, another form of Ranterism wholly rejected Scripture, describing it as a “Tale,” a “dead Letter,” and “a bundle of contradictions.” They only used its verbiage polemically in order to validate their anti-commandment practice. The righteous rules of Scripture were seen as “fruits of the curse” with “sin and holinesse [as] all one to God.”¹⁴ Both of the aforementioned expressions of Ranterism were in the purview of the Assembly, as they called for Parliament to set aside time for a national fast. And yet, it seems that neither was the primary ‘ethical target’ the divines were focused upon. Most of the ‘anti-Legal’ sectarians mentioned in the Assembly minutes do not appear to fall into a ‘Ranter’ category. Instead, they were identified as antinomians.¹⁵ In particular, it was a “soteriological antinomianism” that they realized was a problem, because these antinomians placed an emphasis upon the completed work of Christ, which appeared to exclude any form of human activity in the ‘wider doctrine of salvation.’ Essentially, they made justification ultimate—swallowing up any need for sanctification, as mortification and vivification.¹⁶ Part of this line of argumentation stemmed from their belief that the Decalogue was suspended for Christians. The Old Testament was under the administration of the

Covenant of Works, while the New was one of grace, established on the sacrifice of Christ. This left the time from creation to John the Baptist governed by obedience to the Law. Justification was gained through strict adherence to it. Yet, in the Gospel age, it was based on the work of Christ.¹⁷ By extension then, the Law was not needed. Its only purpose was salvific in nature—a means of meriting eternal rest. Since that had been accomplished by Christ—actively and passively—there was really no place for the moral dictums of the Old Testament. In fact, any New Testament passages making ethical demands or providing warnings are only for the unregenerate and should be preached as such.¹⁸ However, antinomians did not press this ‘anti-Law’ spirit to its logical conclusion—unlike the Ranters. They did not relegate morality so far to the sidelines that it was wholly renounced for the Believer. Nonetheless, they did view the “duties of the faith” or even attending to the means of grace, which Reformed Orthodoxy encouraged, as snares leading to legalism. Seeing growth in holiness as evidence of saving faith was identified as

10. “Petition to both houses of parliament for a fast 19 July 1643,” in Calendar of papers of the Westminster assembly, in *The Minutes and Papers of the Westminster Assembly*, 5 vols., ed. Chad Van Dixhoorn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 5, 9–11. Hereafter, *MPWA*.

11. See Andrew Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell’s England*, p. 80. Also, note his discussion of the extent to which Ranterism was actually a movement or just a common set of views held and expressed by many, pp. 75–93.

12. Lawrence Clarkson, *A Single Eye*, pp. 8–12, in Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 215.

13. Quoted in Andrew Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell’s England*, p. 84.

14. Paul Lim, *Mystery Unveiled: The Crisis of the Trinity in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 86–87.

15. The word ‘antinomian’ is difficult to define, historically speaking. No doubt, Ranters, to an extent, fall into this category, because essentially, they were ‘anti-law of God.’ Nonetheless, most Ranters were not identified with antinomianism—not by the Westminster Divines and not by those who were known as antinomians. Those labeled as such distanced themselves from the Ranters, because they saw them as going too far, and deemed them as “non-nomianists.” See D.R. Como, *Blown by the Spirit: Puritanism and the Emergence of an Antinomian Underground in Pre-Civil War England*, pp. 10–72, 454.

16. Robert Letham, *The Westminster Assembly: Reading Its Theology in Historical Context* (Phillipsburg: P & R Publishing, 2009), pp. 250–251 and Whitney Gamble, *Christ and the Law: Antinomianism at the Westminster Assembly* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2018), pp. 15–18, 52–56.

17. Whitney Gamble, *Christ and the Law: Antinomianism at the Westminster Assembly*, pp. 41–42.

18. Particularly note Whitney Gamble, *Christ and the Law: Antinomianism at the Westminster Assembly*, and her treatment of antinomian John Eaton, pp. 14–20.

Pharisaical enslavement. Believers needed to remember the passiveness of their justification and sanctification. Though they were depraved and utterly lost, Christ had found them. As a result, in their “post-conversion state they were transformed into exalted beings.” Therefore, a perfectionism ‘of sorts’ characterized them.¹⁹ The implications for preaching to the regenerate were that a homiletic which included *simil iustus et peccator* was unbiblical.²⁰ Instead, proclamation that focused only on *iustificatus fide sine operibus* was necessary.²¹ Law and admonishments to the justified in Christ would not motivate holiness, but rather encourage legalism and put them back underneath the Covenant of Works. All that was required for the regenerate was preaching justification in Christ without human activity.

It was these things that caused the Assembly great concern. From their perspective anti-Law teaching, while espousing some things that were true, misapplied the Covenant of Works to include the entire Old Testament administration—disregarding its connection to the Covenant of Grace—and it conflated the *duplex gratia*.²² Justification and sanctification were so interwoven that good works were not seen as evidences

of saving faith.²³ Their concern was, antinomians, at best, were spreading misguided and confusing teaching, and at worst, they were espousing heresy. The influence of their ideas led the divines to quickly present to the House of Commons a statement of antinomian errors, with Scripture proofs and citations from the Thirty-nine Articles. A few weeks later, on October 10, 1643, the Assembly went even further and petitioned Parliament to suppress their errors and restrict the publishing of their works. In addition, the Assembly itself established its own committee on antinomianism in order to review the literature on the subject, discuss its impact, and recommend appropriate responses.²⁴ While aberrant views of an ethical nature from sectarians were a major concern for the divines, they were not the only cause for alarm. Other radical groups had emerged and required a response.

Rational

The Westminster Divines were aware of the debates surrounding the Synod of Dort. James I had sent representatives to participate in it. The outcome was a thoroughgoing denunciation of Arminian thought. This had implications not just for the Dutch but the English as well. Remonstrant beliefs and practices were deemed unacceptable in most Protestant circles. However, towards the end of James’ reign, Arminianism began to see greater growth, with the king favoring it for diplomatic purposes. His son, Charles I, supported it even more, appointing William Laud to archbishop of Canterbury—a noted Arminian.²⁵ This caused considerable tension within the nation as a whole and especially in the church. Much of the immediate reasons for the Civil War can be traced along the Laudian/Puritan divide. As the Assembly came to meet in 1643, the conflict between Arminianism and Reformed Orthodoxy was still fresh, but it began to move in a slightly different direction, as a group with connections to Arminianism became established in England during the 1640’s—the Socinians. Generally, their roots lay with the anti-Trinitarian thought that developed in the early Reformation. More specifically, they were connected to Laelius and Faustus Socinus—16th and 17th century Italian uncle and nephew anti-Trinitarians. By the time of the Assembly meetings, anti-Trinitarian literature had begun to impact the English religious landscape, with the Socinians being viewed as formidable and destructive. They appealed to ‘liberty of conscience’ as a basis for their views, along with an over-literalistic hermeneutic—all seen through the lens of reason.²⁶ Therefore, they were largely committed to the use of biblical

19. Specifically, in this way, antinomians shared some of the same views as various Ranter groups. They had been filled by the Spirit of Christ, divinized to an extent—volitionally perfected. The ethical link established here, in part, reveals that antinomianism spawned other groups—like the Ranters—that went further than they did by seeking to dismiss moral boundaries as a whole. See, D. R. Como, *Blown by the Spirit*, pp. 10–24, 33–38.

20. At once righteous and a sinner. See Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Terms*.

21. Justification by faith without works. See Muller, *ibid*.

22. *Duplex gratia*, the dual graces of Justification and Sanctification. Cf. John Calvin, *Institutes*, Book III, c. XI, §I.

23. Whitney Gamble, *Christ and the Law: Antinomianism at the Westminster Assembly*, pp. 42–64. She also provides other summative and distinctive marks of antinomians.

24. MPWA, 5.25–26. For a more detailed description of this committee’s work on antinomianism and that of the Assembly see Whitney Gamble, *Christ and the Law: Antinomianism at the Westminster Assembly*.

25. During this time, Arminianism in England was less focused on opposing Calvinistic predestinarian and salvific doctrines. (That would change as the 17th century progressed. See John Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution* [Rochester, Boydell Press, 2006], especially pp. 199–232.) English Arminians like Laud largely sided with the Dutch Remonstrants on such issues; however, their expression of Arminianism was more concerned with ceremonial worship, emphasis on the Sacraments, and a high view of the clergy and the liturgy. For the Reformed orthodox of the day, this was not only seen as an attack on what they viewed as orthodoxy and orthopraxy, but also a re-institution of certain Roman Catholic elements. Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation* (New York, Penguin Books, 2003), pp. 513–520.

26. Paul Lim, *Mystery Unveiled*, p. 78.

texts to support their arguments, in addition to a budding rationalism.²⁷ They were bibliocists, who were accused of believing “God and his Word ... no farther than they [could] see reason.” Rationality was their *regula fidei*.²⁸ They simply wanted to submit themselves to the teachings of Scripture, while using “unbiased reason” to inform and shape their understanding of it, regardless of whether previous generations in Church history agreed with them.²⁹

With Scripture and syllogistic principles in hand, Socinians in England pushed against the commonly held doctrines of the faith, particularly the Trinity. Prior to the 1640’s, censorship had significantly limited their influence and adherents. However, as the 17th century progressed, the effect of their teaching was felt ‘in the pew,’ with an increasing number being charged with moving beyond forms of error, like Arminianism, to unorthodox positions, mainly regarding the divinity of the Son and Spirit.³⁰ Here, Socinians denied God as three persons. For them, ‘person’ constituted concreteness and separation. Just as the term refers to independent existence for mankind, so also the same should apply to God.³¹ Hence, the divine cannot be one essence and at the same time three subsistencies. It was deemed conceptually illogical. Hermeneutically, the passages used in various confessional documents to support the orthodox delineations of *homoousios* and *perichoresis* were understood to be misinterpreted.³² Applying a strict literalism to biblical texts, they viewed God as one person, identified as the Father. They judged Christ to be purely human, but also elevated him to a mediatorial role between God and man. In their minds, the incarnation was untenable and, more specifically, the hypostatic union un-believable. In addition, the Spirit was simply a “personification” of divine action in the world—“A virtue or energy flowing from God to men.”³³ Of particular note, Socinians affirmed the Spirit as a gift. Moreover, because the Spirit was such, they surmised that divinity cannot be logically true.³⁴

The Assembly recognized the danger of these views and repeatedly condemned them, especially as they were taught by Paul Best. On numerous occasions his name appears in the Minutes and Papers of the Assembly and in Parliament’s records.³⁵ Such repetition reveals that the concern the divines had was not only focused on Best, but also on an overly rationalistic and bibliocist approach to understanding Theology Proper and the notion of personhood within the divine. For the Assembly members, the doctrine of the Trinity and its theological and practical implications were under attack, and it was a fight for the soul of Christianity.³⁶ The triune nature

of the one God would be compromised and biblical revelation as the epistemic ground of religious knowledge and experience would be replaced with reason. Yet, as the Assembly carried on, another category of radicalism was becoming more established—one in some ways contrary to the ethical and rational, and in others very similar.

Spiritual

During the mid-1520s, the ideas of Thomas Muntzer and the Zwickau Prophets swept across Middle Germany and eventually made their way to the Dutch lowlands. There was a ‘Revolutionary Spiritualism’ ushered in by what Anabaptists thought was ‘a new age of the Spirit’ that had come, bringing social egalitarianism, economic equality, and ecclesiastical deconstruction. Fundamentally, these ‘Enthusiasts’ stressed the continuation of divine dreams and direct revelation, while, in varying degrees, neglecting the importance of the Scriptures, Sacraments, and the ministry of the Church. *Solus Spiritus* was their mantra, rather than *Sola Scriptura*. Spiritualists’ emphases began to cross the Channel by the 1570s, as the Family of Love (Familist) emerged in

27. Phillip Dixon *Nice and Hot Disputes: The Doctrine of the Trinity in the Seventeenth Century* (London: T & T Clark, 2003), p. 39.

28. Rule of Faith. John McLachlan, *Socinianism in Seventeenth Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1951), pp. 251–252. There is some debate regarding the extent to which Socinianism can be characterized by rationalism. See Alan W. Gomes, “Reason Run Amok? The Protestant Orthodox Charge of Rationalism Against Socinus,” in *Church and School in Early Modern Protestantism*, ed. Jordan J. Ballor, David S. Sytsma, and Jason Zuidema (Leiden: Brill Academic, 2013), pp. 551–565.

29. Kelly Kapic, “The Spirit as Gift: Explorations in John Owen’s Pneumatology,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to John Owen’s Theology*, eds. Kelly Kapic and Mark Jones (Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012), p. 116.

30. Dewey Wallace, “Puritan Polemical Divinity and Doctrinal Controversy,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, p. 219.

31. For Socinians, language regarding God functions in a univocal fashion. There is, then, no real difference between the “way in which ‘person’ is used of God and how it is used of men ... [Therefore] the assertion that God is three ‘persons’ is tantamount to asserting that there are three absolutely separate gods, much as Peter, James, and John are three separate human beings.” See Phillip Dixon, *Nice and Hot Disputes*, pp. 50–53.

32. See the terms and under “Trinitas” in Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Terms*.

33. *The Racovian catechism, with notes and illustrations; translated from the Latin. To which is prefixed a sketch of the history of Unitarianism in Poland and the adjacent countries Racovian Catechism*, (1605; edited by Thomas Rees, London, 1818), pp. 284–285. See also, Phillip Dixon, *Nice and Hot Disputes*, p. 41.

34. *The Racovian Catechism*, p. 285.

35. See MPWA, Session 451, 10 June 1645, 3.614–615.

36. Phillip Dixon, *Nice and Hot Disputes*, pp. 48–64.

England. This group asserted the notion that the inner impressions and leadings of the Spirit should take precedence over the external Word.³⁷

By the time of the Assembly, these ideas were part and parcel with certain strands of antinomianism. If the Spirit's indwelling of the Believer made perfectionism a reality, then it was not a far stretch for the same 'filling' to allow for ongoing revelation that even superseded the Scriptures. "Have not I the Spirit, and why may not I write the Scripture as well as Paul, and what I write be as binding and infallible as that which Paul writ?" wrote one Ranter.³⁸ For the Enthusiasts, the divinized man or woman knew God's words in an 'immediate' fashion through the inner light of the Spirit. An extreme expression of this manifested itself through the Muggletonians who saw Lodowicke Muggleton and John Reeve as the embodiment of the two witnesses in Revelation 11. Their words were seen as above Scripture, even at times critiquing and correcting it.³⁹ A more common display of this 'inner light theology' was found in the teachings of the Quakers. Through people like George Fox and James Nayler, Quakerism spread rapidly during the early 1650s—particularly their focus on the Spirit above the Scriptures. This did not mean that mediated revelation like the Bible was unimportant for life—God sometimes did work through such means. However,

37. For connections between German and Dutch Anabaptism and English Spiritualism see George Huntston Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, pp. 120–136, 1190–1211, 1289–1311, and Andrew Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell's England*, pp. xviii–xix.

38. Quoted in Ronald Knox, *Enthusiasm; A Chapter in the History of Religion, with Special Reference to the XVII and XVIII Centuries* (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 173.

39. Andrew Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell's England*, pp. 139–141.

40. Catie Gill, "English Radicalism in the 1650s: the Quaker Search for the True Knowledge," in *Radical Voices, Radical Ways*, pp. 80–81.

41. T.L. Underwood, *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb's War: The Baptist-Quaker Conflict in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 21–26.

42. An explanation of early Quaker views on the relationship between Scripture and the Spirit is difficult to nail down. In part, this is because in the beginning stages of the movement there was great diversity. Over time those perspectives were challenged, so that by the end of the 17th century, Quakerism's teaching on the 'inner light' became more firmly established. Yet, even early on, it is clear that the Spirit 'inwardly known' stands as superior to Scripture. See Geoffrey Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 34–47, Ronald Knox, *Enthusiasm*, pp. 139–175, and T.L. Underwood, *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb's War*, pp. 20–33.

43. Garnet Howard Milne, *The Westminster Confession of Faith and the Cessation of Special Revelation* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), pp. 295–297.

44. One could further divide radical teaching along the line of

they insisted on the predominance of immediacy, as they believed was experienced among New Testament Christians. The mystical and inner revelatory work of the Spirit was central. Therefore, they were not so much 'anti-Scripture,' but 'anti-Scripture alone,' allowing for the personal experience of the Spirit to trump all else. As members of the Assembly were looking to their Bibles for instruction and guidance, Quakers increasingly set it aside in favor of 'a turn to within themselves,' where the Spirit was moving each person.⁴⁰ It is true that Quakerism was not specifically referenced in the Minutes and Papers—again, it developed in the 1650s and most of the Assembly's work was completed before then. Nevertheless, the spiritualist foundations of Quaker theology were already prevalent, as Parliament called the divines together.

Prior to the 1650's, Fanatical groups were asserting that the Bible was insufficient as the 'rule of faith.' In fact, to see it as such was to become legalistic and 'a slave in Egypt once again.' Turning away from the light within and only obeying the 'Letter,' was to follow in the steps of the Scribes and Pharisees.⁴¹ Yet, as this spiritualist paradigm developed, an inner Christ-and-community-consciousness was their interpretive grid and final authority on religious matters. An experience of the Spirit known within the unity of community was their epistemological foundation.⁴² By the time the divines were summoned, Familists and Antinomians were spreading new interpretations of Scripture, and the need to have private revelations. And as their meetings carried on, until being dissolved in 1652, Quakerism's inner-light theology was taking hold.⁴³ For the Westminster Assembly, spiritualist arguments against the authority of the Word were a repackaging of Roman Catholic polemics contra *Sola Scriptura*—the 'Word alone' is not sufficient—and it shows the nature of what the divines were up against. Ethical, rational, and spiritual radicals were shifting between revolving epistemic grounds—reason and experience—while Roman Catholics/Laudians were often supplementing or substituting the Scriptures for tradition and the magisterium.

The summons that Parliament put forth called for doctrinal and ecclesiastical unanimity. However, the overall religious milieu of England was anything but unified, and this was made even more obvious given the rise and influence of radical groups. The Assembly realized it, and as a convening body and individually, as ministers, they sought to respond to the "false calumnies and aspersions" sectarian communities were spreading.⁴⁴ Thus, their recognition of radicalism's impact led to a public opposition of it.

2. OPPOSITION

Assembly commissioner Robert Baillie identified England of the 1640s as “democratick anarchie.” Radicalism appeared to be rampant and spreading like wildfire, though, he and other Presbyterians were given to overstatement and sensationalism in describing the extent of the religious landscape of the day. Nonetheless, sectarian groups were increasing in number, influencing the church, and causing varying levels of social disorder.⁴⁵ Thomas Edwards’ *Gangraena* (1646), gives an example of this by describing the scope of radicalism in and around London. Edwards classified the various views he chronicled into well over a hundred different categories. Even though he was not a member of the Assembly, many of the divines aided him in his study, read his finished work, and contributed their own treatises on the matter. They and others like them, while at times exaggerating the state of chaos brought upon England by radical groups, did base their assessments upon ‘actual’ or ‘real’ encounters and communications experienced directly, or passed on.⁴⁶

Therefore, the commissioners gathering at Westminster Abbey realized that fanatical teaching was scorching the land. And, it was “the duty of all compassionate Country-men to contribute the uttermost of their best endeavours for the extinguishing of these unhappie Flames, before the remainder of all our Churches and States be burnt down to ashes.”⁴⁷ Individual commissioners, and the Assembly as a whole, took seriously Parliament’s charge to respond to the “false calumnies and aspersions” schismatics and Enthusiasts were promulgating. The problem, as they saw it, was essentially one of ‘liberty.’ Radicals included the word in hundreds of tract titles in the 1640s and 50s. In their minds, the Reformation had brought freedom in thought and practice from traditional religious institutions, which included the Church of England. This encouraged a spirit of ‘open-mindedness’ amongst them that, at least in principle, meant radical views were to be tolerated.⁴⁸ However, this was a perspective the Westminster Assembly saw as divisive and dangerous. The divines were keen to emphasize in chapter 20 of the Westminster Confession that the Christian has liberty of conscience, but only in so far as it is consistent with the doctrines and practices of Scripture. To them, ‘the fanatics’ had gone outside the bounds of allowable religious liberty, were destroying the church, and needed to be publicly and ecclesiastically resisted—to this opposition this essay now turns.⁴⁹

Anti-Antinomianism

In 1644, the Assembly asserted that the ethical liberties being encouraged were constructing an England where “brutish ignorance and palpable darknesse [were] possessing the greatest part of the people in all places of the Kingdome, whereby [they] are utterly unfit to waite upon God in any holy duty.”⁵⁰ But even earlier, as discussions on the floor unfolded, the same sentiments were expressed. In a statement from the committee on antinomianism, Thomas Temple noted to the gathered commissioners, “[Anti-legal] opinions open a gap to all manner of licentiousness and strike at the very power of godlynesse.”⁵¹ In other words, while some antinomian ministers may not have encouraged a ‘Ranter-like’ shameful lifestyle, their views on the role of the law in the Christian life logically led to an ‘anything goes’ conclusion. “If Christ [has] fulfilled the law, man [is] not bound to fulfill the law.” In response, Thomas Goodwin commented during session 50 of the Assembly meetings, “[To the aforementioned claim] if Christ fulfilled the law, we are not bound[,] Answer, the same answer as before: not to the same end are we bound; he fulfilled it for Justification.” And other divines continued his train of thought and asserted the law’s importance in sanctification.⁵² Christ’s meeting the legal demands of the law did not eradicate the need to obey them.

ecclesiastical, since many radicals had a low view of the church, given their penchant to diminish the importance of the Word, audible and visible, and its public administration. This will be explored and responded to in subsequent sections of the essay. Additionally, the category of communal could also be used to describe a ‘communitistic bent’ that various radicals expressed, where property was shared amongst all—note the group ‘True Levellers.’ For ecclesiastical and communal distinctions see Andrew Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell’s England*, pp. 51–74, 95–115; Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, pp. 107–150; Jean-Pierre Cavaille “Community of goods: An Unacceptable Radical Theme at the Time of the English Revolution,” in *Radical Voices, Radical Ways*, pp. 41–59.

45. Chad Van Dixhoorn, *God’s Ambassadors*, pp. 34–35.

46. *God’s Ambassadors*, p. 35. But also see Anna Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 169–187. In it, she validates the nature of Edwards’ sources but not necessarily the extent of his descriptions.

47. Robert Baillie, *A Dissuasive From the Errors of the Time* (1645), 1.

48. John Morrill, “The Puritan Revolution,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, pp. 67–79.

49. George Gillespie, *A Late Dialogue Between a Civilian and a Divine, Concerning the Present Condition of the Church of England* (1644), pp. 30–32, and Samuel Rutherford, “A brotherly and free Epistle to the patrons and friends of pretended Liberty of Conscience,” in *A Survey of the Spirituall AntiChrist* (1648), a2–c2.

50. MPWA, “Petition to both houses of parliament for a fast 19 July 1643,” 5.10.

51. MPWA, Session 59, 20 September 1643, 2.143.

52. MPWA, Session 50, 11 September 1643, 2.95–97. The Assembly’s

Antinomians like John Eaton and John Saltmarsh went even further by arguing that Christ's justifying work removed the presence of sin in the life of a Believer, because union with a "sow, or filthy swine" was impossible for Jesus. God, therefore, does not "see any sin in any of his justified children," which means there is no need for ongoing repentance.⁵³ To such antinomian claims, on the one hand, the Assembly's reaction was moderate, in the sense that they desired to affirm the efficacy of Christ's justifying works. Yet, this was not to be done at the expense of sacrificing Scripture's call to sanctifying growth and a life of repentance.⁵⁴ In fact, divine Thomas Gataker argued, to do so was to alter the Gospel itself. Christ told his disciples, "Go out into the wide world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. But what Gospel? Or what manner of Gospel was it that they were to preach? The Gospel of life and salvation, upon the condition of faith and repentance, and obedience." For Gataker and the Assembly, this was important because to remove these conditions—faith, repentance, and obedience—was to not only dismiss Scripture's emphasis to pursue holiness, but also to erase God's sanctifying grace in the life of a Believer, as they strive with Christ's energy for mortification and vivification.⁵⁵ Moreover, Gataker stressed, when Christians do fail, God does, in fact, still see the sin of his children. Yet, he does not consider it as their judge. On the basis

debate regarding justification, sanctification, and antinomianism is complicated and outside the scope of this essay. For a thorough analysis see Whitney Gamble, *Christ and the Law: Antinomianism at the Westminster Assembly*, especially pp. 87–154. More of a summary can be found in Robert Letham, *The Westminster Assembly*, pp. 242–292.

53. See John Eaton, *Honey-Combe of Free Justification*, XIII (379), quoted in John Fesko, *The Theology of the Westminster Standards* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2014), p. 243, and Thomas Gataker, *Antinomianism Discovered and Confuted*, 1652, p. 4. See also Whitney Gamble, *Christ and the Law: Antinomianism at the Westminster Assembly*, pp. 14–20, 41–42, 51–52.

54. MPWA, Session 55, 14 September 1643, 2.121–123.

55. Thomas Gataker, *Antinomianism Discovered and Confuted*, 1652, pp. 17–18.

56. Gataker, *Antinomianism Discovered and Confuted*, 1652, p. 19.

57. Gataker, pp. 33–40.

58. Fesko, *The Theology of the Westminster Standards*, pp. 240–245.

59. It is interesting to note that many of those who saw antinomianism as 'simply errors' (not heresy) were also a part of the independent faction at the Assembly. The level of 'tolerance' they desired regarding their ecclesiastical views, they seemed willing to extend to some ethical sectarians, because they understood both as matters of religious indifference. Whitney Gamble, *Christ and the Law: Antinomianism at the Westminster Assembly*, pp. 74–76.

60. See Whitney Gamble, *Christ and the Law: Antinomianism at the Westminster Assembly*, pp. 65–84. She gives a detailed description of both the Assembly's response to antinomianism and various divines as well.

of love, the Father sent the Son, and Christ was crucified in their place. Nonetheless, God does see it, as their Father, and therefore disciplines them out of affection, when they do not obey. "[God] is like a discreet parent; who though he loves his child dearly, as well when he doth amisse, as when he doth well, yet he is not so well pleased with him ... when he seeth him take some evil course ... yea therefore is he then angry with him, because he loves him; and chastiseth him ... 'as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous therefore, and repent.'"⁵⁶

For Assembly members, like Gataker, God's love, then, is the reason for his displeasure with the sins of his people and his discipline of them. In addition, his affection is the Believer's impetus for repentance and obedience, particularly his love shown in Christ. However, antinomians like John Eaton and John Saltmarsh asserted God's love also, and as an expression of it, Christ obeyed perfectly, mortified sin perfectly, and repented perfectly, all for the elect. Yet, the latter two—mortified sin perfectly and repented perfectly—were considered extra-biblical and the byproduct of enthusiastic dreams. Gataker once more, "[Christ] did obey for us; and yet not to free us from obedience ... but to set us a copy, to give us a precedent, that we might tread in his steps."⁵⁷ Assembly members affirmed the nature of justification, but they did not allow it to swallow sanctification, and the need for repentance in the Christian life, which is what they believed antinomians were doing.⁵⁸ For many of the commissioners, these ethical radicals were teaching damnable opinions that, if allowed to continue, would logically lead to social and moral instability; hence, severe action was called for. Others, however, were unsure. They thought antinomian teaching was, no doubt, dangerous but not necessarily heretical and worthy of civil punishment.⁵⁹ This was a debate that ultimately the Assembly never concluded. Nonetheless, individual divines wrote numerous works against antinomians. The Assembly, as a whole, published a summary of their errors. They examined ethical sectarian ministers and candidates regarding anti-Legal doctrines and practices, and they petitioned Parliament to establish its own anti-antinomian committee.⁶⁰

Contra-Socinianism

While opposing various moral concerns, the Westminster Assembly was also combating rational ones. By the early 1640s anti-Trinitarian perspectives were affecting England. Much of it was the spread of Socinianism from the continent with some 'home-grown-ness' mixed in. Traditional Socinian thought was summarized through the Racovian Catechism, which

was translated into Latin and found in England by 1609. It asserted the uni-personality of God and the unreasonableness of Trinitarian language. They understood the term ‘person’ in a univocal fashion, which meant that whatever is said regarding personhood with man is also true of God. Since a human can’t be said to exist in a ‘multi-personal’ manner, neither can God. Even more so, they were strict bibliocists who, because they did not see the words of traditional Trinitarianism in Scripture, considered it simply as another addendum of the Roman church that must be ‘reformed out’ from the faith. The anti-Trinitarian Paul Best claimed that the Trinity was “a mystery of iniquity . . . a three headed cerberus.”⁶¹ To support the language of “one God in three persons” was both rationally impossible and functionally tri-theistic. It did not make sense of the nature of individuality. Instead, Best argued that the Father alone was God, with the Son being the divinely created Messiah, and the Spirit the power of God. There was no consubstantiality between them, no coequality, only distinction, division, and difference.⁶² By 1645, Best’s doctrines formally came to the attention of the commissioners. Eventually, they called on Parliament to arrest and imprison him due to his false teaching and upsetting of the faith. While he was jailed, a committee was formed to examine his views and convince him of the errors of his thinking. On more than one occasion, Assembly members met with him, attempting to persuade him to recant his views.⁶³ In the end, it appeared to have no converting impact, as Best remained a Socinian to his death. And yet, given his teachings contra the Trinity, it is no wonder in the minutes of the Assembly that he is spoken of often, and was at times referred to as Paul ‘Beast’ rather than Best.⁶⁴

A fuller treatment of his views and other rational radicals, as well as a more detailed response, can be seen in the works of various divines, but Francis Cheynell’s is likely the most well-known. In 1643, he published *The Rise, Growth, and Danger of Socinianism*, and in many respects, it was a call to battle. The fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith was at stake. The Trinity was under attack, and reason was essentially being placed above Scripture and its interpretative principle of “good and necessary consequence.” In fact, there was even a twinge of reductionistic pragmatism, as Cheynell purported “the Socinians would have us deny Christ to be God, that we may convert Turkes and Iewes to the Christian faith: as if the best way to convert men to the Christian faith, were to deny a prime Article of our Christian faith; or as if Jews and Turks would have a better opinion of Christ, if the Christians should deny him to be God.”

Due to the seemingly irrational nature of the doctrine of the Trinity, it should be dismissed to better convert the infidels.⁶⁵ Such assertions were justification for why Cheynell appears alarmist in this work. However, in 1650, authorities at Oxford University asked him for a more detailed refutation of Socinianism and a defense of orthodox Trinitarianism—*The Divine Triunity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*. In it, he rebuffs the univocal usage of ‘person’ and declares that the term should not be applied in the same way to God as it would be to men.⁶⁶ To do as the Socinians were was to collapse language distinctions between God and man and base human knowledge of the divine essentially off of reason or experience—‘our’ definition of personhood, human and divine, must completely comport with rationality and be experientially ascertained, making it epistemically precarious. However, for Cheynell and the Assembly, human knowledge of God is fundamentally analogical in nature and, as such, must be revealed from God via the external Word. As a result, Cheynell argued, “a [divine] person is an undivided substance, an understanding substance, a complete, incommunicable, independent substance, which doth not depend upon anything else by way of inhaesion, adhaesion, union, or any other way, for its sustentation,” thus, making the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit each ‘persons’ subsisting in one essence [nature] without compound.⁶⁷ Cheynell’s affirmations of orthodox Trinitarianism reaffirmed what

61. Phillip Dixon, *Nice and Hot Disputes*, pp. 39–44.

62. Phillip Dixon, *Nice and Hot Disputes*, pp. 42–45. Some Socinians saw the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as three distinct persons with only the Father as divine. A more English expression of anti-Trinitarianism, like with Best, believed that the Spirit had no individuality, but was simply a force or the activity of God in the world. See how Kelly Kapic unpacks this subject in his article “The Spirit as Gift: Explorations in John Owen’s Pneumatology,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to John Owen’s Theology*, pp. 113–140, and John Owen, “Of Communion with God,” and “On the Holy Spirit,” in *The Works of John Owen*, 17 vols., ed. by William Goold. (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965), vols. 2 and 3 respectively.

63. How the Assembly handled Paul Best is an interesting test case that seems to evidence their pastoral concern not only for the sheep being led astray by him (hence, why they encouraged his arrest), but also for the man, himself. The divines were not woodenly engaged in their work. They took their labors seriously but also approached it with compassion. They cared for Best’s soul and pleaded with him to repent.

64. MPWA, Biographical Dictionary, 1.109 and Session 451, 10 June 1645, 3.614–615.

65. Francis Cheynell, *The Rise, Growth, and Danger of Socinianism* (1643), p. 19.

66. Francis Cheynell, *The Divine Triunity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit* (1650), pp. 61–66.

67. Cheynell, *The Divine Triunity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, p. 72. See also Phillip Dixon, *Nice and Hot Disputes*, pp. 56–58.

the Westminster Assembly summarized in chapter two of the Confession, “Of God, and of the Holy Trinity.”⁶⁸ Furthermore, he reinforced where the Standards said all theology begins—Scripture. Whether dealing with ethical sectarian errors or Socinian anti-trinitarianism, the point the divines sought to make was “The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture” (WCF 1.10). It alone was the final authority—not reason or some other of way of knowing. The irony is, early Socinians would have agreed. They asserted the Scriptures are authoritative and sufficient. Yet, in practice, as they sought to explain the doctrine of the Trinity, their true colors showed forth, revealing their real *principium*. As their catechism states, “Reject every interpretation which is repugnant to right reason,”⁶⁹ which included the orthodox teaching of “in the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit” (WCF 2.3).

The Assembly, on the other hand, recognized the complexity and inexplicableness of divine triunity. However, the commissioners affirmed it, because Scripture declared it. As Cheynall put it regarding the doctrine of the Trinity, “The saving knowledge of God in Christ is revealed by the Spirit speaking in the Scriptures of truth; nay Father, Son and Holy Ghost do all joyne in revealing to us the saving mystery of faith and godliness, that by the grace of Christ, the love of God, and Communion of the Holy Ghost, we may have a glorious fellowship with all three as one God, the only true God.” Long after the Assembly had concluded, divines were still responding to Socinian attacks. In 1691, John Wallis began his work on the Trinity by saying “THE Doctrine of the *Arrians, Socinians, or Anti-Trinitarians,*

(call them as you please, provided you call them not *Orthodox Christians*) in opposition to those who believe (according to the Word of God), That the Sacred *Trinity, of Father, Son, and Holy-Ghost, are so distinguished* each from other, as that the *Father* is not the *Son, or Holy-Ghost; the Son* not the *Father, or Holy-Ghost; the Holy-Ghost* not the *Father, or Son; yet so United, as that they are all One God.*”⁷⁰ Socinian thought would need to be opposed for years, because essentially this was a conflict over epistemic grounds—biblical revelation or human reason. The works of various commissioners and officers of the Westminster Assembly, like Cheynall and Wallis, shed light on a growing concern regarding the preeminence of reason over Scripture and the abandoning of the Trinity—both of which will become more prevalent, as England falls under the spell of the Enlightenment during the 18th century. For the time being, however, Westminster sought to set forth a contra-Socinian agenda in response to the growth of anti-Trinitarian ideas.

Contrasting Pneumatologies

As the Assembly concluded in 1653, a new radical group had emerged—The Quakers. The full effect of their sectarianism would not be felt until after the commissioners were dismissed. This is, in part, evidenced through the lack of attention given to them in the Assembly minutes. Unlike antinomians and anti-Trinitarians, Quakers were not directly identified, nor corporately opposed. Nonetheless, the essence of their spiritualist teaching was addressed. Quaker theology was an amalgamation of various Enthusiast ideas that developed in the 1630s and 40s, which stressed the Spirit’s work independent of and above Scripture.⁷¹ Thus, for them, divine revelation was ongoing. Commissioner Daniel Featley described these Spiritualists this way, “The Scripture is not [their] onely rule of faith, and manners, but that God revealeth his will to his children at this day by visions and dreams: and therefore *John of Leidan*, after he had set himself to sleep, and had dreamed three dayes and nights, when hee awaked, fained himselfe speechlesse and called by signes with *Zacharie* for a table-book, or pen and ink, and there writeth down certaine positions as revealed to him from God, and commanded the preachers to publish them.”⁷² Enthusiasts like the Quakers saw the Spirit working in a ‘mediate’ and ‘immediate’ fashion—adding to and superseding Scripture. Private revelations could and should be had in order to establish extra-biblical truth. Their *regula fide* was an inner light, given by the Spirit. Foundationally, the rule for doctrine and life was rooted in the experiential

68. Westminster Confession of Faith (hereafter WCF), chapter two. See *The Confession of Faith: the larger and shorter catechisms with the scripture proofs at large...* (Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1855).

69. *The Racovian Catechism*, p. 12.

70. John Wallis, *The Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity Briefly Explain, In a Letter to a Friend* (1691), pp. 1–2. Wallis served the Westminster Assembly as one of the non-voting scribes (1643–1649). See *MPWA*, 1.142–43.

71. For a prehistory leading up to Quakerism see Ronald Knox, *Enthusiasm: A Chapter in the History of Religion*, pp. 168–175.

72. Daniel Featley, *The Dippers Dip*, (1645), p. 31. Featley only sat in the Assembly through September 1643 because he was accused of treasonously communicating with the king and imprisoned. See *MPWA*, 1.117.

rather than an external Word. The Assembly, however, was adamantly opposed to such views. Westminster Confession chapter 1.1 was clear, “those former ways of God’s revealing his will unto his people [have] now ceased.” Thus, the inspiration of divine revelation had terminated with the writing of the New Testament. All claims to a supernatural ‘immediate’ word from God were recognized as false. New revelations of the Spirit has ceased because the canon was closed—asserting otherwise would undermine the final authority, necessity, and sufficiency of Scripture.⁷³ The Spirit’s work was now one of illumination and, according to WCF 1.6, was for the purpose of providing saving understanding and guidance in life and godliness, stemming from a closed canon composed of the sixty-six books of the Bible.

Yet, here is the very point where spiritualists groups, like the Quakers, and the divines differed extensively. The former argued that the Spirit’s operations could, but did not necessarily, include the Scriptures. In fact, to them, God often bypassed the external Word in order to bestow an ‘inner light’ within the individual, with epiphenomena being the existential link between the divine and the individual. Consequently, there was great discontinuity between the Spirit and the Word. The Assembly members, however, saw a fundamental unity between the two. While the Spirit does impress truth upon the soul, it is never independent of Scripture. The Spirit works with the Word, not in distinction to it—applying its truths mediately to the soul.⁷⁴ Westminster Confession of Faith 1.10 stressed this point in declaring, “The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined; and in whose sentence we are to rest; can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture.”

It was this last phrase—can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in Scripture—that was the point of contention. A standard was needed to resolve religious controversies. For the Spiritualists, the individual experience of Christ, shared in an ‘ecclesiastically unified setting,’ was the criterion used to discern between God’s Spirit, inwardly active, and men’s fancies. To the divines, such ideas divorced the Spirit from the Word, thereby supplanting *sola scriptura* in favor of *sola experientia*—experience over the inspired canon.⁷⁵ As the Assembly prolocutor, William Twisse commented concerning the notion of new revelations, they were nothing but “Anabaptist dreams.”⁷⁶ Essentially, the Assembly and the Spiritualists had contrasting Pneumatologies, with Scriptures’ authority and sufficiency at stake. The

divines saw the Spirit’s work with the Word as necessary for salvation and growth in the faith. The Enthusiasts, like the Quakers, did not.⁷⁷

The implications of this can be seen in the importance, or lack thereof, both placed on the church’s ordinances—ordained ministry, sacraments, and preaching. Given that less emphasis was put upon the Scriptures by the Spiritualists, the aforementioned were not seen as marks of the church. Instead, the ‘extraordinary gifts of the Spirit’ were substituted for them, and these were gifts that all men and women had access to.⁷⁸ Accordingly, what need was there for ordained ministry to administer baptism and the Supper? What need was there for a trained and licensed clergy? All had an inner light. Which meant, ecclesiastical structures were functionally levelled and “every sheep was to be a shepherd.”⁷⁹ The

73. It is important to note that there was some debate amongst Assembly members regarding the continuation of dreams, visions, and prophecy. They were all in agreement that none of these functioned in an ‘immediate’ fashion, adding to Scripture. However, some argued that these may be used by God concurrently, with some portion of Scripture, giving guidance to the Believer. For more on this see Garnet Howard Milne, *The Westminster Confession of Faith and the Cessation of Special Revelation*, especially his conclusion, pp. 285–290.

74. As Quakerism began to grow in the 1660s, Quaker theologians began to interact with WCF chapter 1, showing the nature of their disagreement, in part, lies in the relationship between the Spirit and the Scriptures. Garnet Howard Milne, *The Westminster Confession of Faith and the Cessation of Special Revelation*, pp. 173–176.

75. Early Spiritualist movements attempted to ground their epistemic standard in the individual self. However, over time this fractured groups like the Quakers. Thus, a turn to a community-based norming reference for disagreements emerged. At the end of the day that meant, the experience and thought of religious leaders like the Quaker George Fox, became the basis for determining sectarian ‘orthodoxy.’ The Spirit working with the Word was virtually nowhere to be found. H. Larry Ingle, *First Among Friends*, pp. 103–116, 202–204 221–223.

76. William Twisse, *The Scriptures Sufficiency to Determine All Matters of Faith* (1656), p. 6.

77. T. L. Underwood, *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb’s War*, pp. 20–33.

78. Geoffrey Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, pp. 93–94.

79. There is no doubt that some were pushed towards anticlericalism given the poor state of the ordained ministry. Many ministers were unskilled and ungodly. The Assembly argued, they were therefore unqualified and needed to be removed from office. However, amongst spiritualist groups, things were taken further, to an ecclesiastical levelling. Within their own circles, the extent of this levelling was up for debate. Since all had an ‘inner light’ could all actually engage in preaching, teaching, administering the sacraments, and leading congregations regardless of age, sex, and social, churchly, or educational background? Could women for example? There was even debate regarding the need for a learned ordained ministry among the Assembly members. For more on this discussion see T. L. Underwood, *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb’s War*, pp. 82–100; Geoffrey

Assembly however, had an opposing perspective. The Scriptures were central, and, by extension, so were the ordinary means through which it was communicated—preaching and sacraments administered via an ordained and trained ministry. For the divines, an important way to deal with the “false calumnies and aspersions” of sectarian groups was to train up godly, learned, equipped, and ordained men for ministry in preaching and shepherding. Frequently throughout the confession and its catechisms, ministers of this sort are referred to. Larger Catechism question 158 asks, “By whom is the Word of God to be preached?” The answer, “The Word of God is to be preached only by such as are sufficiently gifted, and also duly approved and called to that office.” There was some debate as to the extent that an un-ordained man could minister. However, over time the divines hardened on this point, as radical self-appointed lay preachers effectively spread their ideas. Lay preaching may have been something certain members of the Assembly were in favor of, but it was never formally allowed.⁸⁰ It seems that regarding administering the Lord’s Supper there was much less or even no debate. “The Lord Jesus has, in this ordinance, appointed his ministers to declare his word of institution to the people; to pray, and bless the elements of bread and wine, and thereby to set them apart from a common to an holy use; and, to take, and bread the bread, to take the cup, and (they communicating also themselves) to give both to the communicants; but, to none who are not them present in the congregation” (WCF 29.3). Only ordained clergy could offer the elements. The Assembly saw ordained ministers as the means by which the Spirit nourished the flock of Christ upon the Word. Instruction was even given in the Assembly’s Directory for Public Worship on ministerial requirements for ordination, their duties once installed, and how to preach the

Scriptures. Additionally, recorded in the minutes and papers are hundreds of men who were examined by the commissioners, regarding these requirements.⁸¹ They, along with the divines themselves, would function like a fence, opposing and keeping out ethical, rational, and spiritualists “false calumnies and aspersions.”

3. EXPLANATION

Yet, it must be noted that much has been said in response to the Assembly’s efforts in dealing with 17th century English radicalism. Their assessment of sectarian groups has been viewed as prejudiced, and their treatment of them as harsh. Some have labelled England as a “persecuting state” from 1558–1689.⁸² The argument goes as follows—those in power wanted to stay in power and even used religion to do it. Submission, not toleration, was said to be their goal, with persecution the outcome for those who did not. Describing the ecclesiastical setting of the 1640s and 50s one author notes, “The function of the state church was not merely to guide men to heaven: it was also to keep them in subordination here on earth.”⁸³ This is how the actions of the Westminster Assembly opposing radicalism have been viewed—suppressors of a liberty of conscience.

In support of these assertions, comments from divines like Thomas Case are employed, speaking about sectarians, “they may in good time come to know also ... that it is their birthright to be free from the power of Parliaments and ... of kings, and to take up arms against both when they shall not vote and according to their humours. Liberty of conscience, falsely so called, may in good time improve itself into liberty of estates and liberty of houses and liberty of wives.”⁸⁴ Some commissioners even called for the state to bring the sword to bear upon fanatics. Not to threaten them to repent, but to “hinder wolves and grievous foxes” from dragging away the souls of men and women into heresy. Samuel Rutherford commented,

If he draw the sword against adulteries, murtherers, rapt, robberies, even in Saints, and we hope you, at least some of you are of the same minde with us: now spirituall whoredome, perverting of the right wayes of the Lord, Socinianisme, professed and taught to others, even in Saints, to us is worse and more deserves the sword then adulteries: for false teachers are evill doers, and so to be punished with the sword ... and therefore not to be received into any Christian society, house, or Army ... [they] should bee thrust through, wounded and killed, *because they prophesie lies in the name of the Lord*, Zach. 13.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. c. 12.10. all the godly thinke

Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, pp.88–101; Chad Van Dixhoorn, *God’s Ambassadors*, pp. 100–128, 173; MPWA, Session 84, 20 October 1643, 2.242.

80. Lay preaching was debated by many evangelical Puritans. Some saw the fields ripe for harvest and the laborers few. Therefore, gifted men who might not have obtained the proper ecclesiastical backing were needed. Others saw the danger of lay preachers. Allowing them in pulpits fueled the religious radicalism that collectively the divines were against. See Chad Van Dixhoorn, *God’s Ambassadors*, pp. 74–75, 172–173.

81. See Chad Van Dixhoorn, *God’s Ambassadors*, pp. 7–8, 77–87, 193–196.

82. John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England 1558–1689* (New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 12–24.

83. Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, p. 98.

84. Thomas Case, *Spiritual Whoredome* (1647), p. 34, quoted from Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, p.100.

of Antitoleration as a truth of God, they are perswaded of in conscience must stand, when the hay and stubble of Liberty of conscience, *Antinomianisme*, and the like, shall be consumed with fire....⁸⁵

Given statements like these from various commissioners, there is little doubt that at times exaggeration was employed in describing the teachings and actions of radical groups, and they were not always felicitous in their opposition of them. Some of their comments were misguided, severe, and inappropriate. Their responses to radicalism were an over-bearing misapplication of Scripture.⁸⁶

However, from the perspective of the Assembly divines, the kind of religious toleration being advocated in sectarian communities was a scourge. For them, a liberty of conscience that allowed unorthodox teachings to persist and progress was a major factor in bringing about the chaos of 17th century England. In London and many other places, religious radicals and lay preachers were increasing in number and influence. It was helping to foster and further a dis-unified nation—not just religiously, but economically, politically and socially. England was divided along various cultural lines—rich and poor, Laudian and Puritan, Cavalier and Roundhead, King and Parliament. And now as commissioners were called to Westminster Abbey in the summer of 1643, another important division was being added to that list—Radicals and Reformed Orthodox. All of this created a worrisome situation. For the Assembly, it was the state of the church that burdened them the most. Commissioner George Gillespie put it this way,

“I know this liberty and Toleration was maintained by the *Donatists* of old and by the *Socinians*, *Arminians*, and *Anabaptists* of late but it hath beene constantly opposed by all that were sound and orthodoxe, both Ancient and Moderne, who have asserted the lawfull use of a coercive power against those things, whereby (though under pretence of conscience) God is openly dishonoured, soules ensnared and destroyed, faith or piety subverted and overthrowne: and further, the compelling of the outward man, though not to the practise of things indifferent (which compulsion I doe not allow) yet to the practise of necessary duties, and to the external use of meanes and ordinances, by which through the blessing of God, men’s hearts and consciences may be savingly affected and wrought upon.”⁸⁷

Essentially, to the divines, sectarians were only making things worse by trying to take Protestantism in a scary

direction—one that resembled the tumultuous nature of the German states leading up to the Peasant’s War. This was a ‘de-reformation’—a going backwards and downwards. An ‘unregulated-by-the-Word’ liberty of conscience would lead to the destruction of all “hope, comfort of the Scriptures, zeale, constancy, and rejoycing in suffering for the truth, for Christ and the Gospel.”⁸⁸ The kind of toleration radicals were advocating would bring about a further fragmentation of the country. Which meant, in the minds of Assembly members, protection from radical heterodoxy—both in doctrine and deeds—was of the utmost importance. What they were seeking was “*ecclesia semper reformanda est*”—a church always reforming, but according to Scripture. A furthering of the reformation was what they were after, and 17th century English radicalism was taking it further than they wanted, and thus was destroying what the divines had hoped to bring.⁸⁹ To the commissioners,

85. Samuel Rutherford, “A Brotherly and Free Epistle to the Patrons and Friends of the Pretended Liberty of Conscience,” in *A Survey of the Spirituall Antichrist* (1648), unnumbered signature “a.” See also, John Coffey, *Politics, Religion, and the British Revolution: The Mind of Samuel Rutherford* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 217–218.

86. See Chad Van Dixhoorn, *God’s Ambassadors*, pp. 32–33, 171–180, and Anna Hughes, *Gangraena and The Struggle For The English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 401–415, 435–442. It should also be understood that another important reason for the heavy-handed response of some divines was their view of the relationship between church and state. They saw it as appropriate to call for the civil magistrates to punish those holding to unorthodox teaching. Much has, can, and needs to be said about this larger topic. It is outside the immediate scope of this essay. The debates surrounding Westminster and separation of Church and State are extensive. An introduction to the topic can be found in Fesko, *The Theology of the Westminster Standards*, pp. 301–14, and Hugh Cartwright, “Westminster and Establishment: a Scottish Perspective” in *The Westminster Confession into the 21st Century*, ed. by Ligon Duncan (Ross-shire: Christian Focus, 2005), pp. 181–221. For a presentation of an argument against the divines’ view of tolerance see John Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution*, especially pp. 97–167, and Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, pp. 98–106.

87. George Gillespie, *A Late Dialogue Betwixt a Civilian and a Divine, Concerning the Present Condition of the Church of England* (1644), p. 32.

88. Samuel Rutherford, *A Free Disputation Against Pretended Liberty of Conscience* (1649), p. 150.

89. There is little doubt that many radicals also saw themselves as furthering the Reformation. They viewed the divines as not going far enough in changing church and society. John Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution*, pp. 97–98, 108–111, 138–141, 233–234, and Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, pp. 161–162. The difference lay in the standard to establish and measure reform. For the divines, it was a Reformed Orthodox understanding of Scripture. 17th Century English radicalism drew the line of demarcation in differing spots.

the toleration sectarians were after would function like gunpowder. It would blow apart the religious advancements made in Protestant religion.⁹⁰ The sort of liberty radicals were calling for would undermine the very foundation of the Reformation—the Scriptures. Anthony Burgess, in a sermon preached to Parliament on September 27, 1643—a day of fasting and prayer—argued that men were setting up other epistemic grounds. Socinian “reason” and Enthusiasm’s “private fancies” made his list. What was needed was more reformation according to the external Word, not a turn in the opposite direction.⁹¹

The threat of de-formation was one reason for the level of anxiousness that was present as the Assembly initially gathered on July 1, 1643. To combat this, convener William Twisse preached from John 14:18 at the opening ceremonies. The text read, “I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you.” Interestingly, he did not choose a passage that spoke about the themes of political victory and religious success, which likely Parliament would have encouraged him to focus upon. Instead, assurance was what he set out to bring to his listeners. England was cracking and unity was needed, and Twisse sought to bring to bear comfort from the Scriptures. The fact that he did underscores the seriousness of England’s religious problems, and the significance of the Assembly’s task to stand against things like the “false calumnies and aspersions” of sectarian groups.⁹² The ‘reforming of the reformation’ in England was at

stake. To the commissioners, if radicalism was allowed to spread unopposed, a weakened church would develop, a marginalization of the Bible would occur, and an ‘age of toleration’ would emerge—leading to an anti-orthodox and anti-clerical spirit taking root. The Assembly realized the problems fanaticism was creating. And so, they sought to oppose it, to protect the church and further the cause of reformation, even if at times their manner of doing so was ill-chosen.

Despite the Assembly’s efforts, within 100 years, various aspects of English radicalism did gain a foothold in society. It is always difficult to bring critique upon the complex circumstances of the past, and armchair historians draw often incorrect and insensitive conclusions. Nonetheless, it could be said that in how the Assembly responded to 17th century English radicalism reveals some of its failures. It is not that the divines were without the foresight regarding what would come because of sectarian thinking; rather, it was how they, at times, went about dealing with it. As Chad Van Dixhoorn has asserted, attempts to put in place measures, which would encourage a Reformed Orthodox reformation, for generations to come, either did not materialize or failed to take root.⁹³ Their inaction and the manner of their interaction with fanaticism spelled doom to the reformation they hoped to further, especially given their overbearing retorts. An 18th century United Kingdom, marked by toleration, would look back upon the Assembly commissioners with generally unfavorable eyes. The consequences for their failures are multifaceted and far-reaching. One appears to be that ‘the struggle’ between Westminster and English sectarianism for dominance, in the wider society, went the way of the latter, in the sense that what was ‘radical then’ has become ‘culturally orthodox’ today. In the face of secularism, biblical Christianity is deemed fanatical. The tables appear to have turned.⁹⁴

CONCLUSION

Amidst political and social turmoil, on June 12, 1643, England’s Parliament resolved to bring ecclesiastical reforms by calling for an Assembly of church divines. Their task was to set a course for England to get out of its religious quagmire. Not only were there Roman Catholic and Laudian influences, but various sectarian groups were forming. Radical religious ideas were taking root and growing, and the Assembly was charged with responding to them. This essay has attempted to categorize and explain the views of some of these communities, while also describing that the divines realized the serious threat their ideas posed to religious unity.

90. Thomas Case, *Deliverance—Obstruction: Or The Set-back of Reformation* (1646), pp. 36–37.

91. Anthony Burgess, *The Difficulty of, and the Encouragements to a Reformation* (1643), pp. 12–13, 24.

92. Chad Van Dixhoorn, *God’s Ambassadors*, pp. 32–38.

93. Chad Van Dixhoorn, *God’s Ambassadors*, pp. 171–177, and John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England 1558–1689*, pp. 1–20, 134–224.

94. It would be historically irresponsible to conclude that Reformed Christianity’s decline in the 18th and 19th century United Kingdom is solely the result of the Assembly’s failures with radicals. Other factors play more significant roles. My point is to show that 17th century England was tumultuous, and the divines did not always rightly navigate those stormy seas. Even though their intentions were worthy—continue reforming the reformation—they made mistakes and consequences followed. What should or could they have done differently? That is beyond the scope of this essay, especially given the complex political, religious, and social issues of the day. And would different actions have ensured an alternate conclusion? These are questions for someone else to explore. In short, nothing but the grace of God would have altered things. As it is, the road the divines walked is instructive for us because we often find ourselves not responding felicitously in our highly secularized times. Perhaps, we can learn from those who have gone before us—both in their zeal for biblical reformation and the manner to pursue it.

The nation was already splintered along partisan and religious lines. The emergence of sectarianism was seen as a recipe for further disaster. Additionally, the nature of how the Assembly opposed them has been discussed, revealing the way, both corporately and individually, the commissioners critiqued the doctrines and practices of ethical, rational, and spiritualist radicals. At the heart of their response was an epistemology rooted in Scripture rather than reason, experience, tradition, or the magisterium. Finally, an explanation as to why they were adamantly against groups like antinomians, Socinians, and Quakers has been given. The ‘reforming of the reformation’ in England was on the line. Toleration and a ‘liberty of conscience without Scriptural rails’ would lead to the church falling further off the tracks of Reformation Christianity. A response to radicals was crucial.

In Brief: Exhortation to the Five Independent Brethren. Extract from George Gillespie, Wholesome Severity Reconciled with Christian Liberty (1645), 34–38

Eighthly, there is also a great difference between *toleration* and *accommodation*. By *accommodation* I understand an agreement of dissenters with the rest of the Church in practical conclusions, so that if any difference be, it is in their *principles*, not in their *practices*, and so not obvious, apparent and scandalous to people. I had rather go two miles in an *accommodation* (yea as many as the word of God will suffer me) than one mile in *toleration*. For in that way there is no schism, no rent in Israel, but “the Lord one, and his name one.” In this way there is *temple against temple*, and *altar against altar*, Manasseh against Ephraim, and Ephraim against Manasseh, and they both against Judah: a misery from which the Lord deliver us. I do not deny, but if a safe and happy accommodation is possible, such a toleration as I have formerly spoken of, is not to be disallowed. But the accommodation is a more excellent way, and that which is to be rather embraced, yea endeavored for and followed after, according to the apostle’s rule (which Isidorua Pelusiotia did long since observe to be the best and happiest way of putting an end to divisions and dissensions in the Church): *Let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing* (Phil 3:15-16).

V. If it is said, *Quorsum haec?* [To what purpose?], what do I conclude from all this?¹ It is to leave this confirmed and sealed truth in the bosom of the High Court and Parliament, and of all inferior Magistrates according to their interest under them, that it is their duty, *without respect of persons, to endeavor the extirpation of heresy and schism, and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound doctrine,*

Yet, in examining these things, only the tip of the iceberg has been explored. Much more could be said and gleaned from the Westminster Assembly’s engagement with 17th century English radicalism. This is especially true in a 21st century context where positions seem to have been flipped from what they were in the 1640s and 50s. What was once recognized as orthodoxy in 17th century England is now considered ‘radical,’ according to modern sensibilities, and central aspects of the sectarianism of the Assembly’s day are deemed ‘socially orthodox.’ Perhaps continued engagement with the divines, and how they responded, successfully and unsuccessfully, to the ‘fanaticism’ of the 1600s, will provide insight for meaningful interaction between modern equivalents.■

*and the power of godliness, lest they partake in other men’s sins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their plagues; and that the Lord may be one, and his name one in the three kingdoms: and to endeavor the discovery of all such as have been or shall be evil instruments, by hindering the reformation of religion, or making any faction or party amongst the people, contrary to the solemn league and covenant, that they may be brought to public trial, and receive condign punishment, etc.*² Which as they had great reason to swear and covenant, so now they have greater reason to perform accordingly; and as it is in itself a duty, and we tied to it by the *oath of God*, and *his vows that are upon us*, as straitly as ever the sacrifice to the horns of the altar. So we are to take special notice of the unhappy consequences which follow upon our slackness and slothfulness, in fulfilling that sacred oath, viz. the hindering of uniformity, the continuing and increasing of a rupture both in Church and State, the retarding of reformation, the spreading and multiplying of heresies and sects, while every one does what is right in his own eyes; the great scandal given both to enemies and friends: to enemies, who are made to think worse of our covenant, because we do not perform it;³ *The Review of the Covenant*, printed at Oxford, upbraids us with this: that heresy and schism were never

1. In the prior section IV, Gillespie outlined distinctions of toleration and accommodation (text updated for spelling, punctuation and usage).

2. Cf. The Solemn League and Covenant.

3. Cf. Gerard Langbaine, *A Review of the Covenant wherein the original, grounds, means, matter, and ends of it are examined: and out of the principles of the remonstrances, declarations, votes, orders, and ordinances of the prime covenanters, or the firmer grounds of Scripture, law, and reason, disproved* (Oxford, 1644), p. 49.

more suffered, and less suppressed in London, than since we swore to endeavor the extirpation of the same: to friends also, who are mightily stumbled by our own promising much, and performing so little in this kind: which the Wallachian Classis in their late letter to the reverend Assembly of Divines at Westminster (printed before Apollonius's book)⁴ does sadly and seriously lay to our consciences.

A PARÆNETIC

Before I end, I have a word of exhortation for the five apolo- gists, and such others as shall (I trust) agree with the churches of both kingdoms, not only in one Confession of Faith, but in one Directory for Worship. Methinks I hear them calling on me to say on. Et tu mi fili? [Even you, my son?] said Caesar. And must you also brethren, give a wound to the body of Christ? Do not, O do not involve yourselves in the plea of toleration with the Separatists and Anabaptists. Do not partake in their separation, lest you partake in their suppression. Let us hear no more Paraenetics for toleration, or liberty of conscience: but as many as you will for a just and merciful accommodation: a thing mentioned by that author (p. 3), but not sought after. If you are the sons of peace, you shall be characterized by this shibboleth, you will call for accommodation, not for toleration; for one way, not for two. Let there be no strife between us and you, for we are brethren (Gen. 13:7, 8): and is not the Canaanite and the Perizzite yet in the land? O let it not be told in Gath, nor published in the streets of Ashkelon. Let it not be said, that there can be no unity in the Church without Prelacy. Brethren I charge you by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that ye awake not nor stir up Jesus Christ till he please (Song. 2:7); for his rest is sweet and glorious with his well-beloved. It shall be no grief of heart to you afterward, that you have pleased others as well as yourselves, and have stretched your principles for accommodation in church government, as well as in worship, and that for the Church's peace and edification; and that the

4. Let your own consciences judge, how heresies of all kinds can pass unpunished, manifold seeds of schisms be spread without control, and prophane doctrines of errors be commonly vented in publick, in that city which by so express, so sacred, and severe an oath hath bound itself in the presence of God to cast out all errors, heresies, schisms, from the house of God. We exhort you therefore in the Lord, and do so seriously in the abundance of charity require you, that you take care to discover a way and means whereby you will endeavor the removal of this lothsome evil of schisms and errors, while the disease is yet curable, from the midst of your nation, of your city. Unless you do timely withstand the spreading gangrene of separatists and unlawful conventicles of schismatics, farewell all sacred discipline of the church, due policy and spiritual government." Letter from the Walahrian Churches "To the Synod of London," in Willem Apollonius, *A Consideration of Certain Controversies at this Time Agitated in the kingdome of England: concerning the government of the church of God* (1645), sixth page.

ears of our common enemies may tingle, when it shall be said, "The Churches of Christ in England have rest, and are edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the joy of the Holy Ghost are multiplied (Act 9:31)." Alas how shall our divisions and contentions hinder the preaching and learning of Christ, and the edifying one another in love! Is Christ divided? says the apostle. There is but one Christ, yea the head and the body make one Christ, so that you cannot divide the body without dividing Christ. Is there so much as a seam in all Christ's garment? Is it not woven throughout from the top to the bottom? Will you have one half of Israel to follow Tibni, and another half to follow Omri? O brethren, we shall be one in heaven, let us pack up differences in this place of our pilgrimage, the best way we can. Nay, we will not despair of unity in this world. Hath not God promised to give us one heart and one way (Jer. 32:39, Ezek. 11:19)? and that Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim, but they shall flee upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the East, they shall spoil them of the East together (Isa. 11:13, 14)? Has not the Mediator (whom the Father hears always) prayed that all his may be one? Brethren, it is not impossible, pray for it, endeavor it, press hard toward the mark of accommodation. How much better is it that you be one with the other Reformed Churches, though somewhat straitened and bound up, than to be divided though at full liberty and elbow room? Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife (Prov. 17:1). Does not the Solemn League and Covenant bind you sincerely, really, and constantly to endeavor the nearest (mark nearest) uniformity and conjunction in religion; and that you shall not suffer yourselves directly or indirectly to be withdrawn from this blessed union and conjunction. I know there is a spirit of jealousy walking up and down. O beware of groundless fears and apprehensions. Judge not, lest you be judged. Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment (Matt. 7:1; John. 7:24). Many false rumors and surmises there have been concerning the Presbyterian principles, practices, designs. Expertui lequor [I speak from experience]. I am persuaded if there were but a right understanding one of another's intentions, the accommodation I speak of would not be difficult. Brethren, if you will not hearken to wholesome counsel, you shall be the more inexcusable. I have in my eye that law of God, Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him (Lev. 19:17). Faithful are the wounds of a friend (Prov. 17:6). Therefore love the truth and peace (Zech. 8:19). Yea, seek peace and pursue it (1 Pet. 3:11).

Consider what I say. The Lord guide your feet in the way of peace. And O that God would put it in your hearts to cry down toleration, and to cry up accommodation!

Amen! Amen!■

The Westminster Assembly & *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici*

By Chris Coldwell

Of the untold number of books written about biblical church government, perhaps none has had the accolades and reputation, certainly among English works, as *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici* (JDRE), by sundry ministers of London.¹ Thomas Smyth, a Belfast born import to the Southern Presbyterian Church (PCUS), himself the author of several notable books on Presbyterianism, called it “a work of admirable and overpowering argument.”² When serving as chaplain to Charles I, the Scottish minister Robert Blair after debating with the king at length about the worship and government of the church, rather than recommending a work penned by a fellow Scot, obtained the king’s promise to read this English work.³ William M. Hetherington, the mid-nineteenth century historian of Scottish Presbyterianism and of the Westminster assembly, and editor of the *Works of George Gillespie* (an author of several famous presbyterian books and a presbyterian champion in debates at the Westminster Assembly), nevertheless calls this then 200 year old English work “the most complete and able defence of Presbyterian Church government that has yet appeared, and places its divine right on a foundation which will not easily be shaken.”⁴

ENGLISH PURITAN PRESBYTERIANS

From its beginning the puritan movement in England had its presbyterian element. “From their first appearance in the 1570s, presbyterians emerged as leaders of a puritan movement for further reformation of the Elizabethan religious settlement. They posed a threat to its episcopally organized hierarchy by insisting on a model of government based on the equality of ministers and the inclusion of lay elders in the oversight of the Church.”⁵ In 1592 the ecclesiastical/state authorities crushed the movement. However, rather than killing it for good as was long thought, such convictions merely

went underground. From her work with the manuscripts of the Elizabethan proponent of presbyterianism, Walter Travers, whom Whitgift forbade to preach in 1586 but who lived until 1635, Polly Ha shows that while not a broad movement, presbyterians did continue working for reform; functioning in secret, concealing papers, writing in code, still maintaining that episcopacy was unbiblical. “Despite their cryptic nature, presbyterian manuscripts informed the printed debates over church government and provide a key to interpreting the polemical literature of the early Stuart period. Even before the reign of Charles I and the rise of Laud . . .” it “was during these years of apparent silence that they made a concerted effort to argue that episcopacy was unbiblical, unlawful, un-English and unnatural.”⁶ Thus contrary to prior historical consensus, the reappearing of English Presbyterianism in the 1640s was not simply due to “political expediency and Scottish influence.”⁷

THE AUTHOR: Chris Coldwell is the general editor and publisher of *The Confessional Presbyterian* journal and has published Puritan, Presbyterian and Reformed books since 1988 through the Naphtali Press imprint.

1. This text of this article with little revision appears as the introduction to the new critical edition of *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici*, the second volume in the new book series, Naphtali Press Special Editions, copublished with Reformation Heritage Books (2020).

2. Thomas Smyth, *Complete Works of Rev. Thomas Smyth, D.D.*, Volume 2, *Presbytery and Not Prelacy, The Scriptural and Primitive Polity* (Columbia, S. C.: Reprinted by The R. L. Bryan Company, 1908), Index IV: Works on Presbyterianism, page 562.

3. *The Life of Mr. Robert Blair*, ed. Thomas M’Crie (Edinburgh: Printed for the Wodrow Society, [1848]), 190.

4. William M. Hetherington, *History of the Westminster Assembly of Divines* (Edinburgh: Johnstone, 1843), 288; (fourth ed., 1878; New York: Randolph, 1890), 272.

5. Polly Ha, *English Presbyterianism, 1590–1640* (Stanford University Press, 2011), 1.

6. *English Presbyterianism, 1590–1640*, pp. 2, 3.

7. *English Presbyterianism, 1590–1640*, p. 1.

ENGLISH PRESBYTERIANISM AT THE TIME OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY

When Edmund Calamy accepted the call to be pastor of St. Mary Aldermanbury in 1639, he became part of a network of London ministers led by William Gouge (1575–1653), who was the “father” and elder statesman of the group. Gouge was a young man when Presbyterianism was driven underground in 1592, and began his ministry four years after the rejection of any concessions to moderate Puritanism at Hampton Court in 1604. Calamy brought considerable organizational skill to the group, which led the campaigns against prelacy of the early 1640s.⁸

With the outbreak of war between Charles I and the Scots in the Bishops’ Wars, while many saw it as an opportunity in England simply to restore a pre-Laudian episcopacy, “for the London ministers and the more zealous members of the laity a chance was seen to carry on the work of reform that had halted in Elizabeth’s reign.”⁹ This network subsequently took over the premises of Sion College, and its members became leaders in the London Provincial Assembly, parliament’s grant of an experiment in Presbyterianism, albeit hampered by Erastian imperfections.

Many of these same ministers meeting at Sion College were appointed members of the Westminster

Assembly of Divines, called by parliament to sit and determine what would be the doctrine and practice for the three kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland, as outlined by the Solemn League and Covenant. The history of the assembly and a detailed history of this book cannot be given here, nor does one need to know the history of the period of the 1640s to appreciate *JDRE* as one of the significant early full orbéd defenses of the Presbyterian system of church government. However, some resources can be suggested before discussing some specific matters related to the creation of the sundry ministers’ *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici*.¹⁰

Of histories appearing before the publication of the Mitchell-Struthers volume of the minutes of the Westminster Assembly,¹¹ William M. Hetherington’s history is still useful,¹² as is A. F. Mitchell’s history published afterward.¹³ As we transition to twentieth century works, Dr. Carruthers’ many studies about different aspects of the assembly and its productions remain relevant, such as his *Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly* (1943).¹⁴ Additional ground breaking studies began with John R. de Witt’s *Jus Divinum: The Westminster Assembly and the Divine Right of Church Government* (1969), which was followed by other still standard works on the Westminster Assembly by Wayne Spear (1976) and R. S. Paul (1985).¹⁵ These should be supplemented with Chad Van Dixhoorn’s introductory volume to his critical edition of the full minutes and many of the papers of the assembly (2012).¹⁶

The Sion College men brought their *jure divino* Presbyterianism with them to the Westminster assembly and from the beginning led a majority to agree or at least align with the choice of Presbyterianism over Erastianism and Congregationalism of the three views represented in the assembly. Amongst these newly minted Presbyterians were men who as noted likely initially were open to a limited episcopacy, such as that advocated by James Ussher. But,

they all agreed on an Augustian conception of the Church as defined by the credal notes and the Reformed marks. Two views stand out in particular: firstly, that the Church must be the uniform and universal body of Christ and, secondly, that ecclesiastical authority resided only in the ministry. Both were foundational to the moderate Puritan understanding of ecclesiastical polity. From these points of consensus, the Scots and the Sion College ministers, could successfully argue to their no[n]-Congregationalists colleagues that the Church polity *nearest to the Word* was

8. Elliot Vernon, “The Sion College Conclave and London Presbyterianism during the English Revolution” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1999), 29, 32.

9. Vernon, 48.

10. See also for more historical background, David W. Hall’s introduction in *Jus Divinum Ecclesiastici Regiminis* (Naphtali Press, 1995).

11. *Minutes of the sessions of the Westminster Assembly of Divines while engaged in preparing their Directory for Church Government, Confession of Faith, and Catechisms (November 1644 to March 1649)*, ed. Alex. F. Mitchell and John Struthers (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1874).

12. Hetherington, *History of the Westminster Assembly of Divines*, *ibid.*

13. A. F. Mitchell, *The Westminster Assembly its History and Standards*, second edition (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1897).

14. S. W. Carruthers, *The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly* (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian Historical Society [of America] and the Presbyterian Historical Society of England, 1943).

15. J. R. de Witt, *Jus Divinum: The Westminster Assembly and the Divine Right of Church Government*. R. S. Paul, *The Assembly of the Lord* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1985). Wayne Spear, *Covenanted Uniformity in Religion: The Influence of the Scottish Commissioners on the Ecclesiology of the Westminster Assembly* (1976 dissertation; publ., Reformation Heritage Books, 2013).

16. “Introduction,” in *The Minutes and Papers of the Westminster Assembly 1643–1652*, ed. Chad Van Dixhoorn, 5 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), volume 1.

the Presbyterian government. It was from these foundation points that the Westminster Assembly’s Presbyterianism emerged.¹⁷

PARLIAMENT’S ASSAULT AGAINST DIVINE RIGHT
PRESBYTERIANISM

Despite this Presbyterian majority, the Westminster Assembly was hampered by the stalling tactics of the congregationalist minority (the independent Brethren) and ultimately by the unwillingness of the parliament to cede any power and maintain an Erastian establishment. This eventually precipitated the greatest crisis faced by the assembly. When the House of Commons made it clear by an ordinance with regard to the Lord’s Supper, that a creature of parliament would decide cases of suspension from the sacrament and not the church, the assembly filed a protest in objection, maintaining what they would ultimately state in the Confession of Faith, “The Lord Jesus, as king and head of His Church, hath therein appointed a government in the hand of church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate.”¹⁸ The assembly told the Commons that what it proposed was “so contrary to that Way of Government which Christ hath appointed in His Church, in that it giveth a Power to judge of the Fitness of Persons to come to the Sacrament unto such as our Lord Christ hath not given that Power unto.”¹⁹ The House of Commons was not pleased,²⁰ and charged the assembly with breach of privilege. They sent “and demanded that the assembly answer nine queries about the divine right of church government (see Session 627),” and “then printed its queries in a public effort to discredit the claim that Presbyterian discipline was required by Scripture....”²¹

With biblical church government and Christ’s prerogatives at stake, the assembly set about to answer parliament’s demands to answer their questions, and worked on the matter with other business from May 4, 1646 through July 22, 1646 (Sessions 633 through 677), with the last work in Session 676 being on the preliminary question for answering the queries pertaining to the Lord’s Supper, whether, “notorious and scandalous offendours should be kept away.”²² However, the controversy was causing serious delay in the necessary work of the assembly and Scottish Commissioner Robert Baillie, through contacts, convinced parliament to send an order to get back to work on finishing the confession of faith and catechism.²³

The work of the Assemblie, these bygone weeks, hes been to answer some very captious questions of the

Parliament, about the clear scripturall warrant for the punctilioes of the Government. It wes thought it would be impossible to us to answer, and that in our answers there should be no unanimitie; yet, by God’s grace, we shall deceave them who were waiting for our halting. The committee hes prepared very solide and satisfactorie answers already, almost to all the questions, wherein there is like to be ane unanimitie absolute in all things materiall, even with the Independents. But because of the Assemblie’s way, and the Independents miserable unamendable designe to keep all things from any conclusion, it’s like we shall not be able to perfyte our answeres for some tyme; therefore, I have put some of my good friends, leading men in the House of Commons, to move the Assemblie to lay aside our questions for a time, and labour that which is most necessar, and all are crying for, the perfecting of the Confession of Faith and Catechise.²⁴

The assembly would come back to attempt an answer to the queries two years later, but the political circumstances having changed and parliament no longer demanding an answer from the divines, the topic was dropped again for good.²⁵

However, two years prior, the subject had not actually been dropped. Three weeks after the assembly obeyed the order to essentially cease work on answering the Commons’ nine queries and get back to work on the confession and catechisms, the following entry appeared in the Stationers’ Register under the date for August 13, 1646, for an intended publication: “The 13th

17. Vernon, 130.

18. Westminster Confession of Faith 30.1. The text of chapter thirty was approved on November 26, 1646. Van Dixhoorn, 4.342–3. *JDRE* would come out in print one week later.

19. John R. de Witt, *Jus Divinum*, 194. See the text in document 104, “Protest to both houses of parliament against its ordinance for suspension from the Lord’s supper 20 March 1646,” in Van Dixhoorn, *Minutes*, volume 5, “Calendar of papers of the Westminster assembly, p. 301.

20. The city ministers also complained as did the Scottish commissioners, in as plain words. *Jus Divinum*, 195.

21. Van Dixhoorn, 1.78. The Commons’ nine queries are given in Appendix 14, *ibid.*, 1.214–216. The crisis and the nine queries are discussed at length in de Witt, “Chapter V Church Censures and Excommunication,” 169–208.

22. The session of July 22nd was also the day the death was announced of the Prolocutor of the assembly, William Twisse. Van Dixhoorn, *Minutes*, 4.102–211. Session 676, July 17, 1646.

23. John R. de Witt, *Jus Divinum*, 227.

24. “For Glasgow. London, July 14th 1646,” *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie*, ed. David Laing, 3 vols. (Edinburgh: Printed for Robert Ogle, [1841–2]), 2.378–9.

25. John R. de Witt, *Jus Divinum*, 223–224.

of Augusti 1646 Entred ... under the hands of Master Cranford and Maſter Seile warden a booke called *Jus divinum regiminis eccleſiaſtici, or the divine right of church government* [sic] &c [Maſter Hunſcott and Geo. Calvert].²⁶ According to Robert Baillie, the work appeared in print on December 1, 1646.²⁷ “The Miniſters of London have put out this day, a very fine book, proving from Scripture, the Divine Right of every part of the Presbyterianall Government.”²⁸

It is not impossible that Hunſcott and Calvert had in hand ſome ſort of manuſcript from the London miniſters juſt three weeks after aſſembly work had ceaſed. Entry in the Stationers’ Register represented the licensing of a title or the idea for a book,²⁹ or that the work at leaſt was “ſeriously contemplated at the date of entry.”³⁰ At the time of entry the book might exiſt in ſome form, or actually be in print and regiſtered after publication; there did not ſeem to be a hard and faſt rule, which makes it difficult to deduce the ſtate of any particular title juſt from the date of regiſtration.³¹ In this caſe it is not hard to imagine that the controversy would intereſt the publiſhers, even if no work on it had actually commenced.

It cannot be ruled out that ſome form of manuſcript was uſed to engage the publiſhers; however, that it took four months to complete ſeems like a long time if the printers had a full manuſcript. The printers ſtate in the errata, “Kinde Reader, The Authors of this Book being by multiplicity of imployments detained from meeting

together to reviſe the whole before the impreſs was finiſhed, the Errata ſwell to a greater number then may ſtand with the credit of the Book....”³² It may be at regiſtration the printers only had at moſt part one of *JDRE*, which parallels the ſummertime work of the aſſembly, and that it was a work in progress through the months to completion and was printed in pieces as the printers received more text and the writers continued to expand the work to finiſh the answer from where the aſſembly ceaſed work.

Regrettably there is little internal evidence to date portions of the book to any time between Auguſt and December 1646. There are no ſpecific hiſtorical references and there are only two books publiſhed in this period that might inform the dating. In theory between the time the aſſembly ceaſed working on an answer and the publication of the ſundry miniſters’ book on December 1, 1646, any books referenced that were firſt publiſhed within that period would help define how late work was being done on the book. Unfortunately, the two in queſtion only define broad boundaries. The firſt work was publiſhed between the time the aſſembly ceaſed working and the recording of *JDRE* by the Stationers in Auguſt. George Gillespie’s magnum opus, *Aaron’s Rod Blossoming*, is referenced ſeven or eight times. The work was in print and Gillespie himſelf handed out copies in the aſſembly on July 30, 1646.³³ In the body of the work, the firſt reference to *Aaron’s Rod* appears on page 63 (part 2, chp. 7) in the original work of 240 pages. While all theſe references are of the “ſee for more information” form, generally publication juſt two weeks prior tends to align with moſt of the work on *JDRE* commencing after the date of regiſtration.

The ſecond book is not cited by *JDRE*. Anthony Burgess’s *Vindiciae Legis* was publiſhed on October 12, 1646. In works important to determining the aſſembly’s original intent,³⁴ *Vindiciae Legis* is ſecond in importance only to *JDRE*. Burgess’s work was ſtrongly connected to the London Miniſters, who had requeſted the lectures and had them publiſhed. Given that Burgess’s work has chapters on natural law and its ſtrong connection to the *JDRE* authors, it is plausible that if it could have been cited early in part one where natural law is diſcuſſed, it would have been. This may indicate that at leaſt the early parts of the book were completed before mid October 1646.

JDRE AS THE ASSEMBLY’S REPLY TO THE COMMON’S NINE QUERIES

However the work of printing unfolded, the recording

26. *A Transcript of the Registers of the Worshipful Company of Stationers; From 1640–1708 A.D.*, ed. G.E. Briscoe Eyre, 3 vols. (London: Priv. Print, 1913), 1.242.

27. Thomason dated his copy December 2, 1646. *Catalogue of the Pamphlets, Books, Newspapers, and Manuscripts Relating to the Civil War, the Commonwealth, and Restoration, Collected by George Thomason, 1640–1661*, 2 vols. (British Museum, 1908), 1.478.

28. “[To George Young.] December 1st 1646,” *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie*, 2.411.

29. “Furthermore it is perfectly clear that what was being held as copyright” [by entry in the Stationers’ Register] “was not a specific state of a text ... but the title of the work, not a document but an idea....” *Shakespeare’s Stationers: Studies in Cultural Bibliography*, edited by Marta Straznicky (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), p. 65.

30. Ronald B. McKerrow, *An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students*, edited by David McKitterick (1927; New Castle: Oak Knoll Press, 1994), p. 137.

31. McKerrow, *ibid.*

32. *Jus Divinum Eccleſiaſtici Regiminis* (1646), page facing “An Advertisement....”

33. Thomason dated his copy as purchased on Auguſt 3, 1646 (1.455).

34. See Chris Coldwell, “The Weſtmiſter Aſſembly & the Judicial Law: A Chronological Compilation and Analysis, Part 1,” *The Confessional Presbyterian* 5 (2009), 42.

of the intent to publish just three weeks after the assembly “moved on” from answering the nine queries is significant. Historians have long supposed that the London presbyterians that met at Sion College, with some level of support took the work of the assembly and in some form used or built upon it to craft an answer to the House’s nine “captious” queries and defend a church government “by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ.” Not even having the benefit of the assembly minutes, which he supposed had been lost, Hetherington opined,

Judging from internal evidence, in matter, manner, and style, it appears almost certain that this work at least embodies the substance of the answer prepared by the Assembly, somewhat enlarged and modified by the city ministers, in whose name it was published.... We do not mean to assert, that the work published by the city ministers was the identical production of the Assembly; but that so much of the one was transfused into the other as to render them to all practical intents one work, and to relieve us from any cause to regret that the Assembly’s answer was not published.³⁵

Other nineteenth century historians who wrote after the discovery and publication of the minutes essentially concurred, including Mitchell, who believed the material the assembly drafted in May through June of 1646 was contained in parts of *JDRE*. “This work, however, there is reason to believe, was not lost, but supplemented and expanded by some of the London ministers, it made its appearance before the close of the year in certain parts of the *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici*, much to the indignation of several members of the House of Commons.”³⁶

In a later edition of his history of the assembly, Hetherington adds in a chapter on the works of the assembly,

The *Jus Divinum* of the city ministers appears to me to be both virtually and substantially the Assembly’s Answer to the Parliament, containing actually that very Answer as prepared by them; but with such additional amplifications in statement and illustrations, by the city ministers themselves, as might both render it more complete and fit for publication as a distinct work on the subject, and at the same time entitle them to publish it on their own responsibility.³⁷

Of modern historians, Dr. de Witt took essentially Hetherington’s view, as does David W. Hall.³⁸ After the work on the assembly by Spear and Paul, Dr. de Witt later

conceded his view of the uniformity of views amongst the presbyterians of the assembly required some nuance.

It is essential that one pay heed to the composition of the Assembly. Here a word of caution may be in order. Much of what has been written on this subject has frequently been more than a little hagiographical in nature. I too have in the past been inclined to minimize the sometimes quite far-reaching divergences which existed among the divines and to underestimate the extent to which factors having little to do with biblical interpretation and theological conviction affected their work. The members of the Assembly were Puritans all, and united in their commitment to reformed doctrinal orthodoxy—the divines at Westminster were Calvinists to a man—but distinct differences of conviction existed among them on questions relating to the church.³⁹

In conformity to the work done by Paul and Spear after his 1969 thesis, Dr. de Witt noted the early ambivalence toward if not advocacy of a limited episcopacy by some of the assembly.⁴⁰ Yet while he does not address *JDRE* in this later briefer paper, one may deduce his view had not really changed, that the book reflected the assembly’s views. In discussing the Form of Government he goes on to briefly cover the controversy over the House’s queries, noting, “To these divines of Westminster, the powers of the state are *circa sacra*, not *in sacris*. They

35. John R. de Witt, *Jus Divinum*, 229. Hetherington (1843), 287; (1890), 272.

36. Mitchell, *History*, 329. Charles A. Briggs and William Beveridge wrote similarly. See David W. Hall, “The Original Intent of Westminster as Clarified by *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici* (1646)” in *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici* (1995), xx–xxii.

37. Hetherington (1890), 371. Hetherington added material for the third edition of his history in a sixth chapter (Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1856), where this statement is found. This is chapter ten in the fourth edition edited by Robert Williamson, who reorganized and added material (Edinburgh: Gemmell, 1878; fifth edition, 1890). An American edition lacking the additions was often reprinted (New York: Newman, 1843, repr. New York: Carter, 1853, 1868, and 1875), 311 pp.

38. David W. Hall, “The Original Intent of Westminster,” *ibid*.

39. John Richard de Witt, “The Form of Government,” in *To Glorify and Enjoy God: A Commemoration of the 350th Anniversary of the Westminster Assembly*, ed. John L. Carson and David W. Hall (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1994), 150–151.

40. John Richard de Witt, “The Form of Government,” 151. “One may also speak of a group of divines who were strongly Puritan in their doctrinal views, but more or less undecided with regard to the details of church polity—at least during the early stages of the Assembly’s life. Some of these men may very well have had an inclination toward the kind of ‘primitive episcopacy’ advocated in this period by ... Ussher....”

are extrinsic, not intrinsic. And that is the point of the whole quarrel” (over the nine queries).⁴¹ For this statement in the endnote he directs the reader to *JDRE* where this is addressed, indicating he still viewed *JDRE* as expressing the assembly’s views.

It seems clear that the statement by Hetherington is too strong, that the work of the assembly is essentially indistinguishable from *JDRE*. While they may have agreed with general statements regarding divine right, the Independents and Erastians would certainly not have approved of the chapters discrediting their respective systems.⁴² And even amongst the presbyterian majority there were disagreements on some points of church polity. This may best be illustrated by noting the revisions in the second edition of *JDRE*, which appeared rather quickly four months after the first edition.

THE MARCH 1647 REVISION OF *JDRE*

While the scholarship is substantial, it is clear the work on *JDRE* was not something to which the writers could

devote full or as much time as needed. This would not be a surprise if common consensus is correct that the sundry ministers were not only full time pastors, but were additionally weighed with service in the assembly of divines. This is clear from the printer’s notice to the errata page already cited. Also, the substantial revision put out only four months later evidences this.⁴³ The authors offer an apology at the end of the appendix of the revised edition, that “the candid reader will please to excuse our castigations [*revisions*] in this edition, of divers passages in the first [edition], as being no way corruptive but perfective, both in reference to our book and principles.”

In these four months the authors would have marked up a first edition and given it to the printers to set the type anew by hand and print off the revised second edition.⁴⁴ The authors probably were working on the text as late as the end of February and early March; or at least they had finished by then and had time to have the printer print an appendix containing an answer to some queries directed at the first edition, which appeared on February 27, 1646/47.⁴⁵ As far as the evidence of revision, this is documented throughout the current text. Some of these are minor and may have been author revisions or arbitrarily or erroneously committed by the printer. For example, in the otherwise unchanged part one, the first variation noted in this new collation of the editions of *JDRE* is the revision’s omission of some incidental Greek.⁴⁶ In part two there are minor changes but also many significant and more substantial revisions. Some of these are simply refining the presentation of an argument. For example, various syllogistic arguments have had the major and minor premises explicitly delineated which had not been the case in the first edition.⁴⁷ There is evidence throughout the work of refinement by reorganizing, adding or omitting sections. For instance there is a paragraph on the collection and the office of deacon that was dropped in the revision for apparently uncontroversial reasons.⁴⁸ However, other parts of *JDRE* may have been controversial amongst the English presbyterians, to which some editing draws our attention. In the following first edition text, the second point in braces was removed from the revised 1647 edition, along with the section addressing it, and the points renumbered.⁴⁹

The end or scope intended by Christ in instituting, and to be aimed at by Christ’s officers in executing of church government, in dispensing the Word, Sacraments, censures, and all ordinances of Christ, is (as the description expresses) *the edifying of the church of Christ*. This

41. John Richard de Witt, “The Form of Government,” 163, 324 n11.

42. See Van Dixhoorn’s comments on this below.

43. After the first edition available on December 1, 1646, a second edition appeared four months later with substantial revisions, on March 29, 1647, going by Thomason’s date (1.502).

44. The printer was the same for both editions (J.Y. for Joseph Hunscoot and George Calvert). There is no evidence the type was left standing for a quick second edition; rather the contrary. The title page is clearly a new sitting with some variation in the size of print and the boarder, though using the same fleur-de-lis, is set differently at the corners. While it is clear the printers used the first edition, variations in spacing and line breaks in the unchanged text exhibit that the text was a fresh setting of the type. It is most likely the decision for a revised text and another printing was made once the authors did have time to review the text as printed in the first edition and after the type would have been redistributed for other projects from whatever wood forms filled with set type may have remained from the end of the printing of the first edition. For instance, part two chapter fifteen begins a fresh page on signature page Kk2 in the 1647 revision, which shared a page with the end of chapter fourteen on Gg3 in the first edition.

45. W. A. [William Allen], *Certain Queries touching the Ordination of Ministers propounded to the Consideration of those Ministers in London, Authors of a booke entituled Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici* (Printed by Mathew Simmons for Henry Overton). See Thomason, 1.496–7. This tract has been in this writer’s opinion misattributed by Donald Wing, *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British America and of the English Books Printed in Other Countries, 1641–1700*. See the editor’s preface appended to the *Reply to Certain Queries* in *Jus Divinum* (2020), 301.

46. Part one, chapter seven, note 5. This was the only wording change noted in part one.

47. See throughout starting in part two, chapter nine.

48. See the note at the end of part two, chapter seven.

49. See part two, chapter eight, page 116.

end is very comprehensive. For the fuller evidencing whereof, these three things are to be proved: I. That Jesus Christ our Mediator has under the New Testament one general visible church on earth. {II. That the oracles, ministry, government, and all the ordinances of the New Testament are chiefly given by Christ for this one general visible church.} III. That the edification of this church of Christ is that eminent scope and end why Christ gave the power of church government and other ordinances unto the church.

UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS ENGLISH PRESBYTERIANS

In the debates in the Westminster assembly and at that time regarding what form of church government is prescribed in the Scriptures (i.e. of divine right, *jure divino*), one of the key questions was and is to whom Christ has granted and “committed, in the first instance, the gift of ecclesiastical power, and in whom the right to such power primarily resides.”⁵⁰ James Bannerman identifies three views in his magisterial work, *The Church of Christ*. 1. That church power is given “in the first instance, and properly, to the office-bearers” and not to the “community of believers”. 2. That it has been granted to the general body of believers. 3. Church power has been given to both church officers and the church in general “in accordance with their respective characters and places in the Christian society.”⁵¹ The first view was held by prominent presbyterians of that time and others, such as Samuel Rutherford and Robert Baillie, and by the authors of *JDRE*. It is also the view taken by the hierarchical churches and with all “High Churchmen,” and while not of necessity, does lend itself to such errors as “apostolical succession,” even, if rarely, in some singular and “outré” presbyterians.⁵² The second view is that taken by congregationalists and was defended at the Westminster assembly by the independent Brethren. The third view, which Bannerman defends, can be found in contemporary continental Reformed theologians such as Voetius and Apollonius. It was also the view taken by George Gillespie in his *Dispute Against the English Popish Ceremonies*, but through Rutherford’s or other influence and/or having experienced the anarchy of the sectarians in London, Gillespie was driven to take up the first view in his 111 Propositions as the surer safeguard against the consequences of the second view.⁵³

We take the time to delineate these views, first, to point out that these older works such as *JDRE*, should be supplemented with later writers such as Bannerman, who sift through the earlier works, noting some of the controversies, less soundly founded ideas, etc. Second,

it lays the ground for explaining the revision of the section of text in question.

For the English presbyterians, who held that church power was primarily and at the first instance granted to church officers, the question became important as to whether this flowed from the officers of a congregation upward through the church courts (presbyteries, synods, councils), or downward from the courts of the church to the individual congregation. The Scots such as Samuel Rutherford saw this as a needless question, simply resolving the matter by contending that church power is given by Christ to all parts of it immediately; “there is no derivation either by climbing up stairs, or going downe.”⁵⁴

In this question, the *JDRE* authors and the presbyterians of the London Provincial Assembly were drawn to the newly articulated view of Samuel Hudson.⁵⁵ This view stated that Christ granted church power to the officers as officers of a general visible church. This was anathema to congregationalists and also opposed by the Scots. This came up in the assembly debates in March 1644 as described by Hunter Powell.

Goodwin specifically raised the question of the universal visible church in March 1644 when the Assembly debated the proposition that “There is one general visible church held forth in the New Testament.” According to Lightfoot, “Mr. Goodwin suspected there might be some snare in this proposition.” Goodwin pointed out that some “rise to church-government, ‘ascendendo’, from particular congregations to the church universal, some ‘et contra descendendo’; ergo, there may be some scruple or entanglement” in the debate over this proposition.

50. James Bannerman, *The Church of Christ: A Treatise on the Nature, Powers, Ordinances, Discipline, and Government of the Christian Church*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, [1868]; 1869; rpr., Banner of Truth Trust, 1960; rpr., 1974), 1.262.

51. See the discussion in Bannerman, 1.262–275.

52. Bannerman, 1.438.

53. See Bannerman, n2, pp. 273–274.

54. Samuel Rutherford, *Due Right of Presbyteries* (1644), 383. See the discussion in Hunter Powell, “October 1643: The Dissenting Brethren and the Proton Dektikon,” in *Drawn into Controversie: Reformed Theological Diversity and Debates Within Seventeenth-Century British Puritanism*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin and Mark Jones, *Reformed Historical Theology*, v. 17. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 52–82.

55. Samuel Hudson, *The Essence and Unities of the Church Catholike Visible, And the priority thereof in regard of particular churches discussed* (London: 1644 [i.e. 1645]). Cf. Hudson, “The Essence and Unity....” *An Anthology of Presbyterian & Reformed Literature*, volume 5 (Dallas: Naphtali Press, 1992), 15–43. Thomason’s copy is dated March 8, 1645 and Hudson says that he had circulated the text amongst friends the year prior. Powell notes that this places his views as circulating at the time the assembly was debating the church universal. Powell, p. 74.

Interestingly, it was Rutherford who responded to Goodwin with two views of the church universal. Whereas the English presbyterians debated amongst themselves as to the first subject of all church power, the universal or the particular church, Rutherford offered a third option. The “ecclesia presbyterialis” (meaning the elders in a particular church) is “ecclesia prima” and “the church catholic[us]” is “totem integrale,” and what power is given to it was neither “ascendendo,” nor “descendendo,” but immediately from Christ on every part.⁵⁶

This clearly was one of the controversial views at the assembly, even amongst Presbyterians, and that may be the reason *JDRE* was revised in the second edition. It is true, if one searches *JDRE*, the authors did not remove all evidence of this view. In part two, chapter fourteen, in the revision, the authors neglected to omit a reference back to the previously noted deleted text. “3. That all Christ’s ordinances, and particularly church government, primarily belong to the whole general church visible for her edification (secondarily to particular churches and single congregations as parts or members of the whole) has been manifested [in] part two, chapter eight.” And similarly in part two, chapter ten, the text remains: “Then, not any particular congregation, but the whole general visible church is the object for which all officers and officers with their gifts and power are primarily given (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:8–12).” The first was clearly missed in the editing and the second perhaps as well, though it may also have been deemed a less blatant defense of this view and therefore retained.

The authors of *JDRE* also published *Jus Divinum Ministerii Evangelici, or, The Divine Right of the Gospel-Ministry* (1654). This has long been viewed as a sister

volume, and the authors themselves clearly intended it as a follow up work, as they allude twice in the 1647 revised edition of *JDRE*.⁵⁷ In the sister work the view the authors sought to diminish in the revision of *JDRE*, is even more pronounced. This indicates that there was motivation to remove the text from *JDRE* at the time only months after the first edition, which was likely not an issue and not a bar to the London ministers doubling down as it were on their particular view in the sister volume seven years later, two years after the dismissal of the Westminster Assembly. This may be as some have suggested, because the political winds had shifted in favor of a softer presbyterianism and because of holding out hope still that the congregationalists would still join a united church and not be separatists, and thus in 1647 the *JDRE* authors were accommodating to this change in the political winds.⁵⁸ Additional references and one long section of text from John Cotton were also added in the revision which could also lend support to this hope. It may also be, if *JDRE* was some way perceived as representing the views of the assembly or the presbyterian majority in it, that disapproval of the text, if not some pressure brought to make the change, caused the revision.

For our purposes the reason for the omission of the text is not as important to determine as to note that the view was controversial. It illustrates that it is too simplistic to view *JDRE* as essentially the assembly’s reply to the queries as Hetherington maintained. On the other hand, this does not mean the divines were not in substantial agreement and otherwise content with *JDRE*, and that the volume is not some way useful to fill out questions of intent of the assembly’s work, as perhaps the one work external to the assembly that is most closely associated with it. So in general it is nevertheless not too strong simply to modify Hetherington’s view just a bit and conclude that *JDRE* generally represents the view of the presbyterian majority, and perhaps even of the assembly on broader points not exclusively presbyterian.

RECENT CONSENSUS THAT *JDRE* REPRESENTS THE ASSEMBLY’S VIEWS

This seems to be the consensus of those writing after de Witt’s 1969 work. Paul, who presents the view of a pragmatically presbyterian majority in the assembly,⁵⁹ nevertheless concluded regarding *JDRE*, compared to another work of the period attributed to Thomas Bakewell also addressing the nine queries,⁶⁰ that, “It is more probable, however, that *Jus Divinum Regiminis*

56. Powell, 77–78.

57. In their revision, the authors announce the intention to publish a book defending the gospel ministry of the New Testament and of the Church of England specifically in part two, chapter eleven, and at the end of the book in their reply to the queries (pp. 54 and 314).

58. Correspondence with Hunter Powell, Chad Van Dixhoorn, and Elliot Vernon (via Hunter Powell), July 24–25, 2018.

59. Paul in part relies on Neal’s assessment a century after the assembly that political expediency due to the Scots Commissioners’ insistence on their own system, and pragmatic considerations drove a majority to the presbyterian camp. Robert S. Paul, *Assembly of the Lord*, 114ff.

60. Thomas Bakewell (or Bathwell), *An Answer to those questions propounded by the Parliament to the Assembly of Divines, touching jus divinum in matter of church-government* (London: William Ley, 1646). See de Witt, page 230, n64, for his assessment and rejection of this 20 page pamphlet as directly connected to the assembly. Thomason has written on his copy: “by Thomas Bathwell”; “by Tho: Bathwell woolmonger in [illegible]”; “June 17th”. Vernon describes Thomas Bakewell

Ecclesiastici, written by the London ministers and published from Sion College in December 1646, represents a much closer identification with the views of the presbyterian majority in the Assembly;” and is “more likely to have corresponded to the Assembly’s views.”⁶¹ And Chad Van Dixhoorn, in ruling out *JDRE* as an assembly work, writes (*emphasis* added):

There can be no doubt that *Jus divinum regiminis ecclesiastici* is intended, in part, as a response to parliament, and its open discussion of the nine queries has naturally led to speculation that it is an unacknowledged assembly text or that it incorporates the substance of the assembly’s response. Nonetheless, there is sufficient reason to doubt assembly authorship of *Jus divinum regiminis ecclesiastici*. In the first place, the first edition of the book was printed in November or December of 1646, and the second on 29 March 1647, but, although an answer had been produced by a committee, the assembly itself had not yet approved of an answer to the queries by 1648. Indeed, the minutes suggest that the assembly’s answer never made it out of committee (see Session 1080, 13 June 1648) and was only completely abandoned on 21 June 1648 (Session 2086). Second, while contemporary accounts of the work variously attribute authorship, the assembly is on no one’s short-list. Some attribute the work to Edmund Calamy alone; Robert Baillie mentions that it was produced by the ‘London ministers’; and the errata of the 1646 edition speaks of multiple authors that could not meet to check the text at the time of printing. Finally, the work is lengthy for an assembly response, and its robust presbyterian assertions would have raised an outcry from the assembly’s congregationalists that could not have failed to have been recorded. ***It could more safely be concluded that most of the assembly’s members were probably content with the book.*** The assembly did not pursue its responses to the nine queries with enthusiasm and, during the brief time that a response was considered by the assembly, it was willing to give some individuals prominent roles: something said by Anthony Tuckney seems to have led to Calamy’s appointment to the assembly’s first drafting committee (see Session 1069, 25 May 1648), and Stephen Marshall suggested that individual divines bring their contributions to the assembly, perhaps knowing that some of them had played a part in writing on the subject at another time (Session 1080, 13 June 1648), or would be doing so soon, since the Provincial Assembly of London, of which many members were a part, would continue to address the subject for the next few years.⁶²

DETERMINING ORIGINAL INTENT

Why is any of this important? Often, and more likely than not, we lack information on the assembly’s decisions and deliberations because the minutes of the assembly are not a full record of everything said in the debates. So writers often go to outside sources to inform and confirm the “original intent” of the Westminster Assembly for a fuller understanding of the final words of their work (Confession of Faith, Catechisms, etc.). The more strongly a non assembly work can be tied to any of the members and to the time period that specific questions were under debate in the assembly, the more significant that work may be in helping to define the intent of the assembly or providing further nuance or background to their words. For instance, this way of working with historical material first came to my attention when David W. Hall asked me to find and compile works relative to what the Westminster Assembly meant by “in the space of six days” to discern their original intent as far as it related to the debate at that time (1998) in the Presbyterian Church of America about what views of creation should be acceptable according to their version of the confession of faith and catechisms.⁶³ In 2010 I examined original intent of the Westminster assembly regarding the judicial law, with a first time study containing a chronological survey, ordering the source material by “release” date around a time line of the work of the assembly on the Law of God, using Thomason and other official publication dating records.⁶⁴ Of all the publications examined, *JDRE* had the strongest connection to the assembly because of the authorship, purpose, and the dating.

as a ruling elder and presbyterian pamphleteer, whose writings were “theologically sophisticated pamphlets attacking heresy and defending *jure divino* Presbyterianism.” Vernon, p. 157. A perhaps different Thomas Bakewell is described by Calamy (the son) as taking M.A. in 1641 and ejected for nonconformity in 1661. Calamy notes one work on baptism also attributed to the first Bakewell, so this man if one and the same must have subsequently taken a pastoral charge. Edmund Calamy, *The Nonconformist’s Memorial*, vol. 2, second ed. (1778), 391–393.

61. Paul, *Assembly of the Lord*, page 513, and note 87. Spear did not address or discuss *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici*.

62. Van Dixhoorn, 1.78–79. My thanks go to Dr. Van Dixhoorn for giving his permission to cite this portion of text in full.

63. See J. Ligon Duncan, David W. Hall et al., *The Genesis Debate: Three Views on the Days of Creation* (Crux Press, 2001).

64. Coldwell, “The Westminster Assembly & the Judicial Law: A Chronological Compilation and Analysis, Part 1,” pp. 7, 46 and 55.

COMPARING THE ASSEMBLY MINUTES WITH *JDRE*

Yet this is not quite the end of the subject. William Hetherington did not have the benefit of the assembly’s minutes when he made his conclusion that *JDRE* drew upon the assembly’s work to craft their answer. What is most likely to have caught Hetherington’s eye was that in the first six queries each returns the phrase “by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ.” The Commons picked this up from the assembly’s protest, the strength of which had clearly struck some nerves, which reads, “Wherefore your Petitioners in discharge of their fidelity to God, to his church, & to your Honours, do humbly pray, That the several Elderships may be sufficiently inabled to keep <backe> all such as are notoriously scandalous from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, of which wee must, as formerly <in our pet[it]ion> we have done, say expressly, It belongs unto them by Divine Right, & by the Will and appointment of Jesus Christ.”⁶⁵ Given that *JDRE* is an answer to the nine queries, this phrase

occurs several times in part one, and in the first chapter of part two. This is in addition to the fact, as Dr. de Witt noted, that *JDRE* restates the substance of the nine queries and proceeds to answer them.

But more evidence can be deduced now that we have the Westminster Assembly’s minutes in full.⁶⁶ A comparison of entries in the assembly minutes and the text of *JDRE* may strengthen support for the long held view that in their *JDRE* the ministers of Sion College built upon what was done in the assembly during those summer months of 1646.

To begin, the House of Commons in their nine queries, in presenting the questions to be answered, did not bifurcate the subject as *JDRE* does into two questions. But in order to answer the Commons, the question obviously had to be addressed, what is divine right? In this they follow the Westminster Assembly’s initial work, which divided the matter into three questions.⁶⁷

As Baillie makes clear in seeking to divert the assembly back to work on the confession and catechisms,

JDRE	Minutes of the Assembly
<p>I. “Of the Nature of a jus divinum, or a divine right, and how many ways a thing may be jure divino, or of a divine right.” This is the first part of <i>JDRE</i> (p. 53).</p> <p>Of the nature of a jus divinum, or a divine right in general. Part one, chapter two, page 57.</p> <p>II. “The nature of that church government, which is jure divino, of divine right according to the Scripture.” This forms the larger part of <i>JDRE</i> (p. 85).</p> <p>III. “Of the proper receptacle and distinct subject of all this power and authority of church government, which Christ has peculiarly entrusted with the execution thereof, according to the Scriptures. And I. Negatively,” [not the magistrate, nor body of the people, but II.] “Christ’s own officers” [are] “the proper subject of this power.” Part two, chapter nine (p. 120), ten (p. 146), and eleven (p. 169).</p>	<p>Session 632: “Resolved upon the Question: to debate the nature of a Jus Divinum on Munday morning.” Minutes, p. 98.</p> <p>The assembly assigned questions to three committees, “That the nature of Jus Divinum in Reference to Church Government in Generall shall be Considered by the first Committee.” Sess. 637, p. 120.</p> <p>“The nature of Church Government and wherin it doth consist shall be considered by the second committee.” Sess. 637, p. 120.</p> <p>“whether this Church Government be in the hands of church officers only, shall be considered by the 3rd committee” (ibid., p. 120) “Report was made from the 3rd Committee of Church Government in church officers only” (Sess. 643, p. 136).</p>

65. Van Dixhoorn, 5.302. Arrow braces indicate interline text.

66. These entries also appear in the Mitchell-Struthers minutes. I am not aware that such a collation with the minutes has been done before with respect to *JDRE*.

67. To simplify the presentation, the session and page numbers all refer to Van Dixhoorn, *Minutes*, volume four, and to the text of *JDRE* now published. *Emphasis* added.

while the assembly made good progress, with the specifics of biblical church government coming up, the independent Brethren were going to start stalling the work and nothing would get done. Thus, the bulk of the larger part two of *JDRE* (on synods, etc.) does not have as much correlation in the minutes, because the assembly work had ceased. Nevertheless, there are many parallels to much of *JDRE* that can be noted.

JDRE	Minutes of the Assembly
<p>Chapter 2: Of the nature of a <i>jus divinum</i>, or a divine right in general.</p> <p>“What the nature of a <i>jus divinum</i>, or a divine right is.... And generally, a thing may be said to be <i>jure divino</i>.... And whatsoever matters in church government can be proved by Scripture to have this stamp of divine warrant and authority set upon them, they may properly be said to be <i>jure divino</i>, and <i>by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ</i>, to whom God has delegated all power and authority for government of His church.... For a <i>jus divinum</i> is equally obligatory to one church as well as to another. And it is so obligatory to all persons, states and degrees, that none ought to be exempted from that church government which is <i>jure divino</i>, nor to be tolerated in another church government, which is but <i>jure humano</i>....” JDRE, Page 57.</p> <p>Chapter 3: Of the nature of <i>jus divinum</i>, a divine right in particular. How many ways a thing may be of divine right....</p> <p>I. By light of nature. Chp. 3.</p> <p>II. By obligatory Scripture examples. Chp. 4. What examples, and how they bind as obligatory to obey.</p> <p>III. By divine approbation. Chp. 5.</p> <p>IV. By divine acts. Chp. 6. Page 60.</p> <p>V. By divine precepts or mandates. Chp. 7. Necessary consequence is discussed in this chapter. For the validity of arguing from necessity JDRE simply refers the reader for proof in Cameron’s “Controversia inter Reformatos et Pontificios agitata, De Verbo Dei.” In the place referenced, the only proof matching the assembly’s is from Matthew 22. JDRE, page 81.</p>	<p>Session 633: The Assembly entred upon the debate of the <i>Jus Divinum</i>. Upon debate it was Ordered to inquire how many wayes the will and appoyntment of Jesus Christ is set out in Scripture.” <i>Minutes</i>, page 102.</p> <p>Debate of the nature of a <i>jus divinum</i>. Dr Burgis ... I think by the order by <i>jus divinum</i> they [parliament] mean that which is the will & apoyntment of Jesus Christ. Dr Gouge: <i>Jus divinum</i> will be taken in opposition to that which is <i>jus humanum</i>.... What is the will and apoyntment of Jesus Christ concerning church government.” <i>Minutes</i>, page 103.</p> <p>“Ordered: To inquire how many wayes the will & apoyntment of Jesus Christ <is set> out in Scripture <Res. neg.:> in reference to Church government.”</p> <p>The assembly had debated the light of nature and what it teaches in relation to the Sabbath before this (April 6, 1646, Session 615, p. 48) and in relation to liberty of conscience afterwards (October 7, 1646, Session 772, p. 310), but nothing is recorded in relation to answering the queries regarding church government.</p> <p>“Precepts, consequences, examples.” Page 103. “express words”; “necessary consequence” (Sess. 634, p. 104). “Debate about precepts. Expresse Scriptures. Debate of consequences” (p. 105). Necessary consequence was debated, Session 636, 640, 641.</p> <p>Proofs for the validity of consequence: Matthew 22, John 10, Acts 13:34, and Hebrews 1:6. Session 640, p. 128. In Session 641 the assembly waved off any further proofs of the validity of necessary consequence, “Ordered: And this may be cleared by sundry other Instances, many more of the articles of faith being proved by Christ and his Apostells, out of the Old Testament, only by consequence.</p>

JDRE	Minutes of the Assembly
<p>II. By obligatory Scripture examples. Chp. 4 .</p> <p>“3. Those examples in Scripture are obligatory, whose ground, reason, scope or end are obligatory, and of a moral nature, and as much concern one Christian as another, one church as another, one time as another, etc., whether they are the examples under Old or New Testament.” <i>JDRE</i>, p. 72.</p> <p>Part two, chapter two, “but of the visible church of Christ, for which Christ has provided a visible polity, a visible government by visible officers and ordinances, for the good both of the visible and invisible members thereof, which is that church government spoken of here.” <i>JDRE</i>, p. 90.</p> <p>In <i>JDRE</i> part two, chapter one, the authors give their description of church government which provides the outline for part two. Page 87. “Church government may be thus described: church government is a spiritual¹ power or authority², revealed in the holy Scriptures³, derived from Jesus Christ our Mediator,⁴ only to His own officers⁵ and by them exercised in dispensing of the Word⁶, seals,⁷ censures,⁸ and all other ordinances of Christ,⁹ for the edifying of the church of Christ.¹⁰”</p> <p>1. Matt. 16:19 & 18:15–18, 1 Cor. 5:4–5, 2 Cor. 10:8 & 13:10.</p> <p>2. 1 Cor. 4:20–21 & 2 Cor. 10:8 & 13:10.</p> <p>3. 2 Timothy 3:16–17, 1 Timothy 3:14–15, along with all places that mention anything of government.</p> <p>4. Eph. 4:8, 11–12, 1 Cor. 12:28, Matt. 28:18–20, John 20:21–23, Matt. 16:19, 2 Cor. 10:8.</p> <p>5. Matt. 16:19, 28:19, John 20:21, 23, 2 Cor. 10:8 & 13:10.</p>	<p>The assembly developed how examples bind over several sessions, 642, 643, 647, 649, 650 653, 654. The Sabbath was given as an example (Session 647) and other examples at more length as well as a general argument (Session 649), but none equate to text in <i>JDRE</i>, chp. 4.</p> <p>“Those examples either of <the> Apostells, evengelists or of the churches planted and ordered by them, which are recorded in the New Testament, and are noe wher dissalowed, and the perticular Reason wherof still abides, doe shew a Jus Divinum and the will and apoyntment of Jesus Christ, soe as still to Remaine.” Session 654, p. 158. Cf. Session 650, p. 150.</p> <p>The assembly moved on to the second question, given the second committee, which handled the nature or description of the church government prescribed by Scripture. “The Assembly entred upon the debate of the Report of the second Committee concerning Church government. Resolved upon the Q.: to goe on with the Report as it is brought in by parts. Resolved upon the Q.: Church government is that power and authority which Christ hath appoynted to be exercised in his Church for the good therof.” 2 Corinthians 13:10 is brought as a proof. Session 655, p. 160. This proof is adduced in the description of church government in <i>JDRE</i>.</p> <p>Session 656, June 10, 1646, p. 162. While the proofs vary, and this was a work in progress, the parallels and similarities with the final description in <i>JDRE</i> are striking.</p> <p>“The Assembly proceeded in the debate of Church Government and upon debate it was Resolved upon the Q.: This government is not civill, but spirituall, Math. 20:25, 26, 27; John 18:36</p> <p>... not originall but derivative, John 20:21</p> <p>... not supreme but subordinate to Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 4:1</p> <p>... not lordly but ministeriall, 2 Cor. 1:24; 1 Pet. 5:3; not arbitrary but limited by the word of God, Math. 28 ul., ‘teaching them, &c.’”</p>

JDRE	Minutes of the Assembly
<p>6. <i>Matt. 28:18–20</i>, Acts 6:4, 2 Tim. 4:2. 7. <i>Matt. 28:18–20</i>, 1 Cor. 11:24. 8. <i>Matt. 18:15–17</i>, Titus 3:10, 1 Tim. 5:20, 1 Cor. 5:4–5, 13, 2 Cor. 2:6, 1 Tim. 1:20, 2 Cor. 2:7–8, etc. 9. 1 Cor. 4:1. 10. 2 Cor. 10:8 & 13:10.</p> <p>“This description of church government may be thus explained and proved. Three things are principally considered herein, viz.,” Page 87.</p> <p>“I. The <i>definitum</i>, or thing defined, or described, viz., church government.” Part two, chapter. two (page 89): “I. The <i>definitum</i>, or thing defined, or described, viz., church government [chapter 2]. “And here we are further to consider that church government is either: 1. Magisterial, lordly and supreme; and so it is primitively and absolutely in God... 2. Ministerial, stewardly and subordinate. And this power, Jesus Christ our Mediator has committed to His church guides and officers in His church (2 Cor. 10:8, 13:10).”</p> <p>“II. The <i>genus</i>, or general nature of this government which it has in common with all other governments, viz., power or authority [chapter 3].” Page 87.</p> <p>Part two, chapter three, “1. What is meant by power or authority. The word chiefly used in the New Testament for power or authority is ἐξουσία, which is used not only to denote Christ’s supreme power (as Luke 4:36, Mark 1:17 with Luke 6:19), but also His officers’ derived power (as [1 Cor. 4:20–21] with 2 Cor. 10:8 and 13:10).” Page 92.</p> <p>“III. The <i>differentia</i>, or the <i>specific difference</i> whereby it is distinguished from all other governments whatsoever [chapter 4, page 87]. Herein six things are observable: 1. The <i>special Rule</i>, wherein it is revealed, and whereby it is to be measured, viz., <i>The Holy Scriptures</i> [chapter 4].</p> <p>Part two, chapter four, “The rule or standard of church government is only the holy Scriptures. Thus, in the description, church government is styled a <i>power or authority revealed in the holy Scriptures</i>. For clearing hereof, take this PROPOSITION: <i>Jesus Christ our Mediator has laid down in His Word a</i></p>	<p>“... this government doth consist not only in Preaching of the word and administring the sacrament (by virtue of an office), Math. 28:19–20; Rom. 10:15; Heb. 13:7, but also in the ordaining of officers, 1 Tim. 4:14; 1 Tim. 5:22, and in dispensing of censures, 1 Cor. 5:12; 2 Cor. 2:6.”</p> <p>Each of the above entries in the minutes, also has parallels or similarities in the chapters noted by the outline in <i>JDRE</i>.</p> <p>... not originall but derivative, John 20:21 ... not supreme but subordinate to Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 4:1. ... not lordly but ministeriall, 2 Cor. 1:24; 1 Pet. 5:3; not arbitrary but limited by the word of God, Math. 28 ul., ‘teaching them, &c.” <i>Minutes</i>, p. 162.</p> <p>“... not lordly but ministeriall, 2 Cor. 1:24; 1 Pet. 5:3; not arbitrary but limited by the word of God, Math. 28 ul., ‘teaching them, &c.” <i>Minutes</i>, p. 162.</p>

JDRE	Minutes of the Assembly
<p><i>perfect and sufficient rule for the government of His visible church under the New Testament, which all the members of His church ought to observe and submit unto till the end of the world.”</i> Page 98.</p> <p>“2. The proper author, or fountain, whence this power is derived, viz., from Jesus Christ our Mediator, peculiarly” [chapter 5]. Page 87. See also the chapter’s opening paragraph. Also,</p> <p>Part two, chapter five: “as, preaching the Word (Matt. 10:7, 1 Cor. 1:17, Matt. 28:18–20, Mark 16:15); administering of the sacraments: Baptism (John 1:33 with Matt. 3:13 and 28:18–19), the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11:20, 23 etc., Matt. 26:26 etc., Mark 14:22 etc., Luke 22:19–20); dispensing of censures (Matt. 16:19 with 18:15–18 etc.)” “ordaining and appointing of His own church officers by whom His ordinances shall be dispensed and managed in His church.” “(Eph. 4:7–11. Compare 1 Cor. 12:28; 1 Thess. 5:12; Acts 20:28).” Page 102.</p> <p>“3. The <i>species</i>, or special kind of this power or authority, viz., It is a spiritual power; it is a derived power; it is an exercised power” [chapter 6]. Page 87.</p> <p>Part two, chapter six, “1. It is a spiritual power or authority. 2. It is a derived power...” John 20:21 is cited several times, but the Mathew 20 passage is not cited. Page 103.</p> <p>“4. The various parts or acts wherein this power puts forth itself: viz., in dispensing the Word, seals, censures, and all other ordinances of Christ [chapter 7].” Page 87.</p> <p>“5. The special end or scope of this power, viz., the edifying of the church of Christ” [chapter 8]. Page 87.</p> <p>“6. The proper and distinct subject or receptacle wherein Christ has placed and entrusted all this power, viz., only His own officers [chapter 9–15].”</p>	<p>“... this government doth consist not only in Preaching of the word and administring the sacrament (by virtue of an office), Math. 28:19–20; Rom. 10:15; Heb. 13:7, but also in the ordaining of officers, 1 Tim. 4:14; 1 Tim. 5:22, and in dispensing of censures, 1 Cor. 5:12; 2 Cor. 2:6.” <i>Minutes</i>, p. 162.</p> <p>“This government is not civill, but spirituall, Math. 20:25, 26, 27; John 18:36.... not originall but derivative, John 20:21</p> <p>... this government doth consist not only in Preaching of the word and administring the sacrament (by virtue of an office), Math. 28:19–20; Rom. 10:15; Heb. 13:7, but also in the ordaining of officers, 1 Tim. 4:14; 1 Tim. 5:22, and in dispensing of censures, 1 Cor. 5:12; 2 Cor. 2:6.</p> <p>Church government is that power and authority which Christ hath appoynted to be exercised in his Church for the good therof.”</p> <p>Session 657. June 11, 1646, p. 164. “This Government doth consist in ordaining of Ministers for the preaching of the word, and for administration of the sacraments and in dispensing of church censures by church officers.” Proofs, 1 Timothy 4:14 and 1 Timothy 5:22.”</p>

<i>JDRE</i>	Minutes of the Assembly
<p>“All these things are comprehended in this description and unto these various heads the whole nature of church government may be reduced. So that these being explained and confirmed by Scriptures, it will easily and fully be discovered what that church government is, which is <i>jure divino</i> and by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ our Mediator.” Page 87.</p>	<p>Session 658 (p. 166): The words “by church officers” dropped,¹ 1 Corinthians 5 and 2 Corinthians 2:6 added for proofs and debate ended on the proposition. “Resolved: “That Church Government is in the hands of Church Officers only as contradistinct to the civill magistrate.” Proofs were approved for “in the hands of church officers only” in the next session and debate ended.”</p>

In session 659 the assembly ran into some dissent from Thomas Goodwin that led to a debate about voting on the issues which resulted in a “noe more shall be said to this businesse.” In session 660 the assembly broke off from debating the nine queries until session 667 and the first committee was assigned to “prepare something for the Assembly in answer to the Questions propounded by the House of Commons” (p. 182). In session 668 the committee presented a paper answering the first query but only as from the portion of the members who drew it up, as there was not full agreement on the committee. Those of the first committee that had drawn it up were made a committee to answer the eight other queries. It is hard to say if there is a connection between this ad hoc subcommittee and the writing of *JDRE*. Those associated with early 1640s Presbyterianism such as Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, William Spurstow (the authors of works under the name Smectymnuus [1641]), William Gouge,

Lazarus Seaman and others, were spread throughout the three standing committees of the assembly: Marshall and Gouge were on the first committee, Calamy, Young, and Seaman on the second committee, Newcomen and Spurstow on the third. So while the work of this group of men from the first committee may have somehow evolved into writing *JDRE*, it is difficult to deduce this from the makeup of the first committee. See the member lists of the three committees in Van Dixhoorn, 1.182–184.

The paper was debated in Session 669 which again devolved into a discussion of how members would subscribe to the answers. In Session 670 the assembly debated the preface to the answer to the first query and it was decided to wave this till the answers to the nine queries were completed in full. Debate over the “first branch of the first Question” was debated and then put off for “further consideration.”

<i>JDRE</i>	Minutes of the Assembly
<p>Part one, chapter one. “General Proposition”: “The Scriptures declare that there is a government <i>jure divino</i> in the visible church of Christ now under the New Testament.</p> <p>Added hereto [for consideration] is 2 Corinthians 10:8. “Of our authority, which the Lord has given to us for the edification, and not for the destruction of you...” <i>JDRE</i>, page 54.</p> <p><i>JDRE</i> distinguishes the nature of civil power and the power of the church in part two, chapters six and nine, when denying the civil magistrate any government in the church.</p>	<p>Session 671. Resolved without dissent: “that Jesus Christ as King and head of his church hath himself appointed a church Government” ... “Distinct from the civill”. <i>Minutes</i>, page 192.</p> <p>Session 672. R: “this Church government stands not in any power of externall coertions in Inflicting bodily punishments, fines or mulcts upon mens persons...”</p> <p>Session 673, “But it consists in apply spirituall meanes for the better ordering of the spirituall life and preventing and Removing of scandalls, and the end of it is for edification, 2 Cor. 10:8, ‘for though I should boast somewhat more of our Authority which the Lord hath given us for edification and not for your destruction’ ... and 1 Cor. 5:5...”</p>

JDRE	Minutes of the Assembly
<p>Part two, chapter nine. “Ecclesiastical power consists of the ‘keys of the kingdom of heaven’—preaching the Word, dispensing the Sacraments, executing the censures, admonition, excommunication, absolution, ordination of presbyters, etc.; but magistratical power consists in the exercise of the secular sword, in secular statutes, fines, mulcts, imprisonments, confiscations, banishments, torments, deaths. {Magistratical power is merely temporal; ecclesiastical merely spiritual.}” The braced text was dropped in the 1647 revision. <i>JDRE</i>, page 141.</p> <p>Part two, chapter seven, Of the various parts or acts of this power of church government, wherein it puts forth itself in the church. “3. Admonition and public rebuke of sinners is a divine ordinance of Christ. “If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone ... if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more ... and if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church” (Matt. 18:15–17). “Whosoever sins ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven” (John 20:23). One way and degree of binding is by authoritative convincing reproof. “Admonish the unruly” (1 Thess. 5:14). ... (Titus 3:1)... (1 Tim. 5:20)... Titus 1:13)... (2 Cor. 2:6).” Page 110.</p> <p>“4. Rejecting, purging out, or putting away wicked and incorrigible persons from the communion of the church is an ordinance of Christ. “And if he will not hear them, tell the church...” <i>JDRE</i>, page 111.</p>	<p>Session 674. R: ... “the Government which we conceive this Question aims at stands in the due application of the censures which Christ hath appoynted, which are to be dispensed as the nature of the fault or scandall doth Require.”</p> <p>Re: “Admonitions are first to be used (according as is further expressed in the Answer to the 7th Question) wherein this order is to be observed: if the offence or fault be private, the method appoynted [in] Math. 18:15–16 is to be followed...” “If publique, that method is not necessary, 1 Tim. 5:20...” <i>Minutes</i>, pages 203, 204.</p> <p>Session 675. To debate: “That it is the will and appoyntment of Jesus Christ that notorious and scandalous offendours should be kept away from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.” This passed without opposition in the previous session, but Goodwin, Burroughs and Carter, Jr. did not vote, “till they see the scope of it.” <i>Minutes</i>, Page 206.</p> <p>It was resolved to vote on the proofs of this proposition in the session 676, but the order from the Commons to essentially drop the queries and take up the work of the confession and catechisms was delivered in Session 677, July 22, 1646 (p. 210).</p>

As one may see, the parallels are striking between the assembly’s minutes and the *JDRE* of the London Provincial Assembly. Not only is there some common language (beyond that found in the nine queries), but the sundry ministers adopted the Westminster divines’ main outline of the questions to be answered. Thus, while it may not be as strongly associated to the assembly as William Hetherington thought, as to be essentially their

work, *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici* is nevertheless so closely associated that it is perhaps, more than any other work not by the assembly itself, clearly reflective of its views and useful in determining the original intent of the Westminster Assembly, at least of the presbyterian majority, and perhaps of the majority of the assembly on more general questions of establishing a *jus divinum* from Scripture. ■

In Pursuit of an Owenian Pastoral Theology: An Examination of John Owen's Ordination Sermons

By Angelo O. Valle

INTRODUCTION

On the day before his death, John Owen wrote a most pastoral note to his long-standing friend Charles Fleetwood,

I am going to him whom my soul hath loved, or rather who hath loved me with an everlasting love; which is the whole ground of all my consolation.... I am leaving the ship of the church in a storm, but whilst the great Pilot is in it the loss of a poore under-rower will be inconsiderable. Live and pray and hope and doe not despair; the promise stands invincible that he will never leave thee nor forsake thee.¹

Even in the final moments of Owen's life, he was committed to caring for the flock of Christ. He encouraged Charles Fleetwood to consider God's everlasting love and promises, which in Owen's eyes were an "invincible" foundation to the believer. Owen as a pastor was not lifting up an empty truth, but one that he had experientially clung to throughout his extensive pastoral career; namely, God's abiding presence in the midst of uncertainty. Owen understood this reality quite well. The latter course of his life consisted of layers of political and theological defeat, yet his eyes remained fixed upon the faithfulness and abiding presence of God His shepherd.² Owen's pastoral trajectory for guiding his congregation was rooted in the very pastures which he had travailed with Christ His shepherd.

But what sort of pastor was he? Owen was always a pastor of the puritan tradition. A succinct definition for puritanism is provided by John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim. "Puritanism was a variety of Reformed Protestantism, aligned with the continental Calvinistic churches rather than with Lutherans ... which originated within the Church of England, and was a product

of that unique environment and its tensions."³ Another angle in considering the definition of a puritan comes from one of the 20th century's most vocal supporters for the puritan movement, J. I. Packer. Packer provides an alternative definition, "Puritanism was an evangelical holiness movement seeking to implement its vision of spiritual renewal, national and personal, in the church, the state, and the home; in education, evangelism, and economics; in individual discipleship and devotion, and in pastoral care and competence."⁴ The

THE AUTHOR: Angelo O. Valle is Pastor of Christ Reformed Church at Alexandria, Pennsylvania and a Minister of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He has just completed his Th.M thesis on the Pastoral Theology of John Owen during the Restoration Era under Dr. Chad Van Dixhoorn at Westminster Theological Seminary. This article is an extract from that thesis.

1. Peter Toon, *Correspondence of John Owen* (Lutterworth: James Clarke, 1970), 174.

2. For a purposeful examination of the life of John Owen from the vantage point of "defeat," see Crawford Gribben, *John Owen and English Puritanism: Experiences of Defeat*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

3. John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim, *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), Introduction, p. 2.

4. J. I. Packer, *An Anglican to Remember—William Perkins: Puritan Popularizer* (London: St. Antholin's Lectureship Charity, 1996), 1–2. See also Joel R. Beeke, *The Quest for Full Assurance: The Legacy of Calvin and His Successors* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1999), 82n1; Joel R. Beeke and Mark Jones, *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2012), 2–5; Joel R. Beeke and Randall J. Pederson, *Meet the Puritans: With a Guide to Modern Reprints* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2006), xiii–xix; Richard Greaves, "The Nature of the Puritan Tradition," in *Reformation, Conformity and Dissent: Essays in Honour of Geoffrey Nuttall*, ed. R. Buick Knox (London: Epworth Press, 1977), 255–273; Basil Hall, "Puritanism: The Problem of Definition," in *Studies in Church History*, ed. G. J. Cumming (London: Nelson, 1965), 2:283–296; Richard Mitchell Hawkes, "The Logic of Assurance in English Puritan Theology," *Westminster Theological Journal* 52 (1990): 247, accessed August 8, 2019, ATLA Religion Database

puritans recognized their unique theological mission as affecting every sphere of the world at large, from the kitchen table to the king's crown. All were called to bend the knee to the authority of Christ Himself who was clearly proclaimed from the pulpit sabbath by sabbath.

In addition to bearing the badge of puritanism proudly, Owen also saw himself as a pastor in the Protestant Scholastic tradition. Owen functioned primarily during the middle era of Protestant Scholasticism which has been called High Orthodoxy (A.D. 1640–1724).⁵ During this period, the intellectual heirs of the magisterial Reformers, and their subsequent confessional and creedal documents, were able to solidify and advance the faithful deposit that had been handed down to them.⁶ However, scholasticism cannot be misunderstood as bearing any content inherently within itself. Scholasticism must be viewed primarily as methodological. Richard Muller writes, “[Scholasticism was] a method of discourse used in the schools and universities, applicable to nearly all disciplines . . . as a method, scholasticism evidences an institutionalization of Protestant thought in its academies and universities, not the rise of a specific doctrinal perspective.”⁷ Owen's historical moment paired with his own university education and role at Oxford lent itself to his natural utilization of this common method.

with ATLASerials; Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1964), 13–29. Hill provides useful historical survey of the development of the term “puritan” as it began as a “very general term of abuse.” Ibid., 14.; D. M. Lloyd-Jones, “Puritanism and Its Origins,” in *The Puritans: Their Origins and Successors* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1987), 237–59; John Morgan, *Godly Learning: Puritan Attitudes towards Reason, Learning, and Education, 1560–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 9–22; Tae-Hyeun Park, *The Sacred Rhetoric of the Holy Spirit: A Study of Puritan Preaching in Pneumatological Perspective* (Apeldoorn: Theologische Universiteit Apeldoorn, 2005), 73–75; L. J. Trinterud, “The Origins of Puritanism,” *Church History* 20 (1951): 37–57, accessed August 8, 2019, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials. The present author is indebted to Beeke and Jones, *A Puritan Theology*, 113, for identifying various resources and trajectories in the elusive and complex history of defining puritanism.

5. Richard A. Muller, *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology, ed. David C. Steinmetz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 4–7.

6. See also Willem J. Van Asselt, *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*, ed. Joel R. Beeke and Jay T. Collier, trans. Albert Gootjes, *Reformed Historical-Theological Studies* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011); *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment*, ed. Carl R. Trueman and R. Scott Clark (Glasgow: Paternoster Press, 1999); *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise*, Texts and Studies in Reformation and Post-Reformation Thought, ed. Willem J. van Asselt and Eef Dekker (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001); Richard A. Muller, *The Unaccommodated*

With a broad awareness then of these contextual features, Owen's pastoral theology would come to bear fruit that reflected both its world-encompassing dynamic (via his puritanism) and rigorous precision in polemics and application (via his Protestant Scholasticism). Owen's own desire was not to simply pastor the flock of a particular congregation, but through his own giftedness in writing, which has survived in his voluminous remains, one finds that he sought to pastor the state, his fellow under-shepherds, correct his theological foes, and of course the people of God at large.

Amongst the entirety of the collected writings of John Owen there are only three ordination sermons preserved for the church. All three sermons may be found in volume 9 of *The Works of John Owen* as edited by William H. Goold.⁸ As posthumous sermons, they were preserved by a member of John Owen's church, Sir John Hartopp. The aim of this article is twofold: first, highlight the trustworthiness of the unauthorized scribe, Sir John Hartopp, Baronet; second, to identify Owen's pastoral theology as he expressed it to clergy and laity alike via the pulpit. Stephen Wright's article on “Sir John Hartopp, third baronet” provides the foundation for much of the historical research gathered below. Wright's own concise entry on the life of Hartopp marked out much of the primary research trajectories that are subsequently gathered here.⁹

Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology, ed. David C. Steinmetz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

7. Muller, *After Calvin*, 4. For subsequent articulation of the primacy of Scholasticism as chiefly concerned with method see Muller, *After Calvin*, 27–33, 74–88; Richard A. Muller, *Post Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725*, vol. 1, *Prolegomena to Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 189–204; Luco J. van den Brom, “Scholasticism and Contemporary Systematic Theology” in *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise*, Texts and Studies in Reformation and Post-Reformation Thought, ed. Willem J. van Asselt and Eef Dekker (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 279, 282–283, 287. For the import of Aristotelian influence on the Protestant Scholastics see Richard A. Muller, “Reformation, orthodoxy, ‘Christian Aristotelianism,’ and the eclecticism of early modern philosophy,” *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis*, 81, no. 3 (2001): 306–322, accessed September 9, 2017, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials. Crawford Gribben does witness a change in Owen's stance towards the scholastic method, of both the Roman Catholic and Protestant sort, when he writes, “[For Owen the s]cholastic method was to be abominated wherever it was found.” Gribben, *John Owen and English Puritanism*, 219.

8. *The Works of John Owen*, ed. William H. Goold (1850–1853; repr., Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965–2008).

9. Stephen Wright, “Sir John Hartopp, third baronet,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), accessed February 14, 2020, <https://www.oxforddnb.com>.

HISTORICAL SOURCE CONSIDERED:
SIR JOHN HARTOPP

In order to verify the credibility of the sermons that will be examined, one must know something about the man who transcribed them: Sir John Hartopp. Hartopp was a Nonconformist, “a thrice elected Member of Parliament for Leicestershire,” and member of Owen’s congregation at Leadenhall Street.¹⁰ He was an educated Christian who was nestled firmly within the Nonconformist context and cohorts of his pastor, John Owen. After being widowed in 1658, Sir John Hartopp’s mother, Mary, would go on to wed one of Owen’s closest friends, Charles Fleetwood in 1664. Fleetwood was the former General and son-in-law of Oliver Cromwell. Hartopp’s mother would move to Stoke Newington, Middlesex where Fleetwood lived. In the late autumn of 1666, Sir John Hartopp would go on to marry Fleetwood’s daughter, Elizabeth, who was from Fleetwood’s first marriage to Bridget Cromwell. Hartopp was a committed Nonconformist who had followed in his pastor’s footsteps in his willingness to stand against the Established church. In one instance Hartopp along with Fleetwood, came under the eye of the church wardens of their parish in Stoke Newington for failing to come for worship and partaking of the Lord’s Supper in 1673.¹¹

Hartopp would continue in the Leadenhall Street congregation under Owen’s successors including Isaac Watts. In a funeral discourse dedicated to Sir John Hartopp and his wife, Watts shed some light on the man, “When I name Sir John Hartopp, all that knew him will agree that I name a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian....”¹² Watts continued in his exposition of Hartopp’s character, “He had a taste for universal learning; and ingenious arts were his delight from his youth. He pursued knowledge in various forms, and was acquainted with many parts of human science....”¹³ Watts would even go on to use the word “genius” to describe Hartopp. Though a funeral sermon is an excellent opportunity to euphemistically recall the life of an individual, it would seem from his life and character that Hartopp was an educated, capable Christian who had served in public life, and maintained exemplary character in the church. Hartopp’s commitment with Christ led him to even pursue studying the Hebrew language after fifty years of age.¹⁴

Sir John Hartopp was not only a member of pastor John Owen’s church, but he was also a close friend. Their friendship is evidenced in various correspondences.¹⁵ One example provides a window into Owen’s own defeated mentality at this latter stage of his

life while simultaneously reflecting on his friendship towards Hartopp and his wife. Owen wrote, “Dear Sir, The reason why I write so seldom unto any of my friends is because I have nothing to write; at least nothing that is worth reading in my scribbling ... my letters are not worth reading for nothing.”¹⁶ Nevertheless, Owen continued to expand upon his love for the Hartopp family, “And as for you I am sure I have noe need to tender you any new assurance of my cordiall respects and love unto your selfe and your Lady.”¹⁷ In a subsequent letter Owen refers to Hartopp as “my deare friend....”¹⁸ In addition, Owen’s pastoral letters also sought to comfort the Hartopp’s by reminding them of his regular ministry of prayer on their behalf. Isaac Watts, highlighted their friendship in his funeral discourse for Hartopp. Watts wrote, “He [that is Hartopp] enjoyed an intimate friendship with that great and venerable man Dr Owen, and this was mutually cultivated with zeal and delight on both sides, till death divided them.”¹⁹

In short, though his sermons remain unofficial copies of Owen’s writings, Hartopp’s character, his friendship with Owen, and his own education grant allowance for their overall trustworthy character. Hartopp would only live to see one collection of sermons published in his lifetime. In 1721, the year before Hartopp’s death, a collection of Owen’s discourses and sermons were published in a single folio, which included unpublished notes from Owen as well as those from Hartopp’s shorthand notes.²⁰ According to Goold, the 1721 edition was “edited so carefully by five Independent ministers, who assure us that the posthumous sermons contained in it were the genuine productions of Owen....”²¹ Hartopp’s regular practice was to take shorthand notes of Owen’s sermons and then to share them with his

10. Goold, “Prefatory Note,” in John Owen, 9:18.

11. J. T. Cliffe, *The Puritan Gentry Besieged, 1650–1700* (London: Routledge, 1993), 84, quoted in Stephen Wright, “Sir John Hartopp, third baronet,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

12. Isaac Watts, *Death and Heaven: or, The last Enemy conquered, and Separate Spirits made Perfect. With an Account of the rich variety of their Employments and Pleasures. Attempted in Two Funeral Discourses. In Memory of Sir John Hartopp, Baronet, and His Lady, Deceased* (Edinburgh: Sands, Murray, and Cochran, 1769), 167. The present author is deeply indebted to the historical research of Stephen Wright in pointing out this primary source.

13. Isaac Watts, *Death and Heaven*, 167–168.

14. Isaac Watts, *Death and Heaven*, 168.

15. Toon, *The Correspondences of John Owen*, 158, 160–161.

16. Toon, *The Correspondences of John Owen*, 160–161.

17. Toon, *The Correspondences of John Owen*, 160.

18. Toon, *The Correspondences of John Owen*, 160–161.

19. Isaac Watts, *Death and Heaven*, 173.

20. Goold, “Prefatory Note,” in Owen, *Works*, 9:18.

21. Goold, “Preface,” in Owen, *Works*, 8:vii.

family in the evening. Watts mentioned that since Hartopp is now in heaven, “There he has no need to relieve his memory by the swiftness of his pen, which was his *perpetual practice* in the church on earth, and by which means he often entertained his family in the evening worship on the Lord’s day with excellent discourses...”²² Though one mystery does remain: If Hartopp truly was a committed Nonconformist and faithful member and friend of his pastor, John Owen, why did he not seek to publish in his lifetime all of the sermons and discourses he collected? Why did he wait until the end of his life to have only some sermons published in 1721? These questions are outside the present scope of this work, but may be useful for further inquiry to add subsequent depth to the man who preserved Owen’s latter discourses.

As a committed Nonconformist and member under Owen’s pastoral ministry at the church in Leadenhall Street, Hartopp preserved more than thirteen sermons by Owen via shorthand. The precise number of sermons provided for by the pen of Hartopp remains uncertain because in the 1721 publication of Owen’s posthumous sermons, no clear distinction is made between the sermons collected from Owen’s notes, and those collected from Hartopp’s notes. Hartopp did more, however, than preserve Owen’s sermons. Hartopp had also maintained a manuscript of Owen’s “*A Treatise of the Dominion of Sin and Grace*” which would aid Goold over a century later in his own assembly of Owen’s collected works.²³

The collected edition, in which the ordination sermons are found, was published posthumously for the first time in 1756 by Hartopp’s granddaughter, Mrs. Cooke. Though Mrs. Cooke would later take subsequent notes from Hartopp to the publisher in 1760,

these successive discourses were concerned with the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. The significance of Mrs. Cooke’s work in publishing her grandfather’s sermon notes was recognized only four years after the matter by the Rev. Richard Winter, whom Goold described as “an excellent and useful minister in London” who himself served as a pastor of “Independent Church, New Court, Carey Street.”²⁴ Winter described the significance of Mrs. Cooke’s efforts in publishing her grandfather’s sermon notes of Pastor Owen in this way, “the world was favored, through your means, with a volume of Dr Owen’s sermons which never before appeared in print...”²⁵ In its first publication, the collected sermons were preceded by the following advertisement to function as a seal of authenticity:

To the Reader,—The following Discourses were preached by that truly venerable divine in the last century, Dr John Owen: and in order to be fully satisfied they are genuine, Mrs. Cooke of Stoke Newington, by this means informs the reader that her pious grandfather, *Sir John Hartopp, Bart.*, wrote them in shorthand from the Doctor’s own mouth, and then took the pains to transcribe them into long-hand; as thinking them worthy of being transmitted down to posterity. It is from his manuscripts this collection is now made public.²⁶

As unofficial sermons released well after the death of Owen and Hartopp, these collected sermons should be viewed as authentic, and yet simultaneously as several steps removed. The dates for the collected sermons range from 1669–1682. The ordination sermons provided are the only existent evidence of how Owen would have conveyed his pastoral theology explicitly to the various congregations from the pulpit. Peter Toon noted Owen’s interactions with other Congregationalist churches for calling and ordaining services, “He also took part, whenever possible, in services of ordination ... he was sometimes asked to be a guest preacher.”²⁷ On one occasion, Owen participated in the ordination service of Matthew Mead on December 14, 1671 in Stepney, right outside of London.²⁸ Owen appears to have committed himself to regularly participating in various ordination sermons, and commending other ministers via letter to their tasks.²⁹ Nevertheless, the only explicit evidence thus far of an example of pastor Owen’s ordination sermons come via Hartopp’s pen.

When considering the sermons printed from Hartopp’s notes, there does not seem to be a pattern as to why some sermons were preserved and others were not. However, there are at least two patterns that do

22. Isaac Watts, *Death and Heaven*, 173.

23. Goold, “Prefatory Note,” in Owen, *Works*, 7:500. Goold notes, “We have had access to a manuscript which belonged to Dr Owen’s friend, Sir John Hartopp, and which contains a large portion of this treatise. It serves to show how many obscure passages in the writings of Owen might have been elucidated and rendered perfectly clear, if the same advantage had been enjoyed in the preparation of his other works for this edition.” *Ibid.*

24. Goold, “Prefatory Note,” in Owen, *Works*, 9:518.

25. Richard Winter, *To Mrs. Cooke of Stoke Newington*, 1760, in Owen, *Works*, 9:519.

26. Goold, “Prefatory Note,” in Owen, *Works*, 9:408; emphasis added.

27. Toon, *God’s Statesman*, 163.

28. A. T. Jones, *Notes on the Early Days of Stepney Meeting*, 1887, 50, quoted in Toon, *God’s Statesman*, 163.

29. *The Records of a Church of Christ meeting at Broadmead, Bristol, 1640–1687*, ed. E. B. Underhill (London: J. Haddon, 1847), 382. Toon, *God’s Statesman*, 163.

	Date Delivered	Sermon Topic	Sermon Text	Sermon Title
1	Thursday, June 27, 1669	The Everlasting Covenant, The Believer's Support Under Distress	2 Samuel 22:5	The Everlasting Covenant, The Believer's Support Under Distress
2	Wednesday, Jan. 1, 1670	The Everlasting Covenant, The Believer's Support Under Distress	2 Samuel 22:5	On the Everlasting Covenant
3	Monday, Jan. 23, 1673	Ordination Sermons	Ephesians 4:8	N/A [Origin of the Ministry]
4	Sunday, April 3, 1678	Ordination Sermons	1 Corinthians 12:11	N/A [Qualifications of the Ministry]
5	Tuesday, Sept. 8, 1682	Ordination Sermons	Jeremiah 3:15	N/A [Duties of the Ministry]
6	Thursday, June 7, 1674	The Excellency of Christ	Psalms 45:1-3	N/A
7	Thursday, June 7, 1674	The Excellency of Christ	Psalms 45:1-3	N/A
8	Thursday, June 14, 1674	The Excellency of Christ	Psalms 45:2	N/A
9	Thursday, June 21, 1674	The Excellency of Christ	Psalms 45:3	N/A
10	Monday, April 9, 1680	The Use and Advantage of Faith	Habakkuk 2:4	The Use and Advantage of Faith in a Time of Public Calamity
11	Tuesday, April 30, 1680	The Use and Advantage of Faith	Habakkuk 2:4	The Use of Faith Under Reproaches and Persecutions
12	Tuesday, May 7, 1680	The Use and Advantage of Faith	Habakkuk 2:4	The Use of Faith, If Popery Should Return Upon Us
13	Tuesday, May 21, 1680	The Use and Advantage of Faith	Habakkuk 2:4	The Use of Faith in a Time of General Declension in Religion

Table 1. Owen's Sermons First Published in 1756³⁰

emerge as the sermons are considered as a collection. First, the sermons are ordered chronologically, with the only notable exception being the ordination sermons (Sermons 3–5). The ordination sermons themselves are listed chronologically (1673, 1678, 1682) but the latter two deviate from the overall chronological structure of the collection as a whole. They are wedged between a sermon from 1670 and another from 1674.

The second observable pattern of interest is that each of the chronologically ordered sermons is a part of a sermon series. The first two sermons are on the everlasting covenant, with Owen's main text arising from 2 Samuel 22:5. Sermons 1–2 are six months removed from each other, but Owen alludes to the first sermon in the second where he writes, "I do remember I have spoken

in this place formerly from these words; and delivered somewhat concerning the covenant of God, so far as the exposition of the words did lead me."³¹ As already mentioned, the second series listed for Sermons 3–5 are his ordination sermons.³² Sermons 6–9 are a series on Psalm 45:1–3, and are the only sermons listed with a location: Stadhampton. Sermons 6–9 are the only sequential sermons series being dated on successive Thursdays:

30. The selected sermons come from the transcribed notes of Sir John Hartopp and published courtesy of his granddaughter, Mrs. Cooke for the first time in 1756. The Sermon Topics are taken from Gould's suggested division names with Sermons 3–5 as exceptions, where the present author provided the Sermon Topic names. See *Owen, Works*, 9.408.

31. Owen, *Works*, 9.420.

32. Owen, *Works*, 9.431–462.

June 7, 1674 (2x); June 14; June 21. The final grouping for Sermons 10–13 consider the practical ramifications of faith in light of England's spiritual decline in Owen's estimation. Owen's chief text for this final sermons series is found from Habakkuk 2:4. He delivered these sermons on Monday (Sermon 10) and thereafter on Tuesdays (Sermons 11–13).

As a note of curiosity, it is worth noting, that of all the sermons taken from Hartopp's collection, only Sermon 4, an ordination sermon, is delivered on the Lord's Day. There is not enough information to establish why Owen selected one day over the others. However, it may have been to protect himself, his congregation, and others in light of the pressures raised against the Nonconformists. Table 1 on the previous page shows Hartopp's sermons with the aforementioned data in a more user friendly manner.

It is not clear if the titles provided under the modern collected works as edited by Goold represent the original sermon titles, or if they were added subsequently by Goold, or Hartopp himself.³³

SERMON 1: ORIGIN OF THE MINISTRY

Pastor Owen's first ordination sermon is all about identifying the Christological origin of pastoral ministry.³⁴ It was first delivered on January 23, 1673. He provided this thesis statement for his listeners, "The design of these words is to show that the gift of the ministry and of ministers ... is an eminent fruit of the exaltation of Christ, and a great expression and pledge of his care and love towards his church ..." (431). The overall structure of the sermon is divided into two main parts. The first part will be concerned with demonstrating the Christological origin of pastoral ministry and secondarily with highlighting that ordained ministry is "an eminent fruit of the exaltation and mediation of Christ ..." (438).

As presented here, pastoral ministry from beginning to end is rooted in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. John Owen's first homiletical point is to highlight the pastor as a gift from Christ towards His congregation. Owen said, "The foundation of the ministry is in the gift of Christ ... The ministry, is it from heaven? or is it of men? The answer is in the text, 'He gave;'—it is the gift of Christ." (431). In considering Owen's constant polemical engagement the various extra-biblical offices

established and maintained by the Church of Rome and England, it is not surprising that he would begin his ordination sermon with this Christological foundation. His consideration of Ephesians 4 led him to see the Apostle Paul's comments on the nature of pastoral ministry as a fulfillment of the prophet Jeremiah. Owen alludes to one of his favorite texts on pastoral ministry: Jeremiah 3:15. There the prophet Jeremiah writes, "I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." For his listeners, Owen then linked this generic pastoral promise to an explicit Christological prophecy in Jeremiah 23:4–5. Utilizing the Old Testament text, Owen again reiterates his central thesis to the congregation, "It is the great promise, that, under the gospel, Christ would give ministers to his church" (432).

Owen's own homiletical method comes forward as he proposed an interrogative towards those listeners so as to lead them further in his exposition. Owen asked, "how doth Christ now continue to give ministers to his church?" He answered his own question providing an outline for his listeners so as to guide them in this first section of his sermon. Owen said, "by four ways or means doth Christ continue to give ministers, in all ages, unto his church" (432).

Firstly, Christ has established this gospel ministry in the church and instated it by His own command. What is presented is that this means of gifting the church is an outworking of Christ's abiding role as the church's "great mediator" forever. The ordinance of Christ secures the abiding place of pastoral ministry in this present age. Owen roots its indelible character when he notes "it shall never be altered in this world" (432). For Owen, the immutable ordinance of Christ guarantees for every successive generation the unceasing line of ministers from one generation to the next.

Secondly, the Lord Jesus Christ gifts pastors to His church by bestowing spiritual gifts upon these men. Here Owen articulated two related but distinct notes. The first is that a minister of the Gospel needs spiritual gifts in order to accomplish his ordained mission. A minister without the gifts of Christ is no minister at all. Secondarily, Owen argued that the gifts alone do not render a man fit for gospel ministry. Therefore, as an outworking of Christ's constant care for His people, the Lord Jesus never ceases to equip men for gospel ministry by means of the outpouring of spiritual gifts. Owen said, "If the Lord Jesus Christ should cease to give out spiritual gifts unto men for the work of the ministry ... it must cease also ..." (432). With this remark Owen simultaneously demonstrated the need for spiritual

33. See Table 1 for a table visualizing Sir John Hartopp's selected sermons, dates delivered, sermon topics, sermon texts and sermon titles.

34. Owen, *Works*, 9.431–441. Hereafter, references to Owen's works, especially volume 9, are generally made parenthetically.

gifts whilst taking a rhetorical jab against the Church of Rome whom, in Owen's estimate, had lost their access to Christ by means of their apostasy. Against Rome Owen added, "Christ no more giving out unto them of the gifts of his Spirit; and all their outward forms and order, which they can continue, are of no signification in his sight" (432).

Thirdly, the Lord Jesus gifts pastors to His church by equipping His congregations with power to lawfully call spiritually gifted men to ordained ministry. Here Owen added three observations about the sort of power Christ grants to His people. First, this power is not rooted in the individuals themselves, but only insofar as they abide by the words of Christ. As they commit themselves towards his decrees they are enabled to set men apart from ministry "in the name and authority of Jesus Christ alone ..." (433). In addition, the power which Christ bestows towards His people is limited by His own qualifications. The church is not free to choose any man as they see fit. Again, the word and work of Christ must constrain the congregation in the execution of their duties. Owen said, "if Christ hath not preinstructed and prefurnished him with gifts, it is not in the power of the church to choose or call him" (433). Lastly, the church must as the body of Christ consent by suffrage to elect such a man to office. The voluntary consent of the congregation to submit towards their elected officer is a requirement and outworking of the power Christ provides unto His congregations. Owen in his most pastoral of moments said to the congregation, "It is the great work you have to do, let me tell you ... in your calling of an officer, to give up yourselves unto him by the will of God, to be led, guided, instructed, directed,—to have the work of the ministry fulfilled among you to your edification ..." (433). Owen revealed to the congregation what they ought to expect in the work of their minister. The minister will lead God's people, guide them, teach them, and show them the way of Christ for their own benefit and edification.

As can be imagined, on this most congregational of notes, Owen took time to help prove this last observation from Scripture. He pointed the congregation firstly to 2 Corinthians 8:5, but then directed them as well towards Numbers 8:9–10. Considering Owen's historical context he wants to help articulate to those present that what is about to transpire in a congregation's setting a man apart to office is not a historical deviation, but what he believed to be the fruit of the most faithful exposition of Scripture. Owen's tangent for Independency led him to direct his listeners to the New Testament data in greater detail. He identifies the Apostolic model of

suffrage in calling Judas Iscariot's replacement in Acts 1:23, the call for the first diaconate in Acts 6, and elders from Acts 14:23. His last word on the subject is summarized in this manner, that every man ever elected to the offices of the church in the New Testament "was done by the election of the multitude, or the body of the church" (435). Owen validated that which was about to transpire in this ordination service, while simultaneously arguing against the power of a diocesan bishop to ordain men to office without the common suffrage of the people.

Fourthly, the Lord Jesus gifts pastors to His church by having the man ordained be set apart by means of prayerful fasting. Owen provided very few remarks on this matter. His brevity may simply be because it is a less contested subject than the preceding point.

As Owen prepared to lead the congregation through the uses of such observations he paused to drive home again what was his ministry's focal point and hopefully that of the fellow Independent congregations. Owen said, "And these, my brethren, are things that we are come together about this day. This is our faith ... wherein we do not pursue our own imaginations ... but from first to last, have our warrant from Christ" (435). Owen's hermeneutic revealed itself to his listeners in that Christ's wishes must be given the final word. In this quote Owen provided the consistent thread through his theological and practical discourse: the supremacy of the Word of Christ in every sphere; including ecclesiology.

Owen took up his polemical considerations as he preached to this assembly. He sought to refute the systems of Rome and England by arguing that where Christ has not instituted an office, no requisite gifts for ministry can be found there. Owen proclaimed, "if Christ hath not appointed that office ... there is a nullity in it,—it is no gift of Christ ... because it wants the law of Christ for its foundation" (436). Again this highlights Owen's central thesis found all throughout his ordination sermons; namely, that the origin of the Christian ministry is rooted in Christ, and the gifts He bestows upon men solely in the offices He has instituted.

Building further upon what Owen has already said, he invited the congregation to identify the pastor as he truly is, "He is a gift of Christ" (436). If a minister can only lawfully come unto a congregation by means of Christ's gifting them, then they stand before a congregation most basically as a gift from Christ to the particular congregations to whom they are sent. Owen makes clear that such a gift as a minister must be received by Christ's congregation in a special way. Owen exhorted the congregation in this manner, "When we

receive so great a gift from Christ, he expects that it be valued, that it be thankfully received, and that it be duly improved" (436). This is Owen's first application of this point. His next application followed naturally upon the minister himself, "it is incumbent upon us [as ministers] to behave ourselves and so to approve ourselves, as that we may own ourselves to be a gift of Christ unto the church ..." (436). Owen marked the weightiness of this application and in doing so provided a window into his own heart, "I do not know, for my own part, a more trembling thought ... 'How shall I approve myself, so as to be looked on as a gift from Christ given unto the church?'" (435).

Owen's method of application exhorted pastors in general, and the minister in particular at this ordination service to seek help from the Lord in order to accomplish this duty. But he also provided three ways in which this might be accomplished. First, in order for pastors to be gifts to their congregations, they must seek to imitate Christ. If pastors are shepherds, they ought to imitate the chief shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ. In addition to this positive exhortation, Owen also added a word of warning to ministers. By means of their imitation, pastors will be enabled, "to give an account *with comfort* unto the great shepherd of the sheep, when he shall appear at the last day ..." (437; emphasis added). Owen reminded his congregation in these moments that whether faithless or faithful, every minister will one day be called to stand before Christ. Therefore, Owen's general advice to the ministers is that if they conform their lives to resemble Christ, then they can approach the Day of Judgment with hope because they sought to be a gift to Christ's people.

The second manner in which ministers are enabled to be gifts to Christ's congregations is in representing Christ unto them. For Owen, just as Christ has accomplished the office of a mediator by existing as the church's climactic prophet, priest, and king, so the minister in his representation of Christ to the congregation functions analogously towards the people. As a king, the minister represents Christ "in the rule and conduct of the church ..." (437). This governing aspect has its chief end in the well-ordering and edification of the body of Christ on earth. As a prophet, the minister represents Christ by means of faithfully feeding Christ's sheep with the Word of God. This aspect of representation is not optional for Owen. Owen used some of his strongest language with this congregation when talking about the danger of neglecting this aspect of pastoral duty. Owen warned, "Those who take upon themselves to be pastors, and neglect this work of feeding the flock,

may, at as cheap a rate, and with equal modesty, renounce Jesus Christ" (437). A failure in this endeavor is a spiritually capital offense for Owen. Lastly, as a priest, the minister represents Christ by means of his regular ministry of prayer on behalf of the sheep to whom he has been called.

The third manner in which ministers are enabled to be gifts to Christ's congregations is in their "zeal for all the concerns of Christ in the church ..." (438). Zeal in this case for Owen is more than emphatic passion. It involves a regular care and commitment to that which Christ Himself cared for and was committed to. As Owen expressed this before the congregation to whom he was called, this included matters of worship, sacramental purity, evangelism, and the edification of the church.

All that has followed thus far has been clearly didactic, and in many ways an evidence of Owen's contentment to reuse what he expressed elsewhere in his other treatises concerning pastors as Christ's gifts. What is unusual is a parenthetical note which expresses the practical outworking of the suffrage Owen had argued for earlier in his sermon. Of the three ordination sermons this is the only time that Owen paused in the midst of exhortation to allow for the business of the church in electing the man to the ministry of the Word, and providing consent for his ordination. Due to the interesting nature of this digression it would do the reader well to read Owen's guidance at length and the subsequent bracketed note:

And having proceeded so far, I will here stay a little, and desire the church would attend to *their* work and duty. After which, if God give strength, I will speak somewhat more unto the eminency of this gift, according as it is set out in this text.

[Then the church assented to the election, by lifting up of their hands; and the Doctor went on.] (438).

Owen allowed this momentary pause for the church to vote for the pastor-elect. He had already preached in the first half of his ordination sermon about the Christological origin of pastoral ministry. For the remainder of his time Owen presented unto his listeners his conclusory thesis, "*that it is a great and eminent gift, or an eminent fruit of the exaltation and mediation of Christ ...*" (438). Owen proclaimed this major point by means of two heads.

On the one hand, Owen considers Christ's steps in preparing for the gift of the ministry. Here Owen

directed his listeners to the various aspects of the *historia salutis*, such as the exaltation of Christ in His ascension and the pouring out of His Spirit on Pentecost. For example, though Owen does not explicitly allude to Ephesians 4:8, he references the Old Testament passage quoted by the Apostle Paul: Psalm 68:18. Most unexpectedly, Owen rendered this portion of the ordination sermon into a typological exposition of the biblical theological connections. Specifically, Owen has in mind Christ's explicit manifestation of power in his victory over Satan and in bestowing ministers to His churches. Also, Owen proclaimed to this congregation Christ's implicit acts in his Christophanic displays of power amongst the church of the Old Testament, and the unity of Christ's saving work. In one of his most exhortatory of moments, Owen made a bold claim amongst the congregation, "There is a greater glory in giving a minister to a poor congregation, than there is in the instalment and enthroning of all popes ... Christ is upon his theatre of glory in the communication of this office and these officers" (439). Owen redirected the attention of his listeners from the outward show of the Church of Rome at that time and what Owen would see in England, and exhorted the people to consider the sufficiency of the ministry as they have received it in its Spirit-originated simplicity. In juxtaposition to the visible glory of the ordination of Aaron the High Priest, Owen reminded his listeners of the surpassing worth and glory of the New Covenant ordination of a gospel minister. He not only echoed the Apostle Paul's words from 2 Corinthians 3:10 in these moments but hoped to train the congregation to interpret their historical moment aright. Owen said, "The reason why we see not the glory of it is, because we are carnal. It is a spiritual glory. God himself presides over the work of this day ... God walks among us this day; Christ is among us by his special presence" (439). In comparison with the visible luster of Rome, the plain and ordinary lodgings of the Independents would appear lack luster to the senses. Owen's pastoral sensibilities are put on display in his homiletical considerations as he led the congregants in these moments to recognize that which was unseen. Not only is he speaking about the presence of the Triune God but even the courts of angels are present in such services of worship "Because they are present as *witnesses* in the collation of authority from Christ" (440).

On the other hand, Owen directed his readers to the estate of Christ's humiliation as a preparation for the gift of ministers. Owen's chief text remains central to his argumentation. He alluded to the descent of Christ to refer to His death as explained in Ephesians 4:9. Though

he allowed for two options in interpretation, he appealed to Christ's burial as the best interpretive option. But the work of Christ in the accomplishment of redemption provides the ripe seed bed for Owen's understanding of pastoral ministry. Owen illustrated this for the congregation when he preached, "[The ministry is] a branch that grew out of the grave of Christ ... had not Christ died for it, we had not had a ministry in the world" (441).

Owen proclaimed that the death of Christ must empower the entirety of gospel ministry. The exaltation of Christ and its bestowal of ministers as gifts unto the church can only come by means of Christ's humiliation. In addition, the very message of the minister is that reconciliation between God and man which is only secured by the death of the Son of God. All of these factors combine together to illuminate for the congregation that the pastors of Christ's church are gifts which bud from the cross of Christ. Peace came to the world by means of Christ extending Himself by the gifts of ministers in the proclamation of the gospel.

SERMON 2: QUALIFICATIONS OF THE MINISTRY

Pastor Owen's second ordination sermon was all about identifying the qualifications of pastoral ministry (9.441–452). It was delivered on April 3, 1678. He chose 1 Corinthians 12:11 as his main text, a classic section of Scripture pointing to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Owen provided eight points to his listeners, and concluded with three motives. What is expected in this section, even from its inception, is a rigorously pneumatic approach to the qualifications of a pastor. However, what becomes clear as the sermon unfolds is that the qualifications of pastoral ministry are rooted in the work of Christ, and His role is made paramount for Owen in rendering men fit for office. What will be made clear as the sermon is examined is that every work of the Spirit always functions under the shadow of Christ. Though there is a clear pneumatic element in the outworking of Owen's Christology, his pneumatology always serves his Christology.³⁵

The second ordination sermon comes in the spring of 1678 while Owen's declining health affected his pulpit ministry. From the outset of the sermon he noted his own failing health, and its impact on his ability to preach on that occasion. Owen wrote, "There is this disadvantage in preaching upon a particular occasion, especially for one who hath no more strength than I

35. Contra Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 440.

...” (441). Owen’s deteriorating health was a constant factor throughout his later years. He notes its effect on him in this sermon as well as the next. His fading health was a constant source of trouble as he strained himself to perform even the most basic task of preaching. It is worth noting that all which transpired in his second sermon began with a limited scope. He admitted the need to omit several elements from his sermon for his health’s sake. Nevertheless, that which was delivered still bore this seal from Owen’s lips, “I shall only give you the substance of the words, in that proposition which I intend to insist upon ...” (442). He also made mention of the limited time available to him for this end. Therefore, when considering his second ordination sermon, Owen’s health and time constraints must be taken into account as parameters controlling his words. Too much should not be drawn from his words as presented. Instead they ought to be allowed to add to Owen’s general pastoral theology, and particularly its Christological and pneumatological aspect, without domineering the entire conversation.

Owen’s guiding proposition is echoed in two forms from the outset. The initial proposition established the trajectory broadly for the rest of Owen’s sermon. Owen preached, “... it is the work of the Spirit of God, in all ages of the church, to communicate spiritual gifts and abilities to those who are called according to his mind to the ministry of the church, to enable them unto all evangelical administrations, to his glory, and the edification of the church” (442). Owen was establishing for his listeners the pneumatological foundation for all of pastoral ministry, or so it seemed. His eight subsequent heads for his sermon will help to shed necessary light on his pastoral ministry and the Spirit-wrought qualifications necessary for its execution.

First, Pastor Owen began by pointing his listeners to the Lord Jesus Christ. He reminded his listeners of Christ’s unique abiding presence with His church. The nature of Christ’s presence to His church will be taken later in the sermon, but for now it is sufficient to note that Owen recognized this presence as the key distinguisher between the church, and every other group established by men. Owen said that it is Christ’s abiding presence with his people “which essentially and fundamentally differenceth his church from any other assembly...” The church alone is Christ’s “temple and habitation” (442). From a polemical angle, Owen used this starting point as a means of arguing against opposing church orders. The sermon is not as explicit, as he often can be, but his warnings seem to be aimed at the Church of Rome at least, and likely the Church of

England. Owen warned the congregation, “if Christ be not present with them, when they have done, they are *no gospel church*. They want a foundation ... [and] sooner it will tumble down and come to nothing” (943). Christ’s unique presence with His people is the necessary foundation for every church. Owen was warning his listeners that the outward shows of a church are rendered impotent if Christ be not present. Having considered the outward splendor of Moses’ Tabernacle and Solomon’s Temple, Owen articulated that what a gospel church required was not the outward splendors of gorgeous churches and cathedrals but “*the glory of Christ to enter into them*” (943).

Second, the means of Christ’s abiding presence with His church is by none other than His Holy Spirit. Owen used the pulpit to invite his listeners to consider the various manners of Christ’s presence. Beginning with His divinity, Christ is omnipresent Owen proclaimed. Moving to His Incarnation, Owen added that the Lord Jesus Christ was present locally upon the earth for time and a season. But for Owen in his sermon, the abiding presence of Christ with His church must supersede these ordinary and expected ways. Here Owen directed his listeners to the glory of Pentecost. In a quip pointed clearly at Rome, Owen preached, “Christ hath no vicar, but the Spirit.” He considered the historic works of Christ in redemption, namely in His estate of exaltation. Again, considering the fruits of Pentecost in the ministry of the Apostles and Christ’s abiding presence, Owen preached, “I need not prove this; it hath been the faith of the *catholic church*, from the first foundation of it, that the promised presence of Christ with his church was *by his Spirit*” (944). By these words, Owen was presenting his theological system as the faithful budding of the Western Catholic tradition.

Third, Owen now shifted from persons to structures; here he considered God’s covenant with His church. Looking to Isaiah 59:21 as his main text to support his covenantal structure, Owen proceeded to utilize a catechetical form in the midst of his sermon to explicate the text. Owen said, “To whom is this promise made? It is made unto the gospel church.” He again moves back a verse to Isaiah 59:20 to catechetically instruct the congregation. Owen preached, “With whom? With them the Redeemer comes to in Zion, to redeem from iniquity. What is God’s covenant with them? It is his word; *his word shall be in them*” (944). The covenant of God secures the promises between God and His people, and its foundation is built on the word and the Spirit. Should this covenant be removed, the church itself would be removed as well.

Fourth, Owen guided his listeners from the foundations of the church to its Spiritual ministry. Here he juxtaposed the Apostle Paul's words from 2 Corinthians 3:6–8 to distinguish between the ministry of the letter, which leads to death, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit, which brings forth life. Nevertheless, it was always by means of the Spirit that divine revelation came to the people of God. Owen preached, "the Spirit of God revealed all the ordinances and ministrations of old, from first to last, even the little additions that David made after Moses' time . . . so was the law the ministration of the Spirit, because the Spirit revealed that" (445). The ministry of the Spirit stands upon the foundation of Christ's work, and is an outworking of Christ's abiding presence amongst His people.

Fifth, Owen preached about the purpose of the Spirit's presence for the church. Here he highlighted for his listeners the monergistic reality for all church vitality. Though he took a moment to rebut those who would build the ministry upon the will of men, Owen proclaimed the foundational nature of the Spirit's work as an ever-present means of establishing life in the church. If the Spirit is absent, life is absent in the church. But this work is not relegated merely to the Spirit. The Spirit Himself must be sent by the Son. But even there in the midst of Owen's comments, his rigorous and explicit trinitarian theology came forward, and each of the divine person's distinct work is portrayed, though only for a moment. Owen preached, "if God should cease to communicate the Spirit as to an internal, saving work upon the hearts of the elect, the church would cease as to its internal form. No church would have a relation unto *Jesus Christ* as the mystical head, if *God* should cease to communicate the *Spirit* as to gifts." Owen reiterates for his listeners that there is a necessary communion of work in the Godhead in the salvation of poor sinners. What began as a trinitarian emphasis by Owen, shifted back to the pneumatic. What followed appears to establish the third person of the trinity as the foundation of pastoral ministry. Owen made remarks such as "The sum of all you do this day is, your acknowledging *Jesus Christ* to be the Lord. . . . You must have the Spirit of God and his presence, in order to do this" (9.447). How does Owen's sixth head color what has been already said?

Sixth, Owen sought to prove further all that had been said thus far on the purpose of the Holy Spirit from the Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:14–30, and the list of spiritual gifts from Romans 12:4–8. Throughout Owen's writings he utilized the same Scripture texts to argue the same points (e.g., *Works*, 4.504–506.). *A Discourse of*

Spiritual Gifts was released posthumously, like the ordination sermons. It is unclear if Owen's ordination sermon affected his work in *A Discourse of Spiritual Gifts*, or conversely if his pneumatological studies concerning the ordinary officers of the church affected his ordination sermons. Regardless, what is clear for Owen's readership is that he was consistent on this matter both in the study and in the pulpit.

In the Parable of the Talents, Owen highlighted that every talent represents spiritual gifts and each comes from Christ. Their origin is rooted in His will, and His power as king to dispense as He sees fit. Owen preached, "It is agreed by all, that they are spiritual abilities that Christ gives his servants to trade with in the administration of gospel ordinances" (9.448). Owen repeatedly emphasized the Christocentricity in the origin of spiritual gifts. The gifts under consideration are specifically those which are requisite for the ordinary ministry of gospel churches. Owen emphasized, "wherever *Jesus Christ* calls and appoints a minister in his house . . . he gives him spiritual abilities to do that work by the Holy Ghost." Yes, the Spirit is present, necessary and bears a fundamental role in what Christ is accomplishing in His Church, however, there is peculiarity in the work of Christ that stands behind the Spirit's work. The main idea provided by Owen to this congregation, and the minister to be ordained in that instance, is that Christ intends for His ministers to utilize the very gifts He's furnished them with. "This is plain in the parable," Owen proclaimed, "that those who have received talents, or spiritual gifts and abilities of the Holy Ghost, they are to trade with them." Owen warned that the gifts of Christ given by the Spirit are not the same as the natural gifts they bear. In addition, a word of caution came out, which may be surprising to some in considering how voluminous Owen was as a writer. Owen's final word on the matter of the Parable of the Talents comes with a word of caution, "*I have known some good men have been so addicted to their study that they have thought the last day of the week sufficient to prepare for their ministry, though they employ all the rest of the week in other studies.* But your great business is, to trade with your *spiritual abilities*" (448). In light of Owen's own literary career, it is likely, that this wisdom which he proclaimed on the Lord's Day long ago was a piece of wisdom he daily had to be reminded of himself.

As Owen redirected his listeners to Paul's epistle in Romans 12:4–8, he manifestly upheld the essential role of Christ's gifts to Christ's officers. In the strongest language that Owen could muster, he said, "I profess to you I had rather a thousand times be of their opinion,

bad as it is, who say that all church-state is ceased, than that there may be a church-state when these gifts and graces are not." There is no possibility in Owen's theological scheme where the church can exist apart from Christ's constant supply of grace and gifts by means of His Spirit. He continued, "gifts are the foundation of all church work.... If there be no spiritual gifts, there is no spiritual work" (449). The task of pastoral ministry, and indeed of all ministry, is too great to rest upon the shoulders of men in their natural ability and skill. Either Christ will furnish the man of His choosing with gifts proportional to His own desires, or there shall be nothing. The church is Christ's bride and rests upon His own daily provisions, which was a natural segue into Owen's next homiletical point.

Seventh, the church from beginning to end is dependent upon the spiritual gifts of Christ for her constant existence. Owen preached, "There can be no gospel administration without spiritual gifts ... thus there is a necessity of spiritual gifts for their administration: so that *spiritual gifts and spiritual administrations live and die together*" (449). Unexpectedly, after considering the necessity of spiritual gifts for ministry, Owen led the congregation to whom he was preaching to consider the various shades of apostasy that had assaulted the church from the very beginning. Though tangential to the overall function of his ordination sermon, Owen did provide a short apology for why he believed the early church faltered. Owen preached, that it "was by neglect and contempt of spiritual gifts.... This was the ground of the apostasy of the primitive church;— they grew weary of spiritual ministrations" (450). Here Owen connected the failures and sins of the church's past to his own present context as he preached against the Church of Rome and England, "They found out imaginations suited to their inclinations; they will have prayerbooks to read, ceremonies to perform, and a number of inventions to keep up a form of worship *without* those spiritual gifts." In short, Owen's argument as presented unto the congregation is that the liturgical complexities and additions of the Church of Rome and England (in Owen's theological perspective) are founded upon this single principle of neglecting the spiritual gifts God granted, and replacing them with the inventions of men. Owen concluded "The principle of the apostasy of all churches in the world is, from a weariness of serving God by the aid and assistance of the Spirit" (450).

Eighth, Owen proposed the necessity of the experiential dynamic amongst God's people. Owen raised questions to the congregation asking if Christ had not made

His presence known to them by the ministry of their officers. Owen asked them, "Have you not had a *proof of the Spirit of Christ speaking in them?* 2 Cor. xii. 3." Owen did not then propose much beyond his terse comment on the experiential dynamic amongst the congregation. He thereafter reiterated all that had been said thus far as he reminded the congregation that "where the gifts of the Spirit of God, as to the gospel ministrations of the church, are lost or neglected," so God Himself and every fruit of the ministry shall be absent as well (451). In short, no gifts means no living church.

As Owen transitioned into his conclusory exhortation, his comments were aimed explicitly to the ministers present, and the man being set apart that day. His exhortation was simple and accompanied by three motives. His exhortation was, "attend unto the ministry whereunto God hath called them upon this foundation." His first motive towards this end is as sobering as it is dour. Owen writes, "First, It is *the most difficult ministration* of any that a person can be called unto ..." (451). What makes it so difficult? Owen warned that such a ministry could depend merely on outward liturgical form rather than the Spirit, like that ministry of Rome. Owen warned that a minister's natural skills may hamper his ministry as he might depend on them rather than the Spirit and His gifts. But this stern warning is accompanied as well with another word of caution, "If grace decays in our hearts, a ministry in gifts will grow burdensome and displeasing to ourselves, as well as useless to the congregation" (451).

Owen's initial motive to exhort the fellow pastors to attend unto their ministry was intended to remind every one of them of their first calling: to care for the flock of God, and to do so carefully, regularly, and dependently. Again Owen epigrammatically preached, "A man may preach a very good sermon, who is otherwise himself; but he will never make a *good minister of Jesus Christ*, whose heart and mind is not always in the work" (451). Owen's pastoral insight is simple: a ministry which glorifies Christ is beyond the natural scope of any, and therefore must regularly seek to be strengthened and empowered by Christ. Owen's second motive is that ray of sunshine which erupts through the dark canopy of clouds; it is the magnificence and splendor inherently bound to the work of pastoral ministry itself. Lastly, Owen's final motive came with the weighty reminder that no other ministry than gospel ministry can lead "unto the edification and building up of the church, Eph. iv. 8, etc." (452). There is no other path or means by which Christ shall build His church. With this comment, Owen sought to spur those ministers

on towards the task which Christ had called them. He had left them with an exhortation, and concluded his comments to them with a blessing, "The Lord prosper it in your hands!" (452).

Owen's final comments were delivered explicitly to the congregation. Just as he had spurned the ministers to fulfill their offices well, so he exhorted the congregation to execute their prescribed ministry. They are to know what God demands of them, especially with reference to their relationship to the minister. Lastly, he exhorted them to pray. The congregation was not to be passive in Owen's structure. They too had a vital ministry, which differed in function though not in importance. "Pray unto God for a fresh communication of gifts unto them.... It is a renewed act of grace that prepares and opens the soul for receiving new communications of God's grace, for the administration of the holy things of Christ in the congregation. Pray much for them to that end and purpose."³⁶

Owen's last comments highlighted for the congregation then, and for his readership today, the robust and communal dynamic of his pastoral theology. Pastors are empowered for their ministry by Christ gifting them through His Spirit, but the success and sustenance of their ministry is directly contingent upon the ministry of prayer; first, amongst the minister himself, and then by his congregation. This sermon also highlighted that ordination sermons are not merely for the benefit of ordained ministers. Ordination sermons enable the laity of Christ's congregations to know what they ought to expect from their ministers, but also what their ministers expect from them. Unexpressed expectations always lead to dissonance. So ordination sermons, such as this, and especially the one to follow, enable congregations and ministers to be explicit about how their partnership can only lead to their mutual edification.

SERMON 3: DUTIES OF THE MINISTRY

Pastor Owen's third ordination sermon is all about conveying the duties of pastoral ministry (9.452–462). For that purpose, Owen turned to Jeremiah 3:15 as his sermon text. It was delivered on September 8, 1682. Around the same time as this ordination sermon, Owen used this very text from Jeremiah in his treatise, *The True Nature of a Gospel Church*, for the same purpose (16.74). As the sermon will be examined, the consistency of thought between Owen's sermon and treatise will be made clear.

In addition to his own health issues, he admitted that his goal for this ordination sermon was not to be

exhaustive, only sufficient. Owen clarified for the congregation to whom he preached, "I do not design to go through all the necessary duties of a pastor or teacher; I only design to give *some* instances" (9.453; emphasis added). Near the sermon's conclusion Owen again invited his listeners to recognize his own limitations, and his failing health comes forward in his latter comment. Owen preached, "Had I *time* and *strength*, I should tell you of the duty of pastors and teachers in administering of the seals, and what is required thereunto..." (462; emphasis added).

Considering when Owen is delivering this sermon adds some color to the text itself as a reader. Owen himself recognized that his own death was not far off. A month before this ordination service, Owen had written to his dear friend Charles Fleetwood for encouragement and prayer. In the midst of his requests Owen wrote, "Pray for me that I may do soe, for the near approach of my dissolution calls for it earnestly."³⁷ He even hints at the recognition of his looming death in this last ordination sermon, and the reality that his own hopes for religious renewal throughout England will not come in his lifetime. Owen remarked, "Christ hath instituted a beautiful order in his church, if it were discovered and improved. And I have wished sometimes I could live to see it; but I do not think I shall" (9.453). Less than a year after delivering this sermon as Owen's strength was finally taken from him, he would be received into the arms of his Savior.

The duties as they are presented in Owen's final sermon still provided a window into what he considered to be of upmost importance in conveying the duties of pastoral ministry. Each duty listed by Owen was accompanied by various methods of accomplishment. Both the overall duty and accompanying methods will be examined below. The overall structure of his ordination sermon can be organized under four heads:

1. Feed the Church of Christ;
2. Pray for the Church of Christ;
3. Contend for the Church of Christ;
4. Add Souls to the Church of Christ.

36. Owen, *Works*, 9.452. It would seem by Owen's comment that more than one man was set apart for ordained ministry on the occasion of this ordination sermon. Owen mentioned "those you have called and made officers this day." Ibid.

37. Toon, *The Correspondence of John Owen*, 173.

DUTY #1: FEED THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Owen began his explication of the duties of pastoral ministry by quoting Jeremiah 3:15. The pastor's first duty is "to feed the church with knowledge and understanding" (453). Owen conveyed the initial manner of accomplishing the task, "This feeding is by preaching of the gospel. He is no pastor who doth not feed his flock" (453). The primacy of the proclamation of the Word is an abiding feature in Owen's pastoral theology. His method is not simply to preach Bible verses and be settled on the matter. Instead, he invited the congregation to carefully consider the methods by which this duty is called to be accomplished.

His first method is to highlight the centrality of wisdom in order to accomplish the work of feeding the flock of Christ with the Word of God. Wisdom is necessary in order to both understand God's mysteries, which have been unveiled in the Scriptures, and then to convey what God has revealed to others. Owen proclaimed, "Really it is no easy thing for ministers to instruct to such kind of duties.... We must labour ourselves to have a thorough knowledge of these mysteries, or we shall be useless to a great part of the church" (454). That which is not understood cannot be declared. So the first method for a minister to faithfully feed the church with the gospel is to be familiar with it himself.

Owen's second method calls for ministers and the congregation to recognize that pastors bear their authority from God. A minister does not receive authority by virtue of his office. Though not made explicit in Owen's ordination sermon, what lies in the background is Owen's consistent and constant polemic against the Church of Rome and England. Owen points his listeners to the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the necessity of unction. To this end, Owen juxtaposes the call of the scribes who had a call void of unction, and the Lord Jesus Christ who was without a call, yet bore unction beyond measure. Owen's final comment on the matter encourages his listeners, and especially the ministers that an outward call is irrelevant if the work of the Holy Spirit is absent in the minister. Owen said, "preaching in the demonstration of the Spirit ... is nothing less than the evidence in preaching of unction, in the communication of gifts and grace unto them, for the discharge of their office ..." (455).

The third method Owen presented as necessary in order to feed the flock with Christ's Word was the

38. The present author is indebted to Chad Van Dixhoorn for presenting the possibility of Owen's recycling of his written materials for homiletical ends, and potentially for the aforementioned reasons.

minister's experiential knowledge of the truths of Scripture. Owen's cleverness as a wordsmith was apparent as he memorably exhorted his listeners with a simple sentence, "I think, truly, *that no man preaches that sermon well to others that doth not first preach it to his own heart*" (455). Not only is his statement beneficial for this third method, but in many ways it is symptomatic of Owen's pastoral theology as whole. Owen echoes the very same concept in *The True Nature of a Gospel Church*. There Owen warns of what transpires by those ministers who are experientially removed from that which they preach. Owen warned, "The want of this experience of the power of gospel truth on their own souls is that which gives us so many lifeless, sapless orations, quaint in words and dead as to power, instead of preaching the gospel in the demonstration of the Spirit" (16.76). Where a want of experience is found, the Spirit is not. In both, the treatise and his ordination sermon, Owen pointed his audience towards the same illustration of poison, "And he that doth not feed on and thrive in the digestion of the food which he provides for others ... knows not but the food he hath provided may be poison, unless he have really tasted of it himself" (16.76). When both examples are considered, Owen appears to be exhibiting a consistency across the mediums of pen and pulpit, or more simply, he may be reusing former writings for the sake of a sermon due to time or his own health.³⁸ Nevertheless his concerns remain the same; he yearns for a reformation in England. Owen's remarks are tinged with sorrow as he wrote, "though there be twenty or thirty thousand in orders, yet the nation perishes for want of knowledge, and is overwhelmed in all manner of sins, and not delivered from them unto this day" (9.455). Owen was not claiming that England's pulpits are empty, nor that the Scriptures are failing to be read throughout the land of England. That which is lacking, in his estimation, is powerful preaching which originates from a shepherd's heart who is zealous for the good of his sheep.

Owen's fourth method of feeding Christ's sheep is by means of carefully and skillfully delivering the Word of God unto the people of God. Owen is disproportionately terse concerning this method as well as the next. However, what is lacking here is made up elsewhere in Owen's other writings (e.g., 16.76).

Owen's fifth method is equally as concise as the fourth. Owen added that the fifth method whereby ministers are able to feed Christ's flock, "Requires *the knowledge* and consideration of the state of our flocks" (9.455). Owen is simultaneously instructing ministers of their expected duties whilst warning ignorant pastors

of the danger of their negligence. The practical angle as well is of highest importance. If it is true that a minister must commit himself to carefully feeding Christ's flock, than he must know what sort of food they need. Owen utilizes negative examples in his sermon, but should they be inversed what comes forth is a helpful guide as to how pastors can go about acquiring a knowledge of their congregations. For example, a minister ought to consider their temptations, their places of spiritual growth and development, their points of decline and feebleness, and the extent of their comprehension of the mysteries of the gospel (456). By such means, Owen implicitly and inadvertently contends, how a pastor may come to know his congregation, and thereafter faithfully feed them with the particular portion of Scripture to meet their specific needs.

Owen's sixth and final method, insofar as his ordination sermon is concerned, contended for pastors to be zealous for the salvation of lost sinners and God's glory. He says nothing more about this final point limiting its exhortation to a single sentence. It may be possible that Hartopp has perhaps fumbled in his notetaking at this point in the sermon. Perhaps Owen's limitations did cause him to pause, and consider what he said as sufficient. But following his succinct comment on zeal he immediately reviewed all that he has said to this point under the first head.

Owen provided an application after his review to both minister and congregation. His application is crucial for all that has come before, and did follow in his sermon. Why is that? He reminded the congregation that they are not simply to sit back and be ministered unto in these words. They have a vital ministry by the Holy Spirit, and have been called to the priestly ministry of prayer. Both minister and member are called to pray for each other, and especially for the ministers success in his task. Owen preached, "we have great need to pray for ourselves, and that you should pray for us. Pray for your ministers" (456). As Hartopp's remaining sermon notes reveal, a pastor's ministry can be immensely blessed and advanced through the efforts of his faithful members. Owen modeled this final point in his own life through his regular correspondences with Charles Fleetwood. Owen's final comment on prayer naturally segued towards his second duty necessary for pastors.

DUTY #2: PRAY FOR THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Owen began this second duty by stating that which is necessary for pastors "is *continual prayer* for the churches over which Christ hath made them overseers"

(456). Owen provided this spiritual claim, but again admitted to the limited scope of his then present exhortation. "I have not time" Owen remarked "to confirm these things by particular testimonies: you know how often the apostle expresses it of himself, and enjoins it unto others, continually to pray for the flock" (456). What is ironic, however, is that after his initial caveat, Owen proceeds to further elaborate what he means by this second duty.

His first division comes as he seeks to provide an apology as to why it is requisite of pastors to pray for their particular congregations. First, Owen considered private regular prayer for the flock as a chief evidence of the pastor's care for his people, and his being gifted by God towards this end. Owen attached a severe rebuke towards any lazy pastors who would fail to undertake this present parcel of their ministerial calling. Owen warned, "Let him preach as much as he will, visit as much as he will, speak as much as he will, unless God doth keep up in him a *spirit of prayer* in his closet and family for them, he can have no evidence ... that what he doth is accepted with God" (456). A prayerless ministry is a powerless ministry. In Owen's estimate, a prayerless pastor is a spiritual pauper, who lacks even the most basic elements to feed himself let alone the flock of Christ.

The second reason ministers are required to pray, according to Owen, is far more positive than the last. Ministers continue steadfastly in their prayers for the flock that they might be a blessing unto them. Owen included himself in his strong comment, "there is no other way whereby we can bless our flock by institution, but by a *continual praying* for a blessing upon them" (457).

Owen thirdly reminded the men that pastoral ministry is rooted in love and therefore their ministry of prayer must be grounded in love as well. As Christ loved his flock, so ministers must follow after His example. Owen warned from experience that ministry will always be followed by various shades of failure. Evil may fall upon the congregation from without. Sin and its temptations may burst from within. However, that which will sustain a pastor's ministry through the throes of darkness is prayer rooted in love for Christ's sheep. Owen writes, "nothing can keep up his heart with inflamed love towards them, but by praying for them continually" (457).

The fourth and final reason Owen presented for the pastor's continual ministry of prayer deals with spiritually intimacy. Owen proclaimed, "in our prayers for our people, *God will teach us what we shall preach unto them*" (457). The idea of intimacy is especially pronounced on this climactic reason for continual prayer.

Prayer is a pleading from earth to heaven for the souls committed under a pastor's charge. He anchored his fourth reason in the Apostolic example of Acts 6:4. But Owen's bottom line followed in this manner, "The more we pray for our people, the better shall we be instructed what to preach to them" (457).

Sufficiently satisfied with what had been said, Owen now progressed to make clear the substance of that which was to be prayed for. Again, Owen laid out four topics for consideration in the pastor's regular ministry of prayer. Owen said that a minister of the Word must pray first, "For *the success of the word* that we preach unto them." In Owen's sermon, he boldly claimed that the success of a pastor's ministry was dependent upon his own prayer for his congregation. Should this be abandoned, Owen warned, "unless there come the showers of the Spirit upon them, there will be no profiting" (457). Profiting in Owen's pastoral theology means a Christian's spiritual growth in their knowledge and love for God.

The second recommended content of prayer for Owen included a call "to pray *for the presence of Christ* in all our assemblies . . ." (457). Here, Owen proclaimed, is the source of all ministerial strength and power, for the absence of Christ guarantees the absence of ministerial success. Every flicker in the flame of ministry must burst from the hearth of Christ. His unique presence in His church by His Spirit is the only conduit of life for His congregations. Therefore, it is the ministers chief duty in prayer, to seek after such ends. "Make this your business," Owen implored his fellow ministers, "to pray mightily for it in the congregation, to make all these [ordinances] effectual" (458).

Owen initially claimed that there would be four items considered concerning the content of that prayer requisite of ministers. However, whether by Hartopp's scribal errors or Owen's own forgetfulness, only three are listed. Therefore, Owen provided his third and final comment on the content of ministerial prayer. Pastors are called to pray for the unique and specific needs of each member of his own congregation. Owen proclaimed, "our prayers should be for a communication of supplies unto them continually, in all these cases" (458). Owen's final comments on the content of pastoral prayer are quite telling. His list of the various spiritual situations in which members may find themselves reflect the various categories of Christians such as the fallen, the established, the backslidden, the tempted, the faithful, the overwhelmed and the like (458). According to Owen, ministers must chiefly recognize that all sorts of Christians exist in their congregations who are to varying degrees growing in their sanctification, or may not even be regenerate.

However, Owen remarked that what is required is a ministry of specific prayer for the particular spiritual maladies of their members that Christ may strengthen them in the precise way they need. Owen concluded his section on prayer with a pastoral exhortation to guide the clergy and encourage the congregation. Owen said, "our prayers should be for a communication of supplies unto them continually, in all these cases" (458).

DUTY #3: CONTEND FOR THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Owen's own ministry was replete with his third duty of pastoral ministry: contending for the truth. What is expected is Owen's utilization of the pastoral epistles as exemplary for the continual ministry of pastors in fighting against heresy, schism, and all lies against Scripture. Owen symbolically interpreted Song of Solomon 4:4 as a broad description of the defensive tenor of pastoral ministry. Owen proclaimed to the congregation then assembled, "The ministers of the gospel are shields and bucklers to defend the truth against all adversaries and opposers" (458). Spiritual pacifism in the arena of theological truth claims is tantamount to spiritual betrayal. A pastor's ministry necessarily involves the active engagement of spiritual opponents, regardless of when or where they may arise. Owen proposed four points to answer how a minister ought to go about defending the truth.

The first method of defense that Owen proclaimed is clear proof that he never shied away from declaring the obvious. In order to defend the truth, ministers first must know the truth. Owen warns that truth can dissipate from the minds of the faithful by means of "weakness as well as by wickedness. . . ." However, the twin dangers can be conquered by "diligent prayer and study. . ." (459).

The second method of preserving truth comes by means of the heart. A mere knowledge of the truth is insufficient for Owen. Love is that guiding power in Owen's pastoral theology which maintains the primacy of the truth in the pastors themselves. Owen warned then, "I fear there is much loss of truth, not for want of light, knowledge, and ability, but *for want of love*" (459). In the midst of his explanation Owen provided an unexpected autobiographical note about his personal experience with the pastors who never wavered in contending for the truth. The information provided is insufficient to mark out which event Owen is speaking of, but it may be concerning the ministers ejected on Black Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1662. Due to the relative rarity of Owen's biographical notes in his writings, his comment will be attached in full:

I have the advantage of most here present in this, that I know the contest we had for the truths of the gospel before our troubles began, and was an early person engaged in them; and knew those godly ministers that did contend for them as for their lives and souls, and that all the opposition that was made against them was never able to discourage them (459).

Owen's wisdom remained: love the truth, so that in the day of testing you may cling to it, even against insurmountable odds. What are these truths? For Owen they are the essential doctrines once celebrated by the Reformers, then coming under scorn. Nevertheless, Owen imparted this lasting counsel to the ministers and congregants then, and by virtue of Hartopp's efforts, ministers and congregants today, "These truths are not lost for want of skill, but want of love ... we must not be ashamed of truth" (459). Therefore, the church must love the truth.

Owen's third method of contending for the truth came by rejecting "novel opinions" which were as popular then as they are today (459). Owen mentioned justification explicitly amongst other precious doctrines rediscovered in the Reformation that needed to be contended for. Owen explicitly called his listeners to consider the faithful pastors of the Reformation as models. He described the doctrines then contended as "the soul and life of them whom are gone before us ..." (459). In order to follow that godly legacy, Owen implored his listeners, pastor and laity alike, of their need to find comfort in the very doctrines the Reformers found their comfort in. Nevertheless, as he decried the Church of England in the midst of such an antagonistic setting, he implored those ministers present as he said, "let us, for the remainder of our days ... be zealous and watchful over any thing that should arise in our congregations" (460). In other words, in Owen's pastoral theology spiritual vigilance is naturally conceived from the parents of Comfort and the Truth.

Owen's fourth method is brief and involves the minister's "skill and ability" to grapple with heretical teaching (460). Spiritual disciplines are fundamental in a minister's success against the quibbles of heretics, nevertheless, that which is necessary may be beyond a minister. Here Owen encouraged pastors to seek out the advice of "those who are more exercised in them, to give them help and assistance" (460).

DUTY #4: ADD SOULS TO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Owen's final explicit duty has to deal with evangelism

and conversion. Owen preached, "*we labour diligently for the conversion of souls*" (460). Owen is not denying the usefulness of the laity in their own evangelistic efforts in seeking to spread gospel. He admitted, "I confess there are other outward ways and means whereby men have been, and may be, converted" (460). However, there is an inherent priority of ministers in evangelism as Owen noted, "principally this work is committed unto the pastors of churches, for the conversion of souls" (460). The work of evangelism and the careful pursuit of the spiritually lost cannot be relegated to a committee or any other group. For Owen, pastors have been uniquely charged by Christ towards this end, and they accomplish such a goal by means of preaching in the congregations which have called them as well as in the pulpits of others.

CONCLUSION

Owen's last words on the matter bear a hint of sorrow as he admits his own restraints, both by means of his waning health and limited time. In his conclusion, he only provided in swift fashion the various other duties he wished to speak on such as the sacraments, soul-care, ruling the church, a pastor's need to live a godly life, and partnering with other like-minded congregations. The insufficiencies of men for the task of pastoral ministry led Owen to request diligent prayer from God's people one last time in his conclusion. Though Owen's own biographical notes are notoriously scant, his humility shines throughout the whole work, and especially in his last sentence as he never fails to include himself as one needing to accomplish these very pastoral duties. Owen's own limitations were becoming more apparent as he neared his grave. Nevertheless, his request for the congregation was as true in his last years of ministry as it was in his first. Owen proclaimed, "Pray, pray for us; and God strengthen us, and our brother, who hath been called this day to the work! It may not be unuseful to him and me, to be mindful of these things, and to beg the assistance of our brethren" (9.462). Owen admitted his need with a cry of insufficiency, as he had done so regularly throughout his treatises on pastoral ministry (*Works*, 16.77, 89). But the example of his humility, paired with his comments on the duty of pastoral ministry provided for the listener then and the reader today an exemplary guide of how a pastor may best attempt to pursue ministry faithfully in the tradition of the English Independent John Owen. ■

In Brief: An excerpt from James Ussher's Manuscript Sermon on 2 Corinthians 6:1, which he preached on October 20, 1651 [1650].

As the preacher labours, so the hearer must labour too.

1. Something must be done before you come to Church.

2. Something must be done at the time of the delivery of the Word.

3. Something must be done when you are gone home.

1. There must be preparatives: the ground must be fitted, and prepared before the seed be put in: I must have one eye to God: and another to my own heart.

As to God, I must do two things. 1. I must humble myself in prayer to Him for a blessing, that I may receive the Word to the salvation of my soul. 2. I must stir up my faith. 1. Prayer is a principal part of our preparation...What shall I pray for? 1. I must pray for the minister, that God would bless him in two things. 1. That he may deliver the Word reverently and soundly. 2. That God would direct him in the thing that I have most need to be told of.

2. I must pray to God to direct the preacher to meet with my corruptions: to open the impostume [abscess] in my heart: to cause me to hear that, that I would not hear. Men come easily to the Mass: for they say *missa non mordet* [the mass will not bite]. But the Word of God brings fire from Heaven. Psalm 141:5. "Let the righteous smite me, and that is a benefit, and let him reprove me, and it shall be a precious oil that shall not break my head." Here's the desire of a man that means to go to heaven, that the preacher may meet with the secret corruption that is within him: that he may preach against his darling sin, that lies in his bosom. A sin that a man is loath to meet withal, lest he should fall out with it.

Then for prayer, forget not yourselves but pray to God (that has His pulpit in heaven) to teach you.

2. Thou must look to thine own heart: thou must prepare the ground before the seed be put in. 1. By removing all hindrances of God's Word. 2. By

endeavouring to obtain all that may further it. 1. Thou must fall a weeding: thou must leave all worldly cares, and sinful affections: thou must not come hither with thy heart stuffed with those, but though must sever thyself: Proverbs 18:1. "For the desire thereof he will separate himself to seek it, and occupy himself in all wisdom." First there must be a desire of the heart and then he must separate himself. He must not have his hear filled with other things when he comes hither. Worldly thoughts are thorns that choke the Word. Jeremiah 4:[3-]4. "Break up the fallow ground, and sow not among the thorns: be circumcised to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your hearts, lest my wrath come forth like fire and burn that none can quench it." Ezekiel 33:30-31. "Thou son of man, the children of thy people, that talk of thee by the walls, and in the doors of houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother saying, 'Come I pray you and hear, what is the word that cometh from the Lord:' for they come unto thee, as the people useth to come: and my people sit as before thee, and hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouths they make jests, and their heart goeth after their covetousness." Let no worldly cares come with us to church.

Then leave sinful affections. Put off thy shoes when thou comest hither. Hast thou a sin that hast got thy heart? And rules thee? Thou must leave that when thou comes with a heart bemired, can this seed sown in the mire thrive? James 1:21. "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of maliciousness" (superfluity the excrement of nature) "and receive with meekness the word that is grafted in you, which is able to save your souls, and be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." 1 Peter. 2.1[-2]. "Wherefore laying aside all maliciousness, and all guile and dissimulation, and envy, and all evil speaking, as new borne babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

Transcribed by Harrison Perkins and edited to update spelling and for formatting of points and Scripture citations. The text is excerpted from the manuscript volume: Cambridge University Library MS Mm. 6.55, fol. 187r-187v (sermon on 2 Corinthians 6:1 dated October 20, 1651). Note: the date in the margin in the manuscript reads October 20, 1651, but the surrounding sermons date to 1650.■

Account of the Controversy Respecting *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*

By Thomas M'Crie

The Marrow of Modern Divinity was a little known 17th-century book which Thomas Boston republished and caused an 18th century controversy in the Church of Scotland. In recent years, Sinclair Ferguson's 2016 work, *The Whole Christ*, has renewed our awareness and interest in the Marrow Controversy. In the *Dictionary of Scottish Church History & Theology* David C. Lachman writes, "Doctrinally, the controversy centred around various aspects of the relationship between God's sovereignty and human responsibility in the work of salvation, with the Marrow Brethren emphasizing God's grace and the majority insisting on what must be done in order to obtain salvation." The Marrow Men were "more in harmony with the Reformed Confessions of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and, on balance, with the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. Their opponents, though representative of the great majority of ministers in the early eighteenth-century CofS, reflected the legalizing tendencies of late seventeenth-century developments of Reformed theology, rather than Reformed thought as a whole" ("Marrow Controversy," p. 547). "On the surface the Marrow Controversy was about how we preach the gospel, what role, if any, God's law and our obedience play in the Christian life, and what it means to have assurance of salvation. But those issues are always, at bottom, about the gospel itself" (Sinclair Ferguson, "Why I Wrote a Book about the Marrow Controversy"). In short, the Marrow Controversy was a struggle to rightly understand the relationship between God's grace and our works. Its study remains useful, even crucial, in our day.

Serious readers delving further into this controversy then turn to David Lachman's magisterial treatment, *The Marrow Controversy* (Rutherford Studies in Historical Theology, Rutherford House, 1988), where his first footnote references this present work by Thomas M'Crie, Sr., "as a good historical narrative, though limited by a lack of access to ecclesiastical records, but does not attempt an analysis of the theological issues debated in the course of the Controversy." Finding M'Crie's treatise, however, proved elusive, with no digital edition avail-

able in the usual places. At last a full set of *The Edinburgh Christian Instructor* was obtained for the PCA Historical Center's collection, and a transcription is presented here.

M'Crie's "Account" was published anonymously. However, Thomas M'Crie, Jr. confirmed his father's authorship, and notes that "he was so fastidious as to take every precaution to conceal his authorship of the papers in the *Instructor*, and he felt rather annoyed on its being accidentally discovered (*Life of Thomas M'Crie, D.D.* [1842], 280ff.). It may be that attaching the famous historian's name to this "good historical narrative," has rescued it from obscurity, much like Thomas Boston did *The Marrow*.

WAYNE SPARKMAN

THE AUTHOR: Thomas M'Crie (M'Crie or McCrie; the open single quote mark or "inverted apostrophe," was an 18th-19th century printing convention for the superscript "c") was a Scottish Presbyterian historian and minister (1772-1835). Excerpted from *The Edinburgh Christian Instructor*, vol. 30, no. 8 (August 1831): 539-551; vol. 30, no. 10 (October 1831): 687-699; vol. 30, no. 12 (December 1831): 811-826, and [New Series] vol. 1, no. 2 (February 1832): 73-94. Some terms have been explained in brackets. Text compiled by Wayne Sparkman and edited by Chris Coldwell. Footnotes have been updated to reference sources published since M'Crie wrote. If possible, manuscripts have been located to current collections. Two substantial resources remained in manuscript at the time M'Crie wrote: *The Correspondence of Robert Wodrow*, 3 vols, ed. Thomas M'Crie, Jr. (1842-43) and Robert Wodrow, *Analec̄ta: Or Materials for a History of Remarkable Providences...*, 4 vols. (1842-1843). M'Crie's citations from the *Analec̄ta* manuscripts have been updated with references to the published text, and where possible letters to and from Wodrow are cross-referenced to the *Correspondence*, though the majority of the letters to Wodrow do not appear in print. Also where possible, the location by item number in the Wodrow Octavo and Quarto manuscript volumes of letters are given as cited in David C. Lachman, *The Marrow Controversy* (1988). The archives at National Library of Scotland and the New College collection could not be visited to confirm some manuscript locations within specific manuscript groupings, or exact locations of some Wodrow correspondence in their volumes. In the first, a best guess by catalogue description is made, and in the case of the latter, the full index for all letters of an individual is given from the National Library of Scotland, "Index to Letters (Quarto and Octavo)," compiled by Louise Yeoman.

[PART ONE]

TO UNDERSTAND ARIGHT the controversy respecting the *Marrow of Modern Divinity*, like most other disputes which have agitated the church, it is necessary to look farther back than the time at which it first broke out, and to trace the causes, which, if they did not produce the strife, gave it the peculiar character which it assumed, and made it rage with a heat for which those who consider only the abstract points of difference will find it difficult satisfactorily to account.

Soon after the Revolution there sprang up two parties in the Church of Scotland, which, for want of better designations, may be called the Court and the Independent parties; the former disposed to manage ecclesiastical affairs in such a way as to gratify the wishes, and promote the political views, of the civil government; and the latter, though warmly attached to that government, yet jealous of its encroachments on the liberties of the church, and anxious that the ecclesiastical judicatories, setting aside considerations purely secular, should pursue the course and adopt the measures best calculated to advance the interests of religion, and preserve the purity of the Presbyterian constitution,—which, they were convinced, would eventually prove most conducive to the peace of the country, and to the security of the government established at the Revolution.

The Revolution, so auspicious to the civil and sacred liberties of Britain, was brought about in England by a coalition between two parties, political and religious. It was quite otherwise in Scotland. Though a warm friend to liberty of conscience, William was a stranger to those opinions respecting the independence of the church which were cherished by Scotch Presbyterians; and he was not disposed, either from principle or habits, greatly to respect them, when they interfered with his own political views. Disappointed in his object of effecting an ecclesiastical *comprehension* in England, and aware that he could not safely grant a toleration to the Episcopalians in Scotland, who were almost to a man hostile to his authority, he was urgent that the curates, as they were called, or Episcopalian incumbents, should be received, on as easy terms as possible, into the communion and ministry of the Presbyterian establishment. This was resisted by the more zealous Presbyterians, who dreaded

the consequences of admitting persons, who, besides their hostility to the established discipline, were strongly suspected of holding erroneous sentiments on points of doctrine. In consequence of this resistance, an act of Parliament passed, declaring that such incumbents as offered to subscribe the Confession of Faith and submit to the Presbyterian discipline, if not proved scandalous or erroneous before a certain day, should be taken under the protection of government, in other words, should be maintained in the possession of the legal stipends as parochial ministers. The church was finally gained over to the measures of the court, after a warm contest, in the course of which the General Assembly was once dissolved, and repeatedly prorogued, by the civil authority. These invasions of the rights of the Presbyterian church, over which the people of Scotland had always exercised a vigilant jealousy, were succeeded by the imposition of oaths on her ministers, as such, under the pain of deprivation of office. Among the ministers who opposed these measures was Mr. James Hog of Carnock, whose name became afterwards famous in the affair of the *Marrow*. He repeatedly mentions, in his Memoir, the offence which was taken at his conduct in these transactions by the leading members of the church. In 1695 he was excluded from his seat in the General Assembly, because he had not taken the qualifying oaths, though his loyalty was most unquestionable. And when admitted in 1701, he renewed his exertions in support of the intrinsic power of the church.¹

These differences were widened on the accession of Queen Anne, one of whose first acts in Scotland was to dissolve the supreme ecclesiastical court, when it was deliberating on an act, declaring Christ to be the sole head of the church. The union of the kingdom was succeeded by the restoration of patronages, and the extension of the oath of abjuration to Scotland. By this oath, which was imposed on the ministers of the Church of Scotland, the swearer engages to maintain the succession to the Crown, as settled by an English act of Parliament, which provides that the successor shall be always of the communion of the Church of England. At first few of the ministers took the oath, but a slight alteration having been made on its phraseology, at the accession of George I. by far the greater part qualified themselves according to law. Upon this a warm controversy arose. The Court party had from the beginning defended the oath; those who refused to take it were supported by the general voice of the people, who, independently of other considerations, looked upon it as a badge of slavery, imposed on those who ought to appear before them unfettered as the messengers of Heaven. Both parties

1. March 3, 1701. "Mr. Hog's bringing in the intrinsick power so by head and shoulders, and as a considerable omission of the commissioners, and the Commissioner's open declaration of the king's tender regard to the intrinsick power of the church, and the general satisfaction of the Assembly with this, may stand for an open assertion of the church's privileges at this time."—(*Wodrow's Analecta*, i.3. [*Analecta* (1842), 1.2.]

appealed to the public through the medium of the press; the dispute was brought into the pulpit; and scenes not very creditable to religion, and in which it is natural to suppose blame attached to the actors on both sides, were sometimes exhibited, particularly on sacramental occasions. In 1719 the Parliament removed the most palpable objection against it, so far as concerned ministers and preachers, in consequence of which the number of non-jurors was reduced to very few, and their rigidity severely censured. Formerly the Assembly, or its commission, had sometimes petitioned for the abolition of the oath, and at other times had interceded with government not to enforce the law; but now these petitions and intercessions were refused, and the scruplers were exposed at once to state persecutions, and to the high displeasure of their brethren.² In this state were all the ministers who appeared in behalf of the *Marrow*; and while the controversy respecting that book was pending, sentence was pronounced by the civil courts against some of them, while prosecutions were hanging over the heads of the rest.³

But grounds of difference of deeper import, and more intimately connected with their official duty, subsisted among the ministers of the Church in Scotland. There is reason to think that, early in the eighteenth century, a strain of legal or unevangelical preaching was introduced into several of our pulpits, after the example of Archbishop Tillotson, and some other English divines. This was encouraged by the state of matters among the dissenters in England. Soon after the revolution, a warm dispute arose in that body on some points connected with the doctrine of grace; turning chiefly on the question, whether the gospel is a new law or constitution, promising salvation upon a certain condition; some making that condition to be faith, others making it faith and repentance, to which others added sincere obedience. Those who held the affirmative were called Baxterians, or Neonomians; who, in their turn, did not scruple to charge their opponents with antinomianism. The most able and esteemed advocate of the former was Dr. Daniel Williams; the most celebrated writer in favour of the latter was Mr. Robert Trail. Their dissensions were removed or compromised, by the labours of the celebrated Dutch divine, Hermann Witsius, to whom both parties had appealed; but they soon broke out afresh; and Neonomianism grew first into Arminianism, and afterwards into Arianism. The Neonomians, in the early party of the controversy, sheltered themselves (as Mr. Baxter had done before them), under the authority of the Westminster standards, which apply the word *condition* to faith in the matter of salvation. Their

opponents did not object to the use of that word when properly understood; but, on account of the manner in which it was abused by the adversaries of gratuitous justification, they preferred the use of the word *mean* or *instrument*, by which the standards referred to explain the other; and they were careful in their sermons and writings to distinguish accurately between the law and the gospel. The state of public opinion in England began at this time to exert great influence over Scotland; the writings of Williams and Trail were then in the hands of the ministry of this church; and the contest which these men and their respective friends had maintained against one another, was now to be transferred from English to Scottish ground.

Among those who distinguished themselves by zeal for the doctrine of grace, as well as the liberties of the church, were Mr. Hog of Carnock, already mentioned, and Mr. Alexander Hamilton, minister of Airth, who was afterwards translated to Stirling. The former, in a book on the Covenant of Grace⁴, printed in 1706, and in other treatises published about the same time, was at great pains in guarding against legality, or a

2. Boston's *Memoirs*, anno 1719, page 352. At an earlier period, Mr. Boston had found it necessary to execute legal deeds conveying his property to others, to prevent its seizure by order of the Sheriff, while his brethren harassed him by insisting on a pledge that he would not speak against the taking of the oath. *Ibid.*, p. 277, 279. [See *Memoirs of the life, time, and writings, of the reverend and learned Thomas Boston, A.M. sometime minister at Simprin, afterwards at Etterick. Divided into Twelve Periods. Written by himself, and addressed to his children. Now first published from his own manuscripts. To which are added, some original papers, and letters to and from the author (1776). See Works, vol. 12 (Aberdeen, 1852), p. 310.*]

3. Early in January 1720, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh informed the Magistrates that he had received a letter from the Duke of Roxburgh, appointing him "to order the Magistrates of Edinburgh to execute the laws upon the non-jurant ministers of the Established Church, and those of the Episcopal persuasion, and return an answer of their diligence." (Letter, Mr. Webster to Mr. Wodrow.) "The Sheriff-substitute of Stirling has passed sentence (for refusing the abjuration) against Mr. Hamilton, Warden, Anderson in Falkirk, Haſtie in Slamanno. We are not yet troubled here." (Letter, Mr. William Wilson of Perth to Mr. Wodrow, Feb. 22, 1720.) [Letters sent to Robert Wodrow are generally not in the three volumes published of his correspondence. Here, see NLS, Special Collections, Wodrow Manuscripts, Quarto and Octavo, James Webster, Minister of the Tolbooth, Edinburgh, letters of 1719–20, Wod.Lett.Qu., vol. XIV, ff.19, 134, 142, 214, and William Wilson, Minister of the Third Charge, Perth, letters of 1719–20), Wod.Lett.Qu. vol. XIV, ff.48, 84, 103, 112, 150, 199, 223, 249.]

4. Hog, James, *Some select notes, towards detecting a covered mixture of the covenant of works and of grace: With the danger of that evil, and a few advices for remedying thereof. Contained in a letter to a friend upon the head.* Edinburgh: Printed by James Watson, 1706. [20 p.] or *The Covenants of Redemption and Grace displayed. In some questions sent by a Gentleman to a Reverend and Pious Minister of this*

self-righteous disposition, on the head of acceptance with God; and in explaining the place which faith holds in that momentous concern, as well as its influence on evangelical holiness.⁵ The latter embodied his sentiments on the subject in a Catechism on the Covenants of Works and Grace, in which he draws a broad line of distinction between the law and the gospel; makes the righteousness or finished work of Christ the only proper condition of the covenant of grace; maintains that this covenant, as exhibited in the gospel, consists of unconditional promises *indefinitely* proposed to sinners to be received by faith; and teaches that, though faith may be called a condition in a loose sense, yet it cannot be so termed in a strict and proper sense, because it is one of the blessings promised, and we never think of describing the mere reception or acceptance

church, with his answers returned to them. Edinburgh: John Moneur, 1707. 24 p.

5. A correspondence which Mr. Hog carried on by letters with one of his brethren in the years 1710–1712, is still preserved in manuscript, and relates to the conditionality or absoluteness of the premises of the covenant of grace. [See Papers of the Rev. James Hog (c. 1658–1734), New College Library Archives and Manuscripts, MS GD-20. The library lists letters concerning the absoluteness of the covenant of grace for the years 1712–1713. “Letters concerning the absoluteness of the covenant of grace. 4to. 29p. Letters numbered 41 to 56. Dated Dec. 13 1712–Jan. 19 {1713?}.”]

6. Letter, Mr. Alexander Hamilton to Principal Stirling, April 12, 1714. [See New College Library Archives and Manuscripts, MS HAD, Papers of James Hadow (c.1670–1747), Principal of St Mary’s College, St Andrews 1710–1714, Letters of Principal Hadow . . . (with copy of a letter from Principal John Stirling to Alexander Hamilton (27 Feb. 1714) and Hamilton’s reply (12 April. 1714). (From General Assembly Library.)]

7. Letter, Mr. Gibb of Cleish to Mr. Wodrow, October 1, 1711. [See most likely in either John Gib, Minister of Cleish, NLS, Wodrow quartos, Wod.Lett.Qu.II (1711), XIX, f.11, or Wodrow Octavos, Wod. Lett.Oct.II (1709, 1711), ff.3v, 9v, 75.]

8. Letters which passed between Principal Hadow, and Mr. Alexander Hamilton, in 1710–1712. The Principal calls Mr. A.H. a man “whom I am bound to love and honour, and do reckon to be amongst the truly faithful and conscientious ministers of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Mr. Hamilton professes that the Principal’s missives “had been edifying” to him, and begs the continuance of his favours. “That manuscript catechism (says he) that is so much mistaken, came very accidentally from my hand, neither was it designed for public view, but rather to be a record with myself of some thoughts upon these points. If there be heresy in it, it’s more than I am yet convinced of.” [See New College Library Archives and Manuscripts, MS HAD, Papers of James Hadow (c.1670–1747), Principal of St Mary’s College, St Andrews 1710–1714, Correspondence between Princ. Hadow of St Andrews and Mr Alex Hamilton, minr of Airth on the subject of the Gospel offer and collateral topics. 4to. 159p. (copies of 5 letters, Sept 14, 1710–Jan. 28, 1712).]

9. *Fama clamosa* = a general bad report, a rumor. In Scottish ecclesiastical law, *fama clamosa* provides sufficient grounds for action against pastor or laity, even though based solely on common report and not on a charge by accusation. If the rumor is general and hurtful,

of a gift as the condition on which it is offered. This catechism he showed to some of his brethren, with the view of obtaining their opinion or animadversions. Principal Stirling of Glasgow having taken offense at something said by Mr. Hamilton in a sermon preached by him in the church of Stirling, procured a copy of the catechism, then only in manuscript, and showed it to some members of the General Assembly held in 1710; in consequence of which an overture was hastily introduced and passed into an act, by which, among other things, it was enjoined that no minister or member of this church shall use any expression, in regard to the articles of faith, not agreeable to the form of sound words expressed in the Confession of Faith, nor “presume to print, or to *disperse in writ*, any catechism, without the allowance of the presbytery of the bounds and of the commission.” Suspecting that he was the person aimed at, Mr. Hamilton at the time insisted on being made acquainted with the fact, and offered to defend anything which he had written; but his request was waved. Such is the secret history of the act for purity of doctrine in 1710, which led to an injunction by the synod of Fife in the course of that year.⁶

Mr. Hamilton, if not also Mr. Hog, appears to have been troubled in consequence of this act. “I need write nothing (says a correspondent of Mr. Wodrow), anent Mr. Hog, as I understand you have correspondence with him yourself. Only he has been kept low by affliction this summer. Ye desired some farther accompt anent Mr. Alexander Hamilton: I thought to have got his catechism, and have sent you a copy of it, though I have seen it several times and read it; but I apprehend ye may have got it yourself ere now. It gives an account of the whole matter, for what I know that was like to be a difference between him and his presbytery; but I hope it’s happily taken up.”⁷ Mr. Hamilton carried on a friendly correspondence with Principal Hadow on the question respecting the conditionality of the covenant of grace, and collateral points; and he published his catechism in 1714, to correct misrepresentations which had gone abroad respecting his sentiments.⁸ This controversy was forgotten and absorbed in the interest excited by two events—the approaching invasion of the kingdom, and the process commenced against Mr. Simpson, professor of divinity in Glasgow, for dangerous errors. The ecclesiastical leaders testified no fondness for this prosecution. Instead of instructing his presbytery to proceed against the professor on a *fama clamosa*⁹, they left the burden on Mr. Webster of Edinburgh, who had brought the affair before the church courts; and though it appeared in evidence that he had taught Arminian and

Pelagian sentiments, the Assembly merely found that he had vented some opinions not necessary to be taught in divinity, used some expressions which bear, and are used by adversaries in, a bad and unsound sense, and, for answering the objections of adversaries, had used some hypotheses that tend to attribute too much to natural reason, and the power of corrupt nature; which expressions and hypotheses they discharged him from employing. It was in the year 1717 that this process was issued. And on the same day on which this leniency was shown; and before those who had opposed it had time to breathe, the Assembly inflicted a mark of their strongest reprobation on the following sentiment, "That it is not sound and orthodox to teach that we must forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ, and instating us in covenant with God." This was one of a series of propositions which the presbytery of Auchterarder had inserted in their minutes, on occasion of an erroneous person passing trials before them. Of this proposition the Assembly declared "their abhorrence," as "unsound and detestable;" and appointed the presbytery to be called to account for it; against which act Mr. Thomas Boston of Ettrick and some others, remonstrated as rash and dangerous.

The tenderness shown to professor Simpson, contrasted with the severe treatment of a presbytery which had evinced its zeal for evangelical doctrine, filled many good men with ominous apprehensions as to the state of religious belief among the ministers of the church. This led to consultations as to the best method of preventing the progress of the evil. Among the means which appeared to them to unite the greatest efficiency with the least offence, were the composing of new works, and in the meantime the republishing of old ones, written in an evangelical strain. A resolution to this purpose gave rise to several of Boston's most popular works, and to the first printing of *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* in Scotland.

The circumstances which led to the republication of a book which has caused so much noise, and acted so powerfully on the mind of the religious public both in the way of attraction and repulsion, cannot be altogether uninteresting. Mr. Boston, soon after his ordination, met with two old books in the house of one of his parishioners at Simprin. The one, entitled *Christ's Blood Flowing Freely*, by Saltmarsh, he laid aside, on finding that it was of an antinomian tendency. The other, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, he read with great pleasure; and to the perusal of it he imputed in a great degree the clear views he obtained of the gospel offer, and the liberty which he henceforth felt in

proclaiming the free, open, and unrestrained access of sinners to Christ as a Saviour. These views he unfolded at different times in sermons preached before his brethren, without ever hearing that they gave any offence. Sitting in the Assembly-house in 1717, he happened to mention *The Marrow* to Mr. John Drummond, minister of Crieff, and a member of the presbytery of Auchterarder. The account he gave of it inspired Mr. Drummond with a strong desire to possess the book, of which, after a diligent search, he obtained a copy before leaving Edinburgh. That copy was read by Mr. Webster of Edinburgh, and afterwards came into the hands of Mr. Hog of Carnock, who, by the advice of his brethren, wrote a recommendatory preface to it, which was printed along with the first part of the work in the course of the year 1718.¹⁰ The book was read by many with satisfaction and delight; but it was soon understood that it had been received with very different feelings by others, including some of the leading and most influential ministers of the church.¹¹ Hearing of the objections circulated against the work, Mr. Hog, early in 1719, published *An explanation [sic explication] of the passages excepted against in The Marrow of Modern Divinity.* Soon after this, Principal Hadow of St. Andrews, in a sermon preached at the opening of the Synod of Fife on the 7th of April, 1719, attacked directly Marshall on Sanctification, and especially the *Marrow*. He did not, as in his subsequent writings, accuse these works of antinomianism, but he charged them with contradicting the Scriptures, and the standards of the Church of Scotland, by "making the very essence and formal nature of justifying saving faith to be a man's persuading and assuring himself of his particular interest in Christ," and building this "upon a foundation of universal redemption." The sermon was immediately published at the desire of the Synod,¹² and led the way to a host of polemical pieces on both sides of

the court can investigate it without any accuser, for the vindication of the character of the Church and of the court, and with a view to the preservation of good morals in the community. Cf. Hill, *Church Practice*, p. 49.

10. Boston's *Memoirs* [1776], p. 330.

11. "The publishing *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, with a preface by Mr. James Hog, is much reflected upon." (Letter, Mr. William Wilson of Perth to Mr. Wodrow, January 24, 1719.) [Ibid., Wod.Lett. Qu. vol. XIV.]

12. It is entitled "The Record of God and the Duty of faith therein required: a sermon on 1 John v. 11, 12." [*The Record of God and Duty of Faith Therein Required: A Sermon on 1 John v. ver. 11, 12 before The Synod of Fife at St. Andrew's April 7th, 1719* (Edinburgh: Printed by John Mosman and Company, for John Paton Bookseller, and to be sold at his Shop in the Parliament-Closs, 1719. (Price Four Pence).]

the question, which continued to issue from the press during the four following years.¹³

It does not appear that the *Marrow* was mentioned at the meeting of the General Assembly in May 1719, but it was well understood that the following clause in the instructions to the Commission was principally directed against that book. "And that they inquire how the prohibition has been observed in the bounds of the Presbytery of Auchterarder, or elsewhere, whereby the using of the proposition remitted by that Presbytery, and condemned by the General Assembly 1717, was discharged; and that they inquire into the publishing and spreading of books and pamphlets tending to the diffusing of that condemned proposition, and promoting a scheme of opinions relative thereto, which are inconsistent with our Confession of Faith; and that the recommenders of such books and pamphlets, or the

13. To attempt to enumerate all the pamphlets would be tedious and unprofitable. Mr. Hog replied to the Principal's sermon in a "Conference between Ephaphroditus and Epaphras," and in a "Second Dialogue between Gamaliel, Paul," &c. To these the Principal replied in his "Antinomianism of the Marrow Detected," which was answered satirically by the "Political Disputant" (a work to which the "Ecclesiastical Characteristics" of Witherspoon bear no small resemblance), and gravely, in the "Sober Inquiry into the grounds of the present Differences;" the most acute of all the books in favour of the *Marrow*, and afterwards known to have proceeded from the ingenious pen of Mr. Riccaltoun of Hobkirk, who was probably also the author of the "Political Disputant." The "Snake in the Grass," and "This Cromwellian Ghost Conjured," were squibs on the other side.

14. "This morning the committee for instructions met. There was canglings [i.e., wranglings] and debates about our grievances, and some charges from the Synod of Fife against Mr. Simpson for error. The head of error is committed to the committee."—(Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mrs. Wodrow, Edinburgh, May 20, 1719.) [See the text somewhat modernized in *The Correspondence of Robert Wodrow*, volume 2, edited by Thomas M'Crie ([1843]), 446–447.]

15. It was preached September 18, 1718, at the admission of Mr. David Shaw to Auchterarder.

16. Letters, Mr. William Wilson of Perth to Mr. Wodrow, August 31, 1719, and February 1720. Papers concerning Mr. Drummond's process. The process commenced January 9, 1719, and terminated February 11, 1720. One of the opponents of the *Marrow* writes as follows: "There are few of the Presbyteries of Stirling and Auchterarder but are for Mr. Hog, Webster and Hamilton's doctrine, though I believe none of the three will own Mr. Drummond's creed, who is a very ordinary man, for I knew him full well: he is nothing of a scholar, though I truly believe him a very good man; he was under my ministry in St. Ninian's."—(Letter, Mr. Patrick Couper to Mr. Wodrow, August 1719.) [Wilson letters, *ibid.*, Wod.Lett.Qu. vol. XIV. The letter of Couper is in *Correspondence*, 2.452–453. but the referenced substance of the libel against Drummond was not included. See Patrick Couper, Minister of Pittenweem, letters of (1719), Wod.Lett.Qu.XIV, f.101. There is also an MS described as Drummond's propositions (1719), Wod.Lett.Qu.XIX, f. 120. Is unclear if the reference to the papers intends to imply they still existed and may be in volume XIV. See the long explanatory footnote about the case in *Correspondence*, 2.507–508.]

errors therein contained, whether by write or print, be called before them to answer for their conduct in such recommendations; and the Commission are empowered to judge, in cases of doctrine that shall be brought before them, by appeals or references from Synods or Presbyteries." At this Assembly a new charge of error was brought against Mr. Simpson; but it does not appear that any proceedings were founded upon it, at least for several years.¹⁴

Previous to this time, a process had been commenced against Mr. Drummond, already mentioned, for sentiments uttered by him in a sermon.¹⁵ He appears to have preached the doctrine common to the Marrow-men, as they have been called; but the propositions charged against him in the libel, drawn up by a committee of the Synod of Perth and Stirling, were expressed in very odious terms. He gave in large defences, in which he denied all the counts but one, which he explained, and retorted in severe terms on his principal prosecutors; but by the advice of his friends, he withdrew these, and substituted a paper couched in milder language, upon which the Synod dismissed the process, in the way of prohibiting Mr. Drummond, or any other in their bounds, to use the propositions as expressed in the libel, and returning thanks to the brethren who had brought the cause before them. "This last clause," says a member of Synod, "contributed not a little to the unanimity."¹⁶

In the meantime the Commission was not idle in following out the instructions, and exerting the powers which they had received from the last Assembly. Their first step was to appoint a committee under the imposing name of the committee for purity of doctrine, who, in their turn, nominated a sub-committee to sit at St. Andrews, to "ripen the affair," by fixing on the persons to be dealt with, and drawing up interrogatories for their examination. The sub-committee carved out a sufficiency of work for their constituents, Messrs. Warden of Gargunnock, Brisbane of Stirling, Hamilton of Airth, and Hog of Carnock, were summoned to attend the committee at Edinburgh, in the beginning of April, 1720. The first was to be examined on a book which he had published on the Sacrament of the Supper; the second on a sermon he had published on Rom. vi. 14; the third on his Catechism, which had been before the public for six years; and the last on the *Marrow*. On their first appearance before the committee, they begged to know in what character they appeared, and in what light they were called to converse; and being told that they were to answer certain questions respecting books which they had written or recommended, they requested to see the queries, which was refused. After

protesting that such procedure had the appearance of a judicial trial, was an encroachment on the privileges of the radical judicatories, and an examination *super inquirendis*¹⁷, they agreed to answer such questions as should be proposed to them for the satisfaction of their brethren; upon which they were conversed with separately. When we consider the station and character of the members of committee who were present, it is impossible to charge them with want of judgment; whether they were misled by their own dread of innovations, or were imposed upon by the keenness of their brethren at St. Andrews, the reader may judge, after perusing the following letter.

Reverend and dear Brother—Having the occasion of this sure hand, I write you an account of our Edinburgh conversation, of which I doubt not but you have heard before now. We were called to meet on the 11th, but it was Wednesday the afternoon ere we were called; and after some dispute in what capacity they were who were to converse with us, which Mr. Hamilton and I were willing to waive for peace sake, at last they were pleased to call for me, when the Moderator told me they had little or nothing to say to me. I answered that then they were not so very tender in obliging me to ride sixty miles for nothing, especially when I was to have corresponded with the Synod of Glasgow. They replied that they wished I had gone to Glasgow, and had only wrote to them. I answered, I know I was represented as bad enough by some whom I desired to forgive; and if I had not come, it might have been improved by some not to my advantage. I desired, therefore, to know why I was sent for; whereupon Mr. Grierson asked, [said] that he did not doubt that I owned the little book as mine. I told I did, and was not afraid of anything in it before an œumenick [i.e., ecumenical] council, errors of the press excepted. Here he told, there was somewhat observed, page 133, line 29, but that they understood it was a typographical error. I told them it was so, tho' not among the *errata*; that there were several copies out e'er I observed it, but so soon as I did, I left an order in Mr. Anderson's shop to sell none but where the word *not* was deleted; and wherever I met with them, I so amended them. They all said they knew this, and entreated I would not be angry. I then said, I wondered what was in the Inquisition's blind eyes that they saw not a *not* too little in another place, which made greater nonsense and greater error, viz. p. 138, line 10, where the words are *I dare assert*, and should be *I dare not assert*. Here there was silence. Then the moderator said that there was only a very little thing, page 113, where I

say "persons should accept, etc. with full assurance." I asked him, was not the truth, and will he have a person doubt if God will be as good as his word. Here they all said, "Houts! houts!¹⁸ let that alone." But one said, he believed I did not think I was of opinion that assurance was essential to faith. I said there was no such thing, but the contrary, in that place asserted, viz. the assurance of the connexion betwixt faith and the blessing. But then, though this was to answer *super inquirendis*, yet to satisfy them, I told I was far from any such thought, for then I should many a time exclude myself. Hereupon they all declared that they were more than satisfied, and that troubling me required an apology, and therefore offered me any satisfaction I would demand. I told them I wanted no satisfaction, but wished some might be forgiven; and if this was their way of doing, they might come to have more of my change. Here all smiled. I was much caressed by them, so that others were like to take umbrage.

They professed themselves satisfied with Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Brisbane, and never so much as once named Mr. Hamilton's *claim*, which some here and elsewhere made so much work about. They met with Mr. Hog the Monday after, and I hear they parted very friendly. The conveners were Mr. Grierson, Principal Wishart, Professor Hamilton, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Allan Logan (a learned and distinct scholar indeed.) Mr. Smith, and my Lord Grange. I make no observation, only that piece of conduct, and your Glasgow overtures, make rare work."¹⁹

It is unnecessary to detail the particulars of Mr. Hamilton's examination; for, though it did not turn so much on errors of the printer as that of Mr. Warden, yet he cleared himself, to the satisfaction of the committee, from doctrinal errors.²⁰ Mr. Hog, when called, frankly

17. *super inquirendis* – i.e., without a specific charge.

18. *Hout*, or *hoot*: An exclamation of annoyance, disgust, or unbelief, often used to dismiss someone else's opinion.

19. Letter, Mr. J. Warden to Mr. Wodrow, May 8, 1720. [See Letters of John Warden, Minister of Gargunnoch (1719–1720), *Wod.Lett.Qu.*, XIV, ff.55–291 (*passim*).]

20. They asked him, what he meant in his Catechism by the legal federal sufficiency of the death of Christ, and if he held that Christ represented and stood in the room of all; to which he answered in the negative, and said that all he meant was the intrinsic sufficiency of Christ's righteousness, as fulfilling the law of the covenant of works; upon which one of the committee said, without that the elect themselves could not be saved. They quarreled at his making this sufficiency the foundation of the universal call of the Gospel, and Professor Hamilton asked him, how he could reconcile that with his holding special election and particular redemption, to which he replied that

acknowledged his activity in reprinting *The Marrow*, and the favourable opinion which he still entertained of that book.²¹ But the answers he gave to the questions relating to his own sentiments were such as proved satisfactory to the committee. “When their communing ended, Thursday night (says Mr. Hamilton), they declared that they were very much satisfied with our answers, and gave us by this to know that they would make a favourable report, which, I hear, they accordingly did to the next Assembly; yet then signifying that there were some things which should be further considered.”²²

After the amicable termination of the conference, it was earnestly wished, and confidently expected, by many who had taken no part in recommending or circulating *The Marrow* that all judicial proceedings relating to it would be dropped. The matter might very probably have issued in this way, had it been left entirely to the committee which met at Edinburgh. But the controversy carried on by the press had produced irritation on both sides. In consequence of the recommendation of last Assembly, inquiries had been instituted by presbyteries; and where the majority in these

the Professor was as much bound to solve that difficulty as he was. (A Copie of the Conduct of the Committee for purity of doctrine with regard to Mr. Alex Hamilton.) [New College, XI4a 2/2 as referenced in Lachman, p. 259. This may be now be classed or in the collection MSS HAM 1, Alexander Hamilton, Minister of Airth (1663–1738), Copies of letters and other documents on the Marrow Controversy, by Alexander Hamilton, John Warden, Ralph Erskine and Jame Hog, 4to. 168p. 1714–22, or MS MAR, Papers Relating to the Marrow Controversy, 1720–22, Collection of letters, proclamations, etc., by Ralph Erskine, James Hog, and others, mainly dealing with aspects of the Marrow Controversy, 1720–22. 4to. 632p.]

21. Boston's *Memoirs* [1776], p. 361.

22. Copie of the conduct of the Committee with regard to Mr. Alex. Hamilton. [See prior note.]

23. Mr. Allan Logan of Culross was reported to be revising the papers of Hog and Hamilton, and finding faults in Warden's book of the Lord's Supper. (Warden to Wodrow, January 2d, 1720.) [See Letters of John Warden, Minister of Gargunnoch (1719–1720), Wod.Lett. Qu., XIV, ff.55–291 (*passim*). Lachman notes that this letter is item No. 206 in the volume. Lachman, 260.]

24. “As to your dear brother's affair, it stands, for what I hear, as it was till next Synod. No doubt you will have accounts from him of the satirical review of his conference [the Snake in the Grass] and the reply he has given to it with much modesty, and the Queries at the close upon the Gospel Offer.” (Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mr. Thomas Hog, Minister at Rotterdam, Feb. 18, 1720.) Mr. Wodrow was opposed to the *Marrow*, but was on intimate terms with several of its friends. [Cf. *Correspondence*, 2,508–509.]

25. Letter, Mr. John Grant, Minister of Auchinleck, to Mr. Wodrow, Dec. 10, 1719. From a letter of Wodrow to Grant, April 1731, it appears that the latter was then to London, and it was reported he was to remain there. [John Grant, Minister of Auchinleck, letters possibly of (1719), Wod.Lett.Qu.XIV, f.124. See John Grant, letter to (1731), Wod.Lett.Oct.IV, f.188.]

courts showed themselves reluctant or slack, individuals in them brought the matter before provincial Synods, who transmitted the information which they received to the sub-committee at St. Andrews.²³

Accordingly, it appears that Mr. Hog's case had been repeatedly under the consideration of the Synod of Fife, to which he belonged.²⁴ The following are the remarks of a respectable minister who disapproved of several things in *The Marrow*, but afterwards opposed the Assembly's procedure respecting that book.

“I am heartily sorry there's so much noise made about *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*; I am afraid there's too much of a party spirit at bottom. It does not look well that so worthy a gentleman as Mr. Hog should be singled out as the butt of opposition and censure, tho' I humbly conceive he's a little stiff in its defence as to that of assurance its being essential to faith; *The Marrow* leaning a little too much to that side. I reckon it cannot be refused there are a good many things unhappily worded in that book, but at the same time I conceive that the scope of the book is excellent, as I take it, viz. to point out the absolute necessity of being cut off from the barren stock of old Adam, and implanted in the second Adam, and receiving constant sap and juice from the glorious root, as the only spring of and nourishment to gospel holiness. And there are a great many rich and savoury truths in it that have no tendency to antinomianism. As to the hints in that book, and in the scheme of some others (that on other accounts I have a great deal of honour and respect to) of universalism in Christ's being given to all mankind, I cannot see them consistent with particular decrees. It looks a little like a cheat upon mankind to assert the one, and not teach the other. You'll pardon my remarks upon these great points.”²⁵

The General Assembly met on Thursday the 12th May, 1720. In the fourth Session (Monday the 16th) the committee for purity of doctrine reported that they had had under their consideration several books and pamphlets, had conversed with the alleged authors of them, “and were well pleased to hear them explain themselves upon sundry of the grounds quarreled,” but added that there were certain other positions and expressions in these writings which deserved to be further considered. On their motion and overture, the Assembly agreed to instruct and empower their commission to appoint a committee for purity of doctrine, similar to the last. The affair of the *Marrow* was introduced in the same sederunt, but in a rather singular manner. It appeared that

the Commission had been appointed to meet on the Tuesday before the opening of the Assembly, in order to receive a report from their committee on that subject, but that diet not having been held, the report was given in to the committee for overtures, who transmitted it to the Assembly. It was accompanied with some propositions collected from *The Marrow*, "which appeared contrary to the Scriptures, and Confession of Faith, and likewise, with some expressions exceeding harsh and offensive, passing many others that were exceptionable." The report and excerpts being read, the Assembly agreed that before entering on the consideration of these, they should lie on the table till Thursday first, to be perused by the members, and that likewise a diet should be appointed for a meeting of the committee for overtures, in order fully to consider the said report and propositions, where all the members of the Assembly, and any ministers of the church that please, may be present and allowed to reason on these subjects.

Next day, at the desire of some members, the clerk was ordered to allow any member who chose to take a copy of the propositions. On Wednesday the overture concerning *The Marrow* was debated in the committee of overtures, or of the whole house. The principal persons who reasoned against it were Mr. Gabriel Wilson of Maxton, Mr. John Bonar of Torphichen, and Mr. Hog, who, though not a member, availed himself of the liberty which the Assembly had granted.²⁶ They urged that the *Marrow*, in its general strain and drift, was confessedly sound and excellent, and ought not to be condemned and prohibited on account of a few injudicious or incautious phrases; that "many paradoxes, and harsh expressions, liable to misconstruction when taken separately, were to be found in authors of uncontested orthodoxy and eminence, both old and late, and the excellent meaning had hitherto procured an overlooking of such flights;" that it was but fair and candid to explain and qualify the expressions of an author by other parts of his writings in which he treats of the same subject directly and *ex professo*²⁷; and they offered to show that the passages excerpted against in this book were reconcilable with other parts of it, in which the errors with which it was charged were rejected by the author. They were allowed to proceed for some time in this mode of defence; but as the defenders of the overture, who were supported by the great body of the committee, refused to admit of this latitude of explanation, and insisted that the passages quoted conveyed an erroneous meaning, they were at last forced to desist.²⁸

On Friday (the 20th) the overture was brought into the Assembly, and after the excerpts from *The Marrow*

were compared with the Scriptures and passages from the standards, it was twice read, "and then voted and approved." Four ministers voted in the negative, Mr. Gabriel Wilson, Mr. John Grant of Auchinleck, Mr. Andrew Burgh of Maddertie, and Mr. Robert Willock of Echt. "After the vote, Mr. Wilson desired his voting *not* might be marked; whereupon it was moved he might be called to the bar and give his reasons, with a great deal of heat. He came to the bar, asked pardon wherein he had given any offence, and declared his dislike of the propositions which were condemned, but declared he had an expedient to propose for the peace of the Church, which could not be heard before the vote, which made him mark his dissent. This satisfied all, and there was no more of it."²⁹

The passages of *The Marrow* condemned by the Assembly, are arranged in the act under five heads. 1st. Concerning the nature of faith; under which the charge is that assurance is made to be of the essence of faith. 2d. Of universal atonement and pardon. 3d. Holiness is not necessary to salvation. 4th. Fear of punishment, and hope of reward, not allowed to be motives of a believer's obedience. 5th. That a believer is not under the law, as a rule of life. To these a number of expressions collected from *The Marrow* are added. "The General

26. Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mrs. Wodrow, May 18, 1720. [*Correspondence*, 2,583.]

27. *Ex professo*: as an expert, or with the competence one would expect from a professional.

28. MS. Dialogue between Theod. and Phyl., by Mr. Hog. [This MS could not be traced. Hog uses the name Philologus for one of the speakers in his Dialogues. But there is also a manuscript entitled "Memorial written by Philomathes," which is a "spiritual autobiography in eleven chapters," of Hog, but it ends before the Marrow Controversy. The copy owned by M'Crie is lacking pages that have been torn out. New College, MS GD-20, "Memorial written by Philomathes and addressed to his surviving friends. 4to. Wants all after p.694, subsequent leaves having been torn out. (MS originally presented to the Theological Library, Whitburn. Autograph of Thomas McCrie on flyleaf." The pages torn out apparently made up the text published as *Memoirs of the Public Life of Mr. James Hogg* (Edinburgh, 1798) (see David George Mullan, *Narratives of the Religious Self in Early-Modern Scotland* (2010; Routledge, 2016), 29). There is another copy in octavo, 701 pages, NLS, Adv.MS.32.3.8. This Dialogue must be a later work drafted during the controversy using the same Philomathes to refer to himself or was a Dialogue involving Philologus that was not published. A portion is quoted in John Brown, *Gospel Truth* (American ed., 1827), p. 116–118; (1831), 46–49, and as with the autobiography, may have circulated in hand drafted copies. Charles L. Moffatt, Jr. suggested the work was no longer extant ("James Hog of Carnock [1658–1734], Leader in the Evangelical Party in Early Eighteenth Century Scotland" [Ph.D thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1960], 177), as does David C. Lachman (p. 272, note 2).]

29. Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mrs. Wodrow, May 20, 1720. [*Correspondence*, 2,532.]

Assembly found that the said passages and quotations which relate to the five several heads of doctrine above mentioned, are contrary to the Holy Scriptures, our confession of faith and catechisms; and that the distinction of the law as it is the law of works and as it is the law of Christ, as the author applies it, in order to sense and defend the six antinomian paradoxes above written, is altogether groundless; and that the other expression above set down, excerpted out of the said book, are exceeding harsh and offensive. And therefore the General Assembly do hereby strictly prohibit and discharge all the ministers of this church, either by preaching, writing, or printing, to recommend the said book, or in discourse to say anything in favours of it; but on the contrary, they are hereby enjoined and required to warn and exhort their people in whose hands the said book is, or may come, not to read or use the same.”³⁰

In the draught of the act as it came from the committee, there was a clause, “discharging ministers to print, publish, or recommend any book or pamphlet relating to doctrine, worship, discipline, or government of the church, without the advice and allowance of their presbytery.” But when it came before the house, this clause

30. The act is to be found among the printed acts of Assembly, and has been lately reprinted in Brown’s *Gospel Truth*, second edition. [See *Acts of the general assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1638–1842* (Edinburgh: for the Church Law Society, 1843), 534–536; John Brown of Whitburn, *Gospel truth accurately stated and illustrated / occasioned by the republication of the marrow of modern divinity, a new edition greatly enlarged and improved* (Glasgow, 1831), pp. 171–176. The act came to be called the Black Act. See Lachman, p. 158, Boston, *Memoirs, Works* 12, p. 357; and Donald Macleod, “Reformed Theology in Scotland,” *Theology in Scotland* 17, no. 2 (2010), 8.]

31. Probably Mr. John Anderson, then one of the ministers of Glasgow, and author of the Defence of Presbyterian Government against Mr. Rhynd. He was a member of this Assembly.

32. Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mrs. Wodrow, May 20, 1720. The following queries serve at least to show that the draught of the act condemning *The Marrow* was understood at the time to be the work of Principal Hadow, who is called the *Detector* from the title of one of his pamphlets on the controversy. “Whether it be consistent with the memory of some honourable and reverend members of the Assembly 1720 that some persons whose draught the condemnatory act was, made them believe that some clauses in that act were deleted, which yet were not, and when they were challenged in the General Assembly, took a pen, and pretended to score them, and yet did let them stand in the act? Whether some members of that Assembly will not own that they thought these clauses had been deleted, or they would not have voted them? Whether this consideration may not account in some good respect, for the Assembly’s being led into an oversight, at the same time that it doth expose the unaccountable conduct of the Detector?” ([Boston,] *Queries to the Friendly Advisor, to which is prefixed, a letter to a friend concerning the affair of the Marrow*, p. 35, printed in the year 1722.)

33. [*The Edinburgh Christian Instructor*, vol. 30, no. 8 (October 1831): 687–699.]

was strongly opposed by Mr. Anderson,³¹ and the Assembly agreed that it should be “separate, and reserved to be afterwards considered.”³²

[PART TWO.]³³

Those who have directed their attention to ecclesiastical history, cannot be ignorant of the five propositions extracted from a work of Jansenius, bishop of Ypres, entitled *Augustinus*, and condemned by Pope Innocent X., which gave rise to such warm disputes in the seventeenth century between the Jesuits and Jansenists; the latter professing that they believed the propositions to be erroneous, and justly condemned by the sovereign pontiff, but maintaining that they were not to be found in the book of Jansenius in the sense in which they had been condemned. All France was divided on this question *de facto*, and the press teemed with publications on both sides during a number of years. The dispute was at last settled by an edict from his Holiness, pronouncing, *ex cathedra* that the condemned propositions were contained in the work of the bishop of Ypres.

There is a considerable resemblance between the controversy excited by the publication of *Augustinus*, and that which arose on the republication of *The Marrow*. The General Assembly condemned five propositions, as contained in this book, and “as sensed” by its author; their prohibition related directly to the book; and when they were afterwards charged with involving certain truths in their condemnatory sentence, they vindicated themselves by saying that they had condemned these propositions, not in the abstract, but “in the sense” in which they were held in the book. By the friends of *The Marrow*, the interpretation put on the passages referred to was denied; and thus the dispute resolved itself, in a good degree, into a question of fact. But as no infallible authority was recognized in Scotland, as in France, for deciding such matters, the controversy was kept alive, and *The Marrow* continued to be sought after and read, because it was prohibited and run down, as well as because it was recommended and vindicated.

Such being the aspect which this controversy assumed, it is more than a matter of curiosity to inquire into the history of the book and its author. Many who have heard of the dispute think that the book which gave occasion to it was of recent origin, and may be surprised at being told that it had been in circulation nearly four-score years, and had gone through twelve editions before it incurred the censure of the General Assembly.

The following is the account given of the author by Principal Hadow, the earliest and ablest opponent of *The Marrow*: “Edward Fisher, the author of *The Marrow* was

a tool whom the Independents thought fit to encourage in that juncture. He was as to employment a barber in London, who took upon himself to be a minister of a separate or independent congregation, as may be gathered from the book itself, and to set up for the Independent way, in opposition to Presbyterian government. Such an intruder into the sacred office would not readily at that time have obtained the recommendation of any true Presbyterian, who had a zeal for the covenant, and sworn reformation of the Church of Scotland."³⁴ By this statement, the Principal stumbled at the threshold, and exposed himself to the double charge of having recourse to the *argumentum ad invidiam*,³⁵ and of being rash in judging of facts. There is no good evidence that Edward Fisher was embarked in any faction; and, according to the most credible accounts, instead of being an illiterate barber, he was a gentleman by birth, and a scholar by education.

"Edward Fisher, the eldest son of a knight, became a gentleman-commoner of Brazenose College, August 25, 1627, took his degree in arts, and soon after left that house. Afterwards, being called home by his relations, who were then, as I have been informed, much in debt, he improved that learning, which he had obtained in the university, so much that he became a noted person among the learned, for his great reading in ecclesiastical history and in the fathers, and for his admirable skill in the Greek and Hebrew languages. His works are *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, etc."³⁶

Such is the account given by the historian of Oxford, who cannot be suspected of partiality either to Independents or Presbyterians; and although there are grounds for suspecting the accuracy of his information in some particulars, it is sufficient for showing that we should be cautious in receiving the odious or discreditable representations which controversialists are apt to give of their opponents.

The Marrow was first published in 1646 with the *imprimatur* of Mr. Joseph Caryl, the well known commentator on the book of Job, who was appointed by the Assembly of Divines, then sitting at Westminster, to revise and approve of theological works before they came from the press. His note of license contained a strong recommendation,

I have perused (says he) this ensuing dialogue, I find it tending to peace and holiness; the author endeavouring to reconcile and heal those unhappy differences which have lately broken out afresh among us, about the points

therein handled and cleared; for which cause I allow it to be printed, and recommend it to the readers, as a discourse stored with many necessary and seasonable truths, confirmed by Scripture, and avowed by many approved writers, etc.

The subsequent editions of the work were recommended, among others, by Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs and Mr. William Strong, dives of acknowledged learning and soundness in the faith. Principal Hadow urges that Caryl and Burroughs, though members of the Westminster Assembly, "were of those Independents named by the Parliament who were engaged in a party in opposition to the settling Presbyterian government," and with this view cherished the other sectaries; that Mr. Sprigge, one of those who recommended *The Marrow*, abetted the extravagances of Sir Henry Vane; and that Toun, who is quoted in the book, was an antinomian. To these assertions his opponents replied that Caryl was not one of those who opposed Presbyterian government in the Westminster Assembly; that Mr. Burroughs and his Independent brethren were avowed enemies to the doctrinal errors of the other sectaries; that though Sprigge had proved a Judas, it would not have invalidated his former testimony to the truth; and that the words quoted in *The Marrow* from Toun are directly opposed to antinomianism. To this it may be added, in point of fact

34. [Hadow,] *The Antinomianism of the Marrow of Modern Divinity Detected* [1721], p. 9.

35. This charge is strongly put by Mr. Riccalton. "When we have looked through this charge, all we can find in it is that he was an Independent and a barber. For the first (however he says nothing of it), we have the same reason to refuse our approbation, I will not say unto Mr. Caryl and Mr. Burroughs, but even to Mr. Greenhill, Dr. Goodwin, and Dr. Owen, with I know not how many more of the very best writers England ever produced. Nor is there one circumstance which makes really against the author of *The Marrow* in this narrative, which does not militate as strongly against them, unless it is that they were not barbers. But, and if he was really such, what can anybody make of it? So were Peter, James and John fishermen; and is it impossible for a barber to be a man of sense and learning? Nor do I know any piece of folly more foolish than that of valuing books by the authors, unless it is another, of valuing authors by the time they have spent in universities, and the degrees they have taken there. I know the circumstance has been publicly contradicted from the press. But as I look upon that other account of the author, however better vouched, yet never a whit more authentic than this, so I own it, I value *The Marrow* more when I look upon it as written by Edward Fisher the barber, than when I consider it as the work of the learned and honourable Edward Fisher." (*Sober Enquiry* [1723], p. 41, 42.) – [*argumentum ad invidiam*: an argument that appeals to popular hatred or prejudice to sustain its rationale.]

36. Wood's *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, vol. ii, p. 198. [Anthony à Wood, *Athenæ Oxonienses*, a new edition ed. Philip Bliss, volume 3 (1817), 408.]

that though *The Marrow* was published at the time that the antinomian errors prevailed in England, it was not then supposed to be favourable to them; and neither Mr. Baillie nor Mr. Rutherford, nor any contemporary writer against antinomianism ever once introduce it among the numerous works which they refute, or accuse of favouring that heresy.

The Marrow is composed in the form of a dialogue between Evangelista, a minister of the gospel, Nomista, a legalist, Antinomista, an antinomian, and Neophytus, a young Christian; the first of these being always understood to express the sentiments of the author. It is called *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, because the object of the author was to exhibit the substance of that doctrine which was revived at the era of the Reformation. The work consists chiefly of extracts from the writings of the reformers, and some of the boldest expressions, and those which gave greatest offence, were the very words of Luther, and of Bolton, Rogers, and Preston, three learned and pious divines of the church of England.

Before resuming the narrative of the controversy, it may be proper to state a few facts of an earlier date, which may perhaps serve to account for the extraordinary jealousy which some good men of decidedly orthodox views expressed of *The Marrow*, and of those who recommended it. They will, at any rate, make a small addition to our ecclesiastical history, and to that

portion of it which is most defective, the state of opinions. Mr. Frazer of Brae, a gentleman distinguished for the sufferings to which he was exposed in the reign of Charles II., composed, during the persecution, a treatise on saving faith, in which he adopted substantially the views of Amyraud, Daillé, and some other divines in the reformed church of France, who held that there was a twofold destination of the atonement, the one restricted to the elect, and the other coextensive with the human race. This work, or rather excerpts from it, having been shewn to some friends in the year 1677, gave great offence, and in particular to Mr. John Carstairs (the father of the celebrated Principal of that name), who wrote animadversions on the new scheme of doctrine.³⁷ Means were used to suppress the controversy, and Mr. Frazer, who was greatly esteemed for his piety and zeal, became minister of Culross after the Revolution. His work was not published during his lifetime, but copies of it came into circulation in manuscript after his death.³⁸ Mr. George Mair, who was his successor, perhaps also his colleague, in Culross, if he did not adopt Mr. Frazer's theory of redemption, appears to have made use of some of his modes of expression and illustration.³⁹ He was succeeded, as minister of that parish, by Mr. Allan Logan, who took a very active part against *The Marrow*.⁴⁰ There is no reason to think that the author of *The Marrow* was acquainted

37. Macward's MSS. Frazer, in a letter written from the Bass to Carstairs, disowns the "conditional" redemption of Amyraud. [It is not clear what M'Crie means by "Macward's MSS" other than a reference to MSS in the Wodrow Folios held in the Advocates library until donated at the founding of the NLS in 1925. Elsewhere M'Crie elaborates, "Wodrow MSS. vol. lix. Carstairs' Letter is dated June 4, 1677. Fraser wrote a long letter in reply, which Carstairs again answered; and there the correspondence appears to have ended." M'Crie, *The Bass Rock: Its Civil and Ecclesiastical History Geology* ([1848]), p. 144.]

38. "You have acquainted me with more than I knew before, I mean of Brae's manuscript on Faith and Universal Redemption, its being transcribing for me at Edinburgh. Mr. Webster some time ago told me he had the paper, and promised me the use of it, but that then it was with Mr. Wilson at Perth's; and therefore I wrote him some five or six weeks ago, if I rightly mind, to make good his promise to me. He has not been so kind as yet to give me an answer, but Mr. Macky wrote me that he was transcribing for himself, and promised the use of his copy how soon he had finished it. I own I long to see it, for I can't take up his notion by the memoirs of his life, and I have a great regard to his way of thinking in a great many things." (Letter, Mr. J. Grant of Auchinleck to Mr. Wodrow, Dec. 10, 1719.) [John Grant, Minister of Auchinleck, letters possibly of (1719), Wod.Lett.Qu.XIV, f.124.]

39. "The question is not, 1, Anent the mere sufficiency of the death of Christ for expiating the guilt of all men's sins, in which sense possibly we might say it might be extended to all sinners, devils as well as men, if God had pleased to design so. Nor, 2, anent its legal and ordinate sufficiency with respect to man (as some eminent writers zealous

against Arminianism have expressed themselves) so as all men who hear thereof may in law plead for remission of sins thereupon. Nor, 3, the warrant hereupon we have to preach this as the gospel or good tidings from heaven to every creature, and their duty to believe the same, with application to the salvation of their souls. Nor, 4, anent the necessary and certain connexion betwixt this faith of the gospel and salvation, and betwixt unbelief and damnation. Nor, 5, anent Christ's having bought the world, so as all power in heaven and earth is given to him, and the Father has committed all judgment to the Son. Nor, 6, anent all grace, its coming by Jesus Christ, whether common or special. And so, nor, 7, anent the obligations that all the children of men are under to the Lord Christ for preserving and providing grace; and for all the objective and subjective grace they enjoy, which if all mankind were not more or less partakers of, they would be in respect of sin and misery like the damned in hell. Nor, 8, anent the capacity of Adam's children to improve the grace they get, and that in this way they may expect and do ordinarily obtain more of that sort of grace, whether it is common or saving. These and the like, I think, might be granted, and though there might be a different conception or expression therein from what others might have thereabout, I think it were tolerable." (Letter, Mr. George Mair to Mr. Wodrow; Culross, Sept. 8, 1713.) [NLS, George Mair, Minister of Tulliallan, letters of (1713-15), Wod.Lett.Qu.XIX, ff.22-6, 32-6, 42, 61-3.]

40. Principal Hadow was very anxious to let it be known that he had the support of a person of such acknowledged orthodoxy as Mr. Logan. "The brethren (says he), whatever ways they take to distinguish themselves, may be pleased to know that there are ministers of the Church of Scotland who will cede to none of them in owning

with "the new method" of doctrine (as it was called in France), afterwards adopted by Frazer, and Mr. Hog and his brethren were certainly hostile to it. But as there were expressions in *The Marrow*, which, when taken by themselves, seemed to favour universal redemption, it is not unnatural to suppose that Mr. Logan, who could not be ignorant of the sentiments of his predecessors, felt alarm on that head, and laboured to impress his brethren with the same feeling.⁴¹

The Commission, according to the directions of the General Assembly 1720, appointed a committee for purity of doctrine. That committee, at their meeting on the 12th of August, appointed the sub-clerk, Nicol Spence, to require Mr. Alexander Hamilton to wait upon them at Edinburgh, on the second Wednesday of October, and to bring along with him a letter which he had written from Airth on the 18th of November 1718. Mr. Hamilton was then in bad health, but came to Edinburgh at the time specified. On expressing to the members of the committee his surprise that he should have been called to attend them, after he had given them satisfaction on a former occasion, he was told that want of time had prevented them from conversing with him on certain points as to which they wished for further satisfaction; and that, to prevent misunderstanding, queries would be put into his hand, to which it was expected he would return answers in writing. As the members of the sub-committee at St. Andrews, to whom the task of framing the queries had been entrusted, had not come forward, Professor Hamilton, at the desire of the committee, drew up nine questions, which, after the arrival of Principal

Hadow and Mr. Allan Logan, were enlarged to fourteen. They related to the extent of Christ's death, the conditionality of the covenant of grace, the nature of faith, and the precepts of the gospel; and they were founded on the catechism printed by Hamilton, on a manuscript copy of that work, and on the letter already referred to. After perusing them, he signified that as the greater part of the queries were founded on a manuscript catechism for which he was not accountable, and on an incorrect and mangled copy of a confidential letter which his most intimate friends had never so much as heard of,⁴² they were quite irrelevant, and that, instead of answering the remainder, he might have demanded a libel; but that for the sake of peace, and out of respect to the authority by which the committee was appointed, he would state his sentiments on the different articles, craving liberty, if he should afterwards find it necessary, to give a narrative of the whole procedure, and complain of the manner in which he had been treated.

The queries and replies are preserved in manuscript, and throw considerable light on the subjects then agitated; but it would be tedious to report them at large in this place. In answer to the four first queries, which relate to the extent of the death of Christ, Mr. H. states that the Lord Jesus Christ, in his obedience unto the death, stood in the room and place of elect sinners of Adam's family, and that in no sense he stood in the room and place of any other; but that in this obedience there is a full answer to the demands of the broken law, and a full satisfaction to the justice and holiness of the law-giver, and consequently that, as revealed in the gospel,

and asserting the gospel doctrine of free grace, though they cannot go into new schemes, and the modern divinity of the recommended *Marrow*. And for a testimony hereof I shall exhibit the following assertions, wherein I have the concurrence of the reverend the moderator of the late General Assembly, and of Mr. Allan Logan of Culross." (*Antinomianism of the Marrow*, Preface, p. 3)

41. The first part of Frazer's work on Saving Faith was published in 1722. The second part, which was the most exceptionable, did not make its appearance until 1749, when it gave rise to warm disputes in more than one religious society in Scotland. Its principles having been adopted by some members of the Reformed Presbytery, usually styled Cameronians, produced a division in that body. They were also adopted in part by Mr. Thomas Mair, minister of Orwell, a member of the Associate Synod, commonly called Antiburghers; and his strenuous defence of them led ultimately to his deposition from the ministry. (Gib's *Display of the Secession Testimony* [1774], vol. ii, pp. 131-148.) Mr. Thomas Mair was a nephew of Mr. George Mair of Culross, and was employed, when a boy, probably by his uncle, in transcribing Frazer's work on Faith. Mr. Gib was disposed to question the fact (which there is now no reason for doubting) that the work was really written by the person to whom it is ascribed. Extracts from Frazer's work have lately been given to the public by Mr. Thomas Erskine, in support of what are called the Row opinions. [See *Extracts of Letters to a Christian Friend*

from a Lady, with introductory essay by Thomas Erskine (Greenock, 1830). Needham notes that "fairly substantial quotations from his [Frazer's, which he notes is also attributed to George Mair] *Treatise on Justifying Faith* were appended to Erskine's *Introductory Essay to Extracts of Letters to a Christian Friend by a Lady* (February 1830), by means of which Erskine sought to gain credence for his own synthesis of universal atonement and particular election)." Nicholas Richard Needham, "Thomas Erskine of Linlathen His life and theology 1788-1837 (Thesis, Doctor of Philosophy, University of Edinburgh, 1987), 216. The reference to "Row opinions" is to Erskine's and John McLeod Campbell of Row's leadership in the "Row controversy" (1828-31). See "Erskine, Thomas (of Linlathen)" and "Campbell, John McCleod," in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History & Theology*, ed. Nigel M. De S. Cameron, David F. Wright, David C. Lachman, and Donald E. Meek (IVP, 1993), 129-130, 302-303.]

42. "Mr. Hamilton has got another letter, sent by the sub-clerk, to meet with the committee for purity of doctrine, the first Tuesday of October, in which Mr. H. is desired to bring a letter with him wrot to Mr. Hog, in Nov. 1718. You will be surprised when I tell you that I never heard of such a letter until April last, and never saw it until the other day;" (Letter, Mr. Warden to Mr. Wodrow, Sept. 24, 1720.) [See Letters of John Warden, Minister of Gargunnoch (1719-1720), Wod.Lett.Qu., XIV, ff.55-291 (*passim*).]

it is sufficient for any of Adam's race to build upon for redemption and life, and a sufficient legal foundation for a universal call to all the hearers of the gospel to believe on the Son of God for their salvation. His answer to the three following queries, respecting the conditionality of the covenant of grace, amount to this that this covenant, proposed to the hearers of the gospel, consists of absolute promises; that all and every one are warranted to close with, accept, receive, and trust in Christ, according to the offer of the gospel, for salvation; that this right is antecedent to their believing and repenting, yea, belongs to those who never believe or repent,—“which kind of universal right (says he) is, in my humble opinion, and with submission to those of riper thoughts, so far founded upon Christ's obedience to the death of the cross, as without this it would not be in a due consistency with the divine perfections, and indispensable laws of life and death stated in the covenant of works;” and, in fine that the promise of the first grace (or of the new heart) whereby the faithful God obligeth himself to perform the same, is made to the elect only, and “cannot be said to belong so to sinners to whom the gospel invitation comes, as that they are obliged to believe that God will give them this first grace, or accomplish this promise in them;” yet it is “of such use to all the hearers of the gospel, as that they may take great comfort therefrom in their present lost circumstances, and may be encouraged to come to Christ for himself and all things, and the more that not only there is such a promise as contains even the first grace, but that it, with all the other promises, do so far concern them as they are revealed, set forth, and proposed to them, in the divine invitation, indefinitely and generally, without distinction of nation, state or condition.” The 12th query is, “Whether or not our receiving Christ as offered in the gospel be our covenanting with God, and a constituent part of the covenant of grace as made and concluded betwixt Christ and the sinner.” Mr. Hamilton replies, “All I shall say in answer to this question is that, though I am persuaded that nothing is intended by the reverend committee but what is truth, yet I cannot answer affirmatively in the precise terms of the question. But I say that, as the accepting of the Lord Jesus Christ in the promise and offer of the gospel, may be said to be our covenanting with God, and

that whereby the covenant of grace may be said to be established in the believer's person, so the believer's promising and engaging himself through grace to serve the Lord, his covenanted God, may be said to be his covenanting also; and as all sinners may and ought to be called and pressed to covenanting in this order, so it is their duty to observe the same in compliance with such a call.” In answer to other queries he states that by a confident particular applying faith, he means a sinner's firm trust in Christ for complete salvation, upon the warrant of God's word of grace, and not that God hath loved him in particular, or that Christ belongs to him in particular; and that, though there are no precepts to duty which are not either fundamentally or formally, generally or particularly, contained in the law, and though the gospel precisely understood is a revelation of grace, yet there are precepts which were not actually and formally given in the law before the fall, but result from the revelation of the gospel, and these may justly be called gospel precepts.⁴³

The committee sat during eight days, and Mr. Hamilton appeared ten or eleven times before them; after which they came to the following judgment in the affair:

Edinburgh, 11th October 1720. The committee for purity of doctrine unanimously expressed their satisfaction with the answers given by Mr. Alexander Hamilton to their queries proposed to him, and agreed to make a favourable report thereof, and of his conduct in that affair, to the commission, and resolved, on all occasions that they will improve it with the greatest affection and brotherly tenderness towards him. The which being intimate to him, he was allowed a copy hereof. Extracted from the minutes of the committee, by Nic. Spence.

The communing (says Mr. Hamilton) was begun, carried on, and ended with a good measure of calmness, and, I hope, of brotherly respect and affection, so as that scarce one irritating expression was uttered upon either side. Only, when I might return home, Mr. Logan said, it would take a month to dispatch all the queries. I told them that if once I were gone, though an ecumenick council should call me, I would not answer; to which Principal Hadow answered, ‘that might be spared, when the clearing of truth lay at the stake,’ or some such words; to which I replied, little did he know my circumstances, and with how much difficulty I came in and staid in town; or some words to that purpose. I was much obliged to see the ministers of Edinburgh, particularly the Professor and Mr. Mitchell. I confess, when they were putting some queries to me which insinuated

43. Answers to the Queries delivered to Mr. Alexander Hamilton, minister of the gospel at Airth, by the committee for purity of doctrine, and given into the said committee by him upon the 11th day of October 1720. [This may be preserved as NRS CH1/2/43, Report of subcommittee for purity of doctrine, General Assembly Papers, Main Series (1720), 253–260.]

great suspicion of gross errors, and others that I thought grated much upon special gospel truths, my heart grew so great that I could scarce utter a word without a flood of tears, for which I craved their pardon, and told them it was my infirmity which I could not help; and some of themselves were so affected that they *teared* also.⁴⁴

It had been intended to subject Mr. Warden, Mr. Brisbane and others, to the ordeal through which Mr. Hamilton had passed;⁴⁵ but by this time it had come to be known that the late act of Assembly was creating much dissatisfaction, on which account the committee judged it prudent to desist, and sought by their lenity to disarm the opposition of such as were most tractable. In this they succeeded; for none of the three ministers just mentioned took a decided part in the subsequent management of the controversy.

When the act concerning *The Marrow* was printed, it gave offence in different quarters of the church, even to persons who scrupled at various expressions in the book which it condemned.⁴⁶ But the first motion to take steps for having it repealed were made in a part of the country where the controversy had not been agitated. The subject having been brought before the presbytery of Selkirk by one of its members, in concert with others, was referred to the synod of Merse and Teviotdale, at their meeting in October. The synod refused to countenance the overture, and those who supported it were treated with great severity, in the course of the debate which took place on that occasion.⁴⁷ By Mr. Gabriel Wilson's advice, Mr. Boston wrote to Mr. Hog, giving him an account of what had passed at the synod, and suggesting that some joint measure should be taken by those in different synods who were aggrieved by the Assembly's deed. He received an answer from Mr. Ralph Erskine of Dunfermline, to whom Mr. Hog had communicated his letter, signifying that he and several of his brethren in the neighbourhood were ready to concur in seeking redress of the injury done to truth; and soon after he received from the same quarter a draught of a representation to the Assembly. As this did not satisfy him and his friends, Mr. Boston, at their desire, drew up another, which he sent to the brethren in the north, and it was arranged that a meeting should be held at Edinburgh in the end of February to deliberate on the subject.⁴⁸ Nine ministers attended that meeting, at which it was resolved that a representation and petition should be given in to next Assembly; the draught was committed to Mr. Ebenezer Erskine, of Portmoak that he might introduce such alterations and additions as had been suggested in the course of conversation;

and it was agreed that his labours should be revised by the brethren in his neighbourhood, and submitted to another meeting to be held at the same place in the end of March.⁴⁹

The draught of the representation was submitted to such ministers as were known to the dissatisfied with the act of the Assembly, and they were requested to attend the adjourned meeting; but many of them prayed to "have been excused." When decided measures in a public cause are to be taken by a minority, and there is reason to think that those may lead to consequences affecting public peace or private interest, it is hard to say how individuals will act, and they are not always conscious of the motives by which they are actuated. At the time of which we speak, some, whose zeal had perhaps outrun their knowledge, went over to the side of the majority, and joined in the persecution against their former friends.⁵⁰ Others declined to act with them on different grounds. It is singular that none of the ministers in the presbyteries of Auchterarder and Stirling stood forth, though the controversy properly originated with them. The process against Mr. Drummond, favourable as it was to him in its issue, appears to have cooled

44. A Copie of the conduct of the committee for purity of doctrine, with respect to Mr. Alexander Hamilton, minister of Airth, done by himself. [See footnote 20.]

45. "Mr. Hamilton has been at Edinburgh this week,—I hear I am to be called in for the endeavour I used to rectify the first draught of Mr. Hamilton's catechism some eleven or twelve years ago." (Warden to Wodrow, 8th October 1720; and Wodrow to Warden, 12th October 1720.) [See *Correspondence*, 2.537 and 539.]

46. "A godly and learned divine (says Mr. Gabriel Wilson), who had no manner of concern in the late edition of *The Marrow*, nor in the last Assembly that condemned the book, having in a letter touched on that point, adds, 'I would not for ten thousand worlds have been a yea in the passing of that act.'" (Brown's *Gospel Truth*, p. 21.) "I hear there are some things in the act of last Assembly anent *The Marrow* very stumbling to some brethren." (Mr. William Wilson of Perth to Mr. Wodrow, 3d January 1721.) [Ibid., Wod.Lett.Qu. vol. XIV.]

47. Similar motions were made in other presbyteries and synods, and with similar success. (*The Controversy concerning The Marrow of Modern Divinity considered in a familiar Dialogue*, p. 126.)

48. When Mr. Boston was thus employed, his *Fourfold State of Man* came from the press; a book which has contributed more than any other human and private work, to mould the religious sentiments of the commonality of Scotland. He at first looked on the circumstances in which it made its appearance as unfavourable, but lived to see the contrary.

49. Boston's *Memoirs* [1776], p. 364–370.

50. "Mr. Henderson (of Dalgety) was the man that most of all did advise Mr. Hog to publish *The Marrow*, with his Preface." He purchased copies of Mr. Alexander Hamilton's catechism to circulate in his congregation, but afterwards became a great enemy of both. (Letter, Mr. Ralph Erskine to Mrs. Balderston, Aug. 1, 1720.) [This may be in the letter collection in New College Library, Archives and Manuscripts, HAM-1.]

his zeal. Mr. Muir of Stirling, who was judged one of the most violent against the act of Assembly, contented himself with expressing his opinions as a member of court. The same course was followed by Messrs. Hamilton and Brisbane, who, satisfied with the appearances which they had already made, were averse to involve themselves farther in controversy with the judicatories. Mr. Warden, who appears to have been fond of management, had a favourite plan of his own, and wished to act as a mediator between the two parties.⁵¹ And Mr. Wilson of Perth, who attended the former meeting, had not made up his mind, and both parties claimed him as a friend.⁵² Accordingly, a number who were expected, including the persons just named, did not attend the meeting in March; but the representation was signed by those who were present, and it was agreed to meet again on the day on which the Assembly sat down. On that day, Mr. Hog, whose presence had hitherto been dispensed with, on account of the personal interest he

had in the affair, attended. This meeting was gratified by the entrance of a number of brethren who had hitherto kept aloof; but it soon appeared that their presence was calculated to embarrass, rather than to forward the object. Besides finding fault with some parts of the representation, they urged two things; first that they should ask a conference with the leading members of Assembly before they took the proposed step, and secondly that a few persons only should subscribe the paper, leaving the rest to support it in the court. Mr. Warden was the chief person who managed this opposition, in which he was supported by Mr. Moncrieff of Culfargie, who afterwards saw reason to repent of the line of conduct which he pursued at this time. Mr. Boston was inclined to yield to the first proposal, but it was resisted by his brethren, who perceived its tendency to defeat their great object. Upon this the representation, being subscribed by twelve ministers, was given in by Mr. Kid to the committee of bills.⁵³ “We understood afterwards,” says Mr. Boston, “that Principal Hadow, the spring of that black act of Assembly, was in his way to the committee of bills, to bring in some motion about that act, it would seem for explaining it, etc. but that hearing the tabling of the representation had prevented him, he was disappointed and forbore.”

The diet appointed by the committee for considering the representation, was attended by a great part of the members of the court, who either were attracted by curiosity, or wished to overawe the complainers, and induce them to withdraw their paper. Those who had formerly urged them to request a conference renewed by dwelling on the consequences to be dreaded, if the affair came before the Assembly. The subscribers having declined to comply with this advise, the committee agreed to transmit the representation. It was expected that the affair would be brought forward on Wednesday the 17th of May, but on that day, in consequence of the continued indisposition of the king's commissioner, the Earl of Rothes, the Assembly was suddenly dissolved, after it had referred such business as it could not overtake to the commission.⁵⁴ The act appointing the commission empowered them “to receive any references or appeals that shall be made to them from synods and presbyteries in matters of doctrine, and particularly to take under consideration the representation presented to this Assembly by Mr. James Hog and others about the book entitled *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, and to call the subscribers of that representation before them, or their committees, and ripen and prepare these matters concerning doctrine for the next Assembly, but not to give a final decision therein.”

51. “Some written letters, designed for the press against the Assembly's act, were sent me to revise; and this week a draught of a Representation to be given in to the next Assembly against the former act, which was sent me also, was under my consideration; in both which I find extremes, and have made my remarks on both so plainly that I am persuaded I shall be more and more reckoned ‘a foot out of joint,’ as I know they reckon me. I have pressed with all earnestness to forbear a paper war, though indeed the carriage of the other side to these is scarcely tolerable.” (Mr. Warden to Mr. Wodrow, 28th Jan. 1721.) “I have also been revising (*sed hoc tibi solt*) a draught of a representation by some south country brethren against the act of Assembly condemning *The Marrow*, and indeed I like the representation, as to the doctrine of it, fully as ill as *The Marrow*, yea much worse. But a conference is proposed; and indeed there is an absolute necessity that the Assembly's act be rectified, for never did I see its equal.” (Mr. Warden to Mr. Wodrow, 28th Feb. 1721. [March 1st in *Correspondence*]) “Truly, they run so fast, especially Mr. M. [Muir?] at Sterline that I believe it shall not be in my power to keep within sight of them.” (id. To eund. [the same], 22d March 1721.) [See *Correspondence*, 2, 559, 568.]

52. “Mr. Wilson of Perth was here, and preached in the New Kirk in the afternoon, but he did not meddle with *The Marrow*. However, some say that he was for it, but I was with him in converse a little time, and there was none with us, and he told me that he was not for it. My Lord Grange took Mr. Wilson with him to sup this night.” (Mr. J. Dougall to Mr. Wodrow, Edin. 3d Jan. 1722 [sic 1721].) [NLS, James Dougall, Letters of (1721–2), Wod.Lett.Qu.XV, ff.6–180 (*passim*). The year should be 1721 if Lachman is accurate, who cites this passage as well and numbers the letter as No. 83; cf. Lachman, p. 288.]

53. Boston's *Memoirs* [1776], p. 370, 371. The persons who subscribed the representation were Mr. James Hog, minister of Carnock, Mr. Thomas Boston of Ettrick, Mr. John Bonar of Torphichen, Mr. John Williamson of Inveresk and Musselburgh, Mr. James Kid of Queensferry, Mr. Gabriel Wilson of Maxton, Mr. Ebenezer Erskine of Portmoak, Messrs. Ralph Erskine and James Wardlaw of Dunfermline, Mr. Henry Davidson of Galashiels, Mr. James Bathgate of Orwell, and Mr. James Hunter of Lilliesleaf.

54. Boston's *Memoirs* [1776], p. 372.

The representation was couched in respectful and temperate, but at the same time, firm and decided language. In the preamble, the subscribers express their conviction that there is a propensity in the corrupt nature of man to licentiousness, and to pervert the grace of God to an encouragement of this, by venting such opinions as these, "that the law is not a rule of life to believers," and "that holiness is not necessary to salvation;" opinions which their hearts did abhor as egregious blasphemy against our Lord Jesus Christ, and which it is the duty of all the ministers and assemblies of the church to stifle as monstrous births. At the same time they express an equally strong conviction that there is also a bias in corrupt nature to seek righteousness and salvation by the old way of the first covenant—not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law; and that this bias is more subtle and less easily discerned than the former, because it is opposed to a new revelation made after the fall, whereas the other is opposed to the law impressed on man's mind before the fall. And apprehending that the late General Assembly had not sufficiently adverted to the danger on that side, in their act concerning *The Marrow*, and that gospel truth had thereby suffered, and was in danger of suffering still more, they beg leave, with all humility and deference, to lay before this venerable Assembly some of the things which in the said act are stumbling to them and many others in the church. These they arrange under five heads.

And first, say they, "it is surprising and exceedingly grievous unto us that by the said act the following position is condemned, namely, 'That as the law is the covenant of works, believers are altogether and wholly set free from it;—set free both from the commanding and condemning power of the covenant of works.' We acknowledge and profess, we look upon our freedom from the covenant of works, or the law as that covenant, to be the chief branch of that precious liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and in which the eternal salvation of our souls is wrapped up. And to suppose that a man cannot be under the law as a rule of life, unless he be under the covenant of works (which the act above specified plainly imports), is contrary to our Confession of Faith, chapter 19, sect. 6, and Larger Catechism [Q. 97], question anent 'the use of the moral law to the regenerate,' which bear, 'That although believers be not under the law as a covenant of works, yet it is of use to them as a rule of life, or as the rule of their obedience.'"

Secondly, they object to the declaring of the distinction of the law, as it is the law of works, and as it is the law of Christ, according to the application of the author of *The Marrow*, to be altogether groundless. This,

they say, is of the same dangerous tendency as the former, and they express their regret that the Assembly had not taken another method to expose the antinomian paradoxes.

Thirdly, they complain that, in attempting to fix upon *The Marrow* the charge that holiness is not necessary to salvation, the Assembly had condemned a number of precious truths contained in the passages quoted, particularly that the believer had in Christ all things necessary to his salvation, and in answer to the demands of the broken law,—which truths the book censured had expressed in the very words in which "that blessed and famous reformer, Martin Luther, in his strenuous and courageous defence of the evangelical doctrine of justification, asserted the perfect obedience of the Lord Jesus, as our surety, to be the only righteousness upon which we may rely in the case of justification before God."

Fourthly, with respect to the nature of faith, they represent that the Assembly had in effect excluded from faith that act by which a person approbates to himself what before lay in common in the gospel offer, and thereby turned it into that "general and doubtful faith" abjured in our national covenant; that it is notorious that our first reformers, and the body of reformed divines after their times, had spoken of faith in the same strain as the author of *The Marrow*; that though a different mode of speaking had in later times come into use, and the subscribers were well satisfied with the manner in which saving faith was described in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, yet they never doubted that it was substantially the same with the doctrine formerly taught that "receiving and resting on Christ for salvation," implies that assurance by which it had been customary for divines to describe the fiducial act or appropriating persuasion of faith; that the Confession, in the passage referred to by the Assembly, doth not exclude all assurance from the essence of faith, but speaks of that kind of assurance which is complex, and contains not only what is included in the direct act of faith, but also what arises from spiritual sensation and rational argumentation; and that the Assembly would have done more acceptable service to God, had they shown the agreement between the ancient and modern way of describing faith, instead of condemning the former as erroneous, and thus inflicting a stigma on the reformed churches.

Fifthly, They complain that by condemning this position, "That the Father had made a deed of gift and grant unto all mankind that whosoever of them shall believe in his Son shall not perish," the Assembly had encroached on the warrant which the revelation of the divine will in the Word gives to all men to receive Christ.

The subscribers say they were willing to waive any consideration of the expressions in *The Marrow*, which the late Assembly had judged exceeding harsh and offensive, as their concern was for the truth, not the manner of expressing it; but they could not but advert to the hard treatment of a book which was remarkable for setting the difference between law and gospel in a clear light, and pointing out the true way of attaining evangelical holiness. As instances of this, they specify the charges of its touching that the believer is not under the law as a rule of life, and that holiness is not necessary to salvation; when the author plainly asserts the contrary, and one half of his book is occupied in explaining and applying the law of the ten commandments both to unbelievers and believers, for their direction and excitation to holiness of heart and life.

In conclusion, the subscribers declare that they “do not account the deed of the late Assembly otherwise than as an oversight;” yet their hearts trembled for its consequences, especially as there was a growing humour in the generation for turning religion into a mere morality, which has nothing but the matter of it in common with true holiness and gospel obedience. They were afraid that the act complained of would open a sluice for the entrances of such tenets, more especially when they connected it with the loose terms in which the last Assembly had stated the doctrine of justification and holiness, in another of its acts, containing directions as to catechetical doctrine. On these grounds they pray the Assembly to repeal the act concerning *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, and to provide a remedy for removing the offence given by the other act referred to; “which (say they), will afford matter of thanksgiving to God, in behalf of the truth and of yourselves, to many who love the truth and peace.”

[PART THREE.]⁵⁵

The “representation” caused no small perplexity to the leading men in the church. They had heard, from various quarters, of the offence taken at the act in question, and were not unconscious that it contained unguarded

expressions which gave a handle to its opponents. The precipitation with which it had been passed was matter of general complaint: it was openly asserted that, though the act bore that the Assembly had compared the passages in *The Marrow* with the Scriptures and Confession of Faith, no such collation ever in fact took place, either in the committee or in the court; and some members acknowledged that they gave their vote in its favour under the impression that the titles prefixed to the several heads of the act, such as, “Holiness not necessary to salvation,” and “The believer is not under the law as a rule of life,” were expressions in the book which they were called on to condemn.⁵⁶ Aware of these things, the ecclesiastical managers were prepared to make a proposal to correct the errors into which too great haste had betrayed them, but were baulked by the measure adopted by their opponents. The latter had indeed given a soft name to their paper; but, though called a representation and petition, it was in reality a remonstrance and complaint; and as such it was felt. The equity of the Assembly’s judgment was arraigned; it was charged with doing injury to truth; the imputing of this error to “an oversight,” seemed to be a compliment paid to the honesty of the members at the expense of their wisdom; and many who could have wished the sentence had not been pronounced, were unwilling that the authority of the court, and their own credit, should be impeached or compromised by a repeal.

The representers were called before the commission on the day after the Assembly rose, and they complain that they were treated as offenders, from whom acknowledgments were demanded, rather than petitioners, who sought for redress. After the representation was read, and Mr. Hog had said a few words in support of it, Principal Hadow, Professors Hamilton and Blackwell, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Logan and others, to the number of thirteen, followed with set speeches on the other side.⁵⁷ The speakers chiefly expatiated on the errors of the *Marrow*, from which they quoted passages additional to those which had hitherto been animadverted upon; they accused it of an antinomian tendency, and of teaching constructively that the sins of believers are no sin; and they alleged that, as the representers did not approve of many of the expressions in that book, their opposition to the Assembly’s act seemed to spring, less from love to the truth, than from regard to one of their own number who had recommended it, and from a desire to distinguish themselves and form a party, as appeared from their hauling in, *ad captandum vulgus*,⁵⁸ the overtures respecting kirk-sessions and presbyteries.⁵⁹ When the members had delivered

55. [*The Edinburgh Christian Instructor*, vol. 30, no. 12 (December 1831): 811–826 and 31. (1832).]

56. Dialogue concerning *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, p. 108–111. [James Hog, *The Controversie concerning the Marrow of Modern Divinity. Considered in several familiar dialogues. Dialogue I* (Edinburgh: John Macky, 1721).]

57. Dialogue concerning *The Marrow*, p. 137. Boston’s *Memoir*, p. 372. Wodrow’s Letter, *ut infra*. [*Correspondence*, 2, 584.]

58. [*ad captandum vulgus* (Latin): “to ensnare the vulgar” or thus, “to captivate the masses.”]

59. The reference here is to certain overtures, transmitted by the

their opinions, the representers were permitted to speak, and Mr. Boston and Mr. Erskine of Portmoak expressed their sentiments shortly; but the former was seized with one of those fits of bashful timidity to which he was subject, and the talents of the latter were more fitted for the pulpit than the arena of ecclesiastical debate. They however acquired the praise of comparative moderation on this occasion, from the members of the commission. "Mr. Boston and Mr. Ebenezer Erskine spoke with some modesty, and many distinguish them from several others among them. The last owned his willingness to retract anything in the paper, when convinced that it was contrary to the Confession of Faith and Scripture; and the former declared he had no jealousy that the Assembly designed anything against the truth, but thought that clause about the covenant of works might be misimproven in time to come.⁶⁰ Mr. Williamson of Inveresk and Mr. Gabriel Wilson were more cautious; and, after expressing their opinion generally as to the direction which had been given to the discussion, declined replying, on the spur of the moment, to so many elaborate speeches. A large committee was appointed to hear them next day.⁶¹

Being asked in the committee what were the "other grievances" to which they referred, besides those which they had specified, the representers agreed to pass from that part of their paper, and to confine themselves to the points of doctrine which they thought injured by the decisions of the Assembly before last. They were then heard at considerable length; and, in the reasoning which ensued, they claim that advantage which they allow their opponents to have had on the preceding day. "Kind providence so ordered it (says Mr. Boston) that the career they were on the day before was, through the divine mercy, stopped to conviction, at that and the following meetings. Particularly, Mr. Williamson did, in a point of debate, fairly lay Mr. Allan Logan, minister of Culross; and I was encouraged by the success of an encounter with Principal Hadow.⁶² The discussion, however, was limited chiefly to two points, the guilt of sin and the nature of faith.⁶³ On receiving the report of the extrajudicial conversation, the commission appointed a committee to prepare an overture vindicating the act of Assembly, to be laid before them at their next meeting, on the second Wednesday of August, which the representers were warned to attend. A difference of sentiment had arisen in the commission, as to the mode of procedure, some of the members disapproving of one part of the Assembly's act; and to please them, the committee was instructed to "state the doctrine of this church as to the believer's freedom from the covenant of works."⁶⁴

In the meantime, the controversy was carried on with increasing warmth before the public, and gave rise to proceedings in different presbyteries and synods of considerable interest, which may be noticed, after bringing the narrative of the main process to a close.

At the meeting of the commission in August, a large overture was laid before them by their committee, vindicating the Assembly against the charges contained in the representation of the twelve brethren, and adducing additional proofs of "the antinomianism of *The Marrow*." It is unnecessary to give a more particular account of it here, as, after being abridged, and undergoing some slight alterations, it was afterwards embodied in the act of Assembly, which terminated the controversy in its judicial form. Several members insisted that it should lie on the table, and be more deliberately and fully considered at the meeting in November; but after a long debate, it carried by a great majority that is now transmitted to the next General Assembly as an overture, with this provision that the commission at their next meeting should add something farther to it, if they saw it meet. Lord Grange, Colonel William Erskine, Mr. Warden, and Mr. Darling, minister of Kinnoul, voted for delay. It was next agreed that the overture should be immediately printed.⁶⁵ "It is ordered (says one of the supporters of the measure) to be printed that all the brethren and people of this church may see the Assembly was vindicated from the false aspersions cast upon it by these twelve brethren."⁶⁶ When this business was

General Assembly, which were viewed with great jealousy, as giving a negative to ministers in kirk-sessions, and otherwise innovating the Presbyterian constitution.

60. Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mrs. Wodrow, May 19, 1721. [*Correspondence*, 2,585.]

61. *Ibid.*

62. [Boston's] *Memoirs*, p. 373.

63. Dialogue concerning *The Marrow*, p. 145.

64. Wodrow's Letter, *ut supra*. [*Ibid.*] Boston's *Memoirs* [1776], p. 373.

65. It would appear from the following passage that the representation was printed subsequently to the answers, or overture of the commission. "Phil. But, Sir, how can you offer to expose anything to the world in this controversy contrary to such an express statute of the church against printing in favours of *The Marrow*? Paul. Sir, it seems you are for trying us neck and heel, and then pelting us at pleasure. We are not the aggressors in the matter of printing, nor have we been hasty therein. Not to speak now of P. Hadow's performance, the commission have printed their overture, and in some parts of it have appealed to the impartial world; and would you have that impartial judge to determine without hearing both parties?" — (*Dialogue concerning The Marrow*, pp. 116–7.)

66. Letter, Mr. James Stirling, August 11, 1721. [NLS, James Stirling, Minister of the Barony, Glasgow, letters of (1721) Wod.Lett.Qu.XV, ff.10–86 (*passim*). This is item No. 62 in volume XV; cf. Lachman, p. 311 (note *John* is mistyped for *James* in Lachman's footnote.)

finished, the representers, who had been in waiting for several days, were called in, and told that the commission had transmitted to the Assembly an overture on their cause, and that their attendance was expected at the meeting of the commission in November.⁶⁷ We have seen that additions to the overture were contemplated. What these were was kept a secret, at least from the brethren immediately concerned; but with a view to that affair the committee for purity of doctrine was appointed to meet on the second Tuesday of September, and a sub-committee to revise their labours, on the Tuesday before the next meeting of the commission.⁶⁸

In the month of November (1721) the subscribers of the representation again appeared before the commission. They thought they had good reason to complain of its proceedings at last meeting: it had, *per saltum*, approved of a paper charging them with “foul reproaches,” had transmitted this as an overture to the General Assembly at a much earlier period than was necessary, and had caused it to be published to the world. But they now learned that still stronger measures were to be taken against them. The committee, which met in September, had drawn up a series of queries relating to points connected with the representation, and calculated to draw from them answers which might lay a foundation for counter-charges, and for obliging those who had accused the supreme court of injuring the truth to clear themselves from error. These were agreed to by the commission on the 8th of November; “and thus (says Mr. Boston) they turned the cannon directly against us.” When they were called in, and the queries presented, they requested liberty to consult

among themselves before receiving them. Some individuals were of opinion that the demand should be resisted as unconstitutional, inquisitorial, and ensnaring; but after some serious deliberation, they agreed that it was most expedient in their circumstances to receive the queries, under protest. The reason assigned by one of their number for adopting this course discovers the gloomy prospect they had as to the issue of the affair. “I was clear (says he) that, whatever should be the consequences, we should receive and answer them. What determined me to this was that I thought we were to lay our account with parting with our brethren, as being cast out by them, and, in that event, it would be safest both for the cause of truth and our own reputation.”⁶⁹ Accordingly, they next day gave in to the commission a paper, subscribed with their names, in which they say,

The Reverend Commission having, in August last, past an overture, and therein made determinations upon the several heads of the representation aforesaid, which no answers of ours can warrant them to alter, and considering that the putting queries to us in this manner is, we conceive, an uncommon and undue manner of procedure, we do not look upon ourselves as bound to answer them: Nevertheless, for the sake of truth, and to take off any shadow of suspicion, though never so groundless, and being neither afraid nor ashamed to bring to light our sentiments on these points in the form of answers to these queries, as well as we have already done in our representation, we judge it expedient to condescend to take them under our consideration, and to give answers thereto against the commission in March; withal protesting that this our condescension herein shall not be construed an approbation of this method of procedure, nor be improved as a precedent.⁷⁰

Upon this they received the queries. It would seem that they made some objections to giving in their answer to the committee for purity of doctrine, but in this also they acquiesced.⁷¹

The queries, it may be presumed, were not the more acceptable to them that they, as well as the commission's overture, were chiefly taken from Principal Hadow's *Antinomianism of the Marrow Detected*. They were so divided as to make twelve in number; which looked as if the commission had intended to ask each of the representers a single question. Instead of being a play upon numbers, this might be one of those casual coincidences which sometimes occur, and which, when discovered, merely provoke a smile. But it is certain that grave committees did find leisure to count their fingers,

67. Boston's *Memoirs* [1776], p. 376. *Dialogue concerning The Marrow*, p. 146.

68. Mr. Stirling's Letter, *ut supra*. The postscript to this letter is in the following words: “They are thinking upon some queries to the twelve brethren, which relates to their representation, and these are to be proposed against the commission in November.”

69. Boston's *Memoirs* [1776], p. 378.

70. Queries and Answers, pp. 7, 8; printed in 1722. [*Queries, agreed unto by the Commission of the General Assembly, and put to these ministers, who gave in a representation and petition against the 5th and 8th Acts of Assembly 1720: together with the answers given by these ministers to the said questions* (1722).]

71. “This day the commission received in the twelve brethren's answer, which has some harsh expressions in it, such as *unduely*, and very peremptory assertions, *we have condescended*, &c. It was delayed till afternoon.—After this the twelve brethren came in, and were referred to meet with the committee, March 8, the week before the commission, and then to give in their answers to be reported to the committee; about which they made some bustle, but at length they yielded.” (Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mrs. Wodrow, 9th November 1721.) [NLS, to Margaret Wodrow (1721–22), Wod.Lett.Qu.XV, ff.68–75, 98, 153–165. This is item No. 71 in volume XV; cf. Lachman, p. 314.]

and arrange their *duodecuple* divisions, in other proceedings connected with this controversy. Speaking of the committee appointed by the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale to examine a sermon preached before them, a writer of that time says, "they drew up a charge consisting of *twelve* remarks, *twelve* questions, and *twelve* slanders; for you must know, by the by that the number *twelve* is what some wanton kirk-men have taken pleasure to sport themselves with of late; though some of them have discovered how ridiculously straightened they have been to find their account."⁷²

At the meeting of the committee for purity of doctrine in Edinburgh, on the 8th of March 1722, the representers, who had not been able to assemble during the winter, requested two days to examine and correct a draught of answers which was under their consideration.⁷³ Their answers were accordingly given in on the 10th, along with a separate paper, containing authorities in support of the sentiments which they had advanced, taken from the writings of the most eminent protestant divines, foreign and domestic. They were subscribed by all the representers, except Mr. Bonar, who "being detained by indisposition, could neither attend when the queries were given, nor the answers returned."⁷⁴ The draught of the answers was begun by Mr. Ebenezer Erskine, but much extended and improved by Mr. Gabriel Wilson, whose "vast compass of reading, with his great collection of books, qualified him singularly for the task."⁷⁵

The merit of the answers, in point of composition, and in respect of the information they contain on certain important doctrines, will be allowed by those who disapprove of the conduct of the compilers, and dissent from some of their conclusions. They begin with complaining that the title prefixed to the queries, which in terms of the commission's overture, describes their representation as "in favours of *The Marrow*," was calculated to give a wrong colour to that paper, "as if (say they) the chief design of it was to plead, not for the precious truths of the gospel which we conceived to be wounded by the condemnatory act, but for *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, the which, though we value for a good and useful book, and doubt not but the church of God may be much edified by it, as we ourselves have been, yet came it never into our minds to hold it, or any other private writing, faultless, nor to put it on a level with our approved standards of doctrine."

In answer to the first query, "Whether there are any precepts in the gospel that were not actually given before the gospel was revealed," after signifying that they could perceive nothing in their representation which

gave just occasion for putting such a question, they state in substance that in the gospel, strictly understood, and as contradistinguished from the law, there are no precepts; all of these, the command to believe and repent not excepted, belonging to and flowing from the law, which fastens the new duty on us as soon as the gospel reveals the new object; so that there never was, nor can be, an instance of a duty owing by the creature to God, which is not commanded by the moral law, either directly or indirectly, expressly or by consequence. And this distinction is equally necessary for maintaining the perfection of the law, and for preserving the purity of the gospel, in opposition to Arminians and Baxterians, who turn the latter into a new or remedial law. But if the gospel be taken largely for the whole doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, or the whole system of revealed truth, then it contains, besides faith and repentance, many precepts which were not actually given or expressly promulgated and required before the revelation of grace; such as, love to enemies, bearing the cross, hope and joy in tribulation, mutual forgiveness, and many others.

The second query runs thus: "Is not the believer now bound, by the authority of the Creator, to personal obedience to the moral law, though not in order to justification?" Having expressed their surprise that the commission should have moved such a query upon the passage of their representation specified as the ground of it, they add, "Since they have been pleased to think otherwise, we answer *affirmatively*, the believer, since

72. *The Trust, a Sermon, at the opening of the provincial synod of Mers and Teviotdale, at Kelso, October 17th, 1721. by Gabriel Wilson, Minister of the Gospel at Maxton.* Glasgow: Printed by John Bryce, 1765. Preface, p. iv.

73. "On Wednesday, upon the first meeting of that committee, three of the representatives compeared [i.e., appeared in court], and told they were not ready to give in their answers, and believed they would not be ready before Friday, if so soon. The committee being but thin, adjourned to five that evening, and having again called the representers, they compeared by two others of their number, and repeated their former answer; and left us at an uncertainty, if on Friday we should have their answers. This is the fruit of allowing them to make a joint answer. However, the committee adjourned to Friday afternoon in hopes of it." (Letter, Principal John Stirling, Edinburgh, March 8, 1722.) [NLS, *ibid.*]

74. Queries by the Commission, and Answers, p. 86. This document was printed in the course of the year 1722, by the representers, with the motto, *Errare possum, hereticus esse nolo* [Though he may be in error, he will not be a heretic]. It has been frequently reprinted, both along with *The Marrow*, and in a separate form. [*Queries, agreed unto by the Commission of the General Assembly; and put to these ministers, who gave in a representation and petition against the 5th and 8th acts of Assembly 1720. Together with the answers given by these ministers to the said queries.* {Edinburgh}, 1722)].

75. Boston's *Memoirs* [1776], p. 379.

he ceases not to be a *creature* by being made a *new creature*, is, and ever must be, bound to personal obedience to the law of the ten commandments by the authority of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, his Creator; but this authority is, as to him, issued by and from the Lord Jesus Christ, at whose mouth he receives the law, being as well his Lord God Creator, as his Lord God Redeemer, and having all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him." Having quoted the following position, "If a believer ought not to receive the law of the ten commandments at the hand of God as he is Creator out of Christ, he is not under its obligation as it was delivered by God the Creator, but is loosed from all obedience to it as it was enacted by the authority of the Lord Creator,"⁷⁶ they say, "What can be more injurious to the infinite majesty of the Sovereign Lord Redeemer, by whom all things were created—than to speak as if the Creator's authority was not in him; or as if the receiving the Creator's law from Christ did loose men from obedience to it as enacted by the authority of the Father?"

To the third query, "Doth the annexing of a promise of life, and a threatening of death, to a precept, make it a covenant of works?" they answered as in their representation, with some additional illustrations. And to the fourth, "If the moral law, antecedent to its receiving the form of a covenant of works, had a threatening of hell annexed to it," they return this striking answer, "As to the intrinsical demerit of sin, we are clear, whether there had ever been any covenant of works or not, it deserves hell;—yet what behoved to have been the Creator's disposal of the creature on the supposed event of sin's entering without a covenant being made, we incline not here to slip into. But we reckon, it is not possible to prove a threatening of hell to be inseparable from the law of creation, the obligation of which, because resulting from the nature of God, is eternal and immutable; for confirmed angels, glorified saints, yea, and the human nature of Christ, are all of them naturally, necessarily, and eternally obliged to love, obey, depend on, and submit unto God, and to make him their blessedness and ultimate end; but none, we conceive, will be preemptory in saying that they have a threatening of hell annexed to the law they are under."

The sixth and seventh queries relate to the necessity of holiness in order to the obtaining of eternal happiness. To which they answer, "That personal holiness and justification being inseparable in the believer, we are unwilling, so much as the query does, to suppose

their separation;" and then they enumerate a variety of grounds on which holiness is necessary; after which they add, "yet we dare not say, 'A holy life is necessary in order to the *obtaining* of eternal happiness;' for to say nothing of the more gross sense of these words, which yet is obvious enough, though we are far from imputing it to the Assembly, we cannot, however they may be explained into an orthodox meaning, look upon them as *wholesome words*, since they have at least an appearance of evil, being such a way of expression as Protestant churches and divines have industriously shunned to use on that head."

In answer to the eighth query, "Is knowledge, belief, and persuasion that Christ died for me, and that he is mine, etc. the direct act of faith,—and the very essence of that justifying act of faith?" They reply that in their representation, they had asserted nothing positively concerning the passages of *The Marrow* relating to faith, but merely remonstrated against the indiscriminate condemnation of them, as what seemed to hurt the appropriating act of faith, and to fix a blot on the doctrine of reformed churches and divines;—which they might do, without determining that the persuasion spoken of in the query was the very direct and formal act of justifying faith. But as the query was so closely put, they would not decline giving their sentiments on that point. Having corrected the commission's statement of the description of faith in *The Marrow*, which did not contain the clause, "Christ died for me," they give the following commentary on it in substance.

"Be verily persuaded," whatever one believes, he is really persuaded of.

"In your heart," it must be a cordial persuasion, in distinction from that cold and naked assent which one gives to things which do not affect or concern him.

"That Christ is yours;" not in possession (for before faith we have no actual or saving interest in him), but in the free offer of him as a Saviour in the Word, in which respect Christ is in some sense ours, namely, as it is lawful and warrantable for us (not for fallen angels), to take possession of him and his salvation by faith; and as it is the duty of every one under the gospel, so the Spirit enables the convinced sinner, upon the above ground and warrant, to appropriate, apply, and make his own the thing offered, by believing.

"That you shall have life and salvation by him;" namely, the life of holiness, as well as of happiness; and salvation being, above all things, in a sensible sinner's eye, he cannot be relieved, unless by faith, he sees his salvation in Christ.

"And that whatsoever Christ did for the redemption

76. These are the words of Principal Hadow, in his *Antinomianism of the Marrow* [1721], p. 88.

of mankind, he did it for you;" for whosoever believes in the manner above explained, may, and ought to believe this also in its proper order; and all who rest on Christ for salvation do believe it virtually, if not explicitly.

Having adduced proofs that the assurance of faith was taught in the formularies of the reformed churches, and writing of their most approved divines, under the expressions of *fiducia specialis misericordiae*, fiducial application, affiancing, appropriating persuasion, etc., and that it is implied in most of the words used in Scripture to describe saving faith, they add certain distinctions for removing difficulties. One is that this persuasion, "is not axiomatical, but real," that is, though the first saving manifestation of Christ to a believer begets such a persuasion and humble confidence as is real and relieving, and particular as to his own salvation, working a proportional hope as to the issue, yet he often fears to express it directly and particularly of himself, owing to the deep impressions he has of his guilt, the awe of the divine majesty on his spirit, his indistinct knowledge of the gospel and grounds of faith, etc.

Another distinction, which is illustrated at some length, is that between the assurance of faith, and the assurance of sense, meaning by the latter, what arises from reflection, spiritual argumentation, or inward sensation, by which a person comes to know, and be assured that he is actually united to Christ, and in a state of grace and salvation.

In answer to the tenth query, they say, "Although we believe the purchase and application of redemption to be peculiar to the elect,—yet the warrant to receive him is common to all; and although this is neither in our representation, nor in the passages of the book condemned on that head, called a deed of gift or grant of Christ, yet, being required to give our judgment on this point, we think that, agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, it may be so called that this grant made in common to lost mankind is from sovereign grace only, and cannot fail to be absolutely free; yet so as none can be possessed of Christ and his benefits, till by faith they receive him."

To the last query, respecting the hope of heaven and fear of hell as motives of the believer's obedience, they reply by a more particular statement of their sentiments than they had given in their representation, having been induced to exclude from it what they had prepared on that head, with the view of securing the concurrence of some brethren, who, after all, did not join them.⁷⁷ "Taking heaven (say they) for a state of endless felicity in the enjoyment of God in Christ, we are so far from thinking that this is to be excluded from being a motive of the believer's obedience that we think it the chief end of

man, next to the glory of God;—but to form conceptions of heaven as a place of pleasure and happiness, without the former views of it, and to fancy that this heaven is to be obtained by our own works and doings, is unworthy of a believer, a child of God, in regard it is slavish, legal, mercenary and carnal." With respect to the fear of hell, they reckon it a special branch of Christian liberty that believers yield obedience to the Lord, not from slavish fear of wrath, but from childlike love, and filial fear of God; and they agree with Rutherford, Durham, and Owen, who, while they own that the threatenings of everlasting wrath are to be viewed by believers as declarative of God's hatred of sin, and his will to punish it, yet maintain that "the use of them cannot be to beget an anxious, doubting, solicitous fear, about the punishment threatened, grounded on a supposition that the person fearing shall be overtaken with it." After requesting a charitable construction of their answers, and complaining of the aspersions thrown on them as enemies to the law of God, the respondents conclude by saying,—“We adhere to our representation and petition in all points; and so much the rather that we have already observed the sad fruits and bad improvement made of the Assembly's deed therein complained of.”⁷⁸

When the commission met on the 8th of May, the brethren's answers to the queries were laid on the table, together with remarks upon them by a sub-committee, which had been appointed for this purpose by the committee for purity of doctrine in March. These remarks formed "a long paper," says Mr. Wodrow, "as long as the brethren's answers very near, and took up our whole forenoon's sederunt to read." After being committed and sub-committed, they were reduced to that size and form which fitted them for being added to the overture agreed upon in August; and to the whole was subjoined the commission's opinion as to the mode of issuing the affair. Mr. Muir was the only individual who voted against this conclusion.⁷⁹

The overture (including what was now and formerly

77. Boston's *Memoirs* [1776], p. 371.

78. Queries and Answers, *as above*. The writer of this article has in his possession a copy of Answers to the twelve Queries, by Mr. Alexander Hamilton. His answers are short, but agree in substance with those given by the representing ministers. [It is not clear if this Hamilton MS still exists. The contents are not fully enumerated for New College Library, Archives and Manuscripts, MS MAR and MS HAM 1, and this Hamilton MS may be in one of those collections.]

79. Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mrs. Wodrow, May 9, 1722. The sub-committee which completed the overture, consisted of Mr. Mitchell, Principal Stirling, Principal Chalmers, Mr. John Hunter, Mr. David Anderson, Professor Hamilton, and Mr. Wodrow. [*Correspondence*, 2.639.]

agreed upon), begins with enumerating certain charges brought against the Assembly in the representation, which are characterized as “foul reproaches,” and “injurious and undutiful aspersions.” Then follows an assertory part, in which, with the view of wiping off these aspersions, and preserving the purity of gospel truths, a variety of doctrines, to the number of eight, are asserted in the very words of the Confession of Faith and Catechisms. The third part contains a vindication of the Assembly’s act. To prevent well-meaning people from being “imposed upon by the evil suggestions of the said representation, its authors and abettors, and for removing mistakes which the unthinking may fall into.” It is declared in general that the passages cited from *The Marrow* “are to be understood in the sense and meaning of its author, gathered from the book, and are condemned only in so far as they import the erroneous opinions ascribed to it, or are applied by the author to that purpose.”

More particularly, concerning faith, it is argued that the doctrine in the Assembly’s act “is altogether different from the general and doubtful faith of the papists, who allow a man’s believing implicitly as the church believes, and place true faith on a general assent to revealed truths, without a cordial accepting of Christ as offered in the gospel for salvation, deny perseverance, and do not own assurance to be attainable by believers, without extraordinary revelation.”—“Nor can they (the representers), charge the Assembly with denying that a belief of the mercy of God in Christ and of Christ’s ability and willingness to save all that come unto him, is necessary unto justifying faith.”—With respect to the universal atonement and pardon, it is said, “the brethren do not blame the Assembly for condemning the assertion of an universal atonement,” but complain that the Assembly hath condemned “the deed of gift and grant,” extracted out of the sacred records in *The Marrow*, by which the brethren say they understood no more but the revelation of the divine will in the Word, affording a warrant to offer Christ to all, and a warrant unto all to receive him; “which revelation and warrant the Assembly owns. But they (the representers) omit the sense and meaning of the author, which the Assembly evinceth to be an asserting of universal redemption as to purchase.” As to the article concerning the necessity of holiness, it is said, “the Assembly have given no just ground of quarrel on this, nor for any who understand the gospel to be offended, seeing, though good works be excluded from being the ground of justification, yet they are necessary in the justified, in order to their obtaining the enjoyment of eternal

salvation.” On the subject of the fear of punishment, and the hope of heaven, it is urged that the author of *The Marrow* excludes these motives entirely, and that the brethren “do not declare themselves, whether they allow that a believer may and ought to be moved unto obedience by the hope of heaven, in any other sense than that of obtaining a right and title to it by his own works.” What relates to the question of believers being under the law as a covenant, was afterwards so much altered in the Assembly that any account of it shall be omitted here.

In defence of the Assembly’s condemning the distinction between the law of works and the law of Christ, it is said, the brethren have no reason to complain, seeing the author of *The Marrow*, “will have a believer to be under no law which commands any moral duty to be done, either for eschewing of punishment, or upon promise of any reward, temporal or eternal, and so not under the moral law, nor even under the law of Christ, according to the author’s own account of it.” In answer to the objections brought against the act of Assembly concerning catechetical doctrine, it is urged that the article of justification is so expressed as that “it necessarily implies our being justified for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us;” and “the article immediately following concerning the necessity of no dangerous consequence, if they truly own personal holiness to be necessary to salvation; and if they quarrel the phrase of obtaining everlasting happiness, they may also quarrel the apostle’s expression.”

The last part of the overture is accusatory, charging certain positions “of a pernicious and dangerous tendency,” partly on the representation, and partly on the answers to the queries. Of the former kind is this, “that the law, as to believers, is really divested of its promise of life and threatening of death.” And of the latter are the following, “that in the gospel, properly so taken, there are no precepts, the commands of faith and repentance not excepted;” and “that holy obedience is not properly a federal or conditional mean, nor has any kind of causality, in order to the obtaining of glory.”

In conclusion, the commission proposes, “that the General Assembly refuse the petition in the representation, for repealing the act 1720, and as to the other clauses that the Assembly discharge all speaking, teaching, preaching, and printing the above particulars in time coming; and that the presbyteries and synods where the brethren are, take notice of their observation of this act, and that the brethren declare before the Assembly their subjection and acquiescence in this condemnation, under pain of censure. What censure

the aspersions cast upon the church deserve, is left to the Assembly."⁸⁰

The General Assembly met on Thursday the 10th of May 1722, and Mr. William Mitchell, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, was chosen moderator. On Tuesday, the 15th, the committee of overtures reported that they had had laid before them the proceedings of the commission on the representation of the twelve brethren, respecting the fifth act of the General Assembly 1720, and also an overture from another quarter concerning the fifth paragraph of that act, with their opinion that the Assembly should proceed to consider that affair. It now appeared that a strong opposition would be made to the mode of issuing the affair proposed by the commission. Some were anxious for the simple repeal of the act complained of; others wished it to be modified; while a still greater number were dissatisfied with the high ground which had been taken by the leading men in the church, and afraid that a schism would ensue, if the Assembly adopted the harsh measure recommended to them. They were anxious, accordingly that the Assembly should not enter on the cause, until it should be seen what success would attend the attempts made by extrajudicial conference to effect an accommodation and agreement.⁸¹ A debate rose, whether to read the papers before they were transmitted to a committee, which lasted three hours; where was a great deal of hedging and political disputing. Great were the heats on both sides, and insinuations made that the twelve brethren were ready to come to terms, and that it might be the representation might be withdrawn. But no assurance of this could be given; and at length it came to the vote, Read the papers, or remit to a committee? And it carried, Read in open assembly before remitting, by forty-three. This vote is reckoned unfavourable to the representers."⁸²

Next day the subscribers of the representation were called, and all of them compeared, except Mr. Bonar. The representation, the commission's overture, and the other overture transmitted by the committee, were read, after which the Assembly remitted the whole affair to their committee of overtures, to meet that afternoon; declaring that all members of the house who chose might attend and speak their mind on the subject, and that no other committee should meet at the same time. The representers were warned to attend that meeting. According to appointment, the committee met in the assembly house, which was thronged with members. After long discussion on the question, whether to proceed to the examination of the commission's overture, or previously to hear the representers, the latter was agreed

to. "Many speeches," says Mr. Wodrow, "were made before they came in, as to their good disposition, but little of it appeared." They complained that the commission had passed its overture in August without their being heard, and had groundlessly blamed them for calumniating the Assembly and the church, and they offered to reply to that paper article by article. This was refused on the ground that it would lead to endless disputation. They were told that it was expected they would request a conference with a sub-committee, to which they replied that they were ready to argue the matter before the present committee or any other; but being urged, they signified their wish for a smaller committee. This was immediately appointed, and met that night though it was then late.⁸³

Nothing was done by the sub-committee. The members had recourse to their old plan of putting questions which the representers declined answering, except in the words of the standards, profiting in this by the example which the commission had set them in its overture.⁸⁴ On Thursday night, the committee of overtures again met as before, when the brethren were heard at considerable length. Mr. Williamson, in a speech of nearly two hours, examined the charge which the commission had brought against *The Marrow*, if it denied that the law was a rule of life to the believer; endeavoured to show that it was groundless, and produced a number of passages much harsher from the writings of Luther, which

80. Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mrs. Wodrow, May 9, 1722. "There was one particular," says Mr. Wodrow, "the brethren were called in upon, and a query was put to them, on a consequence we thought naturally arose upon one of their answers, about unbelievers, their being obliged to seek life in the way of a covenant of works; which consequence they renounced, and so we left it out. Whether the brethren will disown several other things in their answers we have marked out to the Assembly, I cannot say; but unless they do, it seems hard to conceive how they will escape censure." [*Correspondence*, 2.638.]

81. "The second part of *The Marrow* was published on Saturday, with a long preface and appendix; which is confidence enough in the representers, who are upon conferences for peace." (Letter, Mr. Wodrow, May 14, 1722.) [*Ibid.*, 2.644.]

82. Letter, Mr. Wodrow, May 15, 1722. [*Ibid.*, 2.645.]

83. Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mrs. Wodrow, May 16, 1722. "I cannot mind them all (the members of the sub-committee) the moderator, Mr. Allan Logan, Mr. Smith, Mr. William Boyd, Mr. William Hamilton, Mr. James Brisbane, Principal Stirling, Principal Hadow, my Lord Grange, President Cullen, Sir James Stewart, they are 17 or 18 in all. What they will bring the brethren to, I know not, nor what overturn they will bring in, so as to salve the church's authority and preserve peace." [*Ibid.*, 646-647.]

84. "Mr. Williamson gave us an abstract of the first Dialogue, of which now I am ready to think he is the author." (Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mrs. Wodrow, May 19, 1722.) Mr. Matthew Crawford was of opinion that Mr. Hog was the author of that tract. (Letter, January 9, 1722.) [*Ibid.*, 649.]

yet Rutherford, the great opponent of the Antinomians, had vindicated and explained in a sound sense.⁸⁵ Others of the representers followed on the same side. At the close of the debate, Principal Hadow and Mr. Smith were appointed to examine and verify the quotations made in the overture. Next day the committee were employed, from four o'clock in the afternoon to midnight, in examining the overture, and putting it into the form of an act. The chief thing which puzzled them was the fifth paragraph of the act of Assembly complained of, which related to believers being under the law as a covenant of works. As the overture of the commission did not give satisfaction on this head to some persons, another overture had been brought before the Assembly from a different quarter. A long debate ensued, in the course of which the rescinding of that clause in the act was pleaded for by several members, among whom was Mr. Logan, who had been a strenuous opponent of *The Marrow*. They insisted that this was the honest and fair course; and that any explanation which was consistent with the orthodox doctrine must be a virtual approbation of the proposition which the Assembly had condemned as erroneous.⁸⁶ But they were overruled by the majority; and an explanation drawn up by a committee sent out for that purpose was adopted. It amounted in substance to this that whereas the following passages,—“As the law is the covenant of works, you are wholly and altogether set free from it,”—and “you are now set free both from the commanding and condemning power of the covenant of works,” were quoted, from *The Marrow*, in the Assembly's act, as a proof that the author

85. Such are the following:—“Works (says Luther), cannot be taught unless you hurt faith, seeing faith and works, in the matter of justification, are completely opposed, so that the doctrine of works must necessarily be a doctrine of devils, and a departure from the truth.”—“Therefore the law hath dominion over the body and the old man; let this man be under the law, but let us not pollute the chamber where Christ alone ought to rest and sleep that is, let us not trouble the new man with any of its uses and offices.”—“A man never sins more horribly than at the moment when he begins to feel and understand the law.”—“It is impossible for Christ and the law to dwell together in one soul”—“It is the great art and wisdom of Christians to be ignorant of the law, and works, and all active obedience, especially when the conscience wrestleth with the justice of God; just as it is the greatest wisdom for men, without the church of God, to know, consider, and press the law, works, and active obedience.”—“A Christian hath nothing at all to do, especially under temptation, with the law and sin; in so far as he is a Christian he is above the law and sin, having Christ, the Lord of the law, inclosed in his heart as a pearl in a ring.” &c.—“Setting aside the matter of justification, we are with Paul to think warmly and speak highly of it, but in the conscience it is the devil.”—“I cannot suffer the law that inexorable tyrant and cruel exactor, to reign in my conscience, for it is the seat and temple of Christ, the Son of God.”—“It is impossible that a son of God should sin, although it

maintained the erroneous sentiment that the believer is not under the law as a rule of life, it is declared that it was not the meaning nor intention of the said act in the least to insinuate that believers in Christ are under the law as a covenant of works, and that these two passages shall not be understood as a proof of the foresaid error in any other sense.⁸⁷

That part of the commission's overture which was drawn up in May was referred to a sub-committee, which sat on Saturday from nine o'clock in the morning to six at night. The alterations which they made contributed in no small degree, to facilitate its progress. In the overture, certain positions and expressions contained in the answers to the queries were declared to be of pernicious and dangerous tendency. It was seen that this rendered it necessary, in point of justice that the Assembly should read these answers; and to prevent this, all reference to them was expunged, and the clause was made to refer generally to positions and expressions which “have at this time been published.” A still greater alteration, and one that had more influence on the issue of the affair, was made. The clause which required the representers to declare their acquiescence in the condemnation of their sentiments was dropped.

The report of the sub-committee was approved of by the committee of overtures which met on Monday forenoon; and, after some reasoning, it was finally agreed, with three dissentient voices, to transmit the overture, as corrected, to the General Assembly.⁸⁸

The Assembly was appointed to meet at three o'clock (on Monday, the 21st of May 1722), but did not actually

is true that he sins; but because his sin was pardoned, therefore when he truly sins he sins not.” (Rutherford's *Spiritual Antichrist* [1648], p. 100–138.)

86. “The clause about believers not being under the covenant of works was matter of tedious debate, and after some hours a committee was sent out to put the passage in writ as amended. The rescinding the act 1720 was plainly enough contended for by Mr. Brisbane, Lord Grange, Mr. Forbes Lesley, and other favourers of the representers. Mr. Logan was for owning a mistake in it.” (Letter, Mr. Wodrow, May 19, 1722.) [Ibid., 649.]

87. Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mrs. Wodrow, May 19, 1722; and Act of Assembly. [*Correspondence*, 2.649. See *Acts of the general assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1638–1842* (Edinburgh: for the Church Law Society, 1843), 554.]

88. “There were reasonings against this by Mr. Brisbane and Mr. Alexander Hamilton, and when it came to the vote, it carried, transmit to the Assembly unanimously, save Mr. Brisbane, Mr. Forbes, and a third *not*. Mr. Hamilton was silent, and several others. How it will carry this day in the Assembly, I know not; but it's expected it will carry. My Lord Grange came in late and did not vote. The appointing of a fast is like to be left to the commission, the Commissioner not being particularly instructed about this.” (Letter, Mr. Wodrow, May 21, 1722.) [*Correspondence*, 2.651.]

meet until six o'clock. This was occasioned partly by a violent storm of thunder and rain,⁸⁹ and partly from the anxiety felt by some influential persons to fall upon some plan, even at that late stage of procedure, to accommodate the points of difference. An extraordinary meeting of the committee of overtures was held, and it was proposed that the clause respecting censure should be left out; but the leading members insisted on adhering to what had already been agreed to.

When the Assembly met, it was moved that the representers should be heard; but this was overruled, so they had already been allowed to express their sentiments before the committee of overtures, or of the whole house. The overture was read, and a few verbal alterations were made. When it came to the statutory part, a motion was made and supported by Mr. Logan and others that the condemnation of the position, "that the law has neither threatenings nor promises to believers," should be omitted; which was resisted. Another debate arose respecting the censure to be inflicted; and Mr. Logan moved that, instead of "sharply rebuke," it should run, "gravely admonish." This also was resisted; but it was at last agreed that the word "sharply" should be omitted. The vote being taken, five voted in the negative,—Mr. Brisbane, Mr. Drummond, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Linlithgow, and Mr. Walter Riddell. Five were *non liquet*. Lord Grange, Mr. Alexander Hamilton, Mr. William Stewart of Perth, Mr. N. Campbell, and about a dozen others, were silent. And 134 voted, approve. When the brethren were called in, the moderator told them that the vote was most harmonious; that it ought to be considered as a more decided expression of the opinion of the church than if it had been pronounced at last Assembly, inasmuch as the subject had been discussed from the press, and presbyteries had had an opportunity of considering it maturely; that he believed they had been betrayed into unbecoming expressions in the heat of controversy; and that, though it was painful to him, he was bound to administer that rebuke which the court has decreed. Mr. Hog requested that the sentence should be read, but was told that, so far as regarded them, it had already been intimated; and that no speeches could be allowed, after judgment had been pronounced. Upon this Mr. Kid, who had been selected for the task on account of his great courage, gave in a protestation subscribed by himself and his brethren, which he desired to be read. This being refused, "he left it on the table, and gave gold with it."⁹⁰

This protest, of which Mr. Boston, "easily foreseeing what would be the issue," had made a draught before he left home, was subscribed by the representers before

they knew the exact terms of the act of Assembly, or its injunctions as to their conduct; on which account it did not bear so particularly upon the sentence, as otherwise it would have done.⁹¹ In consequence of its not being received, it was immediately published. After relating the steps of procedure in this cause, it concludes in the following terms: "We do protest that we look upon the said fifth act of Assembly 1720, as contrary to the Word of God, and to the foresaid standards of doctrine and covenants, and on what we have complained of in the foresaid eighth act as of dangerous consequence thereto; and that therefore we dare not, in any manner of way, no, not by silence, consent unto or approve of them, nor the acts of Assembly relative thereunto; and that it shall be lawful to us, agreeable to the Word of God, and the standards of doctrine aforesaid in this church, to profess, preach, and still bear testimony unto the truths condemned, or otherwise injured, by the said acts of Assembly, notwithstanding of the said acts, or whatsoever shall follow thereupon: upon all which we take instruments, and crave extracts."

Considerable anxiety was entertained about the proceedings of the Assembly on the following day; some expecting that the representers would take some additional step, and others thinking that the Assembly would call them to account for their protest, in which they had declared that they would continue to teach the doctrines on which the supreme judicatory had laid an express inhibition. But nothing of this kind happened. The brethren reckoned they had sufficiently exonerated themselves;⁹² and the Assembly deemed it prudent to wink at what they felt as a contempt of their

89. "From twelve of the clock to near four, we had very great thunder and lightning. About half three the lightning broke in upon an hospital, I think they call it Craft's (The Trades') Hospital, and all the children were in it, and part of the house was broken down, but no hurt was done to any person, for which a note was put into the Assembly, to praise God for the deliverance." (Letter, Mr. Wodrow, as above [Ibid., p. 2.652]. Comp. Boston's *Memoirs* [1776], p. 379.)

90. Letter, Mr. Wodrow, May 21, 1722. [*Correspondence*, 2.651.]

91. Appendix to *Faith no Fancy: or, A treatise of mental images, discovering the vain philosophy and vile divinity of a late pamphlet intitled, Mr. Robe's fourth letter to Mr. Fisher: and shewing that an imaginary idea of Christ as man (when supposed to belong to saving faith, whether in its act or object), imports nothing but ignorance, atheism, idolatry, great falsehood, and gross delusion*, by Mr. Ralph Erskine. Edinburgh: Printed by W. and T. Ruddimans, 1745. With the Appendix, "relating to part of the late writings of the Rev. Messrs. Willison and Currie, especially touching some points of gospel doctrine, injured by their defence of the act of assembly, 1722."

92. "There was no insisting by the brethren for *The Marrow*. They think their protestation, though not received, continues good; but it's wrong." (Letter, Mrs. Wodrow, May 22, 1722.) [*Correspondence*, 2.654.]

authority. They had reasons for adopting this course. The truth is, the dissensions in the church had engaged the attention of government, which considered them as extremely hurtful at a time when the country was threatened with an invasion. His Majesty's letter to the Assembly 1721, contained this clause, "We hope you will apply yourselves with concord and unanimity to dispatch the affairs proper and necessary to be considered in this Assembly, and guard against all matter of contention; since you cannot but foresee the many unhappy consequences with which divisions among you may be attended." A similar clause was inserted in the royal letter to the Assembly 1722; and previous to the sederunt at which the cause of the representers was decided, the king's commissioner, the Earl of Loudon, urged upon the leading members the propriety of abstaining from everything which might cause a breach.⁹³ Had not this influence been exerted, there is reason to think that the sentence would have been more severe; and in that case, the Secession would have taken place ten years earlier than it actually happened.

[PART FOUR.]⁹⁴

It may now be proper to take notice of certain proceedings relating to this controversy, which could not so well be introduced into the preceding narrative, and to add some facts of a date subsequent to the final decision by the Assembly.

We have already seen that Mr. Warden of Gargunock was anxious to discharge the office of a peace-maker, and to steer a middle course between the extremes to which he thought the representers and their opponents were disposed to run. It is not surprising to

93. At three the Assembly [should have] met, but it was five ere we met. The reason was, out of tenderness to the representers, and from the fear of a breach, which the Commissioner insisted upon that it might by all means be prevented, as unfit for our present feared confusions." (Letter, Mr. Wodrow, May 21, 1722.) [Ibid., 652.]

94. [*The Edinburgh Christian Instructor*, New Series, vol. I, no. 2 (February 1832): 73–94.]

95. Letter, Mr. Warden to Mr. R. Erskine, September 4, 1721. [See New College Library, Archives and Manuscripts, MS HAM 1, which seems to be the new reference given for MS W13b Box 11. See Lachman, pp. 401–404.] In a letter to another correspondent, having mentioned that he had received no answer from Mr. Erskine, he says that he saw "no disposition to a calm search after truth or peace." He then adds, "It would divert you to see Mr. B. [Brisbane?] at Stirling, how he now speaks, when so attacked by Principal Haddow, in his late book against *The Marrow*. Mr. H. (Hamilton?) seems to be very easy, and heartily laughs at B. (Letter, Mr. Warden to Mr. Wodrow, September 18, 1721.) See NLS, Letters of John Warden, Minister of Gargunock (1721–2), XV, ff.12, 36, 41, 85, 90, 99, 112, 136, 168, 207. Lachman refers to this letter as No. 65 in volume XV. Lachman, p. 401.]

96. Letter, Mr. R. Erskine to Mr. Warden, October 30, 1721. [Ibid.]

find him complaining that he met with hard treatment from both sides, for that has been the usual fate of reconcilers and middle-men; but facts seem rather to show that he was caressed by the ruling party. In September 1721, he opened an epistolary correspondence with Mr. Ralph Erskine of Dunfermline, by a letter, in which he says, "I had occasion to see somewhat of an advertisement, importing a necessity of meeting in regard of some expressions in Mr. Hadow's book. I cannot say I have yet read it quite over, but should think it very proper these positions in his book were condescended on, and that more of a Christian, friendly, and open conference by letters were maintained on these heads." He mentions one position in the Principal's book which he could not well understand, viz. 'That the law, as it was or is the matter of the covenant of works, is still binding upon believers;' and adds, "that little word *as* has created no small trouble to us, and I wish our vexation with it were at an end."⁹⁵ Mr. Erskine, in his reply, expresses his surprise at the dubious and apparently light manner in which his correspondent had spoken of the above position, and signifies that the word *as*, little as it is, formed the hinge of the controversy, and the point on which the charge of antinomianism, brought against *The Marrow*, mainly rested.⁹⁶ Mr. Warden, in his next letter, admits that if the word be understood in "the ordinary sense of mankind, both lawyers and divines,—it will indeed be a terrible blunder. But to do justice to that learned person (adds he) you may observe that afterwards he alters the phrase, and says, 'which was the matter of the covenant of works;' as to which I observe that if *as* and *which* be the same, then a great part of his book is in vain;—for *The Marrow* grants, even according to the Principal that they (believers) are under the law which was the law of the Creator." Still, however, Mr. Warden denies the inference that, according to the doctrine of Mr. Hadow and the commission, believers are under the law as a covenant of works.

The discussion then turned on the following question: Has the moral law, without the form of the covenant of works, a promise of eternal life, and a threatening of death and wrath, to believers? Mr. Warden takes the affirmative on both parts of this question, and with respect to the latter, maintains that believers are by their sins made liable to eternal death, though it will never be executed upon them, in consequence of their interest in the surety righteousness; nor will he admit of the distinction which his correspondent had made between desert or the intrinsic demerit of sin, and guilt or liability to punishment. After three letters had passed between them, the correspondence was dropped.

To an impartial reader, it throws light on the subject and shows the importance of making accurate distinctions and avoiding the ambiguous use of words; but it certainly had not the effect of bringing the parties nearer to one another in sentiment, or of increasing that friendship which had formerly subsisted between them. The one did not display that candour and self-denial which are so requisite in a peacemaker, nor make those allowances which are always due to a person contending against a majority; and the other showed himself impatient of those infirmities in a good man, which he must have perceived and borne with at a former period, when they lived together and loved as brethren.

In his last letter Mr. Warden talks of "the quirks and empty distinctions" of his correspondent; and he concludes thus, "I believe you will not in haste give yourself nor me the trouble of so long letters. I have wrote my thoughts, and I beg there may be no disputing: it breaks my heart."⁹⁷ To this Mr. Erskine answers, "As the former was far from the design of the last I sent you, and as I cannot accuse myself of having employed my pen about trifles (and I wish you had let me understand wherein it appears to be as you allege), so the latter seems to be as far from the design of the first you sent to me, wherein you expressed such an inclination towards communicating by word or writ to one another. And as I was not the first that wrote and made the proposal of conferring in this way, so I am content I am not the first that hath insinuated an inclination to drop it; which indeed I would have done the more readily, if this way of speaking had not suggested, as if there was no more could be said after this strong effort of yours." Accordingly, he subjoins a long reply, which, however, concludes in the following friendly strain: "Meanwhile, as a brotherly line from you, proposing whatever you think proper, will always be acceptable to me, so I hope nothing that has past in our communication hitherto shall make me disown that debt which I am always obliged to pay (according to the apostolical precept, 'owe no man anything but to love one another;') nor yet weaken just esteem and brotherly love, which I own to be a debt always owing to you in particular."⁹⁸—One thing which contributed to render this correspondence less satisfactory in its issue was that, during its continuance, Mr. Warden was acting along with the commission, in their proceedings against the representers.⁹⁹

During the agitation which prevailed, it is natural to suppose that the controversy would force its way into the pulpit, and produce collision and offence. The representers appear to have formed the resolution, not only to abstain from recommending *The Marrow*, but to

avoid introducing into their sermons the points of difference, while their representation was in dependence before the Assembly. They complain, however that they were constrained to lay aside this reserve, in consequence of the accusations brought against them, from the pulpit and the press, as antinomians, new schemers, etc.¹⁰⁰ At communions, where they officiated, persons attended to carry away, by word and writing, what the preachers said, or were supposed to say, on the controversial doctrines. This was particularly done at Dunfermline, Large, and Gladsmuir, where the dispensation of the sacrament was attended by crowds in the years 1721 and 1722.¹⁰¹

The contention was hottest within the bounds of the synod of Fife, which included five of the representing ministers, and some of the keenest of their opponents. A strict watch was kept by the latter over the conduct of the former; and at the privy censures, in the synod and in some of the presbyteries, one of the questions put to ministers, was, Have you obeyed the act of Assembly condemning *The Marrow*?¹⁰² At the meeting of synod, on the 28th of September 1721, formal complaints were lodged with the committee for overtures against Messrs. Bathgate and Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine, as

97. Letter, Mr. Warden to Mr. R. Erskine, January 4, 1722. [Ibid.]

98. Mr. R. Erskine's answer to the above letter. [Ibid.]

99. "I am, by a letter, called to the committee for purity of doctrine, as a member of it. I want not great difficulties in going, so ready are all sides to mistake one another; yet gladly would I go, if so be I might do any service. It meets the first Wednesday of March.—I purpose to stay, and next week to wait the commission, when you shall have all that has past betwixt Mr. Ralph Erskine and me." (Letter, Mr. Warden to Mr. Wodrow, February 23, 1722. [No. 95, Lachman, p. 402])—"I have no news of the representing brethren to write you. I hear nothing on that side; but, ah! how much do I see of a spirit impatient of contradiction, and fearful inclination to be thought infallible, so that if you will not say as they do, you must by all means be run down." (Letter, Mr. Warden to Mr. Wodrow, January 19, 1722). [NLS, Letters of John Warden, Minister of Gargunnoch (1721–2), *ibid.*]

100. Brown's *Gospel Truth*, 144–5. Mr. Hugh Maxwell preached a sermon before the Synod of Angus and Mearns, in which he attacked *The Marrow* and its defenders. It was published in 1721, under the title of *The Beauty and Purity of the Gospel Church*, with two appendixes, one on Antinomian errors, and a New Scheme of doctrine, and the other on *The Marrow* and Mr. Hamilton's Catechism.

101. At Gladsmuir, there were "a great many writers taking down the sermons. Mr. Hamilton desired them to write on, and take all" (Letter, Mr. J. Dougall, to Mr. Wodrow, Sept. 14, 1722.) The minister of Gladsmuir at this time was Mr. Sethrum, who, though not one of the subscribers of the representation, was of the same sentiments with them. [NLS, James Dougall, Letters of (1721–2), *Wod.Lett.Qu.XV*, ff.6–180 (*passim*).]

102. Letter, Mr. E. Erskine to Mr. Gillespie of Strathmiglo, Sept. 18, 1751 (Brown's *Gospel Truth*, p. 125.) This letter was originally printed, but without names, in the *First Dialogue on the Marrow*, pp. 46–57.

guilty of contravening the act of Assembly and an act of synod in 1710,¹⁰³ by preaching doctrines opposite to what were held by the church. These brethren vindicated themselves from misrepresentations of their words and meaning, but did not deny that they had taught the doctrines contained in their representation, and the sentence of the Synod bears that Mr. Ralph Erskine, in particular, owned, “that he had, at public occasions, preached some doctrines that are, *in terminis*, in *The Marrow*, such as that a believer is not under the law as a covenant of works.” Wherefore, “the synod, upon report of said committee, did, and hereby do, declare their high dissatisfaction with such practices, and strictly enjoin the said brethren, and all the ministers within this synod, punctually to observe the foresaid act of synod and Assembly; with certification, the contraveners shall be censurable by their respective presbyteries and this synod, according to the demerit of their offences.”¹⁰⁴

In the course of the debate which led to this decision, some members having denied that there was any gift of Christ as a Saviour to sinners of mankind, Mr. Ebenezer Erskine rose, and, with a tone and manner which is reported to have made an uncommon impression,

103. This act of Synod (which was formerly referred to), appears to have been introduced here, because the act of Assembly 1720, prohibited only the recommending of *The Marrow*, which these brethren had abstained from.

104. Brown's *Gospel Truth*, pp. 31, 144–5.

105. *Ibid.*, pp. 105–6.

106. Frazer's *Life of Ebenezer Erskine* [Donald Fraser, 1831], pp. 238–247. Mr. Erskine was induced to print the sermons complained of; and, in an Apologetical Preface to a sermon on Rev. iii. 4 (which was his first publication), he has related the facts mentioned above. Among other reports calculated to excite odium, Mr. Anderson told the commission that Mr. E. being desired to reconcile his sentiments to the Confession of Faith, replied, “Let them see to that who have subscribed it.” [Brown, *Gospel Truth* [1831], p. 108, cites the text quoted, but the preface to this sermon was apparently reduced significantly for the 1733 second edition and that text forms the preface reproduced in Erskine's *Works*. Neither the 1725 nor 1733 edition of this sermon is online or in ECCO (Eighteenth Century Collections Online).]

107. Ralph Erskine's *Faith no Fancy*, apud Brown's *Gospel Truth*, p. 30.

108. Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mr. Charles Masterton in Ireland, May 28, 1722 [*Correspondence*, 2.656]. “This day the overtures met, and rejected a motion about renewing subscription to the Confession.” (Mr. Wodrow, May 22, 1722.) [NLS, Charles Masterton, Minister at Connor, Ireland, letters of and copies of letters of [to Robert Wodrow] (1722), Wod.Lett.Qu.XX, ff.279, 292, 313.]

109. The pamphlet which gave the chief offence was the *First Dialogue on the Marrow*; and we have already seen that, if Mr. Wodrow was right in his conjecture, its author was Mr. Williamson, and not Mr. Hog. [James Hog, *The Controversie Concerning the Marrow of Modern Divinity. Considered in several familiar dialogues. Dialogue I* (Edinburgh: Macky, 1721). The attribution to Hog does not seem to be questioned and writers assign it without controversy.]

said, “Moderator, our Lord Jesus said of himself, ‘My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven;’ this he uttered to a promiscuous multitude, and let me see the man who dare say he said wrong.”¹⁰⁵ At the same time the synod appointed a new subscription of the formula by ministers, “as a fresh evidence of their zeal for, and adherence to, the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this church.” This was resisted by the representers, as an unwarranted assumption of power on the part of a subordinate judicatory, and an indirect method of obliging them to approve of recent proceedings. To silence, however, the reports circulated against their orthodoxy, they afterwards did subscribe a second time, though in such terms as excluded any reference to the synodical appointment. This affair proved peculiarly vexatious to Mr. Ebenezer Erskine, who, in consequence of an oversight on the part of the presbytery, as well as himself, by no means singular or uncommon, had not subscribed either at his license or ordination. This circumstance was mentioned to his prejudice by Mr. Alexander Anderson, minister of St. Andrews, who, in May 1725, arraigned him before the commission for alleged errors vented in sermons, some of which had been preached ten years before that time.¹⁰⁶ It would appear that these charges were not countenanced by the commission.

The synod of Fife endeavoured at the ensuing meeting of the General Assembly, to procure the sanction of the supreme court to their new mode of subscription;¹⁰⁷ and it would appear that they had nearly succeeded in extending it over the whole church. “A motion came (says Mr. Wodrow), from one of our synods to the Assembly that all ministers who are suspected of declining from our standards, should be called upon to renew their adherence to our Confession of Faith; which cast up from a particular case in that synod, of some brethren who declined adhering to their subscription, save in a consistency with a peculiar representation they had given in. This motion was soon made, but, by reason of much more important affairs falling, could not be considered till the very last day of the Assembly's meeting, and so it never came farther than the committee, though, had it been got completed, in my opinion it would have passed.”¹⁰⁸

Mr. Hog was, of all the representing brethren, the most obnoxious to the opponents of *The Marrow*, and was accordingly subjected to more rigorous proceedings before the synod of Fife. Being suspected to be the author of certain pamphlets anonymously published during the controversy,¹⁰⁹ the synod agreed to put the question to him. He refused to answer, and objected to

the mode of procedure as inquisitorial, and calculated to establish a bad precedent. After dealing with him in vain at different times, the synod appointed a committee to prepare an overture on the affair. This was given in on the 4th April 1722, and was to the following effect:—"The committee appointed by the synod to prepare an overture upon Mr. Hog's repeated refusal to answer the questions put to him by the Synod, viz. Whether he be the author of these pamphlets, said to contain errors in doctrine, and slanderous aspersions upon the judicatories and ministers of this church, find that Mr. Hog is obliged to give direct answers, whether he be the author of these pamphlets or not." The reasons assigned for this are, the divine authority for dealing with conscience, to which the spirit of the prophets is subject; his ordination vows; the form of process; and "his refusing to answer, and disobeying the authoritative order of the synod," tends to overthrow the government and defeat the ends of discipline, is a bad precedent, and condemns the practice of the church since the Reformation. "Therefore, the committee are of opinion, the synod should declare the practice of Mr. Hog censurable, and reserve in their own hand the determination of what censure they will inflict till afterwards."¹¹⁰ To another species of interrogatory employed by the synod, Mr. Hog did not make the same objections. He replied, first verbally, and afterwards in writing, to eight queries, which they put to him concerning his sentiments. The queries in general resembled those which the commission had proposed to him, in common with his representing brethren; so that it is unnecessary here to give a particular account of them or of his answers.¹¹¹ There is reason to think that circumstances occurred to prevent the synod from carrying this prosecution any farther.¹¹²

But that which made the greatest noise was the process against Mr. Gabriel Wilson. In a sermon preached by him at the opening of the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, on the 17th of October 1721, he delivered his opinion on some doctrines which were at that time controverted, and took notice of certain defections in the church, which many good men had long bewailed. He did not, however, specify either *The Marrow*, or the act condemning it, nor did he use any violent or disrespectful language in his condemnation of public evils.¹¹³ But it gave great offence to some of his reverend auditors, who could not conceal their uneasiness during its delivery, and no sooner was the Synod constituted, than a formal complaint was made against the preacher. He was required instantly to deliver the notes, or manuscript of his sermon, for examination, and upon his refusal was threatened with suspension. After some

violent discussion, it was at last agreed that a copy of the sermon should within a fortnight be given in to a committee appointed to examine it, and to report to the synod at their next meeting.¹¹⁴ Mr. Wilson accordingly presented the transcript, accompanied with the original manuscript, for the purpose of collation. At the same time he gave in a protest, in which he declared that, as he had produced the sermon in compliance with the orders of the Synod, with the view of satisfying them as to some particular points, it should not be employed as materials to form a libel, or articles of charge in order to censure, against him, which would make him his own accuser, contrary to the Word of God, the form of process, and the natural rights of mankind. He protested also that nothing which he might say to give satisfaction to the committee as to his sentiments, should militate or be improved against him in any process which might

110. Copy, Minute of Synod of Fife, Kirkcaldy, April 4, 1722. [See Minutes of the Synod of Fife, 1719–1738, National Archives of Scotland (National Records of Scotland), CH2/154/7.]

111. Queries of the Synod of Fife to Mr. James Hog, minister of the gospel at Carnock, with his Answers to these Queries, April 5th, 1722, *hora quinta post meridiem*.—The following is the preamble: "Having the very reverend Synod's allowance to review and amend my answers, ere they make faith as mine, I take the benefit of extending and clearing them, according to my stated sentiments before and since that time, and without communication with any person that the information of the committee against me may be set in a true light in so far."

112. "I heard lately of Mr. James Hog that he was pretty well when he was in town. I got the inclosed copy of his answers to the Synod's queries to be given in the next Synod; which return me after perusal. I know no more of that Synod." (Letter, Mr. William Hog to Mr. Wodrow, January 11, 1723.) [This quotation is partially cited in a note M'Crie adds to Wodrow's reply in *Correspondence*, 3.7. For Hog's letter see NLS, William Hog, Merchant, Edinburgh, letters of (1723), Wod.Lett.Qu.XV, ff.19, 27, 35.]

113. Before the process was concluded, the sermon was published in 1723, under the name of *The Trust*, without the author's knowledge, by one of his friends, who had procured a copy of it. According to Mr. Boston's information, the preface was written by Mr. Kid of Queensferry. The quarrelled passages are carefully marked. The sermon has been frequently reprinted. [The 1765 edition was cited by M'Crie previously. See Gabriel Wilson, *The Trust. A Sermon at the opening of the provincial Synod of Mers and Teviotdale, at Kelso, Oct. 17, 1721* (Edinburgh: 1723).]

114. "There was a Synod at Teviotdale lately, and the account we hear is that there was one Mr. Gabriel Wilson that preached before the Synod, being moderator at the last Synod; and he preached up the Marrow boldly, and told in his sermon that he would own it, although they would suspend him. The Synod, they said, was very uneasy on hearing of him, and when the sermon was done, the Synod desired him to deliver up the sermon to them, otherwise they would suspend him. He would not part with it; however he promised within fourteen days to deliver it up. Mr. Mitchell said to one, he believed they would make no hand with him now, they having given him fourteen days; for Mr. Mitchell said, the Synod should not have parted with him until

be founded on the quarrelled sermon.¹¹⁵ A sub-committee was appointed to extract from it the materials of a libel against the author.¹¹⁶ The committee found, on examination that the offensive portions of the discourse could not bear the construction which they had put upon them in the act of hearing, and accordingly had recourse to a loose mode of charge, consisting of twelve remarks as to doctrine, twelve instances of slander, and twelve topics for question. It is only necessary to compare the remarks with the sermon to perceive that some of them are unfounded, others gathered by strained inference, and the remainder connected with points on which the author had laid his sentiments before the supreme judicatory.¹¹⁷ The alleged slanders were against the civil government, against the church, against particular ministers who had written against *The Marrow* (Principal Hadow and Mr. Maxwell), and against students of divinity. In this form the affair was taken up by the synod, and the author was forced to appear at the bar during four several meetings of that court, and of as many committees of their appointment, without any decision being given in the cause.¹¹⁸

In a speech delivered, apparently at a meeting of

synod, in October 1722, Mr. Wilson expresses himself, evidently more in grief than in anger or dread of the issue, in the following manner:

Moderator, it is known all the world over, and will be while the world lasts that where a man's discourse is in general solid, sound, and to the purpose, little notice is taken, or severity used, as to some words or phrases, though not so well chosen or fitly set; because men, for the most part, remember themselves to be but men, who cannot promise, on every occasion, to write or speak infallibly; else processes of this sort had not, unto this day, been such a rarity in the churches of Christ, and particularly in the Church of Scotland.

Moderator, it is given out of me, propagated among the people, and through the church, so far as it will go that I deny the Father in the glorious Godhead, the necessity of holiness, etc.; and now, when the sermon is delivered that I have altered it, and kept back all the gross things that were in my papers, and which I delivered before the synod; whereas the brethren appointed to receive the copy know, and the brethren of the committee

they had gotten it. However, the Synod have appointed a committee to receive it from him, the sermon he had, to wit, Mr. Wilson. He bantered [rebuked; scolded] magistrates, and ministers, and all, at a strange rate." (Letter, Mr. J. Dougall to Mr. Wodrow, Oct. 28, 1721.) Without deciding upon the charitableness of the suspicion imputed to Mr. Mitchell, it is proper to notice that due precautions were taken against the supposed danger. "The committee of the Synod, appointed to collate the copy with the notes, reported, they had a faithful transcript of them" (Preface to *The Trust*, p. iv.) And a rumour of this kind being afterwards spread, Mr. Wilson, in the presence of the Synod, appealed to the members of the committee for its falsehood. (Boston's *Memoirs* [1776], Appendix No. iv.) Dougall to Mr. Wodrow, Edin. 3d Jan. 1722.) [NLS, James Dougall, Letters of (1721–2), Wod. Lett.Qu.XV, ff.6–180 (*passim*); No. 70; cf. Lachman, *The Marrow Controversy* (1988), p. 406. *The Trust* (1785), p. iv. Boston, *Memoirs*, Works, v. 12 (1852), 464.]

115. The protest is published in Boston's *Memoirs*, Appendix No. iv.

116. "Mr. G. Wilson gave in a copy of his sermon to the sub-committee of the Synod, with a very strange protestation that, though he owned it to be the doctrine delivered by him, and maintained all the propositions in it to be orthodox, yet it should by no means militate against him, or be made use of as a libel. The sub-committee have prepared materials to be presented to the committee of the Synod, in order to form a libel against him, against the time of the Synod's meeting. I saw some of the extracts from his sermon, which are very gross, and can never be defended, without explaining away the genuine sense and obvious meaning of the words. (Letter, Mr. M. Crawford to Mr. Wodrow, January 9, 1722. [Matthew Crawford, Professor of Church History, Edinburgh University, Letters of (1721–22), Wod. Lett.Qu.XV, ff.106, 119, 143, 149, 151, 174. Lachman identifies the letter as item No. 84. Lachman, p. 364.]

117. The following is a specimen of the remarks:—"First, Mr. Wilson

maintains that the law is not part of the trust committed to Timothy (page 2 of his sermon), contrary to Malachi, 2, 7, &c. Secondly, he sets the doctrine of the gospel in opposition to the doctrine of the law, in this particular that he ascribes the effectually teaching of holiness to the doctrines of the gospel, and denies it to the law (Sermon, p. 20), whereas both law and gospel teach holiness effectually, by the concurrence of the Spirit, and none of them without it. And, page 30, under that head of his sermon where he speaks of the commands which are the rule and way of holiness, but the doctrine of the gospel as the channel of sanctifying grace, contrary to Ps. xix. 7. 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul,' &c. And thereby he seems to symbolize with Islebius Agricola (as quoted by Rutherford, *Survey of Spiritual Antichrist*, p. 81) who asserts, 'that the law teaches not good works, nor is the law to be preached that we may do good works, but only the gospel.' Thirdly, p. 24, in speaking of keeping the gospel distinct from the law, he speaks unduly of the law, saying only, 'It may be called the doctrine of God;' wherein he seems to symbolize with Islebius Agricola (as cited by Rutherford), who asserts 'that the law is not worthy to be called the Word of God.'" The following is one of the committee's questions: "What he (Mr. Wilson) means by the law as a covenant, and whether he means the law as having a penal sanction annexed to it? And is it not as such, by Christ, as our Prophet and King, adopted into the dispensation of the gospel, and made use of for the instruction and government of believers? And whether Christ makes use of the law for the instruction and government of believers in a sense distinct from the covenant of works? And what that sense is? (Remarks of the Committee of the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, upon Mr. Gabriel Wilson's Sermon, preached before the Synod, October 1721.) [National Records of Scotland, Records of the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, 1708–1723, SRO, CH2/265/1 (See the discussion in Lachman, pp. 343–351.)

118. *The Trust*, Preface, p. iii, iv.

know, they have a faithful copy of my notes, and not only so, but of all things delivered by me, though they were not in my notes, so far as I ever remember them. Whatever measure I have got, or may further get, never did one give his judges fairer play against himself than I have done.

What shall I say, Moderator? I am made a gazing-stock by reproach, and a world's wonder throughout Scotland, and may be farther too, for anything I know. Reproach sometimes breaks the heart; and were it not, in some measure, I believe the promises and the special providence of God, I behoved to sink and be broken effectually.

Moderator, it is not in the power of this synod, were they ever so willing, to make reparation of the injuries done me by means of their procedure; for infamy will stick better. If there had dropped from one's pen, on a paper which, in his account, the world was never to see, expressions not so well chosen or guarded, would not the love of God, the love of truth, and the love of our neighbour, which the gospel so much teaches and recommends, make all men in whom it dwells rejoice to see these things, elsewhere in the same paper, more plainly and fully expressed to satisfaction? And will not that humility, modesty, and compassion which a sense of human weakness and frailty, which a sense of our own imperfections and liability to mistake begets, persuade the same thing? Even the wisest of societies happen at times to express themselves, for removing such misapprehensions as their words had given occasion to.¹¹⁹

The straining or wrestling of words, or occasional passages, in this case, in order to the fixing of odious notions that the words neither express, nor, candidly interpreted, give any countenance to, cannot miss to be held as a clear evidence that something is aimed at, either with respect to the person or doctrine that is not fairly and honestly owned and spoken out. Yet considering my unskillfulness, and my profound security from all fears of such unprecedented measures, I conceive I have much reason to bless the name of the Lord, who instructs the simple and guides the blind in a way they know not; and, accordingly, here I desire, with all my soul, to bless him that my excesses were not both more and greater than they are; else, alas! where had I been? I had been swallowed and eaten up as bread, the truth had suffered by my means, and the friends of truth had been ashamed for my sake.¹²⁰

The cause came before the commission by reference in November 1722, on which occasion Mr. Wilson, who had a great portion of fire in his constitution, freely exposed the irregularity of the proceedings, and pronounced a violent philippic against Mr. Ramsay, minister of Kelso, who had been the most active person in raising and keeping alive the prosecution.¹²¹ A committee was appointed to examine the papers and to make a report to the commission at their meeting in March; but, at that meeting it was found that the committee had done nothing; and the cause was transmitted, as it came from the synod, to the ensuing General Assembly.¹²² When the reference came before the Assembly, Mr. Wilson obtained time to prepare answers to the synod's statement or abstract of the process; as the committee for bills had refused to transmit the paper which he had given in to them, alleging that it was "full of complaints and hard words."¹²³ The truth is that the leading members disapproved of the prosecution as inexpedient, and wished to get rid of it in the easiest way possible, consistently with the act of last Assembly, and the credit of their friends in the synod. Accordingly, when the cause came before the court, it was moved that the Assembly should set aside that part of the process which related to alleged slanders against the government, the church, and particular ministers,

119. There seems to be an allusion here to the explanatory act of the General Assembly 1722 concerning *The Marrow*. [See *The Principal Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland Convened at Edinburgh, the 10th Day of May, 1722* (Edinburgh, 1722), VII. Act concerning doctrine, confirming and explaining the Acts 5th and 8th of the General Assembly Anno 1720. 21 May 1722, Sess. 10., pp. 13–26. Cf. Acts of the general assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1638–1842, p. 548.]

120. Boston's *Memoirs*, Appendix No. iv.

121. "I expected to have seen you in town at last commission, wherein Mr. Gab. Wilson's affair was commenced, of which, no doubt, you have heard, and the flaming speech he made against Mr. Ramsay" (Letter, Mr. William Hog to Mr. Wodrow, January 3, 1723.) "There was a remit (to the commission) from the synod of Merse, concerning Mr. G. Wilson, which I think is delayed till March." (Mr. Matthew Simpson to Mr. Wodrow, November 15, 1722.) "Nothing more of that case was laid before us than the reference itself, and a general state of the case; the whole papers, which are very long, being referred to a committee, to prepare the affair for the commission in March. Only, Mr. Wilson had a very long discourse, full of bitter invective against the synod and Mr. J. Ramsay." (Principal John Stirling to Mr. Wodrow, November 19, 1722.) [NLS, William Hogg, merchant, Edinburgh, letters of, Wod.Lett.Qu.XVI, ff.6, 11, 24. Matthew Simson, Minister of Pencaitland, Letters of (1722), Wod.Lett.Qu.I, XV, ff. 195–7. John Stirling, Principal of Glasgow University, letters of and to (1721–2), Wod.Lett.Qu. XV, ff. 14, 39, 48, 59, 138, 199.]

122. *The Trust*, preface, p. iv.

123. Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mrs. Wodrow, May 11, 1723. [*Correspondence*, 2.45.]

on the ground that “the synod, at least a good part of it, were tolerably satisfied” as to those, and that they should confine themselves to three points of doctrine, on which the synod seemed not to have received satisfaction. This was opposed by Mr. Wilson, who insisted that he should either be found guilty or exculpated from such deep and heavy accusations. But he at last yielded to the proposed arrangement, and was accordingly heard in answer to the three remaining charges.

After long discussion, the matter was referred to a committee, with power to them to call for Mr. Wilson and converse with him. They presented an overture, which was adopted by the Assembly on Tuesday the 21st of May. It bore that on the first article of charge, viz. “That the moral law to a believer is divested of the curse or threatening of eternal damnation, and hath no other sanction but fatherly chastisement.” Mr. Wilson had answered, “that he did not tenaciously adhere to that expression, and that all his meaning is that a believer by his union with Christ is forever delivered from the curse of the law, so that he shall never for one moment come under the sentence of eternal condemnation.”

As to the second article, viz. “That gospel or saving repentance is not necessary in a sinner in order to the pardon of his sins in justification,” he had answered that “justifying faith and gospel repentance are inseparable, both in their principles and exercise;” and being asked, if he would own it as a truth that God did never justify an impenitent sinner, he answered that he could not express himself in these terms, or in any words that might seem to import that a sinner is justified by any works of his own; and that the cautioning against that, was the main thing he had in his view in expressing himself as he did in his sermon and to the synod.

And as to the third article, viz. “That assurance, or a man’s persuasion that he shall be saved by Christ, is of the essence of justifying faith,” he had answered that “he owned all that is contained in our Confession of Faith

and Catechisms on that head, and at the same time adhered to the answers given to the queries proposed by the commission in 1721.”

The committee further reported that, though they had not received satisfaction from him on these points, yet as the last Assembly had passed an act respecting them, and this process had commenced before that act, it was their opinion that the General Assembly should prohibit him from teaching anything on the foresaid three points, contrary to the doctrine of this church and to the act of 1722, and admonish him to beware of expressing himself in such a manner as may have a bad influence on Christian practice, or may weaken the life and power of godliness. On the intimation of the sentence, Mr. Wilson signified his dissatisfaction with it, and was proceeding to state his reasons, but the Moderator having desired him to remove, he declared his adherence to the paper given in by the twelve brethren.¹²⁴

In 1725 Mr. Gabriel Wilson and Mr. Henry Davidson, minister of Galashiels, were sent by the presbytery of Selkirk, as members to the General Assembly. The committee for inspecting commissions stated in their report, “that the commissions from the presbytery of Selkirk have an extraordinary declaration therein, which is transmitted to the committee of overtures.” The declaration referred to was that they had subscribed the Confession of Faith as approved and explained by the act of Assembly 1647, and agreeably to the old Scots Confession and Covenants. “It was thought (says Mr. Wodrow) that the design of this was to make a noise, and to be taken notice of as adhering to their former doctrines, after the Assembly’s determination against them, and it was thought best to overlook it at this time, with a disapprobation of several commissions, and to appoint a new form of commission to be drawn up.”¹²⁵ The reason assigned for the terms in which the subscription ran, is probably correct, so far as it goes, but there was an additional reason. A great dissatisfaction had been caused throughout the church by a collection of Confessions, lately published by a committee of Assembly, with a preface by Mr. Dunlop, because it did not contain the act of Assembly 1647, receiving the Westminster Confession, nor the Solemn League and Covenant, and severe animadversions were made on the conduct of the publishers during this meeting of the supreme court.¹²⁶ Though Mr. Wilson was allowed to sit as a member of Assembly, an indirect mark of displeasure was put on him, his name being expunged from the list laid before the committee for naming the members of the commission.¹²⁷

One of the bad effects of that process, and collateral

124. Acts of Assembly 1723: and Wodrow’s Letters of 13th and 21st May 1723. [XI. Act anent Mr. Gabriel Wilson Minister at Maxton, his Sermon, preached before the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, At Edinburgh, May 21, 1723, Sess. 12, in *The Principal Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Convened at Edinburgh, the 9th Day of May, 1723* (Edinburgh, 1723), 20–22; *Acts, 1638–1842*, 565–566. *Correspondence*, 3.46, 53.]

125. Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mrs. Wodrow, May 10 and 14, 1725. [*Correspondence*, 3.195, 197–199.]

126. *Ibid.* May 17th and 18th, 1725 [*Correspondence*, 3.202]. Professor Robert Stewart complained that he had been “excommunicated from the Lord’s table,” by Mr. Darling, and some of the representers, for the part he had acted in that edition; referring, it is presumed, to what they had said in debarring from the communion table.

127. Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mrs. Wodrow, May 15, 1725. [This does

measures, was that several ministers who were cordially attached to the constitution of the Church of Scotland, had their confidence in all national churches shaken, and soon after, Mr. Wilson and his co-presbyter and intimate friend, Mr. Davidson, began to discover their preference of independent to presbyterian government.¹²⁸

Another evil resulted from these proceedings. A warm controversy was at that time carried on among the presbyterians in Ireland respecting subscription to Confessions of Faith, as tests of orthodoxy. The non-subscribers, who were generally tainted with Arminian and Arian sentiments, laid hold on the differences among the Scottish clergy, some of whom did not scruple to furnish the innovators in Ireland with information agreeable to their wishes. "Our non-subscribers (says an Irish minister) pretend to good information from all your synods and assemblies; and I know not but it is so, though what friends they have I cannot tell. One of them told me yesterday, with a considerable air of satisfaction, that some of your commissioners to the Assembly refused to subscribe the Confession of Faith, without allowance to except some parts they scrupled at, and that they were allowed by the Assembly, or some committee, to explain what they thought fit."¹²⁹ It was probably to prevent such misconstructions of their conduct that Messrs. Wilson and Davidson, soon after their return from the General Assembly, took an opportunity to subscribe in the usual form.¹³⁰

The Irish non-subscribers made a similar use of the act of Assembly condemning *The Marrow*, and the representation to which it gave rise. One of their advocates introduces an entrant to the ministry, as saying, on being required to subscribe, "Several particular doctrinal propositions in the Confession appear to me ambiguous, and capable of different and inconsistent senses. To illustrate more perfectly what I intend, I beg leave to observe what has lately passed in Scotland." And having made quotations from the writings on both sides, he adds, "By this it plainly appears to me that such as subscribe the Confession are not agreed about the sense of many doctrinal propositions contained in it, and therefore agree in sound rather than in sense."¹³¹

To this the defender of the subscribers replies, "I can't see that their reasoning amounts to any more than this that the General Assembly and these twelve ministers differed about the sense of some propositions in the book mentioned, called *The Marrow*; the one alleging these propositions were contrary to the Westminster Confession, and that they favoured Antinomianism, and the other alleging the contrary. But how it is proved that

they differed in their sense of the Confession, unless it be a consequence of this entrant's making, I am at a loss to understand. I have reason to believe that these twelve ministers have satisfied their brethren that they are far from understanding any articles in their public Confession as favouring Antinomianism. I am likewise credibly informed that one of these twelve ministers, who, it seems, had acknowledged he had never subscribed to the Confession, was required judicially to subscribe to all the propositions of it in their obvious sense, with which he complied."¹³²

The subscribers had written to Scotland for materials to enable them to answer this objection, and Wodrow, who was employed to convey these, evidently felt at a loss, and was fain to smooth down the difference.

"If the Assembly (says he) and the twelve representatives differed as to the sense of some propositions in the Confession, what can be inferred thence? What is put into the candidate's mouth as to the Assembly's condemning some pages *in cumulo*, serves no way to affect the question as to subscription. It is obvious, from

not appear in volume 3 of the *Correspondence*. See NLS, Margaret Wodrow, letters to, Wod.Lett.Qu XVI, ff.54-9, 186-195, 345-357.]

128. "Indeed, I am apprehensive that the serious part of this church are in greater hazard of turning to the excesses of the Independents than many are aware of.—The reputation and just weight of our judicatories is every year dwindling away, partly through ministers' unacquaintedness with our constitution and scriptural foundations, through want of reading and study, and our unhappy party divisions, and state differences, which we both senselessly and sinfully embark in." (Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mr. Marr, minister of Murross, Oct. 27, 1727.) In another Letter written on the same day, he requests Lord Grange to let him know if there was any prospect of anything being done at the approaching meeting of the committee for purity of doctrine, in Professor Simson's process, "worth a winter's journey to one that is turning frail, and almost weary of many of our church meetings, and the chicane and different views we have." [NLS, James Marr, Minister of Murroes, letters to (1727-8), Wod.Lett.Oct.IV, ff.43v, 54v. James Erskine, Lord Grange, Lord Justice Clerk, letter to (1726-31), Wod.Lett.Oct. IV, ff.1-207 (*passim*).]

129. Letter, Mr. Livingston of Templepatrick to Mr. Wodrow, June 10, 1725. Compare Letter, Professor Hamilton to Mr. Wodrow, Aug. 21, 1725. [William Livingston, Minister of Templepatrick, letters and copies of letters of (1723-5), Wod.Lett.Qu.XX, ff.296-8, 300-1, 309-10, 316. See Wodrow's reply to Livingston, *Correspondence*, 3.211. William Hamilton, Principal of Edinburgh University, letters of and to (1724-5), Wod.Lett.Qu.XVI, ff. 227, 247, 263, 299, 331, 403; (1725), XXI, ff.262-5, 277, 297.]

130. "Mr. Wilson and Mr. Davidson, two of the twelve Marrow brethren, have subscribed without any explanation." (Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mr. Livingston, June 28, 1725.) [*Correspondence*, 3.211.]

131. [John] Abernethy's *Defence of the Seasonable Advice*, with a Postscript by the Reverend N. Wald, J. Boyse, and R. Choppin, p. 199, 200. Belfast, 1724.

132. [Charles] Masterton's *Short Reply to the Postscript to Mr. Abernethy's Defence of the Seasonable Advice*, p. 22. Dublin, 1726.

the act of Assembly that they did not condemn every proposition in the pages they point at, but mark those pages only as containing some propositions contrary to the truth stated in the title of the Assembly's act, which the Assembly find contradicted in *The Marrow*. I only add that one of the twelve brethren never signed the Confession, which came to light only in May last; but, for what I know, he and the other Marrow brethren are for subscription."¹³³

There is also a perceptible difference between the manner in which he had formerly spoken of the proposal for a new subscription, and that which he now uses on hearing of the reaction which the report of it had caused in Ireland. "I fancy (says he) the occasion of the mistake is the opposition that was made against re-subscribing the Confession of Faith, which was proposed is one of our committees of Assembly, 1722, if I mind right, and dropped without a vote. But that is a quite distinct question from subscribing, which none among us ever opposed that I know of; and they would soon be taken up, if they did."¹³⁴

So eager were the church courts at this time in guarding against the infection of *The Marrow* that cases of license, ordination, and translation were decided according to the sentiments which the candidates were understood to hold respecting that prescribed publication.

The disposition of the judicatories (says a writer of that time), too evidently appeared, whenever any student or

candidate was supposed to be tainted with *The Marrow* that is, a gospel spirit. There was no quarter for such; queries upon queries were formed to discourage them, and stop their way, either of being entered upon trials, or ordained into churches; while those that were of the most loose and corrupt principles were most favoured by them. These things are too notour [i.e., notorious or infamous] to be denied; and these were some of the sad and lasting effects of the foresaid acts of Assembly, and the sad occasion of planting many churches with men that were little acquainted with the gospel, yea, enemies to the doctrine of grace. Many pious youths of sound principles, to whom now a door is opened in holy providence among us (the Seceders), had the door of entrance into the ministry quite barred against them; and we formerly fought many times as in an agony, and fought in vain, to have it set open to them.¹³⁵

But as this is the testimony of one who was engaged in the Representation, it may be proper to adduce a few facts.

In the course of the year 1722, two students of divinity were on trials before the presbytery of Edinburgh. One of them had for his subject the words of the apostle Paul, "So run that ye may obtain;" and he made use of certain expressions which led the presbytery to suspect that he "savoured of the *Marrow*." Two brethren were appointed to converse with him, with the view of ascertaining his real sentiments, and they reported their opinion that "the young man was not upon that way," in consequence of which his discourse was sustained. The youthful aspirant had the sagacity to perceive the object of the deputation with which he had been honoured, and did not neglect to avail himself of the discovery. Against next meeting of presbytery he addressed a letter to the moderator, Mr. Craig, in which he disowned the *Marrow*, and called it a "blasphemous book." The reporter of this anecdote, who was chaplain to a public institution in the city, and a great news monger, says, "One of the ministers thought this was a harsh expression, and some said one thing and some another, and so the young man's licensed."¹³⁶

The celebrated Boston, who for personal piety and ministerial gifts had then few equals in the Church of Scotland, was, in consequence of the part he took in this controversy, "staked down in Ettrick," a place unfavourable to his health, and where he encountered severe trials.¹³⁷ And on the same ground avowedly, the name of Mr. Ebenezer Erskine was not permitted to be put on the "leet" at an election in Kirkcaldy, and his translation to that parish was prevented, after the

133. Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mr. Charles Maisteron, June 28, 1725. [*Correspondence*, 3.214.]

134. Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mr. Charles Maisteron, Oct. 14, 1724. [*Correspondence*, 3.161.]

135. Ralph Erskine's *Faith no Fancy* [1805 ed.], p. 401.

136. Letter, Mr. J. Dougall, to Mr. Wodrow, July 21, 1722. [James Dougall, Edinburgh, letters of (1721-2), Wod.Lett.Qu. XV, ff.6-180 (*passim*). This is No. 117; cf. Lachman, p. 465.]

137. Boston's *Memoirs*. ["However, I had at that time ground to think, the Church would have some time or other removed me out of Etterick; till I fell under their displeasure in the affair of the Marrow, which I reckon to have staked me down in it." *A General Account of My life, Printed for the first time from the original manuscript*, ed. George D. Low (Hodder and Stoughton, [1908]), p. 229. The sentence does not appear in the *Memoirs* first published by Michael Boston in 1776, who weaved the two MS accounts of his father's life which he had maintained (*A General Account of My Life* and *Passages of My Life*) and who omitted this phrase and other passages as he saw fit to put the two together. M'Crie must have obtained the short phrase "Staked down in Ettrick," from John Brown of Whitburn's *Gospel Truth* (1831), p. 29, and since Brown does not attribute it, he must have assumed it was from the published *Memoirs* (note he does not give a page number). Brown could adduced the statement because he at that time was in possession of the manuscript of *A General Account of My Life*. See Low, Editor's preface, for an account of the manuscripts.]

cause had been brought before the supreme judicatory.¹³⁸ But the following case is less known, and of a more singular character.

In the year 1722, the town-council and general kirk-session of Edinburgh gave a call to Mr. John Hepburn, minister of Torryburn, to fill one of their churches then vacant. When the call was presented to the presbytery, on the 27th November, some members took notice that it was subscribed by only seven ministers and about twenty elders, not councilors.—There had been a party in the kirk-session in favour of another candidate, Mr. Smith, minister of Cramond; but no appearance was made in his behalf.¹³⁹ The presbytery judged it fit to converse with the non-subscribing ministers and elders, as to the reasons for withholding their names, and with this view the consideration of the affair was delayed until the 26th of December. On that day the ministers and elders who had not subscribed the call declared that their not signing arose from a conviction that the transporting of Mr. Hepburn from Torryburn, as things now stand in that corner of the country, would be attended with very great inconveniences and prejudices to the interests of religion. Passing by other things, they stated that the presbytery of Dunfermline consists of fourteen parochial charges, four of which are filled with ministers in a valetudinary state, or plainly in a dying condition; other four charges are filled with ministers who, whatever otherways are their merits, have given an open declaration of their favouring and supporting the doctrine of the *Marrow of Modern Divinity*, which the General Assemblies of the church have thought fit to condemn; that Aberdeen being vacant, the abettors of the *Marrow*, in the event of Mr. Hepburn's removal, and of the absence of the valetudinarians, would equal in number to the brethren who stand firm to the doctrine of the church; and that as the settlement of Aberdeen had been long obstructed, and other parishes must probably soon become vacant, the fore-mentioned brethren, already so near to an equality, would, in a very short time, have a considerable majority, and be able to do as they pleased within the bounds of the presbytery.

They further stated that by an act of Assembly 1694, designed transportations are not to be concurred with, except the greater good of the church be manifestly evident; and that they regarded this act as a rule to them in subscribing calls, as well as to presbyteries in concurring with them.

After hearing parties, the presbytery, considering how much the General Assemblies of this church have had this matter of purity of doctrine at heart, and what just concern they have showed to prevent the spreading

of errors and novelties, particularly those of the *Marrow*, did find themselves greatly diffculted; and without determining whether what had been represented was a sufficient ground for rejecting the call, being willing to show all possible regard to those concerned in it, were inclined to refer it to a superior judicatory for decision; and considering that the commission is empowered to act in all matters that concern purity of doctrine, it was put to the vote, and carried, *nem. con.* Refer to the commission; upon which the commissioner from the city of Edinburgh protested and appealed to the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale.

The cause came ultimately before the General Assembly by reference from the commission, and no small embarrassment was felt in settling it.

"A committee (says Mr. Wodrow, has been meeting on it for two days, and has postponed the general concerns of the church more than ever I saw. They reported, they had dealt 'twixt parties for peace, but with little success." The truth seems to be that the delicacy of bringing the real objection to the call before the open Assembly was felt, and therefore, a committee was appointed to persuade the town of Edinburgh to relinquish their object.¹⁴⁰ When this was found impracticable, the objection was avowed, and the assembly, after rescinding

138. Frazer's *Life of Ebenezer Erskine* [1831], p. 320–326.

139. "There is a new flame breaking out at Edinburgh. The magistrates and several of the elders, with some of the ministers, have carried a call for Mr. John Hepburn (old Mr. Hepburn's son), to a vacancy there. The plurality of the ministers and elders were for Mr. Smith of Cramond, and yet the council cast the scale for the other, and the presbytery have declined to concur with the council and remitted the matter to the commission, and the magistrates and callers have appealed to the Synod." (Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mr. M'Bride at Ballimoney, January 15, 1723.) [*Correspondence*, 3.9] A somewhat different account of the facts is given in the following extract: "I know not if I wrote you in my last that the call given by the town of Edinburgh to Mr. John Hepburn, minister at Torryburn, is referred by our presbytery to the next commission to be knocked down, though it be signed by eight ministers and all the elders but two or three, which is management somewhat singular, but not unusual with them." (Letter, Mr. William Hog to Mr. Wodrow, January 11, 1723.) [William Hog, Merchant, Edinburgh, letters of (1723), Wod.Lett.Qu.XV, ff.19, 27, 35.]

140. "In the afternoon, the town of Edinburgh's call to Mr. Hepburn came in, and the first question was, who were parties. The presbytery of Edinburgh, and the commission in March, making them parties, were heard, when the merits of the cause, the strengthening of the hands of the Marrow brethren in Dunfermline, giving them the vote by taking away Mr. Hepburn, and giving them occasion to license young men favouring the new scheme, was entered on," &c. (Letter, Mr. to Mrs. Wodrow, May 17, 1723.) [*Correspondence*, 3.50–51.] "Committees were appointed to converse with the parties, and try if the good town would fall from the call. When they would not do, the Presbytery of Edinburgh are ordained to concur," &c. (Letter, Mr. Wodrow to Mr. John Evans at London, May 18, 1723.) [*Correspondence*, 3.54.]

a vote of the commission finding the presbytery of Edinburgh parties, came to the following decision: That though the presbytery of Edinburgh had reason, conform to the views they then had of the circumstances of the presbytery of Dunfermline, to refer to the commission the affair of their giving their concurrence with the call, yet that it should now be concurred with, and prosecuted in the ordinary course; and that, in the event of Mr. Hepburn's transportation, the parish of Torryburn should not be planted but with the advice and at the direction of the synod of Fife. And so the "orthodox brother" was transported; but so tender were the presbytery of Edinburgh of the safety of their brethren of Dunfermline that they scrupulously abstained from taking any active part in the affair, even after the supreme court had authorized them, and made provision, in its wisdom, against the evil which they professed so much to dread."^[sic]¹⁴¹

The next case relates to an ordination. In the year 1729, Mr. Francis Craig received a harmonious call to the parish of Kinross, with concurrence of the patron, Sir Thomas Bruce Hope.¹⁴² It was with considerable difficulty that Mr. Craig, whose piety is praised equally by Mr. Boston and Mr. Wodrow, had been prevailed on to preach within the bounds of the presbytery of Dunfermline; owing, most probably, to the dissension which prevailed among its members, and the jealousy with which their proceedings were viewed by men of great influence in the church. When the call was laid before the presbytery, they, in deference to the opinion of some members who had heard surmises of his having imbibed divisive principles, examined him closely on that point, as well as on theology, and were so fully satisfied that

they agreed unanimously to proceed with his trials for ordination. But soon after this, they received a letter from the presbytery of St. Andrews, informing them that reports were abroad that Mr. Craig was friendly to the doctrines which the Assembly had condemned in the *Marrow*. In consequence of this information, the affair was referred to the synod, who resolved that he should be examined *de novo*. A committee of synod was appointed to meet at Cupar to prepare queries, which were to be transmitted to the presbytery of Dunfermline for their consideration, after which a joint meeting of the committee and presbytery was to be held at Kinross, to propose the queries and to judge of the answers that should be returned to them. The queries, which had not been transmitted according to appointment, were laid before the joint meeting, and amounted to twenty, comprehending all the points of doctrine contained in the acts of Assembly 1720 and 1722. These were put into Mr. Craig's hand, and he was required to give in written answers to them against the afternoon's sederunt. Within that short time he presented a paper, containing answers to all the questions but the last. Some members demurred to some of the answers, but no particular objection was stated; and all were struck with the proof which the young man had given of his ability in answering, on the spur of the moment, and with so much accuracy and distinctness, questions of such nicety, which had divided persons of great experience and skill.

The question which he declined answering was to this purpose, Do you approve of the acts of Assembly respecting the *Marrow*? It was urged by several members of court that the question should be dropped as highly improper; but Mr. Alexander Anderson and some others insisted that it should be put. Being called in, and told that he must return an answer in writing to the last question, he begged to be excused, and pled that it was not his business to approve or disapprove of particular acts of Assembly that he owned the acts in question to be deeds of the church, and did not in the least controvert them, and that it was his resolution not to oppose or meddle with them in public or in private. His request was refused, and he was required to give a direct answer; upon which he said that, being obliged to declare his private opinion, he was inclined to think that if the Assembly had taken more time, and fully considered what was advanced by the subscribers of the representation, it might have conducted more to the peace of the church, and that, according to his present light, he was of the sentiments of the representers, and was content to stand and fall with them. "This was what they wanted," says Mr. Wodrow, speaking of those who were adverse to

141. "As for our news here, I presume you heard an account of Mr. John Hepburn's call, which the Presbytery of Edinburgh, at their last meeting, referred to the commission, being unwilling to have any hand in transporting an orthodox brother from the Presbytery of Dunfermline, where the Marrow doctrine prevails so much." (Letter, Mr. Matthew Crawford to Mr. Wodrow, January 12, 1723.) "Mr. Hepburn's call was tabled before the Presbytery of Dunfermline, upon Wednesday last. This presbytery (of Edinburgh) refused to send any in their name to prosecute it." (Letter, the same to the same, July 5, 1723.) [Matthew Crawford, Professor of Church History, Edinburgh University, Letters of (1723–5), Wod.Lett.Qu. XVI, ff.13, 76, 163, 250, 265, 301, 417. If the close quotation mark is accurate, it is unclear where the open quotation mark should have been placed, particularly since double quotation marks are used around "orthodox brother."]

142. "Mr. John [Francis] Craig, son to Mr. Hugh Craig, minister at Galashiels, a good, honest man, was centered on by the parish of Kinross. Mr. Craig was a pious youth. [...] The people were as one man for him, save one Baillie [...] who influenced another. The more he preached there, the more they were built up in him." (*Analecta*, October 1729. [See volume 4 (1843), page 78].)

his settlement. The cause was referred to the provincial synod, to be held at Kirkcaldy in the end of September.

In the meantime, attempts had been made to stir up an opposition in the parish to the settlement. Sir Thomas Bruce Hope had died, and was succeeded by his brother Sir John. This gentleman, whose mind had been prepossessed against Mr. Craig by the individual who at first opposed the call, had signified to the presbytery his aversion to the settlement.¹⁴³ At the ensuing meeting of synod he appeared; and a few others gave in a paper purporting to be subscribed by a great many in the parish, and charging Mr. Craig with imprudencies in his preaching at Kinross. His answers to the queries were first read, and the synod, by a majority, declared they were not satisfied with them. They afterwards came to the following decision in the cause.

The synod considering not only that Mr. Craig's answers to the queries proposed to him had been found not satisfying by the above vote, but farther, the great change of the parish from what it was at the moderating the call, as appeared by the petition of Sir John Bruce Hope, and a great many others, against his settlement there; and also the imprudencies alleged against Mr. Craig in his lecturing and preaching at Kinross, represented in the above-mentioned declaration, subscribed by several hands; and that this synod were well informed that Mr. Craig himself had, before the presbytery and committee at Kinross and again before the presbytery itself, declared his willingness to quit the call of Kinross to him that he might be no more a bone of contention; and farther, his desiring the presbytery to take proper methods for the speedy planting that parish otherways; it was, upon the whole, put to the vote. Lay aside the call, or not? and the roll being called, and votes marked, it carried—Lay aside.

From this decision the parishioners appealed to the General Assembly, and a dissent was entered by nine ministers and eight elders.¹⁴⁴ The dissentients, in their reasons, complain that those who, in the course of reasoning, hinted dissatisfaction with Mr. Craig's answers, were repeatedly asked to condescend on anything that was faulty in them, but refused; that when it was proposed that the state of the vote should be—approve of the answers as a part of trials, this was also refused; and that by the state of the vote actually put, "every member of synod who did not fully understand the answers, or who perceived the least omission or failure of expression, was put *in toto* to condemn them;—by which method no man, more than Mr. Craig, can be in safety,

if a prevailing party in a judicatory has a mind to break either his character or his call.¹⁴⁵

As to the alteration of the inclination of the people, they deny that the least of it was made legally evident to the synod; the document adduced for it was made legally evident to the synod; the document adduced for it being an extrajudicial paper subscribed by several hands without any attestation, and not above three or four of the subscribers appearing to declare their adherence thereto. Besides, "it was judicially declared by members of Dunfermline that the said petition was subscribed by several infamous persons, lying under the censures of the church;—many of them were persons depending immediately on Sir John Bruce, particularly his menial servants; and others were influenced and compelled by threats and promises to subscribe, which those for Mr. Craig do in their petition offer to document." On the "alleged imprudencies," in lecturing and preaching at Kinross, it was contrary to all the principles of justice to introduce confessedly unproved allegations into the grounds of a sentence; the presbytery, on examination, were satisfied that they had originated in "the chimerical application of certain plain texts uttered by Mr. Craig,—which application he declared before the presbytery did never so much as once enter into his thoughts." When a patron has given his concurrence to a call, to allow his successor to interpose his influence for defeating its object, is to aggravate, instead of alleviating, the grievance of patronage. "Obliging young men to subscribe answers to proposed queries, as it is a method nowhere practiced now that we know of, in the Church of Scotland, except in the synod of Fife, so we judge it, *in terminis*, contrary to the 10th act of Assembly 1717, in the case of the presbytery of Auchterarder and Mr. William Craig, by which act the said presbytery, or any other presbytery, within this national church, are discharged to require subscriptions of any young man to be licensed to preach the gospel, or ordained to the office of the ministry, to

143. Sir John alleged as an objection to Mr. Craig, "that he had once been crazed in his mind." The following extract, while it explains the occasion of the unfeeling charge, puts us in possession at the same time, of the cause of the jealousy which the synod of Fife entertained of this probationer. "Mr Craig was a pious youth, under great deeps of exercise for some years, while a student in Edinburgh. When in the Lady Maitland's family, his serious exercise brought him to haunt with some of the Marrow brethren, or their followers." (Wodrow's *Analec̄ta*, October 1729.) [*Analec̄ta*, 4,78, 80.]

144. Copy, Minute of Synod of Fife, at Kirkcaldy, October 1, 1729. [See Minutes of the Synod of Fife, 1719–1738, National Archives of Scotland (National Records of Scotland), CH2/154/7.]

145. Copy, Reasons of Dissent from the Sentence, &c. [Ibid. See the discussion in Lachman, 467–472.]

any formula but such as is or shall be agreed to and approved by the Assembly of this church.”

On the query requiring Mr. Craig to express his opinion of the acts 1720 and 1722, the dissenters make the following remarks:—“It has a manifest tendency to perpetuate divisions and animosities among ministers and people who yet own one another’s orthodoxy and soundness in the faith, and who always are living in Christian communion and good understanding one with another; and we humbly think that, in the judgment of all sober persons, such handles of debate and strife among brethren should rather be sopite [i.e., to lull or put to sleep] and buried. It is well-known that there are few acts passed in the assemblies of the Church of Scotland, wherein members are perfectly of one mind; votes are divided through a diversity of sentiments; and, though as to the outward practice the

minor part yield unto the majority, yet the vote of the majority can never determine a man’s private light. And, therefore, we reckon it a piece of great cruelty to oblige a young man upon trials to propal [urge on] his private light or way of thinking about any particular act, anent which ministers themselves have different sentiments, without any detriment to the doctrine, worship, discipline, or government of this church; and if this practice of querying men upon particular acts be introduced, we do not know where it may land; perhaps a prevailing party may in a little propound questions after the same manner about other acts of Assembly. In fine, this practice has a tendency to alter and innovate the terms of ministerial communion, and to introduce other terms than those of Christ’s appointment, and that have been known in the churches of Christ, which may be of dangerous consequence, as laying a foundation for schisms and divisions in the body of Christ.”¹⁴⁶

146. Copy, Reasons of Dissent from a sentence of the Synod of Fife, laying aside the call to Mr. F. Craig from the parish of Kinross,—Mr. Wodrow has the following remarks on this decision of the synod: “This, as far as I can see, is a most imprudent and unhappy step, and is like to cast this poor divided rent church into a new labyrinth. On the one hand, the flames about the *Marrow* were just dying out, and the debates just ending. This will revive the whole, and the representing brethren will get multitudes to join them that were before opposite to their peculiar ways of speaking, which I am far from approving. And, which is in some respects as ill, this, especially after what has been of late as to Mr. Simson’s queries, and the battail we had there, [will] expose the method of queries, and stop any overtures in dependence about putting them. To urge and stop a man on his trials till he give a direct consent to all complex acts of Assembly, and make that a query, after satisfaction as to his soundness of the faith, is such a stretch in the method of queries as I do not see can be vindicated. I doubt not but this use of queries will be very satisfying to Mr. Simson and his friends, who with such keenness opposed this just method, when it’s regulated scripturally.”—(Wodrow’s *Analec̄ta*, September, 1729.) [*Analec̄ta*, volume 4 (1843), p. 80.]

147. “The affair of Kinross is referred to it,” says Mr. Wodrow, speaking of the commission. “Sir John Bruce, when meeting with some ministers at Kinross to oppose Mr. Craig, his horse fell with him and broke his leg. I heard, there were inclinations to be soft in that matter by the Synod of Fife, and that Sir John Bruce was falling from his opposition; but I doubt that will not hold.”—(*Analec̄ta*, May 1730.) [*Analec̄ta*, volume 4 (1843), p. 135.]

148. “Sir John Bruce, patron of Kinross, hath stopped payment of stipend to Mr. Ebenezer Erskine and Mr. Thomas Mair, upon the account of their non-jurancy. However the people pay their part, but he keeps L.60 in his own hands due to Mr. Erskine. The reason is, their opposing him in the settlement of Kinross. He intented a process before the Session this winter for a declaration of his not being obliged to pay the stipend to them since unqualified, or attempted it, but was dissuaded from it. Mr. Erskine tells me, he had advice of lawyers, he was in no hazard on many grounds. But soon after this attack, Sir John’s debtors fell on him for his debts, and he is like to run the country for his own debts.”—(Wodrow’s *Analec̄ta*, March 1731.) [*Analec̄ta*, volume 4 (1843), p. 215.]

The Assembly referred the cause to the commission and it was thought that the general feeling which had been expressed would teach the synod of Fife greater moderation, and induce Sir James Bruce to drop the opposition which he had made to the call.¹⁴⁷ But these expectations were disappointed. The determination which the church-courts had formed to resist popular election, joined with antipathy to the *Marrow* doctrine, induced the commission to confirm the sentence of the synod of Fife. Subsequently, the patron of Kinross, with the assistance of the synod, forced an unpopular candidate on the parish;¹⁴⁸ the body of the parishioners refused to acknowledge the intruder, and applied for religious privileges from the neighbouring ministers, who were prohibited by the church-courts from granting them; and the dissensions caused by this, and by similar occurrences in other parts of the country, contributed in no small degree to the secession which soon after took place from the national church.

It has been noticed that the arbitrary measures of the ecclesiastical judicatories had driven some of the ministers of the Church of Scotland to the opposite extreme of Independency. Mr. Glass, minister of Tealing, having been prosecuted for denying Presbyterian government and national churches, and for certain irregular practices founded upon these sentiments, was, in the year 1729, deposed by the commission. A remonstrance against this sentence was sent by some of the southern presbyteries in which the representers had influence, and it was anticipated that this would produce a division among them, fatal to their cause, as their brethren in the north were unanimous in their opposition to the

views of Glass.¹⁴⁹ There is no evidence that Mr. Boston ever adopted the sentiments of his friends Mr. Wilson and Mr. Davidson, but he might be induced to join in the remonstrance under the idea that ministerial liberty had been encroached on unduly in the process referred to, and there is reason to suspect that, by professing to agree with him on some points connected with the Marrow controversy, Professor Hamilton, who endeavoured to screen Mr. Glass from censure, insinuated himself at this time into his confidence.¹⁵⁰ The processes against Mr. Simson on the one hand, and Mr. Glass on the other, together with the alarming increase of intrusions, appear to have abated the temporary coldness which the dispute about the *Marrow* had produced between certain brethren; but there is no reason to believe that any of the representers either retracted or repented of the sentiments which they had so solemnly avowed.¹⁵¹ Mr. Boston published his Notes to the *Marrow* in 1726, and subsequently taught the same doctrine in his work on the Covenant of Grace. Mr. Ebenezer Erskine defended the main point in the dispute, in his sermons on the Assurance of Faith; and all the doctrines held by the representers were stated and vindicated by him in common with his brethren of the Secession, in their Act concerning the Doctrine of Grace.

It was customary at that period for presbyteries to send written instructions, along with their commissioners, to the General Assembly, suggesting such things as they thought demanded the attention of the supreme court. Though these were little attended to, unless when they fell in with the views of the leaders, yet they show the feeling which pervaded different portions of the church, and it may not be improper to give a specimen of them during the period referred to.

Anno 1722.—"Considering that a book, the *Marrow*, condemned by the late assembly, has been published and spread in their bounds that their members represent the transgression of the act by publishing a second edition of it, and concur in suppressing it." (Presbytery of Lanark.)—"That the Rev. Mr. James Hadow greet the public thanks of the Assembly for the great pains he has been at in vindicating the act of Assembly 1720, by his writing and publishing the *Antinomianism of the Marrow Detected*." (Presbytery of Brechin.)—"That the fourth act, 1720, obliging only ministers, members of Assembly, to sign the Confession and Formula 1711 that the Assembly appoint all the ministers of this national church to sign it in their presbyteries." (Synod of Fife.)—"That the Assembly take to task the authors of all books containing heresy and error, particularly with respect to these antinomian errors contained in

the *Marrow*." (Presbytery of Chanonry.)—"That the Assembly enquire how the 9th act, 1717, relating to Mr. Simson, hath been observed and obtempered [submitted to] by him." (Presbytery of Biggar.)

Anno 1723.—"To bear testimony to the doctrine of this church against antinomianism and other errors, particularly the *Marrow*; and that that book be suppressed, and that the Assembly proceed, as accords, against all who defend it." (Presbytery of Sky.)—"That as our church hath appeared against antinomianism, they should likewise prevent Arminian, Baxterian, and other errors." (Presbytery of Forres.)—"Remonstrance against the omission of the act 1647, approving and receiving the Confession of Faith, of the Solemn League, and of the Acknowledgment of Sins, 'public and approved deeds of this church, and a part of our Standard,' and against binding up a large Preface before said edition, said to be done by a private hand, and not approved by any act of this church." (Synod of Fife.)

149. After stating that in the instructions of presbyteries to the Assembly there was a general inclination against Mr. Simson being reposed [i.e., restored to former office] even to preaching, Mr. Wodrow says, "on the other hand, by influence from Professor H. [Hamilton] who was for Mr. Glass, there is a great appearance from the Synod of Merse against the commission's procedure against Mr. Glass. Particularly, I am told that the Marrow brethren, M. Wilson, Mr. Boston, and Davidson, were very keen against the Synod of Angus' proceedings, and under pretext of liberty, and out of regard to the Independents, were violent against Mr. Glass' deposition. And the flaming instructions from the presbytery of Jedburgh, they say, were drawn by Riccarton, [Riccartoun] the author of the *Sober Enquiry* and the *Political Disputant*, who is thought to favour the *Marrow*. Whereas, the Marrow brethren in Fife are violent against Mr. Glass; and his opposition to our covenants and national establishments, they give justly as the reason of it. Whether this will create any misunderstanding among the twelve representers or not, I cannot say. Time will try."—(*Analeceta*, May 1730.) [*Analeceta*, volume 4 (1843), p. 80.]

150. Boston's *Memoirs* [1776], anno 1729, p. 442. Mr. Wodrow produces several grounds for thinking that Professor Hamilton was unsound in his creed, and secretly inclines to the tenets of Professor Simson. (*Analeceta*, vol. vi. pp. 167, 229.) They are now, however, decisive. [See *Analeceta*, volume 4 (1843), 139.]

151. "The affair of the *Marrow* is at some stand. The appearance of these brethren in the Synod of the Merse in favour of Mr. Glass, is disliked by Mr. Hog and the ministers representers in Fife, and I doubt will be the occasion of a coldness among the Marrow brethren. There seems to be an inclination in the ministers favouring the *Marrow* in Fife to confer with the brethren who differed from them, to renounce the things charged upon them as to assurance being of the essence of faith. And of late Mr. J. Hog, and Mr. Logan, and some others, are in tolerable terms; and Mr. Logan his joining in the dissent in the affair of Hutton is like to cement the differences in Fife. Certainly, if some new thing fall not in, the affair of the *Marrow*, and of representing brethren, will come to nothing; and the less it is noticed and meddled with, its like to dwindle more away." (Wodrow's *Analeceta*, May 1730.) [See *Analeceta*, volume 4 (1843), 135–6.]

Anno 1725.—A remonstrance similar to the above was sent from the synod of Perth, and presbyteries of Perth and Kirkaldy.—“That the overture of last Assembly for subscribing the Confession of Faith be enacted, on account of the progress of error, and opposition to Confessions in England and Ireland.” (Presbytery of Dunfermline.) – “That for healing the breaches of this church, and preventing of separation, etc., the subsequent Assembly make a full and formal act, narrating the substance of our Covenants, National and Solemn League, declaring our adherence to the same as agreeable to the Word of God, and the constant obligation thereof on all members of this church, and appointing this act to be subscribed by all ministers and elders of this church, and that others who are willing to join be invited to do the same, in such a way and manner as the Assembly shall think fit.” (Presbytery of Brechin.)¹⁵²

The Marrow controversy, after it had subsided in Scotland, was introduced, as to the substance of it, into England and America. In the former country, the celebrated

Mr. Hervey adopted the views of the Scottish representers as to faith and appropriating assurance, in his well-known work, entitled *Theron and Aspasio*,¹⁵³ which was assailed, with as much acerbity as ability, by Mr. Sandeman, one of the disciples of Mr. Glass. In America, the opinions of Marshall and Hervey were attacked by Mr. Bellamy, and defended by Dr. Anderson, in different publications, and particularly in a formal answer to the Letters and Dialogues of the last named writer, which was published so late as the beginning of this century.

It is not intended, however, to prosecute the history farther here, or to take notice of recent disputes which have a remote connexion with it; nor would it be proper, in a publication of this kind, to discuss the merits of the controversy, or to indulge in reflections on the manner in which it was conducted. Enough, it is presumed, has been said to make the reader acquainted with the facts of a dispute to which circumstances have of late called public attention, and to put him in possession of the sentiments held by the respective parties.¹⁵⁴■

152. Instructions by Presbyteries and Synods to their commissioners to the General Assembly, annis 1722–1725. [These instructions appear to be in the General Assembly MSS of the Church of Scotland. See General Assembly Papers, 1722, volume 2, NAS CH1/2/46, Instructions by presbyteries of Taine and Chanonrie, pp. 157–158. Overture and instructions of synod of Fife. pp. 219–221. Instructions of presbyteries of Lanark, Strathbogie, Brechin and Biggar, pp. 297–300. General Assembly Papers, 1723, volume 2, NAS CH1/2/48, Instructions, pp. 219–253. General Assembly Papers, 1725, volume 1, NAS CH1/2/50, Instructions, pp. 155–163.]

153. The following is Mr. Hervey's opinion of the *Marrow of Modern Divinity*, with Boston's notes:—“A book designed to guard equally against Antinomian licentiousness, and legal bondage. The thoughts are just and striking; the arguments solid and convincing; the diction is familiar, yet pernicious; and the doctrine exceedingly comfortable, because truly evangelical. The notes are, I think, a master-piece of candid and judicious criticism, in which the nice discernment of the logician sifts, distinguishes and adjusts the rich furniture of the divine. Perhaps, I may venture to say that this little treatise pours as much light upon the gospel and grace of Christ, and, together with the notes, affords as many important distinctions in divinity, as any book of its size whatever.” ([James Hervey,] *Theron and Aspasio* [or, a series of Dialogues and Letters upon the most important and interesting subjects, in two volumes], Dial. 18, vol. ii p. 358. Edinburgh, 1775.)

154. [M'Crie's comments about recent interest and the need to bring

some clarity to The Marrow Controversy relate to the Row Controversy (1828–1831) previously noted involving Thomas Erskine and John McLeod Campbell. This controversy was unfolding as M'Crie was writing and publishing his articles in *The Edinburgh Christian Instructor*. The editor of that publication at that time was Andrew Thomson who had rebutted the “Row” view of universal atonement in *The Doctrine of Universal Pardon Considered and Refuted, in a Series of Sermons: with Notes, Critical and Expository* (Edinburgh: W. Whyte, 1830). “In 1825 he [Campbell] was ordained and inducted to the parish of Row (Rhu) in Dumbartonshire. Shortly afterwards rumours began to circulate that strange doctrines were being preached from the Row pulpit and Campbell was called to account by his local presbytery. The case eventually ended up in the General Assembly and Campbell was deposed from the ministry on 24 May, 1831. There is a superficial resemblance between the case of McLeod Campbell and the case of the Marrow Men, in that the case against him was based on the 1720 finding (the Black Act) which had condemned the Twelve Brethren. This, like much else in the proceedings against Campbell, was highly irregular: the Black Act was not part of the constitution of the Church, and had itself been condemned by such eminent nineteenth-century churchmen as Andrew Thomson. It was chosen because it included a formal Assembly condemnation of the two heresies of which Campbell was accused: universal redemption, and assurance being of the essence of faith. But Campbell was no Marrow Man.” Donald Macleod, “Reformed Theology in Scotland,” *Theology in Scotland* 17, no. 2 (2010): 11.

The Pilgrims, Seventeenth-Century English Emigrants: Celebrating the Quadricentennial of the Voyage of the *Mayflower*

By Frank J. Smith

They were called Brownists, and Separatists. But we know them today as the Pilgrims. The people whose name is inextricably linked with the founding of New England were indeed on a pilgrimage—a spiritual pilgrimage through this world, which was also bound up with a literal pilgrimage across the Atlantic.

Like the story told in John Bunyan's *A Pilgrim's Progress*, these seventeenth-century English emigrants were on a personal quest for the Celestial City. But their 1620 voyage to the New World illustrated the communal nature of their effort. They were desirous of establishing, in the words of John Winthrop, a leader of the Puritan settlers in Massachusetts Bay a decade later, a city set on a hill. It was not as individuals that they came to America—it was as members of a persecuted sect, seeking not only to escape persecution but also to erect an ideal society centered around their body of believers. Simultaneously, there would be an evangelistic dimension, viz., the propagation of the gospel to the Indians. And it is their story from four centuries ago which inspires us today.

I. THE PILGRIMS' BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

Doctrine

So, who exactly were the Pilgrims? Well, in the first place, they were Christians. As such, they believed that the Bible is the Word of God, holy, inerrant, and inspired. They were Trinitarian, holding that God eternally exists in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Accordingly, they professed that Jesus Christ is both God and man. These points of doctrine are held in common across a wide spectrum, including Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant.

Pilgrims were Protestants. With Martin Luther (1483–1546), they believed in the five “solas” of the Reformation: *sola gratia* (salvation by grace alone); *sola fides*

(salvation through faith alone); *solus Christus* (salvation based upon Christ alone); *sola scriptura* (as taught in the Bible alone); *soli Deo gloria* (for the glory of God alone). Consonant with these five “solas” is a belief in justification by faith alone, in which an individual is pronounced “not guilty” in God’s courtroom, based upon the imputed righteousness of Christ, and received by faith alone.

Pilgrims were Calvinists—followers of John Calvin (1509–1564). They believed in the sovereignty of God, and particularly in His having predestined His chosen people (the elect) to salvation.

Pilgrims were Covenantalists. They believed that God relates to mankind through covenants, such as the covenant of works and the covenant of grace (which itself has two modes of administration, viz., old covenant and new covenant), and that men and women can thus relate to each other covenantally.

Worship

Pilgrim worship services, like many Protestant worship services, were simple. There was nothing elaborate about the worship they offered. Pilgrim worship featured Bible reading, prayer, singing, preaching, and the sacraments.

And unlike the Anglican Church, from which the Pilgrims separated, there was no elaborate liturgy, such as recitation of set prayers and responsive readings of Scripture.

Pilgrim worship was Word-based—it was not emotionalistic nor a deliberate appeal to the senses. There was no burning of candles or incense, and there was no symbolic use of color, including with respect to vestments.

Speaking of the Bible, though the King James Version

THE AUTHOR: Frank J. Smith, Ph.D., D.D., is the pastor of Atlanta Reformed Presbyterian Church (RPCNA) in Atlanta, Ga. and one of the editors of *The Confessional Presbyterian*.

was published in 1611, the Pilgrims preferred to continue to use the Geneva Bible, which contained commentary promoting a Calvinistic understanding of Scripture.

Pilgrim services were long. The sermon could often stretch for an hour or two. As one scholar has noted, “The Sunday morning worship would last from eight to noon. Being less formal, the afternoon service would often include ‘prophesyings’ (lay preaching), with previously selected male members speaking from Scripture texts assigned by the pastor.”¹

And Pilgrim worship, like the Calvinistic approach to worship, was regulated—seeking to follow the Bible strictly in terms of worship. This viewpoint contrasted with the Roman Catholic and Lutheran perspective, which would allow worship practices that were not specifically prohibited by the Bible. Rather, the Pilgrims believed that any legitimate worship practice had to be positively commanded by Scripture—either by explicit statement, or by good and necessary consequence.

Pilgrims and Worship Music

Pilgrims sang *a cappella*. Not using musical accompaniment matched the reforms promulgated by Zwingli and Calvin, as musical instruments were regarded by the Reformed branch of the Reformation as belonging to the Jewish worship of the Old Testament—ceremonial worship that not only was ethnic specific (in contrast to the universal nature of the New Testament), but also had been fulfilled by the coming of Christ, His death, resurrection, and ascension, and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

Pilgrim worship songs were the 150 Biblical Psalms. Part of the reason for this utilization was that the Pilgrims identified with ancient Israel. Like all Calvinists, the Pilgrims understood that believers in the New Covenant were the New Israel of God.²

1. David Beale, *The Mayflower Pilgrims: Roots of Puritan, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and Baptist Heritage* (Greenville, S.C. and Belfast, N.I.: Ambassador-Emerald International, 2000), p. 71.

2. Even the language of the Jews held fascination for those in the Puritan movement: “Hebrew possessed a special appeal for Puritans. They wished to swim back up the stream of learning and to absorb the wisdom of the Bible from as close to the source as possible, free from what they saw as Roman Catholic duplicity or errors in translation.” Nick Bunker, *Making Haste in Babylon: The Mayflower and Their World: A New History* (New York: Vintage, 2011), pp. 60ff.

3. Henry Ainsworth, *The booke of Psalmes, Englished both in prose and metre with annotations, opening the words and sentences, by conference with other Scriptures* (Amsterdam: Printed by Thomas Stafford, and are to be sold at his house..., 1644).

4. Waldo Selden Platt, *The Music of the Pilgrims: A description of the Psalm-book brought to Plymouth in 1620* (Boston: Oliver Ditson Company, 1921), pp. 10ff.

Psalm singing was not unique to the Reformed Church. For centuries, the Roman and Orthodox churches had sung the Psalms of David, but the standard way of doing so had been by means of chanting—a medium which often required a high level of musical expertise. Accordingly, the performance of church music customarily was done by the “professionals,” such as monks. The Reformed branch of the Reformation developed a unique approach, by which the psalms were set to meter and rhyme. This method was easier to sing than Gregorian chants, thereby making the singing more accessible to the people as a whole.

One of the hallmarks of Protestantism was congregational singing. Rather than leaving this part of worship to a select group, such as priests or monks, the entire congregation was regarded as the “choir.”

The Pilgrims took seriously all of worship, including the music. Indeed, they were very adept in this musical ability. The singing of the original Pilgrims was not only fervent and devout, but also beautiful.

Ainsworth Psalter

The Pilgrims’ psalter was that produced in 1612 by Henry Ainsworth.³ With respect to the tunes, Ainsworth wrote: “I find none set of God: so that each people is to use the most grave, decent, and comfortable manner of singing that they know, according to the generall rule: 1 Cor. 14, 26.40. The singing notes therefore I have most taken from our former Englished Psalmes, when they will fit the measure of the verse; and for the other long verses, I have also taken (for the most part) the gravest and easiest tunes of the French and Dutch Psalmes.”

Ainsworth was obviously following the Calvinist practice of metrical psalmody, with each psalm being put into meter. But in contrast to what characterized English psalmody, there was great variety represented in this psalter. What became known as Common Meter (abbreviated C.M.), with its familiar 8.6.8.6. pattern (that is, eight syllables for the first line, followed by six syllables on the second line), is called “Common” precisely because it became the dominant pattern. However, of the 39 different tunes in the Ainsworth collection, only two were 8.6.8.6. While several of the other fourteen different types of meters were short in length, quite a few were lengthy, reflecting the style in vogue on the Continent.⁴

Three centuries later, a scholar observed that the music of the Ainsworth version “represents the folk-song style with its symmetrical and echoing lines, each with a definite unity and all fused into a total enveloping unity. But it is folk-song that has retained great freedom

Two versions of Psalm 100. The first is from the Geneva Bible, and is designed to be read as part of worship. The other is the metrical version found in the Ainsworth Psalter.

Geneva Bible

Psalm 100. A Psalm of Praise.

- ¹Sing ye loud unto the Lord, all the earth.
- ²Serve the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyfulness.
- ³Know ye that even the Lord is God; he hath made us, and not we ourselves: *we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
- ⁴Enter into his gates with praise, *and* into his courts with rejoicing: praise him *and* bless his Name.
- ⁵For the Lord is good: his mercy is everlasting, and his truth *is* from generation to generation.

Ainsworth Psalter

Psalm 100

- ¹*Shout to Jehovah, all the Earth.*
- ²*Serve ye Jehovah with gladness.*
- Before Him come with singing mirth.*
- ³*Know that Jehovah, he God is.*
- It's He that made us, and not we.*
- His folk, and sheep of his feeding.*
- ⁴*O, with confession, enter yee*
- His gates, His courtyards with praising.*
- Confess to Him, Bless ye His name.*
- ⁵*Because Jehovah, He good is.*
- His mercy ever is the same.*
- And His faith, unto all ages.*

of inner structure.” The tunes were derived “from the vigorous movements of the brightly folk-dance. It may be guessed that the tempo originally was not slow or heavy but lively and sparkling, and that the accents were full and hearty.” Indeed, “these tunes were anything but monotonous or dolorous.” Many of them “turn out to be true works of simple art.”⁵

As Ainsworth recounted, he aimed deliberately to be faithful to the Hebrew text of the psalter, while at the same time “Englishing” the words so as to put the renderings into the common tongue of the people.

The musical instruments of the old economy, such as psalteries, harps, and others, are no longer employed in the new covenant; “yet doth not the ceasing of that music, abolish the singing of psalms with melodie in our hearts: any more than the ceasing of incense, which was burned with prayer, doth abolish now prayer out of the Church.”

Ecclesiology

Though sharing much in common with the Puritans—and indeed, one could consider the Pilgrims as part of a broad Puritan movement in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—the Pilgrims differed in one key matter: ecclesiology, or, the nature of the church.

While the Puritans were committed to attempt to purify the Church of England, the Pilgrims had concluded

that the Anglican Church was hopelessly corrupt and therefore the only faithful response was to separate. Ecclesiastical separation was the distinguishing mark of the Pilgrims.

This commitment to Separatism manifested itself in other ways. For example, the Pilgrims rejected the idea of an established church (supported by the civil government), and instead promoted the concept of a gathered church with totally voluntary rather than compelled participation. They also came to believe in a Congregationalist viewpoint, in which each congregation was independent and self-sufficient.⁶

One of their key leaders was John Robinson. His academic skill is demonstrated by the fact that the University of Leiden made him an honorary member in 1615. His Reformed theological credentials can be seen from his having participated in debates that preceded the Synod of Dordt (1618–1619). More than that, Robinson was a skilled and loving shepherd—a quality which was “in striking contrast to Separatist squabbling elsewhere.” Accordingly, he was a popular credible apologist “for the Separatist way.”⁷

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 16, 19.

6. Beale, *The Mayflower Pilgrims*, pp. 11–12.

7. Timothy George, *John Robinson and the English Separatist Tradition* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1982), p. 90, cited in Beale, *The Mayflower Pilgrims*, p. 81.

Perhaps his more genial spirit led to a separatist position that was not nearly as strict as that of others.

Robinson was willing to fellowship personally with Puritans and Anglicans who lived godly lives.... Robinson allowed for members of Separatist churches to hear sermons preached by godly ministers of the Church of England. Such a milder form of Separatism helps to explain why the New England Pilgrims were not separated enough for Roger Williams and why, on the other hand, they got along so well with the Massachusetts Puritans.⁸

Nevertheless, Robinson was “a staunch advocate of Separatist ecclesiology in all of its essentials, and consistently refused to recognize any parish in England as a true visible Church.”⁹ This separatist position earned the opposition of both Anglicans and Presbyterians. For instance, a Church of England clergyman, Joseph Hall, took him to task for abandoning his spiritual mother. “This unnaturalness is shameful; and more hainous [*sic*] in you, who are reported, not parties in this evill, but authors.”¹⁰

Representing the Scottish Presbyterian viewpoint, Samuel Rutherford also argued against the Separatists, offering an extensive rebuttal to their arguments. In answering Robinson on one of his contentions, the Scotsman wrote: “There are great odds between a forward generation professedly Christ to be come in the flesh, as the Jews (*Act. 2*), and between a church where there are many wicked persons, who in their life and conversation deny Christ, and yet do believe soundly or orthodoxly the fundamental points of salvation, and hold to profession the orthodox faith; for though we are to separate from the bad conversation of such a generation, yet are we not to separate from the church worship, and church society of such a generation.”¹¹

These separatist views not only were repudiated by churchmen committed to established religion, but they also led to intense persecution in England, including

fines, imprisonment, torture, and death. Quite a few Separatists risked everything to flee to Leiden, the Netherlands, in 1608, where they could practice their faith freely.

However, they eventually felt uncomfortable in their adopted country, and they traveled back to England—from whence many of them would embark on a voyage to the New World.

II. THE PILGRIMS’ VOYAGE TO AMERICA *Why Did They Come to America?*

Every schoolchild knows why Christopher Columbus sailed the ocean blue in 1492—for the 3 G’s of God, gold, and glory. For the Pilgrims, though there were factors such as promoting the kingdom of England and bringing honor to the settlers, the motivation primarily was for God and His glory.

One aspect of the religious dimension was that of religious liberty. Given the persecution of the Pilgrims in England for their faith, escaping that oppression is the obvious answer for their wanting to come to America, and reflects their conscientious commitment. Faced with persecution, in which they either had to give up their beliefs, or suffer for them, going to the New World was one way out of their dilemma. But it is not the whole story.

The proclamation of the gospel was another concern. Akin to one of the goals for the founding of Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607, the evangelizing of the natives was a major reason for the Pilgrims’ voyage.

And more broadly, we can say that the Pilgrims wanted to build Christ’s kingdom. Similar to the Puritans’ desire to establish in New England a “city set on a hill,” the Pilgrims likewise sought to establish a model society.

In 1623, one Pilgrim offered specific “Reasons and Considerations Touching the Lawfulness of Removing Out of England Into the Parts of America.”¹² First, given their daily prayer for the conversion of the natives, it is reasonable to believe that those prayers will be answered through ordinary means rather than “only referred to God’s extraordinary work from heaven.” Also, the land in the colony was common land and largely empty and unused.

And secondly, the “emperor” (Indian chief Massasoit) allowed them to live in his land, not only because they are the servants of King James “whose the land (as he confesseth) is,” but also because the chief had found them “just, honest, kind and peaceable, and so loves our company.”

8. Beale, *The Mayflower Pilgrims*, p. 81.

9. George, *John Robinson and the English Separatist Tradition* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1982), p. 241, cited in Beale, *The Mayflower Pilgrims*, p. 81.

10. John Robinson, *Works of John Robinson with a Memoir and Annotations*, ed. Robert Ashton (London: John Snow, 1851), III:401–420, cited in Beale, *The Mayflower Pilgrims*, p. 81.

11. Samuel Rutherford, “On Separation from Corrupt Churches,” *Naphtali Press: An Anthology of Presbyterian & Reformed Literature*, Vol. 2 n. 2 (Spring 1989): 12.

12. Jordan D. Fiore, ed., *Mourt’s Relation: A Journal of the Pilgrims of Plymouth* (Plymouth, Mass.: Plymouth Rock Foundation, 1985), pp. 77–82.

The Journey on Board the 'Mayflower'

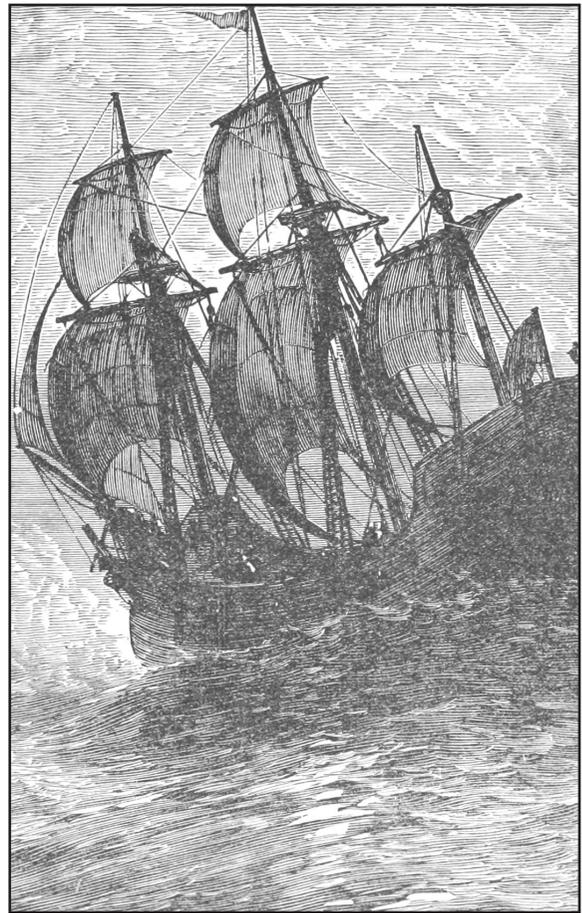
On August 15th, 1620,¹³ two vessels, *Mayflower* and *Speedwell*, sailed out of Southampton, England, carrying settlers bound for the new world. However, the *Speedwell*, which was one-third the size of *Mayflower*, developed leaks, and therefore did not speed very well. The two-ship convoy returned twice to England in what proved to be a futile effort to repair the smaller ship. On September 6th, *Mayflower*, alone, departed Plymouth.¹⁴

Mayflower was not designed as an ocean-going vessel, and it certainly was not a luxury cruise ship. She was a cargo ship, which had plied the waters of the Baltic and North Seas, as she carried salt, hops, vinegar, hats, hemp, wine, and cognac, returning to Britain with fish, tar, and pine planks. She had also crossed the English Channel, transporting cloth to Rochelle and Bordeaux, and returning with fine French wine.

In addition to the 54 Pilgrims, there were another 48 passengers. Of these 102 people, there were 50 men, 20 women, 22 boys, and 10 girls. The crew totaled 12, of which 5 were among the would-be settlers. Thus there was a total of 109 souls on board when she left port. While *en route*, two men died and were buried at sea, and one young man, John Howland, fell overboard and was amazingly rescued by holding onto a rope and being hauled back onto the deck. Meanwhile, a baby boy, appropriately named Oceanus, was born during the voyage, and another boy, Peregrine, was birthed while the ship lay at anchor off of Cape Cod.

The trans-Atlantic journey was extraordinarily difficult. It covered 3,500 miles at an average speed of 46 miles per day, or less than 2 miles per hour. As recounted by William Bradford in his *Of Plymouth Plantation*, "cross winds and . . . many fierce storms" severely shook the ship, "and one of the main beams in the midships was bowed and cracked, which put them in some fear that the ship could not be able to perform the voyage." However, "the mast and others affirmed that they knew the ship to be strong and firm under water; and for the buckling of the main beam, there was a great iron screw the passengers brought out of Holland which would raise the beam into his place." Finally, on November 9th, after 64 days at sea, land was sighted! Two days later, while the ship lay at anchorage at what is currently Provincetown, the Mayflower Compact was drawn up and signed.

On December 18th, 1620, as the Pilgrims landed in the place where they established Plymouth Colony, they stepped onto a boulder which became known as Plymouth Rock. This granite stone was originally much bigger than it is today, as pieces of it were split off over time.



The *Mayflower* at sea. From, *United States; a history: the most complete and most popular history of the United States of America from the aboriginal times to the present day* (1893).

The piece of Plymouth Rock that is displayed outdoors in Plymouth, Massachusetts, is about the size of a dining room table. The year of the landing, 1620, had been chiseled into the rock in 1880.

No one knows exactly what happened to the original *Mayflower*, though strong evidence suggests that she was broken up around 1624. In 1957, a replica, *Mayflower II*, was constructed in England and sailed across the Atlantic—a journey recounted in the *National Geographic* (November 1957). An automated, crewless, solar-powered trimaran of modern design, dubbed *Mayflower Autonomous Ship*, is slated to reenact the voyage in 2021.

13. We will be using the dates then in place, which are Old Style (O.S.). In 1752, England adjusted its calendar in accord with what the rest of Europe had previously done. Using New Style (N.S.), August 15th would have been August 25th.

14. Much of the information regarding the *Mayflower* comes from Beale, *The Mayflower Pilgrims*.



The pilgrims signing the compact, on board the *Mayflower*, Nov. 11th, 1620, by T. H. Matteson, engraved by Gauthier.

The Mayflower Compact

The Pilgrims were supposed to settle in “Virginia,” which then stretched from Jamestown up to the mouth of the Hudson River. *Mayflower*, after a dreadful journey of nine weeks, fought against contrary winds as it reached Cape Cod in present-day Massachusetts, but could not proceed farther south. In effect, the ship was blown off course—a circumstance that would lead to the formulation of an historic document.

Settling in an area outside of where the charter specified put these emigrants in an extra-legal position. Given the possibility of controversy and conflict, there was the need for a formal agreement amongst themselves. Accordingly, one of the leaders drew up what became known as the Mayflower Compact. A pact or compact is like a covenant.

The importance of this document cannot be overestimated. This is the first written constitution in American history. Arguably, it is as significant as other foundational documents such as the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution—especially because

it was the first document that implicitly maintained the notion of the consent of the governed (while still recognizing the rule of King James I). Or, we could say that this document celebrated the principle of self-government.

Relations with the Natives

After a hard winter (1620–1621), the Pilgrims were struggling for survival, when all of a sudden, on March 26th, an Algonkian Indian walked into Plymouth. Chief Samoset had learned English from fishing captains. On April 1st, he returned with Squanto, another English-speaking Indian, the last of the Patuxet tribe, which had been wiped out in a mysterious plague in 1616. It was the Patuxets’ cleared land that the Pilgrims occupied.

Squanto provided invaluable advice which enabled the Plymouth Colony to survive. He and Samoset arranged for a meeting with Chief Massasoit of the Wampanoags, the Pilgrims’ nearest neighbors. The resulting friendship led to a peace treaty that lasted half a century.

The Peace Treaty with Massasoit (1621)

1. That neither he [Massasoit] nor any of his should injure or do hurt to any of our people.
2. And if any of his did hurt to any of ours, he should send the offender, that we might punish him.
3. That if any of our tools were taken away when our people were at work, he should cause them to be restored, and if ours did any harm to any of his, we would do the like to them.
4. If any did unjustly war against him, we would aid him; if any did war against us, he should aid us.
5. He should send to his neighbor confederates, to certify them of this, that they might not wrong us, but might be likewise comprised in the conditions of peace.
6. That when their men came to us, they should leave their bows and arrows behind them, as we should do our peace [firearm] when we came.
7. Lastly, that doing thus, King James would esteem of him as his friend and ally.

III. THE PILGRIMS' LEGACY

A Legacy of Self-government

The Mayflower Compact was key in establishing a principle of people being governed by elected leaders rather than by royalty ruling according to "divine right of kings." Also, significantly, the agreement was in writing.

This policy of self-government was put into practice in both civil and church realms. In terms of civil government, the colonists annually elected a governor. For thirty years, by vote of the people, William Bradford served as governor of Plymouth Colony.

But also in terms of church government, the people selecting their own elders reinforced the principle that rulers should be elected rather than imposed from the top down, as in the Anglican Church with its bishops under the authority of the king.

Thanksgiving

The thanksgiving observance by the Pilgrims in 1621 was not the first in America. Among English colonists, that honor goes to Jamestown, Virginia. Nevertheless, what happened in Plymouth Colony has become the best-known such event—at least in part because of the friendship and sharing between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoags on this occasion.

As with the Puritans, thanksgiving for the Pilgrims

Agreement Between the Settlers at New Plymouth
 IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN. We, whose names are underwritten, the Loyal Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King *James*, by the Grace of God, of *Great Britain, France, and Ireland*, King, *Defender of the Faith*, &c. Having undertaken for the Glory of God, and Advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the first Colony in the northern Parts of *Virginia*; Do by these Presents, solemnly and mutually, in the Presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick, for our better Ordering and Preservation, and Furtherance of the Ends aforesaid: And by Virtue hereof do enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions, and Officers, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general Good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due Submission and Obedience. IN WITNESS whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at *Cape-Cod* the eleventh of November, in the Reign of our Sovereign Lord King *James*, of *England, France, and Ireland*, the eighteenth, and of *Scotland* the fifty-fourth, *Anno Domini*; 1620.

was primarily religious in nature. It was a special occasion for giving thanks to God for His many mercies. It was *not* designed as an annual event—it was to be observed for particular divine blessings. In a similar way, fasts were employed on an occasional basis—whenever divine Providence indicated the need for an intense time for prayer and humiliation before God.

Besides involving acts of worship, such as prayer, singing psalms, and preaching, thanksgiving was also a time for feasting. Chief Massasoit, having been invited to the meal, brought his own guests—90 Indians. He also provided five dressed deer and wild turkey. So, turkey was on the menu, but it would not have been Butterball or Perdue—only the wild variety. Other wildfowl, such as duck and goose, most likely were more prominent. Other foods at that feast could have been carrier pigeon, corn, and seafood, including eel, lobster, clams, and mussels. Beer and wine would have freely flowed. Various fruits would have been featured, including cranberries, which traditionally accompanied game meat. However, there was no cranberry sauce (as that sweetened delicacy was not yet invented).

Thanksgiving has become a quintessential American holiday, and, in many ways, a uniquely American experience. Of course, there are many things today



Detail from "The First Thanksgiving at Plymouth" (1914) by Jennie A. Brownscombe.

associated with the fourth Thursday of November and the weekend following which would not have been practiced in Plymouth Colony: Macy's and other parades, college football rivalries, a mad consumeristic rush on "Black Friday," and a buying spree leading up to Christmas (which the Pilgrims definitely did NOT celebrate, as they viewed it as a superstitious, man-made religious holy day). On the other hand, we can point to items which contain at least a faint echo of the 1621 thanksgiving: church services; perennial Presidential proclamations which call upon the nation to remember the blessings it has received from God; and what might be called an on-going American spirit of thanksgiving.

And so, the Pilgrims helped to create an American observance. At the same time, one must remember that the contemporary Thanksgiving Day, with its sense of coziness, middle-class respectability, and images of Norman Rockwell paintings, differs greatly from the Pilgrims' view of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving for the Pilgrims was not so much a time for a family reunion—after experiencing the horrors of losing half of the colonists that first year, they were giving thanks to God for the family members who had simply survived. The Pilgrims were literally in a life-and-death struggle. And it was in that context that the Pilgrims observed the occasion not merely with feasting but with an outpouring of prayers and psalms of thanksgiving.

The Pilgrims as Inspiration

Plymouth Colony ceased to exist as of 1692, as it was merged into Massachusetts Bay Colony that was peopled by the Puritans. But the Pilgrims left a rich heritage.

For many Christians, the Pilgrims have served as models of inspiration. Congregationalists and Baptists agree with the Pilgrims' view of the church, including

congregationalist church government, and the notion of a voluntary and gathered church. Presbyterians and other Calvinists have sought to emulate the Pilgrims' obvious piety, their simple worship, their psalm singing, their confidence in the gospel, and their Sabbath observance. Believers across a wide theological spectrum appreciate the quest for religious freedom and liberty of conscience, even as some have engaged in their own pilgrimage in fleeing religious persecution.

The Pilgrims have been featured in popular culture—on postage stamps, with monuments and statues, via film, through poetry and literature, and in paintings.

Films about the Pilgrims include *Plymouth Adventure* (1952); *The Pilgrims' Long Journey to the New World* (1955); *Mayflower: The Pilgrims' Adventure* (1979); *Squanto: A Warrior's Tale* (1994); *The Pilgrims* (2015); and *Saints & Strangers* (2015). Some of these flicks, such as *Plymouth Adventure*, are more Hollywood fiction than historical fact. Others are more accurate. *Monumental: In Search of America's Treasure* (2012) was hosted by Kirk Cameron, who used the story of the Pilgrims as foundational to his quest for the nation's real treasure.

For Americans, and indeed for the world as a whole, the story of the Pilgrims is one of faith, adventure, boldness, courage, overcoming obstacles, and friendship across ethnic lines. It is a legacy that still inspires today.

*From my years young in days of youth,
God did make known to me his truth,
And call'd me from my native place
For to enjoy the means of grace.
In wilderness he did me guide,
And in strange lands for me provide.
In fears and wants, through weal and woe,
A pilgrim, past I to and fro.*

Governor William Bradford ■

A Sermon on Mark 16:14–20 At the General Assembly, Louisville, Ky, May 15, 1879

By Thomas E. Peck

The Nineteenth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States having, agreeably to the requirement of the last Assembly, met at 11 o'clock A.M., in the Second Presbyterian church (Rev. S. Robinson, D.D., pastor) of Louisville, Ky., the sessions were opened with the following sermon by the Rev. Dr. T.E. Peck, D.D., the Moderator of the previous Assembly.

MARK 16:14–20.

¹⁴Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

¹⁵And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

¹⁶He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

¹⁷And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

¹⁸They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

¹⁹So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

²⁰And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

The scene here described, my brethren, is one of the most extraordinary ever witnessed upon earth. If it has any parallel at all, that parallel can be found only in the history of the same divine Redeemer. The lowly man of Nazareth had just emerged from the darkness of the grave to which the malice of His enemies had consigned Him, and as they fondly hoped, had consigned Him and His cause forever; but He now appears with

all the majesty of a king, “having offered Himself once for all,” a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice for His people, and having thereby acquired the right to all dominion in heaven, earth and hell. Just before He rises to take His seat at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, he assembles these His servants in order to give them that commission in the accomplishment of which the whole world is to be subdued unto Himself.

We find nothing here, my brethren, like that which we find in other conquerors—in the conquerors and heroes whom this world has agreed to worship. We find, in giving this commission to those who are to be His instruments in accomplishing the conquest of the world, that He gives them no other weapon than the weapon simply of the words, “Go, preach My Gospel to every creature,” and then, with all the absolute sovereignty that belongs to Him, he says that the eternal destinies of men shall depend upon the manner in

THE AUTHOR: Thomas Ephraim Peck (1822–1893) studied under James Henley Thornwell and became pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, Maryland in 1846 and subsequently was professor of theology at Union Theological Seminary (1860–1893). Peck previously appeared on the cover of the volume 12 issue of this journal, which was a rare full issue on the single topic of The Lord's Day or Christian Sabbath (or this would have been quite the appropriate item to include in that issue). This sermon does not appear in Pecks 3 volumes of works but was published in a rare publication, *The Debates and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church at Louisville, Ky., May 15th to 24th, 1879, as transcribed that year by G.L. Wolfe* (Louisville, Ky: Courier-Journal Job Rooms Print, 1879), [5]–12. The PCA Historical Center obtained an original copy of this book and the text has been transcribed by Wayne Sparkman with only minor editing. Due to its rarity we present it in this issue of *The Confessional Presbyterian*. George Lewis Wolfe (1837–1896) was an ordained PCUS pastor and a skilled stenographer as well, apparently. However, the cost to prepare the publication somewhat shocked the PCUS General Assembly and the like was not undertaken again. Peck delivered this Opening Sermon as the retiring moderator on a portion of the text of Mark 16:14–20. The sermon was extemporaneous.

which they receive this word. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." What a strange commission this to give such a world as ours—a world which had so often quaked under the tread of armies, which had resounded for weary centuries with the noise of battle—a commission to conquer this world by simply peaching, simply by a declaration of the Truth! It was no issuing of any royal edict or command—no command given to men to bow the knee merely because the sovereignty which gave the command was a sovereignty which could not be resisted; but it was "glad tidings." They were to proclaim "good news" to those who were sinners and sufferers. And in the discharge of this commission we find that they were to be supported by "the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power." And this again, my brethren, accounts for the fact that our Saviour gives this commission notwithstanding all the ignorance, all the unbelief, all the confusion of mind and sluggishness of heart which He knew existed in His disciples themselves; for just before, as we are told, He upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen from the dead. Stranger still to give a commission to those who seemed but a little while before to have had no faith in their great sovereign Himself' who, for a very little while before at least, doubted whether He had risen from the dead, and, therefore, doubted whether in attempting to conquer the world for Christ they were not attempting a conquest for the glory of a dead Saviour. And I think no man can ponder these words without seeing at once that either Jesus of Nazareth was God overall and blessed forever, or that He was a mere crack-brained enthusiast.

In the next place, my brethren, I call your attention to the end of this conquest which the disciples were to make. They were to go forth and preach:

¹⁷*And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;*

¹⁸*They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*

So that clearly the great end contemplated by the Son of God, the Saviour, in giving this commission to His disciples is nothing short of the entire and perpetual deliverance of all who trust in Him from all evil, both moral and physical, that when His glorious work shall have been accomplished, it shall be seen that not only solitary vestige of evil shall remain in the whole church of His

redeemed—there shall not be the slightest shadow of that awful calamity, or series of calamities, which have passed over them in this world. They shall not only be all perfectly pure in spirit but they shall all be perfectly sound in body—both soul and body redeemed by the same blood, and sanctified by the power of the same Spirit, to be "presented before the presence of the Father without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing."

This is what I propose to call your attention to now particularly: The nature of this work—the grand end and aim of this commission which has been given by Christ to the church so far as that end terminates upon the church itself.

In the first place, my brethren, I remark that I think that we shall be greatly mistaken if we suppose that the signs the Saviour here mentions are merely designed to be credentials of His divine commission, or, with respect to the apostles themselves, were designed to attest the reality of their commission from the hands of God and His Christ. It is undoubtedly true that these miracles were designed for this purpose. Our Saviour said, "If I had not done among them the works that none other man did they had not sin, but now they have no other cloak for their sin." And the principle so clearly contained in the answer of Nicodemus to our Saviour in his interview by night is undoubtedly a principle sanctioned by the teaching of God's word everywhere—that no man can do the miracles that Jesus Christ did "except God be with Him." And I enter my protest against that doctrine which teaches that the miracles in themselves are not valid arguments for a divine commission on the part of those who work them. But I think that it is very important to notice that the miracles are not only this, and perhaps it would not be going too far to say that they are not chiefly this. In other words, that the miracles were designed not merely to attest the presence of God and the approval of God, but they were designed to reveal God. They were designed to reveal the nature of that mission which these miracles were used to authenticate—not only showing that God had sent a message, but indicating the purport of that message itself. It is perfectly plain that, if nothing more had been gained by investing these disciples with miraculous powers than merely the demonstration that they were messengers from God, that end could just as well have been subserved by enabling them to do miracles contrary in character to those actually performed. We do not find that our Saviour Himself, in a single instance, wrought a miracle which was not a miracle mercy; and we do not find that even in the case of the apostle, many miracles of a contrary sort were performed. He opened

the eyes of the blind. He unstopped the ears of the deaf, He cleansed the leper, he raised the dead. If His only purpose had been to show His power, His presence as a God, it might have been just as well served by smiting men with instantaneous blindness, as some of the old prophets of the law did; or by sending overwhelming calamities upon whole communities as was done by the hands of Moses, when he brought the Israelites out of Egypt; or by smiting a man who was in sound health with a loathsome leprosy for his sin, as was done in the case of the servant of Elisha; or by summoning men suddenly by the stroke of death to the bar of God, as was done in numerous cases in the Old Testament. Now, you do not find that any miracles of that sort were performed. Our Saviour went everywhere doing good, relieving the distresses of men, making them to feel that He was a great healer, the great restorer; that His soul was full of compassion, and that He came not to destroy men's lives but to save them. This view of the miracle, as revealing the nature of the commission as well as the fact that it was a commission from God, but be borne in mind in order that we may understand this passage.

Now again I go further and contend that the miracles of our Lord, and to a very great extent the miracles of the apostles, which were wrought in His name, were not only intended to reveal the fact of a Saviour manifest in the flesh, but they were themselves instances or specimens of redemption. They were not merely pledges or earnest of redemption, but they were instances of redemption itself. Wherever there was a case of a blind man who had his eyes opened, or a deaf man who had his ears opened, or a leper who was cleansed, or a dead man raised from the dead, we have an instance, I say, of the actual exercise of the power of a Redeemer. You remember that famous instance—which was recorded apparently for the express purpose of bringing out this great truth—of the palsied man who was let down through the tiles into the presence of the Saviour in order to be restored from his paralysis. Now, what does our Saviour say to him in the first instance? “Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.” And it was only when the Pharisees and by-standers generally murmured and expressed their surprise that any man should undertake to forgive sins that the Saviour said, “Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven them, or to say, Arise, take up thy bed and walk?” No doubt both sets of words were equally easily uttered. It was as easy to say the one as to say the other. But that form of expression was adopted by our Saviour for this reason—that in the one case, the case of the forgiveness of sins, no man could tell whether the effect of the forgiveness

of sins followed or not; because it was a sentence that passed in the court of Heaven, or it was a sentence that seemed to pass by the instrumentality of a mere man as he walked upon the earth. Whereas, in the other case, if the power was real, if the effect was actually accomplished, then it would be palpable to the eyes of all; and hence He turns to the man and says, “Arise, take up thy bed and walk.” When the Saviour said, “Thy sins be forgiven thee,” He used a form of words which carried along with them a very large degree of antecedent improbability in regard to the effect. When He used the form of words, “Arise, take up thy bed and walk,” there was a very high degree of improbability that that could be done. Now then in the one case the thing is done beyond the possibility of doubt. No reasonable man therefore could question that that which they could not see had been also really accomplished. I think this is a principle of immense consequence, my brethren, in the interpretation of God's word; and it is a principle which gives immense advantage in contending with those who doubt, or who profess to doubt the divine legation of Jesus Christ. Our religion is a religion of fact, not a religion of doctrine merely—not an abstract intellectual system which is capable of being logically expounded and logically defended, and which from the nature of the very case could be suited only to a trained and disciplined intellect. It is essentially a popular religion—not in the sense of a religion which men naturally like, but in the sense of a religion which is adapted to the people—a religion which they can comprehend, at least as to its evidence, if not as to its substance. It is a religion of fact; and anyone who is capable of appreciating the real value of historical proof in any department, is also capable of appreciating the historical evidence by which the great history of Christianity is established. When the Apostle Paul, you recollect, was reminding the Corinthian church of what his Gospel had been, when he was summing up what he had preached to the Corinthians, he sums it up after this fashion:

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.”

So, according to Paul's own account of the Gospel, which he preached, it consisted substantially in these two great things—the death of Christ and the resurrection of Christ. And when our Lord instituted two of the ordinances of the church, the only two which were to commemorate events in His history, we find that the two events which He chooses to commemorate are His death and His resurrection. Every time we celebrate the

Lord's supper we commemorate the death of Christ; and every time the light of a Sabbath morning shines upon our eyes, it reminds us of the resurrection of Christ.

Now do you not see, my brethren, what great advantage this gives us in our contest with the infidel? We point him to facts—to facts whose reality cannot be denied without involving in logical consistency the denial of all the facts of human history whatever; for we have no greater evidence, we have nothing like the same amount of evidence for the death of Julius Caesar that we have for the death of Jesus of Nazareth under Pontius Pilate. And so with regard to the resurrection. All the circumstances of the case seem to have been ordered for the special purpose of leaving no possibility, at least no rational possibility of doubt, in reference to the reality of that great fact. Now, if these facts have occurred they have occurred once for all. If the death of Jesus Christ is a fact, it is a fact forever. And let the advancement of so-called science, or of real science, be what it may, it never can be changed. No conclusion at which science may hereafter arrive can ever in the smallest degree affect the reality of the facts of the death and the resurrection of the Son of God. You recollect how Peter argues against the Universalists of his time, and all times, in precisely the same way. When they say that there is no possibility or probability of the coming of the Lord, the apostle refers to the fact that there has been in times past a coming of the Lord; that there have been judgments in which He has discriminated between the righteous and the wicked, that there have been times when He poured His vengeance upon the wicked and has delivered the righteous; and all such dispensations—the dispensation of the flood, the destruction of the cities of the plain, and it might have been added after Peter's time, of the destruction of Jerusalem itself. All these instances in which there was a judicial discrimination between the righteous and the wicked, prove that there must be a final and perfect discrimination under the government of a God who is perfect and changes not; a final discrimination between the righteous and the wicked—one which will leave no righteous man without the blessing of God resting upon him, and no wicked man not blasted and branded by the thunderbolts of God.

Now, this being the view we ought to take of these miracles, then, my brethren, what a glorious view is open to us of the nature of the work which Christ came to perform, and which He honors His church by allowing her to co-operate with Him in performing! These miracles, says the Saviour, are signs, not mere prodigies, not mere powers; but they are signs, and signs not

merely of the presence of God, but the signs of a God present and ready to save, and one who will save. And it appears to me, therefore, that our Saviour here fortifies the faith of His apostles in a way precisely similar to that by which John the Baptist's faith, or the faith of his disciples, (whichever view we take of that passage), was fortified when the question came, the startling question, a question prompted by the obscuration of somebody's faith: "Art thou He who should come, or do we look for another?" "Go tell John what ye have seen and heard—the lepers are cleansed, the blind see, the deaf have their ears unstopped, the dead are raised, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them." Go, tell John this and then he cannot fail to believe, if his faith has been shaken; and you, his disciples, if it is yours and not John's faith which has been obscured, cannot fail to be confirmed. Why should you look for another? Why should you doubt that it is He who should come? Was it not the sign of a Redeemer according to the prophecies of the Old Testament? And do you not see works of redemption actually performed? And should we look for another? Is it possible that there could be another who could give better evidence, stronger or more overwhelming evidence, that He had come, that He is truly the Messiah and the Sent of God?

Beloved friends, we are not to look upon these words of our Saviour as limited in their application to the time of the apostles themselves. In that day it was not all believers who performed these works; these signs did not follow all them that believed. They were intended to be partial from the very first—either partial in the extent of space over which they were spread, or partial in the extent of time to which they were to be prolonged, or both. It was not necessary that all believers should do these things. Nay, it is not necessary that any of the believers should be able to do these things now in the way of miracles—in the way of works palpable to the senses, and which no man in his proper mind can deny. Beloved, it is only necessary for us to know that these things have been done in this fallen world. It is only necessary for us to know in this world of disease, that there has been a Healer against whose power no malady could stand when He spoke the word. It is only necessary for us in such a world as this of death, of graves, of weeds of mourning, to know that there has been One who walked amongst men, who only spake the word and the grave yielded up its prey. Oh! is it not something to know that there is One mightier than death? Is it not something to know that there is One who has actually conquered death? One who has actually gone down to the sides of the pit, and wrestled with the king

of terrors an triumphed over him? Is it not something to know that there has been One upon earth who was clothed with our nature, who was a man like ourselves, and whom death could not possibly hold? This was a sign—these were the signs that our Saviour gave His disciples of the nature of the work to be done.

And now let me illustrate this subject a little in some of the particulars here, not confining ourselves merely to the general view which has been indicated.

In the first place our Saviour says “they shall cast out devils.” There is a special significance in that, because the very purpose for which He was manifested was to destroy the works of the devil, and the very first gleam of hope that darted upon fallen man was contained in that sentence which was denounced against the serpent, that the woman’s seed should bruise his head. And then we say that those who contend for the personal existence of Satan, those who support the clear teaching of Scripture on this point, are those who are defending human nature; and those who deny the existence of a personal devil are the greatest libelers of their kind. What! to say this monster sin which has filled the world with lamentation, mourning and woe, and converted earth into a field of skulls—that this monster sin was engendered in the heart of man without any temptation, without any inducement from without, without any subtle plausible solicitation from some superior spirit! Why, how could we libel human nature more than by saying that? So that we are really getting rid of the doctrine of a personal devil, such as the Scriptures describe, by making all sin to originate with man, and so making man the devil!

Now, the devil being the author in one sense of all the sin in the world, being the prime mover of sin, our Saviour who came to destroy the devil’s work, tells His disciples that one thing they shall do—and it is mentioned as the foremost thing in the enumeration—is that they shall cast out the devil. A mightier spirit than man has taken possession of man and kept man’s personality in abeyance or in subjection in innumerable instances; but ye shall cast out the devils by a word, by My word, by My power; and so it shall be known everywhere that the devil is the slave of Christ. Is not this some comfort to us, to know that, in all our conflicts with Satan and the powers of darkness, there is a Redeemer who is not only able to overcome them, but has overcome them? That these enemies, in reference to whom we are so often tempted to say, we shall one day fall by their hand, are all conquered? That the blessed Redeemer has made a show of them openly upon His cross and by casting them out in innumerable instances?

But I pass on to notice the next particular in the

enumeration, which gives us, I think, the more positive side of the work to be done, and that is the speaking with new tongues.

This wonderful miracle which we call “the gift of tongues,” we are not to take as bestowed upon the church in order to enable the preachers of the Gospel more effectually to preach among all nations. I question very much whether it was designed for that purpose at all. Certainly, so far as the field of operations of the original apostles was concerned, it did not seem to be needful that they should have such a gift; because wherever in the bounds of the Empire these apostles went, they found the Greek language familiarly spoken; and Paul, not only on Mars Hills, but in Antioch of Pisidia, and everywhere else, could address any audience intelligibly in the Greek tongue. And besides, the apostle Paul himself tells us though he spoke with more tongues than they all, that when a man speaks “with a tongue he speaks to God and not to men”—not merely in the sense that God alone knows what he means, but in the sense that he uses his tongue in addressing God and not in addressing men. The gift of tongues was bestowed upon men originally upon the day of Pentecost, and always afterwards, as I conceive, in order to enable them to set forth “the wonderful works of God” in praise, instead of setting them forth in preaching. So that when you look at it in this light, this gift of tongues was intended to signify what should be the ultimate result of this Gospel of Jesus Christ when it should have achieved its highest triumphs. It should be that all men who should experience its power should praise God. The prevailing characteristic of sinful natural man, as the apostle James tells us, is that his “tongue is set on fire of hell;” and that as the tongue, the articulate power of speech is the appropriate expression of the reasonable nature of man, the reason by which he is distinguished from the brute, so when men are in their original sinful condition the tongue is the expression of a ruined reason, of a perverted reason, of a reason which is always collecting material for the praise of self, for the praise of men; and that the time shall come when the heart being thoroughly sanctified, being thoroughly purified by the Spirit of God, men shall praise God and not themselves. Then shall be realized all those prophecies in the Psalms, that all nations shall praise Him. All those exhortations to praise Him shall be promptly responded to—exhortations which grow and multiply, as you have often observed, towards the end of the Book. All nations shall praise Him, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof, God’s name shall be praised. This is the consummation which the church is to seek. It is

the highest and most exalted goal which human nature can ever reach. My brethren, I suppose you have never read that passage in the second chapter of Acts, about the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and the tongues of fire, without thinking of that passage in the Old Testament, which seems to be set over against it as its counterpart, where the Babel builders came together for the purpose of making themselves a name, for the purpose of glorifying man. They came to build a city and a tower, in order to “make themselves a name,” says the simple record. It is the praise of man that they are after. It is the combination of the resources of this poor, feeble, mortal man that they are seeking. Conscious that the individual man is weak, that he is mortal, they will see to it that the constitution of large communities, and by keeping men together and organizing them thoroughly, the name of man shall be perpetuated—the name of the race and the power of the community whatever may become of the individual units which constitute it. That dream of the Babel builders has been the dream of mankind in all the ages. It was the dream that the Alexanders and the Tamerlanes of the world endeavored to realize, a dream which above all others the iron monarchy of Rome endeavored to realize, and did almost realize. Wherever that dream has occupied the mind of the great conquerors of men, wherever they have been able to realize the dream, you will find that it has always been a capital point to have but one language, and that, the language of the conqueror.

Now, in this matter of the Pentecost we have precisely the reverse of all this of the Babel builders. These disciples after the tongues from heaven have been given them, praise God and not man, and that glorious scene of the day of Pentecost is designed to be a prophecy. It was a prophecy, and is a prophecy this day, that the time shall come when men’s tongues shall be set on fire of heaven instead of hell, because their hearts have been purified by the spirit of God from heaven instead of inflamed by fiends from the pit of darkness. The time will come when men shall be all holy; and when they shall be all holy, then not one solitary wish, thought, or impulse shall ever enter into their souls but thoughts of the glory of God and the impulse to praise God. That is the meaning of it as I believe. Hence, when our Saviour says: “They shall speak with new tongues,” He does not mean merely that you shall witness this remarkable miracle of speaking with tongues. He means to say that this gift of tongues or speaking with tongues is the sign of what your work is ultimately to be—what the highest result is to be—the entire transformation of the human

soul, the entire and absolute purification of the human heart, when there shall be no impulse but the impulse to glorify God.

I have not time, my brethren, to notice these other particulars that our Saviour insisted on, though it would be exceedingly interesting. I will only mention the last as one which should form the subject of profitable meditation in itself:

¹⁸*They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.”*

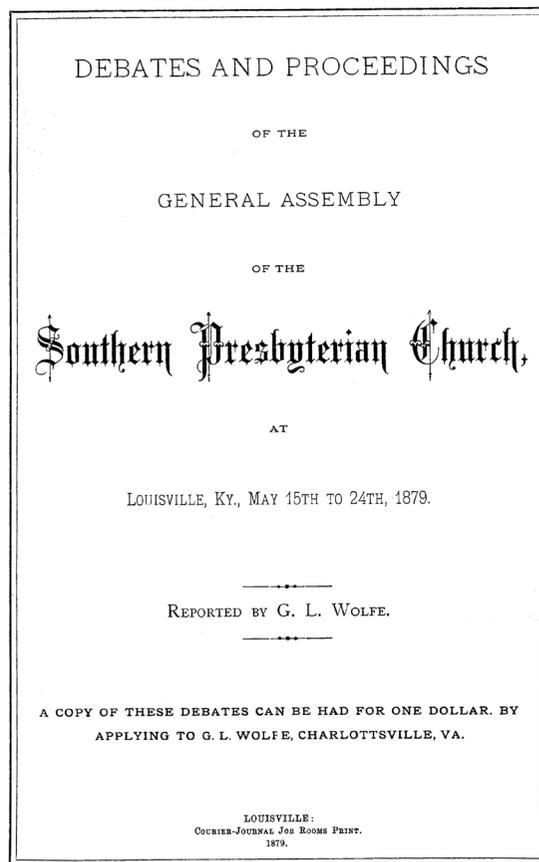
If there is any one feature of our condition in this world, a feature belonging to our physical condition, it is that of our liability to disease. There is not a solitary soul in this congregation who is not liable to moral maladies. The probability is that the vast majority will die by disease. It is a thing which no man can deny to be a calamity—a thing which no man can deny is, in the long run, to be irremediable by human skill. Now, says the Saviour (and this prophecy of His falls in with the old prophecies in regard to the same thing), the time is coming when you shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover, and this healing of the sick by the laying on of your hands is a sign. It is a sign—this healing of the sick—that the time is coming when there shall be no sickness in all the redeemed church of God, no pain, no sorrow. There shall be no crying. God shall wipe away all tears from all faces. A strange world this will be where there is no use for a physician! And yet this is the promise and the prediction, as I understand it, of this passage.

But I cannot tarry any longer on these things. I only wish to say a word or two in reference to the nature of the work for which we have come together to-day, as explained by the principles upon which we have been meditating. We come here as the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. We come here to deliberate, to confer with one another in reference to things which belong to Christ, and which belong to the interests of His church. A great many things that we have to do are matters of detail. There are arrangements; there is machinery, if you choose to call it so, necessary in order to accomplish our work; but my brethren, what is the grand aim and design we ought to have in all these things? We ought to keep our eyes steadfastly fixed upon the consummation—the absolute deliverance of the church of God and of all that part of the human race which has come into the church (and it will be overwhelmingly large in the end), the absolute deliverance of this church from all evil, all moral evil, all physical evil, from all the guilt of sin; from all

pollution of sin, from all weakness of the soul, all infirmity of the body, all disease and deformity of the body for evermore. Now, if this is the true view of the matter, was there ever anybody of men on the face of the earth that had a more beneficent mission than the church has to discharge? Was there ever anybody of men existing on the earth whose mission of benevolence was more comprehensive, more all-embracing than the mission of the church? To abolish all sickness, to abolish all dying beds, to abolish the grave as well as to abolish hell! Is not this a commission which might nerve every arm and stimulate every heart? My brethren, ought we not to cry shame upon ourselves whenever our hands hang down or our knees become feeble in such a glorious work as this? If it were nothing but the good of man, if it were nothing but the amelioration of man's condition, nothing but the priceless blessing bestowed upon the members of our own race, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, it were enough; but when we are glorifying Christ the Redeemer of the world, when we are seeking to show forth His power as the Saviour of the world, when it is our highest aim to demonstrate the irresistible efficacy of Christ's compassion, and of Christ's arm, how can we refuse to make sacrifices? How can we refuse to do anything, to suffer anything, to be anything which the providence of Christ may call upon us to do, or to suffer, or to be?

And it is a very simple thing, my brethren—the means by which we are to do it. Nothing but preaching the Gospel! Go, preach to every creature the glad tidings! That is the whole of our commission as a church. It is not we who are to cast out the devils; it is not we who are to give tongues to men, with which they shall celebrate the praises of God; it is not we who are to lay hands on the sick and they shall recover; it is not we who are to do these things. It is the power of God only, the power of the Father only, the power of Christ only, the power of the Spirit only. And when this work shall have been done, there shall not be one note of praise but to the glory of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. But Christ has condescended to use us as His instruments, and He uses not only the breath of one's mouth, but He uses the breath of the mouth of such worms as we, of such weak people as we, of such sinners as we—sinners saved by grace, but sinners still! We are the instruments, we have but one thing to do—that is to preach the Gospel. This is the ultimate aim, this is the thing you are to do, this is the thing you are to do, this is your commission. Everything is intended merely to bring these glad tidings to human ears and human hearts. All our measures of government, all our measures of discipline,

have but this one end in view ultimately—it is to preach the glad tidings to every creature. How can we think of such a commission as this, my brethren, without feeling that it is our duty to embrace the whole world in the arms of our faith and love; without feeling that we are debtors to all men, whether they be Greeks or Barbarians, whether they be wise or unwise, whether they be Chinese or Hottentots, that, so long as there is a single soul on earth, be he in the distant isles of the sea, that has never heard of Jesus and His salvation, we shall do all and sacrifice all that he may hear of Christ. And I think that, if our hearts were only impressed as they ought to be with these great truths, we should soon have the praises of God sounded from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same. ■



The Debates and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church at Louisville, Ky., May 15th to 24th, 1879, as transcribed that year by G.L. Wolfe (Louisville, Ky: Courier-Journal Job Rooms Print, 1879). Title page of the copy owned by the PCA Historical Center. Used by permission.

In Brief: In Defense of the Traditional Ending of Mark.

The concept of biblical canon includes not only the authoritative books which make up the Bible but also the authoritative text of those books. As Carl E. Armerding put it, “the development of an authoritative text is a natural corollary to an authoritative list of books.”¹ In the historical review this paper has shown that the Traditional Ending of Mark is the earliest attested ending for the second Gospel. It was known by Justin Martyr and Irenaeus of Lyon. It appears in some of the earliest Greek uncial manuscripts of Mark, including Alexandrinus, Ephraemi Rescriptus, and Beza. There was a period when the ending of Mark was clearly disputed. In the end, however, an organic consensus affirmed the Traditional Ending as the fitting and proper canonical conclusion to Mark. After his review of the external evidence² for the Traditional Ending of Mark, Nicholas P. Lunn wrote:

For the vast majority of its history the church as a body has pronounced in favor of this passage. The indications of doubt on the part of Eusebius and the copyists of a small number of manuscripts do not reflect the view of the church in general. Its inclusion was unambiguously accepted from the earliest times, with the second century fathers. The Byzantine, Vulgate, and Peshitta texts, which were to hold sway in the principle sections of the church for a thousand years or more, each embraced it. The humanist scholars and Reformers of the early sixteenth century all received it as authentic, it being published in the Greek NT editions of Erasmus, Stephanus, Elzivir, and Beza. The Bible translation tradition set in motion by Tyndale included it, the passage appearing in Coverdale’s version, the Great Bible, the Anglican Bishops’ Bible, the Puritan Geneva Bible, the Catholic Rheims-Douai version, as well as the King James Bible which came to dominate the English-speaking world for the next three centuries. In the Great Awakening of the mid-eighteenth century and other subsequent revivals the Gospels were preached and read in a form containing the final verses of Mark. The great missionary movement of the early nineteenth century brought about the translation of the NT into numerous languages of Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Americas. With the received Greek text and the King James Bible as

the only possible, and indeed the only known base-texts, the longer version of Mark’s Gospel passed into the hands of the indigenous churches. It was not until the latter half of the nineteenth century that the long-established acceptance of Mark 16:9–20 began to be seriously challenged in certain academic quarters of the Western world. This turn-around found its impetus in the re-discovery of Codices Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, two manuscripts which, it should be remarked, had long lain unused by the church. History shows therefore that also in the matter of ecclesiastical tradition, or what may be termed “canonicity,” the longer ending has received a clear stamp of approval.³

In our present day, this renewed challenge to the Traditional Ending of Mark has created a new canonical crisis. I believe it is reasonable and right to advocate for a new consensus to emerge which reaffirms the Traditional Ending of Mark as the authoritative, fitting, and canonical conclusion to Mark. Such a consensus would again provide consistent and authoritative translations to be read by God’s people both privately in personal devotion and publicly in corporate worship and would allow ministers to preach this text with confidence as the Word of God.

Extract from Jeffrey T. Riddle, “The Ending of Mark as a Canonical Crisis,” *Puritan Reformed Journal*, vol. 10, No. 1 (January 2018): 31–54. Used by Permission. Footnotes renumbered and slightly edited to include bibliographical information. ■

1. Carl E. Armerding, *The Old Testament and Criticism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 101.

2. This study has focused on the external evidence in favor of the Traditional Ending. The ending may also be defended on the basis of internal evidence. For several recent scholarly defenses of Mark 16:9–20 as consistent with Markan style, see Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark* [(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974)], 77–108; Maurice A. Robinson, “The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity,” in David Alan Black, ed., *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark [4 Views]* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2008), 40–79; and Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 117–317.

3. Nicholas P. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark: A New Case for the Authenticity of Mark 16:9–20* (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 115.

The Soul of the Church: The Church's Spiritual Mission

By C. N. Willborn

Today we are experiencing an elevation of pressure upon the church to act outside her God given duties and calling. There has always been a struggle for those who feel oppressed or who are sympathetic to those who are oppressed, to use the church for purposes she was not intended. In the midst of social and political upheaval, the church is tempted to take on roles for which she is neither suited nor called to by God. The mistake is often due to a poor or weak ecclesiology. To put it simply, in the midst of difficult socio-political times, some are prone to forget that the church is not the state and vice versa. Sometimes it is as simple as failing to recognize the proper and biblical distinction between the city of man and city of God, to utilize Augustine's tried and true categories from his fifth century classic, *The City of God*.¹ The problem with such failures, no matter how they are motivated, is that the gospel comes to mean something other than what the church believes it to be from the Bible. It becomes a works-oriented affair of doing good social deeds or producing the "right" political outcome. Of course, those who tend to expand the role of the church institutional to such works, do not see it as corrupting the gospel, but filling it out. All of this is to explain why this article is germane now and in every generation. Augustine's categories need to be remembered and applied if the church is to remain the church and not become an institutional change agent.

As we proceed, it will be helpful to say that Augustine's city of God and city of man distinctions more recently have been altered slightly for Christians and the church. Of course, these changes are intended to help the church and the individual Christian as they pursue their distinct, yet overlapping, lives in this world. The new labels corresponding to Augustine's classic ones are the "common kingdom" and the "redemptive kingdom." The latter, redemptive kingdom, is a reference to the church. Indeed, the redemptive kingdom

is synonymous with the church as the doctrinal standards for Presbyterians state: "The visible church... is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, the house and family of God" (Westminster Confession of Faith 25.2).² This redemptive kingdom, or church, has "its own special work" and must guard against its corruption by entering into other work, no matter how good or worthwhile or necessary that work may be. When we act outside our God given duties and calling as the church we enter into the work of the common kingdom and distort the redemptive mission of the church.³

What we wish to do in this article is concentrate on the classic doctrine of the spirituality of the church or the nature of the redemptive kingdom on the earth. In so doing we wish to recast that sacred doctrine as "the soul of the church," for it is just that. We shall argue that the soul of the church is that which her King has planted in her heart. Furthermore, we shall argue that the seed planted in the heart of believers is that of worship and discipleship. The church's mission then is to worship as He has commanded and the discipling (which covers

THE AUTHOR: C. N. Willborn, Ph.D. is Senior Pastor-Teacher of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Adjunct Professor of Historical Theology at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Taylors, SC and Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan. This paper originated as a pre-conference address given on March 10, 2020, at the Spring Theology Conference 2020 at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, held at Woodruff Road Presbyterian Church in Simpsonville, South Carolina, March 10-12, 2020.

1. Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* is available in numerous monograph editions and is included in the *Nicene-Post-Nicene Fathers*, Marcus Dods, trans., Philip Schaff, ed. (1886; repr. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1999).

2. Hereafter WCF.

3. For a popular discussion of the "common kingdom" and "redemptive kingdom" concepts and outworking of the two, see David VanDrunen, *Living in God's Two Kingdoms* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010).

evangelism to church planting) of all the nations as He has commissioned. Lose the mission and you lose the soul. We've all seen people who seem to have lost their mission in life. They seem soulless, wandering aimlessly from one task to another. Often such a person is more destructive than constructive. That is always true when the church loses her mission, she is more destructive than constructive, leading people to negative, critical lifestyles rather than worshipful, discipling lives.

Were we to pose the purpose of this address in a thesis statement, we could do no better than to quote the premier theologian of Scotland, William Cunningham, who wrote: "The church is a supernatural institution, having direct relation exclusively to men's spiritual and eternal interests." Please notice the strong and explicit language of "exclusively." He went on to comment on his proposition by saying, "we can know nothing certainly about [her supernatural mission] except from the supernatural revelation which God has given us in His word."⁴

As we consider the spiritual and eternal interests of mankind for which the church is singularly called, we need to be aware of *modern attempts to revise the mission of the church*. No one played a larger or more influential role on the revisionist stage in the 20th century than Ernest Trice Thompson. Thompson (1894–1985) was an eminent historian and he produced a magisterial treatment of *Presbyterians in the South* in three volumes.⁵

4. William Cunningham, *Discussions on Church Principles* (1863; reprint, Edmonton, AB Canada: Still Waters Revival Books, 1991), 196–97. On the American side of this same position are Charles Hodge and James Henley Thornwell. For a fine examination of this doctrine as set forth in the theology of the Charles Hodge, "the Pride of Princeton," see Alan Strange, *The Doctrine of the Spirituality of the Church in the Ecclesiology of Charles Hodge* (Phillipsburg, PA: P & R, 2017). Said volume is a publication of Dr Strange's dissertation of the same name successfully submitted to the faculty of the University of Wales in 2013. In this volume you will find Dr Strange affirming this author's treatment of both Hodge and Thornwell on this subject (p. 226, note 678 of dissertation). Furthermore, one may find Hodge's agreement with Thornwell in Appendix A, pp. 229–31 and Strange's comment that Thornwell's position on the spirituality doctrine being "This is the classic Reformational position that sees the two as distinct and both under God: a historic Reformed position that is both anti-Eraſtian and anti-Roman" (228).

5. Ernest Trice Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3 vols. (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1963, 1973, 1973). Thompson taught at Union from 1922 until 1964. "No man had more influence on the Presbyterian Church in the United States..." *Ernest Rice Thompson: An Appreciation* (Richmond, Va.: Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 1964), 7.

6. Ernest Trice Thompson, *The Spirituality of the Church* (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1961), 25.

7. Walter Lippman quoted by Rupert P. Vance, et al, *Exploring the South* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1949), 8.

Educated at Hampden Sydney College (BA), Columbia University (MA), and Union Seminary Richmond (BDiv), he was honored with an honorary doctorate by Washington and Lee College in 1933. Thompson spearheaded the reunion movement that led to the merger of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA (PCUSA aka Northern Presbyterian Church) and the Presbyterian Church in the US (PCUS aka Southern Presbyterian Church), which took place in 1983. Thompson was 88 years of age when the reunion was finalized. It is hard to overstate the large role he played in the downgrade of Presbyterianism in the 20th century, considered from an ecclesiological and theological perspective. Upon his death at age 90 in New York City, he was buried at Hampden Sydney University in the old Union Seminary cemetery, the same cemetery in which rests the remains of such men as R. L. Dabney.

For the 100th anniversary of the PCUS, Thompson produced a small but influential book entitled *The Spirituality of the Church*. Writing in 1961, Ernest Trice Thompson asserted: "This theory of the spirituality of the church, *born in the slavery* controversies of the antebellum period, was strengthened by the Civil War, and confirmed in the bitter days of reconstruction. It was the theory of B. M. Palmer, J. B. Adger, J. A. [sic] Girardeau, Thomas E. Peck, Robert L. Dabney and others..." (emphasis added).⁶ Thompson later picked up his main objective and that was to "re-form" the doctrine. He quoted Walter Lippman who argued that the South had to change in all its agencies to meet the social shifts.⁷ The church was included as one of those "agencies" and Thompson argued for re-forming the church's approach to social matters and that necessitated a "re-form" of the church's mission. In fact, he said, the mission of the church underlies many of the problems in the church toward race relations, church growth, and union with other church bodies. ("That very statement could be attributed to leading adherents of similar change in our own day, could it not?") Thompson continued to argue that that which is suitable for individual Christians—namely, social, political, and moral rights—ought to be equally taken up by the church institutional. Walter Rauschenbusch, the theologian of the Social Gospel movement of the early 20th century, was Thompson's example for the church in this regard. Thompson explained that the social gospel was born out of Rauschenbusch's coming to grips with reality. The epiphany came to Rauschenbusch in the context of Hell's Kitchen, in New York City, where "the simple gospel of his fathers, following the traditional pattern of church ministrations ... could not save souls as fast

as they were being destroyed.”⁸ Thompson wrote that, mind you, in 1961. Reforming the mission of the church to give her a social and political voice was E. T. Thompson's heartbeat. It surely stemmed from pure humanitarian motives, but the direction he pointed the church was not a gospel honoring route.

The 21st century has its own brand of revision attempts. Perhaps the most articulate appeared in a 2016 piece from Sean Michael Lucas. In an online publication, Lucas wrote, “I want to attempt the seemingly impossible: to rehabilitate the idea of the ‘spirituality of the church’ in such a way as to make it a vehicle for the church to speak to social and political issues as part of a full-orbed Gospel [sic] mission.”⁹ In fairness, we should distance Lucas from Thompson because of their many differences theologically. Lucas is far more confessionally conservative, whereas Thompson was at best a theological latitudinarian. Still, we are obligated to say in this early part of our address that we think Lucas' approach toward a rehabilitation of the spiritual doctrine of the church fails on Biblical grounds. Let us remind the reader that Paul did not directly address slavery in his day, even though he had a wonderful opportunity in the case of Onesimus and Philemon. Likewise, Peter did not do so as he instructed slaves and masters in their mutual relations. The apostles, to a man, did not address politics and social reform of societal institutions, but called the church to respect, honor, and pray for civil leaders. There is no republican, democrat, Tory, Labor, or Conservative partisanship offered in the Bible. We'd encourage our readers to see Carl Trueman's *Republicrat: Confessions of a Liberal Conservative* where “[i]n this highly readable analysis ... Trueman warns against absolutizing any political/economic worldview” (Andrew W. Hofferker).¹⁰ If Paul and Peter did not call the church to condemn the person and politics of Nero, but rather pray for him, then we have good examples to follow in maintaining a high spiritual ground for the church. In fact, we shall see that one of the leading proponents of the spirituality doctrine and defender of the soul of the church, James Thornwell, argued this very case when he said, “The church is exclusively a spiritual organization, and possesses only spiritual power. ... The only voice she utters is the Word of God. ... The salt that is to save this country is the Church of Christ, a Church that does not mix with any political party.”¹¹

With that said, we wish to offer *A Polemic Against Extending the Mission of the Church to the Socio-political*. This is necessary for a number of reasons, but none more so than the claim we read above from E. T. Thompson that the doctrine of the spirituality derived

from the antebellum slave context. That is still a common historiographical mistake which was popularized and given some further academic credentials by Professor Jack Maddex of University of Oregon. This claim, that the American Presbyterian church shifted to a spirituality position in order to be quiet about slavery, is also a convenient one to make for opponents of the historical view of the church's nature and mission. Once this sort of “historical fallacy” is attached to this or any such doctrine or practice, the damage is done. The doctrine or practice is irrecoverable. We certainly live in an age when any reference to anything and anyone associated with antebellum slave period is written off and torn out of books and dismantled if still standing.

Some of the names most often associated with the spirituality doctrine of the church are J. H. Thornwell, R. J. Breckinridge, and Stuart Robinson. We shall dispense with Breckinridge upfront for he was a strong adherent of the limited mission of the church or spirituality doctrine even though he was a staunch opponent of slavery. He did not see the doctrine as a convenient way to “ignore” or “dodge” the slave question. He simply saw the slave issue as a social issue that was to be addressed in the realm of the city of man/common kingdom by individual citizens of that city/kingdom, citizens of the state of Kentucky in his case. He like Thornwell, Robinson, and others saw themselves clearly in the line of continuity with our Scottish forefathers, not as products of antebellum slave society.¹² Robinson even refers to himself and his fellow American Presbyterians as adherents to “the Scoto-American theory.”¹³ They did not see themselves as taking a doctrine of the church and forging a new course or unique application for it. They did not see the church as a socio-political agency for reshaping culture through institutional transformation.

8. Thompson, 41.

9. Sean Michael Lucas, “Owning Our Past: The Spirituality of the Church in History, Failure, and Hope,” *Reformed Faith & Practice*, vol. 1, no. 1. (2016), <https://journal.rts.edu/article/owning-our-past-the-spirituality-of-the-church-in-history-failure-and-hope/> [accessed January 7, 2020]. Emphasis added.

10. Carl Trueman, *Republicrat: Confessions of a Liberal Conservative* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2010).

11. The substance of the General Assembly Address Thornwell delivered in 1859, from which this citation comes, may be found in B. M. Palmer, *The Life and Letters of James Henley Thornwell* (reprint, Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1974), 435–37.

12. For a contra continuity argument see Jack Maddex, “From Theocracy to Spirituality: The Southern Presbyterian Reversal on the Church and State,” *Journal of Presbyterian History* (1962–1985), Vol. 54, No. 4 (WINTER 1976): 438–457.

13. See Stuart Robinson, *Discourses of Redemption*, 3rd ed. (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1866), p. 474.

As one surveys Thompson's or Maddex's consideration of the spirituality doctrine, however, it is surprising that little attention is paid to influential predecessors of those most often associated with the doctrine. For instance, William Henry Foote and John Holt Rice were paragons of influence in the Southern region but find little place in the discussions of Thompson or Maddex. John Holt Rice (1771–1831), founder of Union Seminary (VA), was opposed to slavery—"I am most fully convinced that slavery is the greatest evil in our country, except whiskey"—yet he held tenaciously to the spirituality doctrine of the church. Writing on the topic of slavery, as he frequently was inclined, he promoted a spirituality doctrine that would find noble defenders in the next generation.

The reason why I am so strenuously opposed to any movement by the church or the ministers of religion on the subject is simply this. I am convinced that any thing we can do will injure religion, and retard the march of public feeling in relation to slavery.... Under this conviction, I wish ministers of religion to be convinced that there is nothing in the New Testament which obliges them to take hold of this subject directly. In fact, I believe that it never has fared well with either church or state, when the church meddled with temporal affairs.¹⁴

Contrary to Thompson and Maddex, it is evident that the spirituality doctrine was neither invented to promote a pro-slavery position amongst antebellum Southern Presbyterians, nor was it of post-bellum origin.

More recently scholarship has substantiated the claim that the spirituality doctrine was neither novel, nor class-oriented, nor post-bellum. In a study of J. H. Thornwell's ecclesiology, John Vance argued that Thornwell's view of the spiritual nature and mission of the church was informed by the handiwork of the Scots Worthy Andrew Melville and the Scottish Second Book of Discipline, which had played an integral role in the forming of the Free Church of Scotland.¹⁵ Thornwell's

explication of the spirituality doctrine surfaces in a number of writings. That the church's nature and duty is singularly spiritual is implied throughout his several addresses on the office of elder (1843–1856),¹⁶ but becomes more apparent to the reader in his debates with Charles Hodge over the divine warrant for "church boards." His most perspicuous expressions of the doctrine occur in connection with the slavery question and is perhaps best illustrated in the following excerpt:

The relation of the Church to Slavery cannot be definitely settled without an adequate apprehension of the nature and office of the Church itself. What, then, is the Church? It is not, as we fear too many are disposed to regard it, a moral institute of universal good.... The Church is a very peculiar society; voluntary in the sense that its members become so, not by constraint, but willingly; but, not in the sense that its doctrines, discipline and order are the creatures of human will, deriving their authority and obligation from the consent of its members. On the contrary, it has a fixed and unalterable Constitution; and that Constitution is the Word of God. It is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.... The power of the Church, accordingly, is only ministerial and declarative. The Bible, and the Bible alone, is her rule of faith and practice.... Beyond the Bible she can never go, and apart from the Bible she can never speak (Thornwell, 4:382–84).

In following this line of reasoning, Thornwell was in the mainstream of Scottish Presbyterianism, and particularly the mature ecclesiology of the Second Book of Discipline (1578). The power and policy of the church, according to Scottish ecclesiology,

is different and distinct in its own nature from that power and policy which is called the civil power, and appertains to the civil government of the common wealth: Albeit they be both of God, and tend to one end, if they be rightly used, to wit, to advance the glory of God, and to have godly and good subjects.

14. Quote from William Maxwell, *A Memoir of the Rev. John H. Rice* (Philadelphia: J. Whetham, 1835), 306–08.

15. John Lloyd Vance, "The Ecclesiology of James Henley Thornwell: An Old South Presbyterian Theologian" (Ph.D. diss., Drew University, 1990).

16. Thornwell, *The Collected Writings of James Henley Thornwell*, 4:15–142; 145–295.

17. *Second Book of Discipline* 1.9–11. Text modernized. Compare with Stuart Robinson, *The Church of God as an Essential Element of the Gospel* (Philadelphia: Joseph M. Wilson, 1858), appendix, p. xx, and *The Second Book of Discipline*, ed. James Kirk (The Saint Andrews Press, 1980), pp. 166–167.

10. For this power ecclesiastical flows immediately from God, and the Mediator Jesus Christ, and is spiritual, not having a temporal head on earth, but only Christ, the only spiritual King and Governor of His kirk.

11. Therefore this power and policy of the kirk should lean upon the word immediately, as the only ground thereof and should be taken from the pure fountains of the Scriptures, (the kirk) hearing the voice of Christ the only spiritual King, and being ruled by his laws.¹⁷

Evidently, Thornwell's view of the nature and power of the church was not novel, but consistent with early Scottish ecclesiology at this point.

In the standard, received intellectual study of Stuart Robinson, Preston Graham demonstrated the early influence of William Henry Foote upon Robinson. Foote, writes Graham, documented "the doctrine and practice of the American experiment as rooted and grounded in the Scottish tradition."¹⁸ Thus as a young man Robinson imbibed the "Scoto-American" doctrine of the church in its distinctive relation to the state as it had been offered before him. Because of his early exposure to the spirituality of the church in the Scottish tradition, Robinson's ministerial and academic career was characterized by an emphasis on the declarative and ministerial role of the minister and the church. In 1855, Robinson introduced a new journal, which Thomas Peck described as "devoted to the discussion of ecclesiastical questions mainly and specially to questions mooted in the Presbyterian Church" (Graham, *Kingdom*, 21). Though the new journal—*The Presbyterian Critic and Monthly Review*—lasted only two years, Robinson and his contributors addressed various questions of abiding and crucial importance to the church.¹⁹

Much of the material from *The Presbyterian Critic* found more systematic statement in Robinson's 1858 publication, *The Church of God as an Essential Element of the Gospel*. In *The Church of God* Robinson set forth the doctrine of the church from a Scoto-American perspective, as he dealt with many significant nineteenth century Presbyterian controversies.²⁰ "Robinson," wrote Preston Graham, "followed Thornwell in connecting his understanding of the church with the Scottish heritage" (Graham, *Kingdom*, 29). Robinson confirms his respect for and indebtedness to the Scottish heritage by including both the *First Book of Discipline* and *Second Book of Discipline* of the Church of Scotland in the appendix to *The Church of God*.

When the War Between the States erupted, Robinson once again turned his hand to the printing press to call the Presbyterian Church to refrain from political meddling and maintain the high road of the purely spiritual enterprise of the church. Robinson's new periodical, the *True Presbyterian*, was an alternative to R. J. Breckinridge's *Danville Quarterly Review* and existed to express "the idea that one peculiar and distinctive feature of Presbyterianism as a Church government consists in that separation of the secular and spiritual order."²¹ Like Thornwell in South Carolina, Robinson and his protégés were making every effort to purge the church of parachurch influences, extra-ecclesiastical

offices, ecclesiastical intermeddling in the affairs of state, and theological compromise.

After the formation of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America (1861) and into the post-bellum period, prominent leaders maintained the same high view of Presbyterian ecclesiology and the spirituality doctrine. John B. Adger, Robert L. Dabney, John L. Girardeau, J. A. Lefevre, and Thomas Peck are noteworthy for their efforts to direct the Southern Church in the Robinsonian/Thornwellian ecclesiological emphases. Adger is particularly significant for his role in revising the church's Book of Discipline, which culminated in 1879. Of more abiding significance are Girardeau's efforts to set forth the nature and duties of the diaconate, which produced numerous journal articles totaling nearly two hundred pages.²² In each of these cases, *jus divinum* Presbyterianism and the spirituality of the church are central issues.

In 1892, Thomas E. Peck, a protégé of Robinson, published his own *Notes on Ecclesiology*. Though it is late in date, it confirms the argument that Thornwell and Robinson drew from the Scottish *Second Book of Discipline*, as well as the erudite Scottish Presbyterian theologian George Gillespie (1613–48). Peck certainly held to the spirituality of the church and believed it to be old, and not a "new point of view." The power of the Church, wrote Peck, "is only 'ministerial and declarative,' that is, the power of a minister or servant to declare and execute the law statute-book of his kingdom, the Scriptures contained in the Old and New Testament."²³ The Church, therefore, is a spiritual institution with a Sovereign Head. Her function and role are dictated by her Head through the statute-book given by that Head.

18. Preston D. Graham, Jr., *A Kingdom Not of This World* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2002), 14. Also, see William Henry Foote, *Sketches of Virginia, Historical and Biographical*, Second Series, Second Edition, Revised (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1856).

19. *The Presbyterian Critic and Monthly Review*, ed. Stuart Robinson and Thomas E. Peck (Baltimore, Md., Printed by Mills and Cox for 1855 and S. S. Mills for 1856).

20. Robinson, *The Church of God*, *Ibid.*

21. Stuart Robinson, *The True Presbyterian* 3 (April 1862). For more reading on ecclesiology see select discourses in Stuart Robinson, *Discourses of Redemption*, Third American Edition (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1866).

22. J. L. Girardeau, "The Diaconate," *The Southern Presbyterian Review* (hereafter, *SPR*) 30, no. 1 (January 1879): 1–31; "The Diaconate," *SPR* 31, no. 1 (January 1880): 117–60; "The Importance of the Office of Deacon," *SPR* 32, no. 1 (January 1881): 1–29; "The Diaconate, Part III," *SPR* 32, no. 2 (April 1881): 191–209; "The Diaconate Again," *SPR* 32, no. 4 (October 1881): 628–664; "The Diaconate Again," *SPR* 33, no. 1 (January 1882): 175–208.

23. Thomas E. Peck, *Notes on Ecclesiology* (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1892), 107.

Defined spiritually, the Church must confine herself to spiritual activities, and is “not to intermeddle with civil affairs which concern the commonwealth,”²⁴ although individuals of the Church will find themselves intersecting with every sphere of life—social and political.

To understand the spirituality doctrine, one can pick up the writing of most any prominent Presbyterian—antebellum or postbellum—and find it expressed in terms much like those set forth above. The spirituality doctrine deals with the nature of church power and the mission of the church, and it flows naturally from the Scoto-Puritan restatement of biblical, *jus divinum* Presbyterianism. Furthermore, the spirituality of the church is a principle derived directly from the Headship of Christ. “For Christ’s Crown and Covenant” was more than a borrowed motto for American Presbyterians; it was the foundational principle of Presbyterian ecclesiology.

With that swift review of the continuity of the spirituality doctrine with the past and evidence that Thompson, Maddex, and others are wrong as to its origin and utility residing in the antebellum slave context, let’s return to the main purpose of our argument.

Stuart Robinson summarized the views of men in the 19th century as it concerned the institutional church and state. First, there was the “New England school” (this would include the English and Welsh establishmentarian view) which claimed, “the Church as one of the agencies fostered by the state for secular purposes and to develop the Christian state.” Next is the “Gallic school of entire indifference to the whole question of the relation of Church and state.” Finally, there is the *Scoto-American* school, “denying any connection or co-ordinate jurisdiction in spirituals and temporals between the state and the Church.”²⁵ Today, we face an amalgamate of the New England and Gallic schools which finds the entire question unnecessary and so the church is seen as an agent of transformation, actively engaging in social and political rhetoric without regard to the NT distinction between the sword (civil authority) and the Spirit (ecclesial authority).

In this brand of ecclesiology, we find more than one stumbling block in the message of the church. No longer is the stumbling block Christ alone, but the Christ of the Democrat party or the Christ of the Republican

party or the Christ of the socialist party or the Christ of social reconciliation, and on it goes on the political side of the equation. No longer is Christ the stumbling block, but rather how the church administers or addresses social programs for those needing housing, medical attention, and so on. Our actions on matters other than the gospel have led men to reject the message of the church. Furthermore, we have made the decisions of men in far-away times and places, a litmus test for right or wrong when in fact we may not know much at all about the men, their social setting, and their motives. The Word of God seems far safer as the only rule of faith and practice. With the safeguard down, we enter into social or political issues, as the church corporate, which then become part and parcel of the very gospel we are called to preach clearly, distinctly, and singularly. This was never the mind of the church and so Andrew Melville instructed King James I,

Sir, as divers times before I have told you, so now again I must tell you, there are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland: there in King James, the head of the Commonwealth, another is Christ Jesus, the King of the Church, whose subject James is, and of whose kingdom he is not the king, nor a lord, nor a head, but a member. We will yield to you your place, and give to you all due obedience, but again I say that you are not the head of the Church; you cannot give us that eternal life which we seek for even in this world, and you cannot deprive us of it. Permit us then freely to meet in the name of Christ, and to attend to the interests of that Church of which you are the chief member.²⁶

Notice the all-important last plea: “Permit us ... to attend to the interests of the Church of which you are the chief member.” Apparently, the view of the church at least as understood by men like Melville and Augustine before him in *The City of God*, is that the church corporate is not a socio-political voice, but a gospel voice of reconciling justice between holy God and unholy sinful men and must be clearly distinguished from that of the civil or common realm.

Finally, let us consider a *modest review of the spirituality of the church briefly accentuated*. So, if the spirituality doctrine does not include the institutional church reshaping society proactively, directing political drifts, and legislating moral lives of people, then what does it mean? What is the soul of the church? Well, to put it briefly, the seed planted in the soul of the church is “ministerial and declarative.” This concept is that which was dredged up from the distant past by our reforming

24. Westminster Confession of Faith 31.4 is cited here to show that the spirituality doctrine has roots also in the Westminsterian branch of Calvinism.

25. *Ibid.*, 475.

26. W.M. Hetherington, *History of the Church of Scotland* (New York: Robert Carter, 1844), 105.

fathers who, prompted by the humanist dictum of *ad fontes*, had returned to the Scriptures and paid close attention to the clear teaching of Scripture from the OT to the NT. Namely, they noted the particular care with which *God instructed His church on how and what to do*. That specificity is encapsulated in the words of our Savior to the church as he parted—"teaching them to observe all that I commanded you" (Matt 28:20).

John L. Girardeau provides us a good summary in his General Assembly Address of 1875:

The church is grounded in the supernatural facts and relations of redemption, and is intended to 'realize the idea of grace.' Her very existence is created by the redeeming mission of Christ. She is not, therefore, a society of human beings, as such, but of human beings as redeemed. As strictly a redemptive institute she must be supernatural. Her origin is supernatural, as lying in the mediatorial work of Christ; her existence as historically developed is supernatural, as springing from the call of the Holy Spirit; her members are men presumed at least to be supernaturally regenerated; and her end is supernatural, as designed to illustrate the grace of a redeeming God.²⁷

This supernatural organization is one with a distinct purpose. In Acts 6, when we have the rudimentary shape of the NT office of deacon set forth, we learn also something about the other office of the church—the teaching office. The apostles were to devote themselves to the ministry of Word and prayer, and that alone. That ministerial and declarative role then came to the ordinary office of elder as the apostolic office became obsolete. The eldership is to proclaim the supernatural message of God and pray for the supernatural work of God to attend the proclamation.

In Matthew 28:16–20 we learn from Christ of this discretionary power or the soul of the church. First, we learn of the primacy of preaching the gospel indiscriminately to all men with the goal of making disciples, Christ's believers and followers. The church has always been concerned to keep the pulpit unencumbered from worldly matters, i.e., politics—"Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword" (Matt 26:52). Who is to wield the sword? The civil magistrate. What was Peter to wield? The Word in humble reliance upon the Holy Spirit. To whom was the sword given then, if not to the church? Caesar, perhaps? Our Lord told us to give to Caesar what is his and to God what is His (Matt 22:21). He clearly distanced the sword of the civil office from the Word

and Spirit of the ecclesial realm. Another example of this came from Paul when he said, "it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake."⁶For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.⁷Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor" (Rom 13:5–7).

Jesus clearly stated that His kingdom, the church, is not of this world. In response to Pilate, our Lord and Savior said:

My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews [note the social and moral injustice of Jesus's situation, but it is not the work of His servants]; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.³⁷Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say *correctly* that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth" (John 18:36, 37).

Please do not miss this! Jesus said His kingdom is one of testifying—"to testify to the truth." He did not say, "My kingdom and my work is one of social renovation." Rather, our Savior distinctly said the redemptive kingdom's work is that of gospel proclamation! Indeed, one of the first things we read concerning His work on this earth is found in Mark where Jesus "came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God" (Mark 1:14). In the midst of His healing Peter's mother and others we read this: "He said to them, 'Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also; *for that is what I came for*'" (1:38; emphasis added).

Preaching the gospel is with the intent of bringing people to saving faith in Christ and spiritual nurture in the household of faith, the church. Bringing people into His church, which is not the state, through preaching and baptism, not civil courts, public institutions or social venues, is our soul, our mission, our life. How often today do we hear the argument made that people stay away from church because of the church's former silence on this or that. Or the church's former stance on this or that. The lost person's only hope is not our past sins, but the present power of preaching Christ and Him crucified. When Christ is preached faithfully and winsomely, the excuses of the sinner will fall away. All who are appointed to eternal life will believe (Acts

27. John L. Girardeau, "The Discretionary Power of the Church," in George A. Blackburn, ed., *Sermons by John L. Girardeau* (Columbia, SC: The State Company, 1907), 374.

13:48)! Do we believe that? We will not draw people to Christ by renovating ourselves, but by preaching Christ who renovates sinners.

After the primacy of the preaching for the Church, notice in Matthew 28, the ever so close tie between making disciples and baptism. This, by the way, is one of the reasons we believe in covenant baptism of our infant covenant children—discipleship begins with baptism. The link here is clear. So, the church is to preach and administer the initiatory sacrament in order to bring people into His church. This is the beginning of an ongoing life of disciple-making.

We preach, we baptize, and we further disciple those to whom we take the gospel for their growth in the faith. That is implicit in the “make disciples,” but explicit in “teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.” We do this so that disciples will grow in grace and live holy lives as saints and citizens. It is important to notice I said “saints” and “citizens.” The church does preach the Word to make good, growing saints in worship and witness in and from the church; but I also said that through our exposition of God’s Word we make good, growing citizens *for out there*, in the civil realm, in the public square. The spirituality doctrine recognizes that Christians live in two kingdoms on this side of glory. We are citizens of heaven/city of God/the redemptive kingdom *and* citizens of earth/city of man/the common kingdom. In our role as citizens of the latter, we live out our principled positions concerning social and political matters. As the church we prepare men and women for the new heavens and new earth as the bride of Christ. As the church we send individuals out to speak the truth in love, yes, but to live as leaven in the earthly realm. Please do not collapse or confuse the two anymore than you confuse the divine and human natures of our Savior.

This last point is important for we learn in the church what God commands us to do and not to do. The commands cover our role both within the church and outside the church. We learn how to live as a citizen of the church, the city of God *and* how we are to live as a citizen in the city of man. In another place we have written extensively on our role as the church corporate as we live and serve the brotherhood, the church. That corporate role can also involve the church in the community in meeting mercy needs in the “neighborhood.” Our mercy actions among our people out in the

neighborhood would involve “doing good to all people” (Gal 6:10) with the aim of opening the door for the proclamation of the gospel.²⁸ Finally, in that same article, we expound upon the individual role in the neighborhood as individual philanthropists and humanitarians, applying the teachings of the Bible to everyday life in the public sector.

So, the church does have a role institutionally through her diaconate to address the mercy needs of the neighborhood through the brotherhood, with the end to bring the gospel to bear in lives of the poor and needy and add them to the redemptive kingdom. At the same time, individual Christians have a role to live as exemplary citizens engaged in all realms of the civil sphere—social, political, education, environment, and so on. In keeping these distinctions between corporate church and individual Christian-life we protect the soul of the church.

Stuart Robinson provides a good summary to what has just been said:

The idea of a blending of the two powers, secular and spiritual is purely a Paganism in its origin. Only in the Jewish nation, of all the nations of antiquity, is to be found any exception to the general practice.

In all the inspired expositions of the mission of Jesus Christ, whether in the Old or the New Testament, two ideas are fundamental. The first, that his design is not merely to teach a doctrine and make an atonement, but also to found a community and establish a *government*. The other idea is that the power of administration in this government, of which he is King, is something distinct from that of civil power under which human society is organized for protection of life, liberty, and property of man. That there are duties to Caesar altogether distinct from the duties due to [Jesus] as spiritual King. That ‘His kingdom is not of this world.’²⁹

We live in two kingdoms. Our spiritual citizenship is unique *and* distinct from that of our civil citizenship. The church owns one set of vows while Caesar owns another. Those vows do not overlap. They are distinct spheres of allegiance and duties—they are two kingdoms. To confuse or compound the two is to add to and take away from the pure gospel.

CONCLUSION

You see, the spirituality of the church does not preclude individual Christians from entering into political and

28. C. N. Willborn, “The Gospel Work of the Diaconate: A Ministry Proportioned in Number,” in *The Confessional Presbyterian*, vol. 11 (2014): 13–23.

29. Robinson, *Discourses of Redemption*, 3rd ed. (1866), 477.

social debate and even “activism.” The spirituality of the church does preclude the church in all its corporate/institutional expressions from entering into political and social debate and “activism.” “Unto this catholic visible church Christ has given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world: and does, by his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto” (WCF 25.3). Once placed in this institutional body, the church of the living God, we are called upon to exercise our duties within that body and those duties are established—“saints by profession are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification; as also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities and necessities. Which communion, as God offers opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who, in everyplace, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus” (WCF 26.2). This is the soul of the church.

The position denied and that which is affirmed in what has been said is in full agreement with our Confession of Faith and, therefore, we believe, the Bible. May we, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, support the worship and work of the church *as the church* to the best of our ability. Equally may we as individual believers in the public sector do good unto all men, both politically, socially, and environmentally. Amen.

SUGGESTED READING

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Thornwell, James H. *The Collected Writings of James H. Thornwell*, 4 vols. Reprint, Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1974. See especially volume 4.

Webb, Robert A. “The Modern Mind and Christian Service,” in *Elements of Truth*, vol. 2. Jackson, MS: Tucker Printing House, 1915. “The Modern Mind” was a series of addresses delivered at Belhaven College for the Synod’s [Mississippi] Training School between June 22–July 2, 1915 and published by the Committee of Synod. While this is an obscure item, it provides perhaps the single best statement of the church’s soul and pits the spirituality doctrine against other approaches. Because of this, the editors determined to run Webb’s article subsequent to this present one in this issue of *The Confessional Presbyterian*.

Willborn, C.N. “The Gospel Work of the Diaconate: A Ministry Proportioned in Number,” in *The Confessional Presbyterian*, vol. 11 (2014): 13–23. This article deals with the role of the church in meeting temporal needs through the diaconate, while acting clearly within the doctrine of the church and protecting her soul from corruption through extra-ecclesiastical socio-political intermeddling. ■

Neighborhood and Brotherhood

From *Elements of Truth*, volume 2 (1915)

By Robert Alexander Webb.

INTRODUCTION

Robert A. Webb (1856–1919) spent his first fifteen years in Oxford, Mississippi before moving with his family to Nashville, Tennessee. He was educated at the then famous Webb School south of Nashville in Culleoka. He earned his BA at Southwestern Presbyterian University in Clarksville, Tennessee (now Rhodes College, Memphis) and studied for the ministry under John L. Girardeau, DD at old Columbia Theological Seminary in Columbia, South Carolina. After serving the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) as a very able pastor, he was called in 1892 to succeed Joseph Ruggles Wilson (Woodrow Wilson's father) in the chair of theology at his college alma mater. In 1908 the PCUS General Assembly elected him unanimously to move to Louisville Presbyterian Seminary (KY) where he labored as a popular professor, succeeding the erudite Francis Beattie in the Chair of Apologetics and Systematic Theology. There he remained until his death in 1919. To his credit are numerous publications including journal articles and several books such as *The Reformed Doctrine of Adoption* (which was published posthumously without being completed), *The Theology of Infant Salvation, Christian Salvation, Its Doctrine and Experience*, *The Christian Hope*, and was a contributor to *Elements of Truth* in 2 volumes, from which the current literary piece is excerpted. This work was a collection of addresses delivered at Belhaven College, Jackson, Mississippi in 1915. In addition to Webb's incisive lectures, John M. Wells delivered the seminal addresses which would eventually become *Southern Presbyterian Worthies*. Webb was one of the speakers for the event and delivered discourses at this small college of the PCUS. He considered a number of popular approaches to meeting the needs of the whole man. Socialism, utopianism, secularism, humanitarianism and even the "social gospel" of Walter Rauschenbusch were within his

crosshairs. The readers will recall that Rauschenbusch was an eminent sociological theologian of the early 20th century. He published such influential books as *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (1917). Prior to Webb's lectures and subsequent publication, Rauschenbusch had published two other books from his socio-psychological perspective of man. Webb's work was a very able biblical critique of the popular non-Christian approaches to man's plight, concluding with several lectures on a biblical-theological approach that maintained the spirituality of the church, while at the same time encouraging and equipping the philanthropic and humanitarian nature and task of Christians in the public square. The extract presented here comes from a chapter in volume two of *Elements of Truth*, pages 78–90. Very minor form edits have been exercised to help with ease of reading. Original substance is left as is from the original.

C. N. WILLBORN

NEIGHBORHOOD AND BROTHERHOOD

It is common today to hear Jesus represented as the first socialist of the world, and his religion described as a practical, or as some say, an impractical, social programme. It is current to hear the Christian Church pilloried as an institution which has grossly perverted and travestied the ethics of Christ.

Professor Vedder gives us a long list of causes for "the social failure of the Church." He blames Paul first and foremost. "Paul," he says, "saved Christianity from perishing in the cradle. But it was almost an equal disaster that Paul did win." It was his misfortune that he did not know Jesus in the flesh; "he was born and reared in a family of the well-to-do class, and never felt the bitterness of poverty." Hence he "deflected Christianity from its original line of progress." Next to the desocializing of Christianity by Paul, came the early attempts to formulate doctrines and dogmas. Then there was

the influence of paganism, which injected into Christianity its ideas and ideals, carrying the cause of Christ far afield. Then came those bitter persecutions which caused the disciples to think more of the world to come than of this world, which carried the Church still farther away from the initial idea of a social regeneration. Then came the dark ages which marked “the complete passing of the ideal of Jesus.” Protestantism failed to resuscitate the socialism of Christianity because it had “to conquer freedom of thought, and so devoted itself to creed-making.”¹

So this professor in a Protestant Theological Seminary (Crozier) blames Paul and Providence that the Church has been unsocial from the days of Christ to the present time! This is a severe indictment. Many, however, within the Christian circle are prosecuting it both with argument and rhetoric.

I think, perhaps, the radical fallacy is a failure to observe the biblical distinction between “neighborhood” and “brotherhood.” The word “neighbor” occurs in the Christian Scriptures more than one hundred and thirty-five times, and the word “brother” appears more than five hundred times. These words appear in both Testaments in many connections, and almost in every book of the Bible. Besides the words themselves, there are many cognate phrases and kindred expressions. I think we can infer from this usage that the Bible does teach some doctrine of “neighborhood” and some doctrine of “brotherhood.”

“Neighbor” is an Anglo-Saxon word, and primarily signifies one who resides near to another. The basal idea is that of proximity in space. “Brother,” on the other hand, primarily signifies one who had the same parentage with another. The basal idea is that of a common generation, a common origin, a common blood. Etymologically, a “neighborhood” is a geographical community, and a “brotherhood” is a consanguineous community. A group of human beings having a common place is a “neighborhood,” and a group having a common origin is a “brotherhood.” Proximity is the ruling idea with the one, and kinship with the other.

Words, however, have both acquired and expanded meanings as well as their original and proper meanings, but they never entirely lose the aroma of their original significance however far usage may take them from their starting points. The flavor of their derivations always clings to them whatever their history. And so these words “neighborhood” and “brotherhood” can never get away entirely from their original meanings.

The law of good neighborhood was set up in the Mosaic legislation. “If thou meet thine enemy’s ox or his

ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee, lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him; thou shalt surely help with him.” (Exod. 23:4–5). “Also thou shalt not oppress the stranger” (Exod. 23:9). “Thou shalt not see thy brother’s ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them; thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again.” (Deut. 22:4). From such instances it is easy to generalize how the Old Testament required consideration and assistance for the enemy, the stranger, and the brother Israelite. The disciple of the Old Economy could not be faithful to its precepts and spirit, and withhold a helping hand from the needy whoever he might be, Jewish brother, or Philistine enemy, or the unknown stranger by chance within the gates. There was a vast deal of legislation which hedged the neighbor with protection and made him a subject of consideration and kindness.

Yet Israel, in the days of our Lord, had come to narrow the claimants upon bounty and charity and help to those of his own blood and household. Our Lord complained vehemently against these traditions and false interpretations, with which Jewish ecclesiastics had overlaid the law of God as given by Moses and the prophets. He particularly and emphatically corrected the law of good neighborhood, along with other serious misinterpretations of the rules which Jehovah had laid down. He recalled the fact that it had been plainly written in Leviticus, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (Lev. 19:1). Consequently he was adding nothing new to the original law, when He said in the Sermon on the Mount, (Matt. 5:43), or when He said to His disciples when they were asking Him who would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 19:19), or when He said to the scribe asking which is the greatest commandment of the law (Matt. 22:39), or when He said to the young lawyer who tempted Him (Luke 10:27), “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” On these four different occasions He made Himself plain, and asserted that the law of the Old Testament, as well as the law of the New Testament, made the love of self the measure of love for the neighbor. It was a high doctrine of neighborliness, but it had been the doctrine from the very beginning of divine instruction.

The apostle Paul, the great expositor of Christianity to the European and heathen world, also signalized the same principle, in perfect conformity with his divine Master, as one of the cardinal tenets of his gospel.

1. Henry Clay Vedder, *Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus* (New York: Macmillan, 1912), 437–79. Hb, xv, 527 pp.

He said to the Romans, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (Rom. 13:9). He again said to the Galatians, “For all the law (of neighborliness) is fulfilled in one word, even this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (Gal. 5:14). And the practical James said to the general Christian world, “If ye fulfill the royal law, according to the Scriptures, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well.” (James 2:8). So Moses and the prophets, Christ and the apostles have written it all over the Scriptures as the “royal law” of God, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

Our Lord also phrased it as a Golden Rule: “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets” (Matt. 7:12). Men must show the same kindness to others, which, under similar circumstances, they could reasonably desire should be shown to them. But Christian neighborliness must go beyond the ethical neighborliness of the Golden Rule, “for if ye (Christians) salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?” (Matt. 5:47). Christian courtesy and generosity, Christian good-will and neighborliness, must have a wider range and a deeper glow than mark worldly salutations and cordialities.

At the time of our Lord the scribes and Pharisees and ecclesiastics had restricted the idea of “neighbor” to members of their own race and kindred. The alien and the enemy and all non-Jewish people they had put beyond the pale of neighborhood and denied to them all neighborly treatment. Our Lord corrected this narrow view of neighborhood. In the Sermon on the Mount he said, “Ye have heard that it hath been said—ye have heard the law of good neighborhood interpreted in this way—Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies—the law of Old Testament good neighborhood requires you to be charitable to your enemies” (Matt. 5:43–44). When, on another occasion, a young lawyer said to Him, “Who is my neighbor—define him,” Christ answered with His matchless parable of the Good Samaritan, and showed that every human being who may be in need is to be ranked and dealt with as a neighbor (Luke 10:30–37). The whole human world thus becomes one common neighborhood. The earth’s surface is not wide enough for any man to be far enough removed to be beyond the pale of neighborly treatment. Whoever lives in this world is to be regarded as a neighbor to everybody else in the earth.

But the Scriptures have a doctrine of “brotherhood” as well as a doctrine of “neighborhood.” They use the word “brother” and its cognates a great multitude of

times. These uses may be reduced to three classes: (1) brothers by nature, (2) brothers by law, and (3) brothers by grace.

Natural brothers were those related to each other by descent from a common parent or ancestor. They were blood-connections. The sons of Jacob were called “Joseph’s brethren” (Gen. 50:15). The descendants of Esau were called “the brethren” of the children of Israel (Deut. 2:4), because both Jacob and Esau were the sons of Isaac. The natural brother belonged to the immediate household, or had a blood-descent from a common parentage. For instance, the Scriptures never represent the Canaanite as the brother of Israel, or the Roman as the brother of the Jew. A community of blood is essential to the idea of natural brothers.

Legal brothers, on the other hand, are those who had artificially been connected with each other by marriage, or who had been adopted into such nearness as would have been constituted by nature had they been born into that relation. Scripture co-ordinates the relationships of consanguinity and affinity. Law-kin are the same as blood-kin. The degrees are equal, and without distinction. The Levitical marriage-law prescribed that no marriage could be contracted with an in-law-relation of the same degree as the forbidden blood-relation (Lev. 18:6–20). This explains how “Joseph, the husband of Mary of whom Jesus was born,” was by Matthew called the son of “Jacob” and by Luke the son of “Heli” (Matt. 1:16; Luke 3:23). Jacob was the natural father of Joseph, and Heli was his father-in-law, but the narratives call him the “son” of each, because in the Bible relations of consanguinity and affinity are treated without distinction. That which is constituted by law and convention is as real as that which is constituted by nature. In the Scriptures a brotherhood by law is the same as a brotherhood by blood and nature.

But there is another “brotherhood” in Scripture which is neither natural nor legal, but **gracious**. This kind of fraternity is constituted by a common relationship to the Lord Jesus. It is not the blood which courses through their veins, nor yet the legal bonds which hold them together, but the operation of the Spirit of God within them, giving them a common nature and a fraternal relation to the Lord Jesus. This group are brethren because they have experienced the “second birth.” In the Christian brotherhood, God is the **Father**, Christ is the **Elder Brother**, and all Christians are but the younger members in the **Family of God**, in the household of faith. This is not metaphor, a mere human analogy without any basis in reality. On the contrary it is a true and

literal fact, showing a family which has been constituted by a work of grace.

Such a brotherhood is constituted in two ways: (1) subjectively by regeneration, which conveys the nature of a child of God, and (2) objectively by adoption, which gives the rights and standing of a child in the house and family of God. It is one thing to have the **spirit** of a child, and another thing to have the **status** of a child. We can readily think of earthly families in which a member has all the rights and privileges of a son in the house, but who is entirely devoid of every trace of a filial spirit and temper; and, on the other hand, we can think of a family in which the child has none of the formal rights of a son of the house, while he carries in his bosom a genuine filial heart and disposition. He may inherit from a father as a matter of legal right, but be destitute of the most primary sense of filial love and respect. Or he may have the sweetest and most child-like disposition, and yet be the subject of a legal disinheritance. To become a member of the Christian household, a sinner needs both the heart of a child and the standing of a child. The one is provided for in the gospel by regeneration and sanctification, and the other is provided for by adoption. The one gives him a fraternal nature and the other gives him a fraternal status. And so does grace create a genuine "brotherhood."

Christ is often called "the only begotten" Son of God (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9), and also "the first begotten" son of God (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:6; 12:23). Theologians call the one the **monogenetic** sonship, and the other the **primogenetic** sonship of Christ. As the only-begotten Son He had no brethren, but as the first-begotten Son He had many brethren. The one is His trinitarian and eternal sonship in the Godhead, and the other His mediatorial and redemptive sonship in the Church. The monogenetic Son had a divine nature only; the primogenetic Son had a divine-human nature. The monogenetic Son had no birth-day; the primogenetic Son was born in the fulness of time. The monogenetic Son had no brethren in the Trinity; the primogenetic Son has a multitude of brethren in the Church of God. He is not "the elder brother" in the parable, but He is the Elder Brother in the Christian brotherhood.

I think then we may conclude that the Scriptures do give us the idea of a Christian "neighborhood" on the one hand, and a Christian "brotherhood" on the other. The membership of the "neighborhood" includes all men indiscriminately, while the membership of the "brotherhood" is limited to those who are "in Christ Jesus." Our attitude towards the "brotherhood" is closer and more intense than our bearing towards

the "neighbor." This is expressed by Peter when he says, "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood." (1 Peter 2:17). Honor the "neighborhood," but love the "brotherhood." One draws deeper upon the heart, its sympathies and affections, than does the other.

"The New Theology," we are told by one of its formal expositors and earnest defenders, "is but the religious articulation of the social movement." He calls it "spiritual socialism." He tells us that "the great social movement which is now taking place in every country of the civilized world towards universal peace and brotherhood, and a better and fairer distribution of wealth, is really the same movement as that which in the more distinctly religious sphere is coming to be called the New Theology."²

These twin "movements," the one religious and theological, the other social and economic, aim at the destruction of the biblical distinction between neighborhood and brotherhood. The universal neighborhood must be converted into a universal brotherhood. "The universal Fatherhood of God," "the universal brotherhood of man," and "the solidarity of the human race," are the fundamental and formative ideas of the entire propaganda. We are being told, as if it were a commonplace truism, that, while other prophets made God known as Creator and Preserver, Ruler and **Redeemer**, "it was reserved for Christ to make these all to become figurative expressions, and **the Father** to become His real and true name."³ We are being assured, as a matter of course, beyond all question, that this was the original and unique and distinctive revelation of the Lord Jesus.

Jesus did habitually speak of God as "my Father." In His teachings He continually spoke of Him to the disciples as "your Father." He taught His disciples to pray "our Father which art in heaven." There is not a single instance on record in all the New Testament where the antecedent pronouns, "my," "our," "thy," "your," "his," "their," prefixed to "Father," refer to other than Christ and Christians. There is not one reported saying of Jesus which directly or by implication represents Him as teaching that God is the Father of all men indiscriminately and without distinction. To Christ and to those who are "in Christ" He is indeed a loving Father, in all the infinite fulness and tenderness of that blessed name. To all other men than those who have been related to Him by grace, He is creator and preserver, benefactor

2. R. J. Campbell, *The New Theology* (New York: Macmillan, 1912), 14. Hb, ix, 258 pp.

3. Wilbur F. Tillett, *Personal Salvation: Studies in Christian Doctrine pertaining to the Spiritual Life* (Nashville, TN: Cokesbury Press, 1912), 10. Hb, xx, 538 pp.

and ruler and judge—the hater of iniquity and the punisher of evil-doers.

That God was the Father of all Israel is an idea abundantly set forth by the prophets and made familiar to every Jew, but Israel was a type, not of all mankind, but of the people of God—that portion of mankind which was in covenant-relation to their Maker. It is not even claimed that the Old Testament made any such revelation as that God was the Father of all the race. The very contention is that the common and universal Fatherhood of God was first made known by the Lord Jesus, and constitutes something peculiar and exclusive in the revelation of Christ. Israel was God's "son," God's typical son, and all Israelites were consequently "brethren," not because they were descendants from Abraham according to the flesh, but because they were bound together by a covenant of grace, which typed the brotherhood of all believers and Christians—all the spiritual posterity of Abraham as the "father of the faithful." On one occasion the Jews had a controversy with our Lord, in which they argued that God was their Father because they were the seed of Abraham. Jesus retorted, "If God were your Father, ye would love Me.... Ye are of your father the devil." (Jno. 8:37-44).

We see in the teaching of Jesus a message which made **neighborhood**, not national and racial, but universal and world-wide. But there is nothing in His teachings which thus expands **brotherhood**, and makes it co-extensive with the limits of the human race. The idea of an all-comprehensive neighborhood is in the Great Supper, the Marriage of the King's Son, the Wicked Husbandman, the Samaritan Woman, the Samaritan Leper, the Servant of the Centurion, the Canaanitish Woman, and specifically in the Good Samaritan (John 4; Luke 17:18; Matt. 7:26; Mark 7:26).

It is undeniably true that the Bible teaches that all the human race descended from the common parentage of Adam and Eve, and that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26). In this sense the whole world is a human family, all men are brothers afar off. But the Bible predicates little of ethics and precepts upon this purely humanitarian ground. Indeed, it would be difficult to find any passage in Scripture which calls upon us to be kind and generous, considerate and sympathetic with man just because he is man, having the same heredity and nature and blood as ourselves. The Bible teaches that fact, but God does not base the gospel and duty upon that truth. There is a treatment which Christ requires us to accord all men because they are "brethren." Our Lord did not say, Thou shalt love **man** as thyself;

nor did He say, Thou shalt love thy **brother** as thyself; but He did say, Thou shalt love thy **neighbor** as thyself. He thus constituted a neighborhood and a brotherhood, and made all that is human the membership of one and all that is Christian the membership of the other. One is universal and race-wide, and the other is limited to his disciples.

All the world is neighbor to the Church, and it must act the Good Samaritan to the ends of the earth. In the spirit of fraternity it must minister to all the household of faith, but in the spirit of Christian neighborliness it must take its gospel and beneficent institutions to the utmost parts of the habitable globe. It must be unneighborly, or it must be evangelistic and missionary. The law of good neighborhood requires it to give of its bread and drink and oil and loving kindness to the fallen in every land.

But the social movement and the new theology which seeks to "articulate" it are not pleased with the Scriptures' assignment of all who are not the disciples of Christ to the class of neighbors. They are dissatisfied with any distinctions made among men for any reason. They are for reducing all the race to a dead level, and for giving all men the same standing with God and other men. Discriminations are hateful. If God is the Father of any, He must be the Father of all. If any are brothers, all must be brothers. Nothing short of the universal brotherhood of all mankind can placate them. It is not neighborly love and brotherly treatment they want, but brotherly love and brotherly treatment they demand, irrespective of the feelings they show and the treatment they give the Lord Jesus.

But it cannot be helped. It ought not to be otherwise. The attitude of men towards Christ and His gospel must and ought to make a difference between men. He is a divider of men. He is a divider of ages. He is a divider of destinies. He separates men into His "friends" and His "enemies." He treats His enemies in a generous and neighborly fashion, but He regards His friends with a special and exuberant brotherly affection. In this respect His disciples may follow His example. History shows that the people of Christ have often been requited with persecution for their neighborly treatment of His critics and opponents. Many who are the beneficiaries of Christian charity and that humanitarian kindness which has been generated by the gospel, are the bitter critics of the Church and traducers of the disciples of the Lord Jesus. Nevertheless our Master says, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be (that you

may show yourselves to be) the children of your Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 5:44–45).

The most primary duty we owe to the neighborhood is **justice**. The law is, “Render to all their dues” (Rom. 13:7–10). The neighborhood has no need which can take precedence over justice. It requires that respect which makes us “honor all men” (1 Peter 2:17). It forbids participation in barbarisms which degrade, or in any practices which crush. It requires us to accord to every man his full social rights—reward to whom reward is due, and punishment to whom punishment is due. Each member of society must be allowed, as a matter of right, to live upon the highest ethical plane he may make for himself, and be ruled in all things by the loftiest Christian conscience. Nothing can take the place of social justice, which accords to every member of the neighborhood the right to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness.

Next to justice comes **truthfulness**, in importance as a neighborhood duty. False-witness bearing, gross lying, spiteful backbiting, injurious gossip, malicious tale-bearing, hurtful tittle-tattle, are horrid transgressions of the law of Christian neighborhood. The tongue of the deceiver and slanderer has done woeful damage to both the smaller and larger neighborhoods of the world. “Speaking the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15) is the rule of Scripture. “Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, but put away from you, with malice; and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph. 4:31–32). Perhaps few indulge in more bitter blackmail than do certain of the socially discontented, who have taken up the idea that the neighborhood is to blame for all their hardships and failures. Falsehood, in all its forms, is an atrocious offence against the most elementary rules of Christian neighborhood.

We owe to the neighborhood, not only justice and truthfulness and all the sterner qualities of conscience and righteousness, but also **sympathy** and the gentler virtues of the heart. A fellow-feeling which carries us into the joys and sorrows of both the local and the wider community; a practical kindness and beneficence which lend a helping hand to every struggling member of the neighborhood; words of cheer that bolster a drooping spirit; a forbearance that can be patient with those whose tempers are irritable, whose conduct is unlovely, and whose speech is unbecoming; a forgiveness which, in the very majesty and sublimity of one who stands upon the steps of God’s throne, can wipe out the injury which has been even wantonly inflicted;—these

are some of the things which would glorify Christian neighborhood, and make it delicious to live in such a community.

Finally, the law of Christian neighborhood requires each member to be an **example** of justice, truth, and goodness to every other member of the community. It is awful to lead another astray—to tempt him to immorality, to misery, to uncharitableness, to that which is dishonorable and vulgar; but doubly damned is he who first introduces the evil custom which casts its blight upon the neighborhood. Every member of a community is a fountain of influence. Cursed is he whose fountain is morally poisoned. The light of eternity will show your finger-marks and mine upon all those with whom we associate. Cicero is quoted as saying, “Be a pattern to others; for as a whole city is infected by the licentious passions and vices of great men, so it is likewise reformed by their moderation.” Each member of the neighborhood must live as he would have the whole neighborhood live. “Man is an imitative creature, and whoever is foremost leads the herd.”

“Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”

Elements of Truth. Volume I. Addresses delivered at Synod’s Training School, June 16 to 26, 1914, at Belhaven College, Jackson, Miss., by eminent leaders and workers of the Presbyterian Church, by R. A. Webb. (n.p., 1914), paperback, 263 pp.

I. The Christian’s Hope, by Rev. R.A. Webb, D.D., LL.D.

1. The Religion of Hope.
2. The Hope of Eternal Life, Immortality.
3. The Hope of Eternal Life, Resurrection.
4. The Hope of the Christian’s Cause.
5. The Hope of the Earth.
6. The Hope of Christ’s Coming.

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1. Presbyterian Elements in History.
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5. Micah: Prophet of the Common People.

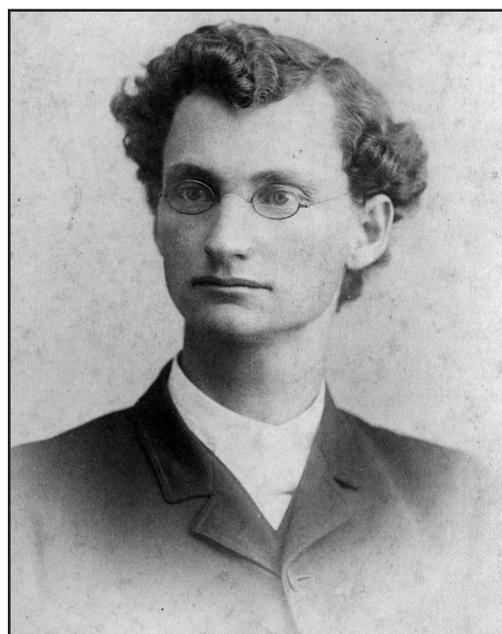
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- 7. Jonah: Is the Whale the Hero?
- 8. Jesus: The Matchless Prophet.
- IV. Evangelism, by Rev. Theron H. Rice, D.D., LL.D.
 - 1. The Call for Evangelism.
 - 2. The Nature of Evangelism.
 - 3. The Agent in Evangelism.
 - 4. The Method of Evangelism.
- V. Bible Ethics: The Sabbath, by Rev. C.W. Grafton, D.D.
 - 1. The Meaning of the Sabbath.
 - 2. The Keeping of the Sabbath.
 - 3. The Home.
- VI. The Unlovely Christ, by Rev. R.V. Lancaster, D.D.
- VII. Social Service, by Rev. L.E. McNair, D.D.
 - 1. Fundamentals in Teaching of Jesus.
 - 2. The Example of Jesus.
- Missions
 - 1. An Aggressive Missionary Campaign, by Rev. L.E. McNair, D.D.
 - 2. Home Missions, by Rev. A.A. Little.
- Literary: Robert Burns, Democrat, by Hon. J.F. Frierson.

Elements of Truth. Volume II. Addresses delivered at Synod's Training School, June 22nd–July 2nd, 1915, at Belhaven College, Jackson, Mississippi, by eminent workers of the Presbyterian Church, by R.A. Webb (Jackson, MS: Tucker Printing House, 1915), paperback, 245pp..

- I. The Modern Mind and Christian Service, by Rev. R.A. Webb, D.D., LL.D.
 - 1. Social Discontent.
 - 2. The Social Organism.
 - 3. Utopianism.
 - 4. Secularism.
 - 5. Altruism: Humanitarianism: Socialism.
 - 6. Christian Socialism.
 - 7. Neighborhood and Brotherhood.
 - 8. Social Service.
 - 9. Christian Charity.
 - 10. The Service of God.
- II. The Ideal State, by Judge W.M. Cox.
- III. Education Essentials, by Dr. Alfred Hume.
- IV. Pioneer Presbyterians and their Successors in Mississippi, by Rev. C.W. Grafton, D.D.
- V. Presbyterian Worthies, by Rev. John M. Wells, D.D.
 - 1. Samuel Davies.
 - 2. Archibald Alexander.
 - 3. John Leighton Wilson.
 - 4. Daniel Baker. ■



REV. R. A. WEBB, D.D.,
Louisville, Ky.
Modern Mind and Social Service.



R. A. Webb from *Elements of Truth* and a college photograph circa 1877, when about 21 years of age.

REVIEWS & RESPONSES

Review: David Fergusson and Mark W. Elliot (eds.), *The History of Scottish Theology*, 3 vols. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019). Hardback. \$375.00. Volume 1, 416pp. ISBN 978-0-19-875933-1. Volume 2, 464pp. ISBN 978-0-19-875934-8. Volume 3, 400pp. ISBN 978-0-19-875935-5. Reviewed by Harrison Perkins (PhD, Queen's University Belfast) is the assistant pastor at London City Presbyterian Church, a visiting lecturer in systematic theology at Edinburgh Theological Seminary, and the author of *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works: James Ussher and the Reformed Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 2020).

Scotland has long been famous for its church culture, even if that has almost totally waned now in its post-Christian era, and especially Presbyterian traditions have often looked to Scotland for its example of a long-running Presbyterian heritage. Scottish theology inherently has *some* link to confessional Presbyterianism, which makes its history of immediate interest to readers of this journal. The new three-volume history of Scottish theology from Oxford University Press makes a massive contribution in describing some of the most important features and seismic shifts in the development of doctrinal thinking and church life in Scotland.

Volume one covers the periods from the Celtic origins of Scottish theology to the era of Reformed Orthodoxy. The task set for this volume was certainly monumental, and the difficulty of examining the most ancient features of Scottish theology is tremendously difficult given the available sources. However, Simon Burton's essay on John Scotus Erigena does a masterful job of investing a difficult and unknown source, and this essay is a particularly important contribution that helpfully introduces material that is likely unknown to many. The essays in this volume that are likely of most interest to readers of this journal are those that concern the Reformation and Orthodox periods. Whitney Gamble contributed a very useful survey of the Westminster Assembly. Although many readers are likely familiar with the Assembly, there is a lack of scholarly material that accurately considers the varying facets of the Assembly from the English and Scottish perspectives. Gamble's essay does a fine job of sketching the Scottish commission's contribution to the Assembly and the various issues involved in the English-Scottish relations during the civil war period. Essays by Aaron Denlinger, Marie-Luise Ehrenschenwenter,

and R. Scott Spurlock raise some issues about the varying parties at work in Scotland during the later Orthodox period, and indicate some of the genuine complexities in studying Scottish ecclesiastical controversies. James Eglinton provided a masterful analysis of Scotland's theological connections to France and the Netherlands and traced out how those links inform various theological controversies and developments. Thomas Green wrote a supremely informative essay about changes and developments in Scottish jurisprudence in relation to theology, which is a topic that more scholars will now need to consider as they examine the political implications of Scottish theology.

Three essays in volume one directly address the issue of covenant theology, which is obviously a recurring theme in studies of Reformed historical theology. Two of these essays, however, are somewhat disappointing. David Mullan and Guy Richard both wrote specifically about the federal motif in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At least Mullan's prior work established him as a formidable expert in "Scottish Puritanism." Both of these essays do engage well with the primary sources and provide new analysis of important texts, such as the works of Robert Rollock, that contributed to Scottish covenant theology and these contributions are worth considering for their primary source assessment. Still, neither essay dealt with the relative explosion of literature on Reformed covenant theology in recent years, and opted instead to cite and engage with the same tired discussions from literature on covenant theology from twenty and thirty years ago. On the other hand, Stephen Meyers' essay about the Marrow controversy in the eighteenth century is a remarkably original and fresh assessment of that much discussed event. Meyers shed very insightful light on two conflicting paradigms of covenant theology that both grew out of latent tensions in prior Scottish theology and then clashed in the debates between the Marrow men and their opponents. It would be hard for readers of this journal to miss the correlations between the two conflicting versions of covenant theology that clashed in eighteenth century Scotland and debates about legalism and antinomianism that are raging in the Reformed community today. Although Meyers' historical essay may not solve those theological problems, it is well worth considering as a new and illuminating perspective on them.

Whereas volume one discussed issues from Scottish

RESPONSES critical of articles and reviews may be submitted for consideration for publication by sending drafts to the editorial address. Please contact the editor at editor@cpjournal.com, beforehand to obtain submission requirements and preferences. When possible, the subject of a negative or possibly controversial review may be contacted beforehand for any appropriate response for publication along with the review, and the reviewer will be given an opportunity for a response. If required, responses and replies may continue in subsequent issues.

theology's ancient root up to early modernity, which meant that theology was largely an ecclesiastical and cultural focus, volume two covers topics related mainly to the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The essays in this volume are occupied mostly with analyzing how Scottish theology responded to the development of modernity, primarily in regards to the Enlightenment, but also the Enlightenment's lingering effects. These essays show how theologians were far friendlier with the Scottish Enlightenment than was the case in the French counterpart. Many theologians attempted to reconcile or incorporate developing intellectual trends with traditional or revisionist Christianity. Sometimes these efforts were successful to some degree, but other times they produced controversy or undermined confessional stances in the Scottish church(es). This volume deals far more with institutional issues, as the eighteenth and nineteenth century saw the splintering of Scottish denomination and the separation of university education from ministerial training.

Several essays in this volume stand out for their usefulness. David Bebbington provides helpful analysis of the ongoing issues of dissent in Scotland from 1720 into the 1840s. The two chapters on the interface between theology and Scottish literature give insight into how theology affected popular media and storytelling, although Ian Campbell's chapter on literature clearly assumes that modernity is better than traditional Christianity. Michael Braütigam's essay on the Free Church of Scotland from its inception in 1843 to 1900 is one of the more helpful treatments of the theology of some of the "Disruption fathers" in print. Those who are interested in the theology of the early Free Church must consult this essay. Rowan Strong's essay on Scottish Episcopalian theology sheds light on matters that are probable lesser known in the development of Scottish theology, since Presbyterianism is almost always at the forefront of historical discussion.

On the other hand, Donald Macleod's essay about the Westminster Confession seemed to be more focused on criticizing the confession and its use in Scotland than explaining its significance. Macleod appeared critical (or at least sympathetic to criticisms) of strict confessional subscription (pg. 3). Although his historical comments about *some* lack of clarity in the confession about covenant theology, since the confession did not mention the covenant of redemption, are insightful, he seemed to use that lack of clarity to stretch the bounds of confessional "theological pluralism" (pg. 5-6). He noted that the confession did not settle the dispute between pre- and postmillennialism, although it would be strange had the confession addressed the issue in those exact terms, since that debate in the way that we know it today is of more recent development. Macleod's criticisms of the confession are clearest in regards to theology proper, namely his rejection of the confession's assertion that God is "without passions."

Macleod argued first that the confession may not actually be rejecting divine passibility in full, suggesting that it could be a rejection of "bodily passions" in God or acts of the mind that go against reason (pg. 6-7). It is not clear to this reviewer why a rejection of "bodily passions" would be necessary since the confession also states that God does not have a body. It seems that Macleod was trying to stretch the most obvious meaning of the confession in order to make his own rejection of divine impassibility more acceptable. His view is that, "To infer from this statement that subscribers to the Confession were bound to the view that God has no emotions, or that he is not affected by events outside himself, or that he was not moved by the death of his own Son, would be to remove from Scripture key elements of its revelation of God" (pg. 7). This claim seems to go beyond the limits of what an historical essay about the confession should argue, but also seems to be a clear rejection of the historic church's and the confession's clear teaching on this issue.

The third volume traces Scottish theology into the twentieth century. In some ways, these essays basically describe the Scottish church's interaction with, and essentially appropriation of, modern theology. Bruce McCormack's contribution about the Scottish reception of kenotic Christology is an extremely useful piece, not just in regard to Scottish theology, but in gaining a better and more nuanced understanding of the various versions of kenoticism. Brian Stanley's essay showed that Scotland's missionary movement, in contrast with the parallel movements in England and America, remained—to their credit—a churchly endeavor. Whereas so many other missionary organizations became parachurch affiliations, Scotland maintained a tight link between the churches and its missionary activities. Paul Nimmo's essay about Karl Barth's influence in Scotland is necessary reading to understand the reshaping of Scottish theology in the modern period. Much the same could be said of David Fergusson's essay on modern Christology, and Paul Molnar's on Thomas Torrance.

Torrance was perhaps the most significant figure in Scottish theology at least since the nineteenth century, which makes Molnar's essays arguably one of the more important in this collection, certainly in volume three. Torrance did notably emphasize retrieving the riches of Trinitarian theology, but, as part of a moderate Barthian legacy, also reworked Reformed theology in more ontological categories. This recasting related largely to his criticisms of traditional Reformed covenant theology, which in Barthian fashion he argued was too "contractual." His solution was to discard the covenant of works and recast features of the covenant of grace in more ontological rather than legal terms. In sum, however, this volume displays Scottish theology's significant adoption of modernity and social concern. By the end of the twentieth century, Barthianism if not full Hegelianism were major features within the doctrine

of the Scottish church. The essays in this volume are in some ways often denser than those in volumes one and two, but that largely relates to the complexity inherent in the sources.

There is a massive stockpile of information contained in these three volumes on the history of Scottish theology. Some of the essays, perhaps especially those on the ancient period, will introduce readers to figures, ideas, and sources that are new or unfamiliar to many. Other essays describe Scotland's period of Reformed orthodoxy, which opens up the foundational era that gave Scotland its reputation in the confessional Presbyterian heritage. The essays about the Enlightenment and modern period, however, show the Scottish church's real struggle and frequent failure to hold onto that confessional tradition. Although these essays can at times seem disconnected, taken together they do portray a narrative of Scotland's fascination with innovative ideas and of the church's tendency to incorporate academic trends into its theological thinking that undermined the more traditional and confessional versions of its heritage.

Review: Kirk R. MacGregor, *Contemporary Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2019). Hardback. 412 pages. ISBN 978-0-310-53453-2. \$34.99. Reviewed by Zachary Groff, divinity student and the Director of Advancement & Admissions at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

Post-Enlightenment developments in so-called Christian theology are many, varied, and imaginative. One feature held in common across philosophical and denominational lines is the active reimagining of the relationships which exist between theology, the church, the Bible, and human experience. As a result, the modern theological enterprise is characterized by dynamism, innovation, and instability. Standard-issue church history and historical theology textbooks published in the last three decades report and reflect upon these traits of modern theology going into the twenty-first century. As the latest contributions to both academic and popular theological corpuses make plain, such innovative and imaginative developments show no signs of slowing down.

McPherson College professor of philosophy and religion Kirk R. MacGregor recently published *Contemporary Theology: An Introduction* to survey the field. He has produced a cogent, clear, and digestible volume encompassing theological developments from the late eighteenth century to the opening decades of the twenty-first century. As such, this volume is a worthy contender for being regarded as the single most helpful textbook on modern Christian theology for students and educators. Though lacking the helpful evaluative component present in *Twentieth-Century Theology: God and the World in*

a Transitional Age by Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson,¹ MacGregor's collection of theological précis is both more comprehensive and more succinct than the earlier standard Evangelical textbook on recent trends and movements in theology. In comparing the two texts below, this review first briefly considers the earlier production.

Nearly 30 years ago, Olson and Grenz undertook the ambitious task (especially for 1992) of weaving together a dialogical and loosely narrative presentation of twentieth century theology, encompassing mainline and evangelical Protestantism together with progressive Roman Catholicism. On the whole, they have written a fascinating account and a helpful review of relevant theologians and their most significant publications. That being said, the book is a slog to read through as a base text in a modern theology survey course. It is the opinion of this reviewer that the authors could have accomplished their task in about 80% of the published length.

Using the twin concepts of divine transcendence and divine immanence as constituting an interpretive rubric, the authors claim that an unbalanced focus on immanence throughout the twentieth century—albeit with flashes of transcendence (from theologians such as Karl Barth, Wolfhart Pannenberg, Jürgen Moltmann, Carl F. H. Henry, and Bernard Ramm) interspersed at points—has both dominated the century and largely spoiled theology. They capture the theme of twentieth century theology in their exploration of Roman Catholic theologian Hans Küng by writing, “That God suffers is almost a truism in contemporary theology. In a single theological generation the traditional doctrine of God's impassability has been overturned, so that it is now almost heresy to reassert it” (266–67). For Reformed and Presbyterian scholars and elders, this shift in theological discourse has had direct bearing on the peace and purity of their churches and corporate witness. One has only to consider the debates over K. Scott Oliphint's doctrine of God (i.e., his “covenantal properties” thesis implying a passible/immanent mode of God's existence distinct from the impassible/transcendent mode of divine being)² that have upset the Association of Reformed Baptist Churches of America (ARBCA), the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), and Westminster Theological Seminary (WTS). Grenz and Olson's observation is relevant to Reformed churches and institutions in a way that mirrors broader so-called Christian theology.

1. Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson, *Twentieth-Century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992); subsequent citations to this volume are provided in parentheses.

2. K. Scott Oliphint, *God With Us: Divine Condescension and the Attributes of God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 110; see also John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2002), 572–573.

Grenz and Olson conclude their project on a note of optimism that the rise of postmodernism will inspire a new vitality in Evangelical theology. They write, “Although the emerging postmodern mind may appear to put faith on the defensive, it actually marks a new day of opportunity for theology” (314). However, ensuing theological developments have proven to be more of a self-negating embarrassment for Evangelical theologians than an opportunity for spiritual vitality. In the West, Evangelical theologians have increasingly adopted accommodationist and even radical hermeneutical and theological agendas. Social justice has emerged as the highest end of corporate Christian activity in some Evangelical circles. As a result, the spirituality of the church has been all but crucified on a cross of church-led and church-organized social activism. At the other end of the Evangelical spectrum, the best of worldwide Christianity has taken up earnest retrieval projects and philosophical engagements that have reestablished a more-or-less classical orthodox theological tradition once thought lost. Thoughtful Evangelical and Reformed systematic theologians have recently addressed modern theological controversies drawing from ancient, medieval, and early modern sources. For example, in a recently published edited volume entitled *Retrieving Eternal Generation*, Fred Sanders and Scott Swain introduce the project focusing on the doctrine of the Son’s eternal generation from (and relationship to) the Father by identifying a problem in modern trinitarian theology. They write, “Without eternal generation, the constellation of truths that compose the doctrine of the Trinity remain just so many points of stellar light; they are stars that fail to constellate.”³ It is precisely this problem which has provided the impetus for the retrieval project in which Sanders, Swain, and the volume’s other contributors are involved. Sanders and Swain elaborate, “The goal of *Retrieving Eternal Generation* is to make three cases in adequate detail: that this classic piece of theological confession is in fact biblically, traditionally, and systematically satisfying. It is our hope that these three are one persuasive argument for retrieving the doctrine of eternal generation and recognizing its central importance for the doctrine of the Trinity.”⁴ Writing much later than Grenz and Olson, Kirk MacGregor treats some of those ensuing theological developments in modern theology (both the self-negating and the constructive) in his more recent textbook.

MacGregor’s textbook is well-written, even if a bit dull

3. Fred Sanders and Scott R. Swain, eds., *Retrieving Eternal Generation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017), 17.

4. Sanders and Swain, 18.

5. MacGregor, *Contemporary Theology*, 64–73; subsequent citations to this volume are provided in parentheses.

6. See Bradley J. Gundlach, *Process and Providence: The Evolution Question at Princeton, 1845–1929* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013).

7. Fred G. Zaspel and Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Theology of B. B. Warfield: A Systematic Summary* (Wheaton, Ill: Crossway, 2010), 380ff.

throughout. But what textbook is not a bit dull? Surprisingly expansive in scope, MacGregor’s survey does leave gaps in coverage, as well as take some liberties in the unavoidable generalization of issues here and there. For example, his inclusion of a chapter on “Princeton Theology”⁵ unfortunately limits the scope of his presentation of eighteenth century Reformed or Calvinistic theology. This lacuna might have been remedied by a broadening of the chapter and some shifting of material to mention contributions from other Presbyterian theologians of note (e.g., W.G.T. Shedd, Thomas Chalmers, James Henley Thornwell, R.L. Dabney, and J.L. Girardeau), the Mercersburg men (e.g., Philip Schaff and John Nevin) and New School Presbyterians. That same chapter gives a typical example of an understandable—if somewhat consternating—generalization. MacGregor makes the claim that B.B. Warfield “always subscribed to evolution” (71). He goes on to qualify this statement by noting, “[Charles] Hodge and Warfield opposed the combination of philosophical naturalism and evolution and viewed evolution as a means God employed in creation” (71). Nevertheless, recent historical scholarship has more accurately classified Warfield (and his colleagues at Princeton) as sympathetic to philosophical “developmentalism.”⁶ Some have gone as far as to characterize Warfield as an agnostic on the issue of evolution, for he recognized the exegetical incongruities (namely, the detailed account of Eve’s creation in Genesis 2:21–23) and theological problems presented by the collision of Darwin’s proposed mechanism of macroevolution and the clear testimony of Scripture.⁷ Despite these understandable and minor deficiencies, MacGregor’s work succeeds as a useful base text for courses in modern church history and theology within any denominational context.

Though MacGregor’s focus aligns primarily with scholarly interests in American Christianity, his textbook has a global scope and concern. That is to say, while the book’s coverage seems to be more attuned to the academic concerns of American church historians, the subject matter is not purely American. He includes several eye-opening chapters on little-known movements in world Christianity worthy of serious attention. In his chapter on “African Christology” (276–84), MacGregor notes that while “African Christology is more holistic in its integration of the person and work of Christ” than Western Christology, African pastor-theologians are “consciously aware and highly respectful of traditional Western Christological formulation” (277). Thus, the most important distinction between classical Western Christology and the more recent African Christology is not in substance, but in approach and emphasis. Whereas the principal focus of Western Christological method is on Christ’s divine nature and God’s eternal decree to take to Himself a human nature to save His elect, the more recent African approach takes as its starting point the person and work of Jesus in his historical

activity as the Godman. Thus, African Christology emphasizes Christ's role as sympathetic deliverer and omnipotent healer. He has experienced the pain of human travail, poverty, and woe, and He has conquered death. Without devolving into the materialism of the so-called social and prosperity gospels, African Christology describes the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ in a manner well-suited to much of the African context, characterized as it is by crushing poverty, rampant disease, and entrenched political corruption. Because Jesus has overcome these and many more repercussions of the Fall, He must be "more than a man" (282), being indeed the human-divine mediator Who reconciles God and man.

In his chapter on "Chinese Eschatology" (318–24), MacGregor highlights the Chinese underground church's inter-denominational "Back to Jerusalem" movement, which adopted a common Confession of Faith in 1998 and has dispatched over 100,000 Chinese missionaries (most of whom are bivocational) to central Asia, Islamic nations, and the State of Israel (320). MacGregor identifies four points of theological emphasis which characterize the movement. First, leaders of the movement anticipate a wide-scale advance of the gospel and growth of the church in every segment of Chinese (and world) society leading up to the return of Christ and subsequent inauguration of His Millennial reign. Thus, the movement is distinctively—but not pessimistically—premillennial. Second, the strategy of the movement is to go first to the Gentile (i.e., Islamic) nations that yet lie in the darkness of unbelief, and then to the Jews (i.e., the State of Israel) in a grand mirror-image of the history of Christian missions, which began with the Jews and extended to the Gentiles. Third, the hymnody of their churches and training of their pastors/missionaries evidence an active expectation of persecution in the last days before the return of Christ. "Since each of the movement's pioneers spent decades in prison, its hymnody echoes a suffering church.... Contrary to Western ministerial preparation, the training of Chinese missionaries includes lessons and coaching on how to be an effective witness in prison as well as in death" (322). Fourth and finally, the movement emphasizes a disciplined and fervent prayer life of every believer, including prayer and fasting on behalf of the missionary labors of its own members as well as the renewed or enduring faithfulness of Western seminaries and Bible colleges (322–23). Though the theology (and particularly, the eschatology and ecclesiology) undergirding the movement is clearly at odds with confessional Presbyterianism at several points, the zeal and practical resourcefulness of the movement should serve as an inspiration for Christians everywhere to think creatively and energetically about how to reach remote people groups with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Though the two chapters discussed above regarding facets of global Christianity are particularly eye-opening, MacGregor

gives attention to several important recent American movements in modern theology. In his chapter on "Theology and the Arts" (333–40), MacGregor notes interesting proposals in theological anthropology dealing especially with the relationships which exist between worship, emotion, cognition, and Christology. Theologians involved in these discussions have put forward requisites for true art, especially that it reflect the character of God in its "lucidity, intelligibility, and illumination" of Christ's person (339). Therefore, "the goal of art is to foster relational union with the Trinitarian God by clearly mediating to an audience the Christ-centered forms on which it is metaphysically grounded" (Ibid.). From a Reformed perspective, artistic forms of human expression (namely, music) enrich and lend structure to Christian worship in ways that are Christ-exalting and God-honoring. The involvement of human emotion in both art and worship is most pronounced in the church's activity of "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:19). Theologians interested in the spiritual ramifications of this aspect of the Christian life and devotion emphasize especially the tight correspondence which exists between human cognition and emotion. For instance, "cognitive theories highlight that what we take to be full-fledged emotions depend on beliefs about the world or oneself" (335). MacGregor gives a helpful introduction to this promising theological research focus which has arisen in recent times.

Not surprisingly, MacGregor demonstrates his competence as an intellectual historian and academic philosopher in his refreshingly clear chapters on "Reformed Epistemology" (263–75) and "Philosophy of Religion and Analytic Theology" (304–17). His presentation not only makes the material easy to grasp, but also suggests a strong sympathy for certain peculiarities of these schools of Christian Philosophy. Attentive readers of a confessional Presbyterian persuasion might like to have seen a more sympathetic reading of one of the most prominent figures in recent American Presbyterian history. From the perspective of this reviewer, it is a lamentable accident of history that J. Gresham Machen continues to be catalogued among Fundamentalists rather than among the American Reformed and Evangelical theologians with whom he had more social and ideological affinity. In his chapter on "Christian Fundamentalism" (113–20) MacGregor rightly notes, "Although Machen permitted Christian fundamentalists to laud him as their academic spokesman, he did not completely fit their mold" (115). MacGregor is aware of the tension which attends lumping Machen together with Fundamentalism, but he stops short of characterizing Machen as anything other than a Fundamentalist. After noting some areas of disagreement between Machen and his Fundamentalist cobelligerents, MacGregor moves on in his discussion of Fundamentalism without devoting any space to developing

a fuller positive historical profile of Machen as a Presbyterian churchman. In other words, the presentation of Machen in MacGregor's volume is inextricably subsumed under the Fundamentalist movement.

The overall value of the included material notwithstanding, certain glaring omissions in MacGregor's coverage could be remedied in a few sentences or paragraphs. Like Grenz and Olson,⁸ MacGregor omits any substantial coverage of the gross moral failures of certain theologians (namely, Karl Barth and Paul Tillich). Taking into account the importance of Christian life and morals (orthopraxy) for Christian theology (orthodoxy), such an examination of men's lives is needful when giving consideration to their respective theologies and careers. Furthermore, this reviewer was left wondering why the BioLogos Foundation and Old Testament scholar John Walton received an entire chapter of coverage in "Evolutionary Creation" (357–66) without even so much as a mention given to the much larger, more well-funded, and more influential organization Answers in Genesis (AiG) and the Young Earth Creationism movement of which AiG is a major part. Similarly, why commit an entire chapter to Charles Haddon Spurgeon (74–84) without at least mentioning figures as significant as Cornelius Van Til, Geerhardus Vos, Abraham Kuyper, or Herman Bavinck? Again like Grenz and Olson,⁹ MacGregor subsumes his discussion of the discipline of biblical theology under "Postliberal Theology" (325–332),¹⁰ which includes what historians designate as narrative theology. As Peter Wallace¹¹ and C.N. Willborn¹² have demonstrated, biblical theology as a discipline in American theological seminaries has a pedigree rooted in nineteenth century and early twentieth century conservative Presbyterianism. The use of biblical theology by northern and southern Presbyterians who defended the authority, inerrancy, and plenary verbal inspiration of the Old and New Testaments anticipated Eichrodt's, Oehler's, and Vos's developments of the discipline. Thus, to lump biblical theology into so-called "Postliberal Theology" is at best incomplete, and at worst an example of faulty historiography. Despite these few and minor shortcomings, Kirk MacGregor has furnished Evangelical pastors, professors, seminarians, and laymen with a standard textbook for the study of modern church history which will prove itself to be more useful than its antecedents.

8. See especially, Grenz and Olson, *Twentieth-Century Theology*, 116.

9. See especially, Grenz and Olson, pp. 271–285.

10. MacGregor, *Contemporary Theology*, 325–332.

11. Peter Wallace, "The Foundations of Reformed Biblical Theology: The Development of Old Testament Theology at Old Princeton, 1812–1932," *Westminster Theological Journal* 59, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 41–69.

12. C.N. Willborn, "Biblical Theology in Southern Presbyterianism," in *The Hope Fulfilled: Essays in Honor of O. Palmer Robertson*, ed. Robert L. Penny (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2008), 3–25.

Review: Harrison Perkins, *Catholicity and the Covenant of Works: James Ussher and the Reformed Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020). 288pp. Cloth. 978-0-19-751418-4. \$99.00. Reviewed by J. V. Fesko, Professor of Systematic and Historical Theology, Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson, Mississippi.

Monographs on the covenant of works are few and far between, thus Harrison Perkins's recently published doctoral dissertation on James Ussher's view is a most welcomed addition. Perkins conducted his study under the supervision of Crawford Gribben, noted early modern historian, at Queen's University of Belfast, Ireland. Perkins divides his book into six chapters: (1) Ussher, covenant theology, and theological contexts, (2) the content of the covenant of works, (3) developing and debating the covenant of works, (4) the covenant of works and predestination, (5) the covenant of works and Christology, and (6) the covenant of works and salvation.

There are five noteworthy features of this book. First, in the present, one of the more common methodological moves is to read Calvin's *Institutes*, hop, skip, and jump to the Westminster Assembly, and then bound into the twenty-first century to demonstrate what the Reformed tradition believes about a certain point of doctrine. I have regularly encountered the statement, "The Westminster divines follow Calvin here...." As popular as the claim is, it does not follow historical evidence. While Calvin's name does appear as one of the more frequently cited authorities in the minutes of the Westminster Assembly, Ussher influenced the assembly in a number of ways. Notably, Ussher was the chief author of the Irish Articles (34–35), which was the first confession to codify the covenant of works and served as a source document for the Westminster Confession of Faith (9–10). Sometimes the divines borrow phrases straight from the Irish Articles and insert them into the Westminster Confession. Ussher's influence is, therefore, significant and often overlooked. Perkins documents and traces a number of these lines of influence throughout his book.

A second important feature pertains to Perkin's use of unpublished manuscripts. Recent work on Ussher by Alan Ford (*James Ussher*, OUP, 2007) and Richard Snoddy (*The Soteriology of James Ussher*, OUP, 2014) have made use of some unpublished manuscripts, but Perkins has made excellent use of them, including rare previously untranslated Latin manuscripts (39–40). Use of these manuscripts has often required challenging paleographical labors to decipher content, but this spadework provides for a thicker and richer account of Ussher's views. By digging through Ussher's manuscripts, Perkins notes that Ussher commended the works of Huguenot theologian, Daniel Chamier, to his students. Few today have ever heard of Chamier let alone read his works, yet Chamier was a likely source of Ussher's understanding of how

Adam was able to secure eternal life through his obedience (104–05). Moreover, Perkins's use of Ussher's unpublished sermon manuscripts provides fascinating historical texture so that readers can have a greater understanding of Ussher's times and theological concerns.

The third commendable characteristic is how Perkins traces the development of the covenant of works through Ussher's writings. For far too long historians have pigeonholed the covenant of works as a dogmatic imposition, or as theological ballast for the doctrine of predestination. Perkins instead rightly demonstrates the exegetical nature of Ussher's doctrine (44–45, 48–67).

The fourth aspect that commends Perkins's work is that he explores the catholicity of Ussher's doctrine of the covenant of works. Twentieth-century scholarship has claimed that the Reformation was a complete break with the patristic and medieval past, but a generation ago Heiko Oberman challenged this assumption. There are many aspects of early modern Reformed theology that stand in continuity with previous views. There is not, for example, a distinct Reformed doctrine of God. Many Reformed theologians followed the broad contours of Thomism (43). Ussher was an advocate of a Thomist intellectualist understanding of natural law rather than a Scotist voluntarist configuration, a key element of the covenant of works (65–66). This Thomist intellectualism is a characteristic he shared with fellow Reformed theologians such as Girolamo Zanchi or Westminster divine Anthony Burgess (71–72). But such continuities do not tell the whole story, as Ussher rejected the *donum superadditum*, which was a component of Roman Catholic pre-fall anthropology (73). Additionally, Perkins documents how one Roman Catholic theologian was an advocate of what would later be called the covenant of works in Reformed circles (46). The continuities with the earlier tradition that Perkins showcases reveals that the substance of the covenant of works is not a peculiar Reformed doctrine.

Fifth, in the twentieth century a regularly repeated mantra in the study of early modern Reformed theology was the normative status of the theology of John Calvin. Calvin was supposedly the lodestar, norm, or the chief influence upon the tradition. What Luther was for Lutheranism, Calvin was for Calvinism. Such a relationship between Calvin and the tradition has typically been used to pit Calvin against the later tradition. Calvin did not advocate the covenant of works unlike later Calvinists, thus the subsequent tradition innovated or deviated from Calvin's theology. Perkins avoids this common false narrative and sidesteps artificial points of contact between Calvin and the tradition. Just because a theologian was a prominent figure in the sixteenth century does not mean he was formative for every theologian. Perkins explores the sources that Ussher himself cites to determine

what theologians shaped his views. Perkins reveals that Ussher did own and interact with Calvin's writings, but the Genevan's influence was negligible (255–56). Calvin was certainly an important figure in early modern Reformed theology, but he was also one among many influential theologians.

In the end, Perkins's work makes at least two key contributions to the study of early modern Reformed theology. First, he presents important research on the development of the covenant of works, a little-researched topic. He dispels a number of canards regarding this much-maligned doctrine to reveal its catholicity and exegetical moorings. Second, he explores an early modern giant who has been largely ignored in the present day. The Westminster divines were not the first to codify the covenant of works; Ussher raised the doctrine to confessional status in the Irish Articles. Perkins, therefore, rightly shines much needed light upon Ussher's covenant theology. Perkins has given the church an important work that deserves a wide reading.

Review: Jay T. Collier, *Debating Perseverance: The Augustinian Heritage in Post-Reformation England* (Oxford University Press, 2018). 229pp. Hb. 978-0-19-085852-0 . \$115.00.
Reviewed by Thomas Haviland-Pabst.

In this first book published by Jay T. Collier, the director of publishing for Reformation Heritage Books, and a research fellow and colloquium director for the Junius Institute for Digital Reformation Research, the reader is offered a fascinating glimpse into, as the title suggests, debates surrounding the doctrine of perseverance in post-Reformation England.

In the first chapter entitled “the Church of England, Sources of Identity, and Theological Distinctives,” the author sets the stage for the remainder of the book. Collier states that the “Church of England developed its theological identity” in “the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries through an association with two influential groups” (p. 1). One group sought to maintain “relations to” the Reformed movement “throughout Europe”; another group looked “back in time” and thus “found great [connectional] significance with the early church.” Although there was harmony between the two, there was also conflict, and yet, they were both powerful forces “shaping and molding” a “rather unique self-understanding” in the Church of England, establishing a distinct pattern “of doctrinal development and argument.” Yet, modern scholarship is undecided to what degree these distinct traditions impacted the identity of the Church of England.

Weighing in on this debate, Collier surveys evidence for this two streams in the Church of England. Regarding the Reformed shape of her identity, soon after King Henry VIII, this Reformed identification took place, which is evidenced

by the connections established by Thomas Cranmer to leading reformers in continental Europe, namely, Martin Bucer and Peter Martyr Vermingli. Both were invited to England and consequently the former was appointed “Regius Professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge” and the latter was appointed “Regius Professor of Divinity at the University of Oxford” (p. 2). Moreover, Queen Mary’s opposition to the Reformation resulted in exiles fleeing to cities aligned with the Reformation such as “Geneva, Strasbourg, and Zurich.”

Regarding the connection with early Christianity, writers such as John Jewel and William Perkins argued that “Rome had strayed from the old paths” with England maintaining the Scriptural position of the “ancient faith” (p. 3). This connection was bolstered by an “English exceptionalism” built on the recognition of “an early uncorrupted Christianity.” In addition, appeal was made to Reformed churches and ancient Christianity by those often opposed in other ways (e.g., Puritans and Archbishop John Whitgift). Thus both sources of identity were deemed essential to shaping Church of England’s own.

Collier, in surveying the approach to the relationship between these two sources in Anglicanism by historians, argues that both those who assert an Anglican via media between Geneva and Rome and those who deny it, favoring “a Calvinistic hegemony” (p. 9), overstate their respective cases. In order to move forward, he suggests that we focus on “how the two sources were harmonized.” This could be done by observing “how the Church [of England] handled theological issues that touched on both of these sources,” and while such a study is beyond the scope of his work, he aims to focus on “one distinctive of Reformed theology” and “how receptions of a particular church father ... factored into certain debates.”

The distinctive in question is the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. Collier defends this doctrine as the most viable for exploring Anglican identity. Although much attention has been given to predestination, this is not a Reformed distinctive. Many non-Reformed bodies have affirmed the unconditional election of the Reformed faith such as Jansenists and Lutherans, yet, “Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and Arminians all recoiled at the notion that a person once possessing justifying faith could not lose it” (p. 10). Though not all Reformed confessions affirmed the doctrine, Collier suggests that, given the lack of explicit denial, “it allowed the doctrine to flourish among the Reformed” (pp. 11-12), resulting in “a distinct character to Reformed theology” (p. 12). He is careful to note though that while this doctrine was unique among the Reformed because they gave it “a significant hearing,” it wasn’t until after the Synod of Dort “solidified” the Reformed theological identity that affirmation of the doctrine was essential to being Reformed. Therefore, the ‘before’ and ‘after’ of the doctrine of perseverance in relation to the Synod of Dort is important for Collier’s study.

Turning to the church fathers, Collier provides a number of reasons for choosing the Church of England’s reception of Augustine as his focus. First, Augustine is clearly an important church father. Second, he was often treated “as preeminent among church fathers” by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century theologians (p. 14). Third, Augustine also wrote a treatise directly addressing perseverance (*On the Gift of Perseverance*) and dealt with the doctrine in other places as well. Fourth, the recognition of these treatises is important is evidenced “in their retrieval of English translations beginning in the reign of King Edward VI.” Fifth, while it has been recognized that reception of Augustine on perseverance influenced “subsequent church history,” there is a lacuna of research on this reception in Reformation and post-Reformation eras. Collier’s goal is to offer a sampling rather than comprehensive treatment of the reception of Augustine and its bearing on perseverance in England in order to approximate an understanding of the Church of England’s identity.

In the second chapter, “Cambridge Aflame with Controversy,” Collier describes the drafting of the Lambert Articles, which were nine propositions “authorized” (p. 20) by Archbishop John Whitgift on November 20, 1595, and the subsequent controversy that resulted from these articles. Eschewing the Calvinist vs. anti-Calvinist framework for understanding these articles, Collier suggests that perseverance was significant for the controversy surrounding these articles.

The reason for the emergence of these articles is a dispute between one William Whitaker and his opponent Peter Baro in the early 1590s at Cambridge University. The debate rose to such a pitch that Archbishop Whitgift was called in to handle the matter in 1595. Upon Whitgift’s involvement, a “determination had been held at the university” (p. 22) undermining the doctrine of perseverance. The debate continued to grow when William Barrett preached a sermon affirming the “defectibility of faith” (p. 23). After being ordered to retract controversial points of his sermon, both Whitaker and Whitgift became involved with Barrett’s case, which in turn gave rise to the Lambert Articles.

It was clear, so Collier argues, that “issues of the perseverance of faith and assurance of salvation” (p. 27) were of primary concern. Yet, this is often missed by modern scholarship given the focus on predestination and effectual calling. Two different versions of the articles existed: those originally submitted for discussion and those “finally approved by Whitgift” (p. 30). Notable at this point is that, contrary to the focus on election and calling in scholarship, “none of the revisions ... detracts from the solid Reformed convictions of unconditional election and effectual calling” (p. 31). Collier compares the Lambert Article 5 on perseverance (p. 32), noting their differences:

Proposed Article 5:

A true, lively, and justifying faith, and the sanctifying Spirit of God is neither extinguished nor lost, nor does it depart from those that have once been partakers of it, either totally or finally.

Approved Article 5

A true, lively, and justifying faith, and the sanctifying Spirit of God, is neither extinguished nor lost, nor does it depart from the elect, either totally or finally.

The change of note, namely, from partakers to the elect, Collier contends, is a substantial change. Partakers is not a synonym for elect; rather, while those affirming the proposed article could affirm the approved article, the use of ‘the elect’ suggests that “someone believing that the nonelect could be sovereignly converted by God and yet sovereignly allowed to not persevere would not be able to affirm the article initially proposed” (p. 34), a fact Whitgift knew. In support of this, Collier notes that Whitgift informed the Cambridge heads that they made Barrett affirm at points what was contrary to the most esteemed Protestant men. Thus, he explores which men Whitgift have had in mind when he revised Article 5.

After exploring the views of such men as Lancelot Andrewes and Richard Hooker, Collier comes to the conclusion that Matthew Hutton and Adrianus Saravia were likely in mind. The former was a friend and correspondent of Whitgift’s during the controversy that would not have affirmed the proposed Article 5 and cited Augustine in support of his view of perseverance. The latter, also a confidant of Whitgift and “respected ... among the Reformed,” enlisted Augustine in support of his denial of “the perseverance of every true believer” (p. 50). John Overall is another figure that, while not directly influential for Whitgift, would affirm the approved Article 5, suggesting that this was not a position confined to one or two men, but “had a wider reception (p. 53). The appeal to Augustine is also characteristic of Whitaker’s defense, the author of the proposed Article 5. Thus, “[k]ey to the whole debate on perseverance is that there were different readings of Augustine, even among the Reformed,” leaving in turn room for “a minority opinion ... that satisfied itself with the perseverance of the elect” rather than of the saints (p. 57).

Chapters three and four give specific attention to the Synod of Dort, with the former describing dilemmas that arose at the Synod itself and with the latter describing troubles following Dort. The British delegate to Dort was given instruction by King James to “be conciliatory within confessional bounds” (p. 63). Collier notes that in the *Collegiate Suffrage*, the British

delegates “gave substantially more space to their discussion of perseverance than they did to the other four articles” (p. 64), each of which addressed an article of the Remonstrates. In the discussion of perseverance, they agreed with Dort’s affirmation of the full and total perseverance of the saints, with significant appeal to Augustine. Yet, matters become more complex when the British delegates are hesitant when asked “to place falling from redeeming grace in a list of errors to reject” (p. 83).

Collier suggests a reason for this. Though they likely saw their own view, consonant with Dort’s, as “compatible with their own church’s confession [Thirty-Nine Articles],” they could not exclude the apostasy option from this same confession. Also, the delegates explicitly offered four reasons for this move. First, they recognized that there were different readings of Augustine on the matter. Second, they recognized that condemnation of this view would upset the Lutherans. Third, they desired a Reformed consensus, and condemning such a view would rule out some “respectable men” (p. 87). Fourth, they asserted that some biblical texts could be understood to support the view that was being opposed. Despite the efforts of this delegation, the international Reformed community denied this conciliatory approach to perseverance, effectively disenfranchising “a strand within the Reformed tradition that could affirm the perseverance of the elect by solidifying ... the perseverance of the saints” (p. 92).

The fourth chapter gives attention to the controversy surrounding Richard Montagu’s views. Though accused of Arminianism because he did not affirm Dort, Collier argues that he was broadly Reformed. In fact, he argues that scholars have misunderstood Montagu’s views by employing the categories of Arminianism and Calvinism. His denial of perseverance of the saints was based on his reading of Augustine and those Reformed churchmen who followed that same reading not sympathies for Jacob Arminius, whom Montagu had never read. Montagu’s condemnation by his contemporaries highlights therefore “the identity crisis the English Church was experiencing” (p. 122) following the Synod of Dort.

Chapter five explores another dilemma that arose in the Church of England following Dort, namely, its understanding of baptism. Because the Church of England associated “baptism with bringing a child into a state of salvation,” which, in turn, appeared to conflict with “the Dortian insistence that believers cannot lose their salvation” (p. 158), three distinct strategies emerged. First, some stated that the English church need not subscribe to Dort to have a Reformed identity. Second, baptism was “proclaiming a conditional promise” (p. 159) not effecting salvation and so was in line with Dort. Third, some, such as John Davenant, limited “the efficacy of infant baptism to the remission of sins” and denied “the infusion of a habit of faith.” As a consequence, the impact of Dort moved

beyond perseverance, creating, additionally, a crisis regarding baptism in the Church of England.

Chapter six surveys the question of perseverance persisting among the Reformed “even after the triumph of Dort and Westminster” (p. 193). This was due, Collier argues, to different readings of Augustine. On the one hand, John Goodwin, followed by Richard Baxter, affirmed “genuine apostasy in some saints” (p. 192); on the other hand, John Owen and George Kendall argued for the perseverance of all saints. This chapter serves to reinforce the author’s claim that how one interpreted Augustine was a deciding factor in the debate on perseverance. Moreover, because the English Church was “[u]nable to resolve such tensions and maintain unity, [it] failed to maintain its Reformed identity among the nations” (p. 194).

With the seventh chapter, the author concludes the book with a summary of his previous findings. First, prior to Dort, there was an acceptable minority opinion on perseverance that denied its application to every saint. Second, there existed two distinct readings of Augustine among the Reformed. This appeal to Augustine in turn reflected their catholicity. Third, the author highlights a theme found throughout his monograph, namely, the fallibility and obscuring effect of labels. Most germane to this study, he argues that there is value “in recognizing both the Reformed churches and the early church as important sources of identity for the Church of England” (p. 203). Perseverance and the debate surrounding it give us a glimpse then into the Reformed catholicity that characterized the Anglican church.

By way of evaluation, there is not much to critique with this monograph. The author clearly and persuasively demonstrates the two sources of the Church of England and the two readings of Augustine and how these factors provide a unique window into the identity of this particular branch of Protestantism especially in light of debates surrounding perseverance of the saints. This work is a mature and intriguing piece of historical theology, and it gives the reader a sense of how the shape of a tradition can take place—in this case, the Anglican tradition. The more we grasp the complexities and diversity that attends the Reformed tradition, the more we are able to appreciate not only its breadth but also its depth. Collier has served us well by unearthing this obscured portion of Reformed history and so I would highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the

doctrine of perseverance, the roots of Anglicanism, or the impact of the Synod of Dort.

Review: Sam Waldron, *The Crux of the Free Offer: A Biblical, Confessional, and Theological Explanation and Defence of the Well-Meant Offer of the Gospel* (Greenbrier, AR: Free Grace Press, 2019). ISBN 978-1-59925-602-3. 143 pages. Reviewed by Dr. Daniel Ritchie, Northern Ireland.

Sam Waldron’s latest book endeavours to set forth a defence of the well-meant offer of the gospel from a biblical and confessional perspective. The author is a Particular Baptist theologian writing from within the tradition of the Second London Baptist Confession of 1689, yet this book is also endorsed by Reformed theologians including Joel R. Beeke and Richard D. Phillips. Such endorsements are indicative of the influence that it will likely have within the wider Reformed community. The latter author even goes so far as to argue that the well-meant offer “defines a vital truth in the Reformed system of theology.”¹ This reviewer believes that such claims are overblown and cannot stand up to objective historical scrutiny. Accordingly, the primary focus of this review is on the issues raised pertaining to historical theology in Dr Waldron’s work. Space precludes a thorough analysis of the questions that also arise from this book in relation to biblical exegesis.² Instead, this review begins with some confessional and theological clarifications in relation to the well-meant offer, considers the free offer in historical theology, and briefly assesses Dr Waldron’s views on the confessional doctrine theology proper.

CONFESSIONAL AND THEOLOGICAL CLARIFICATIONS

Dr Waldron uses the terms free offer and well-meant offer synonymously, viewing them as essentially one and the same thing. He states that “The ‘Free Offer’ in the confessional documents is and must be understood as a ‘Well-Meant’ Offer” (10). Thus, he interprets the phrase “freely offereth life and salvation” in chapter 7, paragraph 2 of the 1689 Baptist Confession, and in the equivalent sections of the Westminster Confession and Savoy Declaration, as referring to the well-meant offer (a supposition that we examine below). The author is of the opinion, however, that the Second London Baptist Confession represents a more moderate form of Calvinism than that of the Westminster Standards. Unlike Alan C. Clifford who maintains that the Baptist Confession led to hyper-Calvinism, Dr Waldron claims that the framers of the 1689 Confession distanced themselves from the High Calvinism that was at least tolerated by the Westminster divines (51–58).³ Dr Waldron argues that the Westminster Confession, in its teaching on predestination, “leaves the false impression that there is a “symmetrical” relationship between election and reprobation and puts God in a harsh light” (56).

1. This comment is made in the endorsements of the book.

2. For reviews that focus on these subjects, see Martyn McGeown, “Editorial: A Critique of Sam Waldron’s *The Crux of the Free Offer of the Gospel*,” *British Reformed Journal*, 70 (2019–20), 1–19; David J. Engelsma, “Review Article: The Crux of the “Free Offer” is the Cross,” *Protestant Reformed Theological Journal*, 53.1 (November 2019): 100–15.

3. Alan C. Clifford, *Atonement and Justification: English Evangelical Theology 1640–1790, An Evaluation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 75.

This reading of the Westminster Confession is mistaken, as it does not even officially teach double predestination, let alone the error of equal ultimacy, which the Synod of Dort had previously condemned.⁴ The Confession carefully distinguishes between the “some men and angels [who] are predestined unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death” (3.3). With reference to the reprobate, moreover, the Confession is clear that “God was pleased ... to pass by; and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath, for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice” (3.7). Those predestined unto life, by way of contrast, were chosen in Christ out of God’s “free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving Him therunto” (3.5). If someone has gained a false impression from the Westminster Confession’s teaching on predestination, the fault lies with the reader and not with the plain teaching of the Confession.⁵

Dr Waldron also recognises that the central issue in the debate surrounding the well-meant offer is whether or not God has a desire for the salvation of all men. He states that “the crux of the doctrine of the Free Offer of the gospel is God’s indiscriminate desire for the salvation of sinners.... I am jealous to affirm here that this ‘Well-Meant Offer’ is both the natural and necessary implication of the ‘Free’ Offer confessed by the climatic confessions of the Reformation” (9). This point is crucial because other defenders of the well-meant offer have either shied away from or downplayed the importance of an ineffectual divine desire for the salvation of the reprobate as part of the well-meant offer. For example, David Silversides claimed that “The controversy over the free offer itself should not be made to hinge on the term ‘desire’” (*The Free Offer*, [2005], 85). In fairness, the Revd Silversides based his argument for the well-meant offer on it being an expression of God’s lovingkindness to sinners in general. Owing to his polemics against the Protestant Reformed Churches, it is understandable that he saw the notion of a general love of God as more crucial to the well-meant offer than the idea of a frustrated divine desire. After all, the first of the “Three Points” adopted by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in 1924 against the teachings of Herman Hoeksema and Henry Danhof stated that “with regard to the favorable disposition of God toward mankind in general, and not only to the elect, Synod declares that according to the Scripture and the confessions it is determined that besides the saving grace of God, shown only to the elect unto eternal life, there is a certain kind of favor, or grace of God which He shows to His creatures in general” (*Acts of Synod*, Article 132, 145–46).

Conversely, it is highly debatable if we may, in the specific context of the dispute within the Christian Reformed Church, neatly separate the ideas of common grace and a frustrated

divine desire with respect to the well-meant offer. The Synod’s committee which investigated the teachings of Hoeksema and Danhof also concluded that, in addition to God’s gracious disposition to the reprobate, “God comes with a well intended offer of salvation to all men” (*Acts of Synod*, Article 100, 126). Even if we were to accept, for the sake of argument, the teaching of a general love of God, it is unclear why it would lead us to conclude that God desires the salvation of all men. Surely common grace is, by definition, not salvific in nature, so how could the existence of such a general love be indicative of a desire on God’s part for the salvation of the non-elect?⁶ Although the specific language of a proper desire for the salvation of the reprobate is not used in the findings of the Christian Reformed Synod’s committee, nevertheless, the appeal to texts normally cited to support this view (specifically Ezekiel 18:23 and 33:11) indicates that this supposition guided their conclusions (see *Acts of Synod*, Article 100, 127). Louis Berkhof, who was a member of the Synod’s committee, later cited the verses from Ezekiel in defence of the proposition that “When God calls the sinner to accept Christ by faith, He earnestly desires this.... It is blasphemous to think that God would be guilty of equivocation and deception ... that He

4. The conclusion to the Canons of Dort condemned the notion “that the same doctrine teaches that God, by a mere arbitrary act of his will, without the least respect or view to any sin, has predestinated the greatest part of the world to eternal damnation, and has created them for this very purpose; that in the same manner in which the election is the fountain and cause of faith and good works, reprobation is the cause of unbelief and impiety; that many children of the faithful are torn, guiltless, from their mothers’ breasts, and tyrannically plunged into hell: so that neither baptism nor the prayers of the Church at their baptism can at all profit them; and many other things of the same kind which the Reformed Churches not only do not acknowledge, but even detest with their whole soul.” James T. Dennison (ed.), *Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation*, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2014), 4.152.

5. For more on this topic, see William Cunningham, *Historical Theology: A Review of the Principal Doctrinal Discussions in the Christian Church since the Apostolic Age*, ed. James Buchanan and James Bannerman, 2 vols, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1870), 2: 421–23; William M. Hetherington, “Introductory Essay,” in Robert Shaw, *An Exposition of the Confession of Faith of the Westminster Assembly of Divines*, 4th ed. (Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1850), xviii–xix.

6. On the subject of common grace, we concur with the distinction found in Amandus Polanus: “The goodness of God is that by which he is the author of all good things. And he doth exercise this, either generally towards all creatures, or else particularly towards his elect. The former is called beneficence, the latter is called mercy. The beneficence of God, is that by which he giveth his gifts to all his creatures. Mat. 5.44.45. Act. 14.17. The mercy of God is that by which God doth good to his elect, although they deserve nothing of him but evil. Esa. 49.10.13. Eph. 2.3.4. Psal. 145.9.” Amandus Polanus, *The Substance of Christian Religion Soundly Set Forth in Two Books, by Definitions and Partitions, Framed According to the Rules of a Natural Method*, trans. Elijah Wilcocks (London: John Oxenbridge, 1595), 3.

would earnestly plead with the sinner to repent and believe unto salvation, and at the same time not desire it in any sense of the word" (*Systematic Theology*, 462).

While it is understandable that proponents of the well-meant offer would appeal to the concept of common grace or a general love of God, partly owing to the support for this idea in the writings of various Reformed divines, we believe that the author of this book is more accurate in recognising that the notion of a desire of God for the salvation of all men is the crux of the issue. After all, Professor John Murray, the foremost defender of the well-meant offer in recent times, stated in no uncertain terms in his Majority Report on the Free Offer to the Orthodox Presbyterian General Assembly in 1948 that "the real point in dispute in connection with the free offer of the gospel is whether it can properly be said that God **desires** the salvation of all men."⁷ The reticence of some to acknowledge that a proper desire on the part of God for the salvation of everyone without exception is central to modern debates on the well-meant offer is perhaps indicative that they find it difficult to reconcile with other doctrines. Given the seemingly incongruous nature of such a position with the doctrine of reprobation, a strict particularist understanding of limited atonement, and with the divine simplicity and impassibility, we can see why they wish to defend the well-meant offer on other grounds. Still, the impartial reader has no option but to agree with Dr Waldron that it is the crux of the matter. Until such a time as advocates of the well-meant offer jettison the notion of a frustrated divine desire for the salvation of the non-elect, the ensuing debates will centre around this subject.

As we have noted above, Dr Waldron contends that the usage of the term offer is expressive of "a proposal presented to someone which the one presenting it desires for that person

to accept" (10). He states that writers from the Protestant Reformed Churches, who follow the theology of Herman Hoeksema and his disciples, tend to also use the word offer in this way. Such usage is considered indicative of a general recognition by the modern opponents of the well-meant offer that the terms offer and free offer can only mean the well-meant offer (10–11). Even if we were to concede that there has been a lack of nuance among writers from the Protestant Reformed Churches on this subject, Dr Waldron's assertion is by no means applicable to all modern critics of the well-meant offer. Nor is it an accurate reflection of how the terms offer and free offer have been used in the history of theology.⁸ We do not dispute that some or indeed many Reformed divines used the term offer in a manner consistent with the likes of Professor Murray. We deny, however, that these usages constituted the only manner in which such terms were employed. Modern readers need to be careful to avoid falling into word-concept fallacies by assuming that the same term means the same thing every time it is used. The below discussion will demonstrate that Dr. Waldron's wholesale conflation of the free offer with the well-meant offer is historically untenable.

THE FREE OFFER IN HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

In the era of confessional formulation, some divines held the view that there was a serious will on the part of God for the salvation of all men. The Westminster divine, Anthony Burgess, stated that "The English Divines in the Synod of Dort held, that *God had a serious will of saving all men, but not an efficacious will of saving all*: Thus differing from the Arminians on one side, and from some Protestant Authors on the other side" (*Vindiciae Legis*, 107). As Burgess concedes, there were prominent divines who took the contrary view that there was no ineffectual divine desire for the salvation of each and every man. So, even a confessional theologian who favoured the well-meant offer was candid enough to admit that this view was not universally held among the Reformed orthodox. Dr Waldron, on the contrary, asserts that the Canons of Dort unambiguously affirm the well-meant offer in the Third/Fourth Heads of Doctrine, Article 8, "As many as are called by the gospel are unfeignedly called. For God hath most earnestly and truly shown in His Word what is acceptable to Him, namely, that those who are called should come to him. He also seriously promises rest of soul and eternal life to all who come to Him and believe" (*Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation*, 4.136).

The historian Raymond Blacketer contests this reading of Dort. He maintains that "Dort picks up the Remonstrant language of a serious call but does not accept their requirements for such a call, namely, that God must sincerely intend and will to save anyone who receives that call." He states further that "Dort rejects the idea that God wills or intends to save all,

7. [John Murray and Ned B. Stonehouse], "The Free Offer of the Gospel," *Minutes of the Fifteenth General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Meeting at Wildwood, New Jersey. May 13–18, 1948* (n.p. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1948), Appendix, 51 (emphasis original).

8. As a subscriber to the original Westminster Confession, this reviewer has obvious differences with the Protestant Reformed Churches on issues relating to covenant theology, divorce and remarriage, church-state relations, and eschatology. Still, it is possible for them to be wrong on any number of subjects and correct on this specific issue. John H. Gerstner's comment is germane here: "As a Calvinist, not associated ecclesiastically with the tiny Protestant Reformed denomination and sharply divergent from some of her doctrinal positions, I feel it absolutely necessary to hold with her here where she stands, almost alone today, and suffers massive vituperation and ridicule from Calvinists (no less) for her faithfulness at this point to the gospel of God." Foreword to David J. Engelsma, *Hyper-Calvinism and the Call of the Gospel: An Examination of the Well-Meant Offer* (3rd ed., Jenison MI: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 2014), xii.

as should be clear from Canons 1.6 and 15. What the Canons actually do in this article is explain how the call can really be serious when, in fact, God does not intend or will the salvation of the reprobate!” (“The Three Points in Most Parts Reformed,” 42). The author of the most recent commentary on the Canons of Dort, Daniel R. Hyde, argues that matters are not so straightforward. He writes, “No doubt some at the synod would’ve agreed; yet men like John Davenant could still affirm what the synod said while also affirming ‘in God a true will revealed in the Gospel of Saving all men that shall believe’” (*Grace Worth Fighting For*, 254). Given the diverse makeup of the Synod of Dort, we find the explanation offered by the Revd Hyde to be the most probable one available.

We can also cite a prominent Reformed divine writing in the era of Dort against the well-meant offer. Although the French Huguenot theologian Pierre Du Moulin was unable to attend the Synod of Dort for political reasons, he composed a treatise against Arminianism (published in 1619), which was clearly in full sympathy with Dort’s condemnation of the Remonstrants’ errors.⁹ Significantly, Du Moulin rejected the notion that “God doth equally love all men, and so desire their Salvation,” reminding his readers that “love in God is not an affection, nor passion, nor inclination of the mind, nor any desire; for God is not touched by these passions, as being impassible, and not subject to affections” (*The Anatomy of Arminianism*, 228–29).¹⁰ In other words, Du Moulin believed that the notion of a desire for the salvation of those that perish was incongruous with the impassibility of God. He also stated that the notion of unfulfilled desires for the salvation of the non-elect was inconsistent with reprobation: “For if God from eternity knoweth that this man shall be damned, in vain doth he wish from eternity, that he should be saved; and he doth from eternity know that he shall not be partaker of his natural desire, and his antecedent will” (*The Anatomy of Arminianism*, 27).

Such diversity of opinion as existed at Dort was also evident among the framers of the Westminster Standards. The influential Scottish Commissioner to the Westminster Assembly, George Gillespie, stated that “Ministers do, indeed, offer Christ to all, upon condition of believing, being commanded to preach the gospel to every creature, and not knowing who are reprobates,” but that offer did not imply that there was a loving desire on the part of God for the salvation of the reprobate Judas Iscariot. Hence, Gillespie said, “Love and hatred in God, and in his Son Jesus Christ, being eternal and unchangeable (for *actus Dei immanentes sunt cetemi*), it followeth that if there was such a decree of God, or any such meaning or intention in Christ, as to give his body and blood for Judas, whom he knew infallibly to be lost, and since that same conditional meaning or intention could not be without a conditional love of God and of Christ to Judas and his salvation, this love doth

still continue in God, and in Christ, to save Judas now in hell, upon condition of his believing, which every Christian I think will abominate” (*Aaron’s Rod Blossoming*, 209–10). Gillespie expressly denied that there was such a thing as a frustrated intention on the part of God for the salvation of those that perish: “There is a most dangerous mistake in that which he saith of the intentions of God and of Christ. If he mean of what God intendeth or purposeth in the counsel of his own will, that, in this sense, God intendeth the conversion of those that perish, is to make void and frustraneous, the degree, will, and intention of God, which is gross Arminianism and Jesuitism” (*Aaron’s Rod Blossoming*, 245).¹¹

Gillespie’s fellow Scots’ Commissioner, Samuel Rutherford, likewise rejected the assumption undergirding the well-meant offer when criticising the Arminian notion of a universal covenant of grace: “The other bastard ground is, the natural antecedent desire and love of God to have all saved, moved him (say they) to make this Covenant of Grace with all.” Rutherford believed that such a concept of a frustrated divine desire was incongruous with God’s impassibility: “And what is this, but to say, God hath passionate desires to have all, Elect, and Reprobate, Men, and Angels, to obey and be eternally saved, but he cannot help the matter; and therefore must upon the same account, be sorrowful and mourn that he cannot get all saved, which destroys the power of grace and restrains the outgoings of free-love” (*The Covenant of Life Opened*, 56–57; cf. *Christ Dying*, 443–45). Even the Prolocutor of the Assembly, William Twisse, stated in a 1646 work, “Can you persuade your self that ever the world will be brought about to believe, or any intelligent or sober man amongst them, that God desires the repentance and life of them, whom he hath determined from everlasting to deprive of those helps without which no man can repent and be saved?” (*A Treatise of Mr. Cotton’s, Clearing Certain Doubts Concerning Predestination*, 233).

This divergence of opinion among confessional divines was on display during the Westminster Assembly’s discussions, as we can see from the debate between Edmund Calamy and

9. Du Moulin was one of the delegates chosen to represent the French Reformed Church at Dort, but King Louis XIII proscribed their attendance. See Brian G. Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy: Protestant Scholasticism and Humanism in Seventeenth-Century France* (Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 133–34.

10. We recognise that Reformed proponents of the well-meant offer would agree that God does not *equally* love all men.

11. The attempt by David Silversides to cite the first quotation from Gillespie on behalf of the well-meant offer is scandalous. First, the quotation merely uses the word offer, but says nothing about the offer being indicative of a frustrated desire of God for the salvation of the non-elect. Second, the subsequent citations from *Aaron’s Rod Blossoming*, including one immediately after the section that the Revd Silversides quoted, are at odds with this notion. See Silversides, *The Free Offer*, 69–70.

Gillespie over hypothetical universalism. Arguing against Calamy, Gillespie rejected the concept of a universal love of God as being at odds with reprobation: “I cannot understand how there can be such a universal love of God to mankind as is maintained. Those that will say it must needs deny the absolute reprobation; then alone [a love] to those whom God hath absolutely reprobated both from salvation and the means of salvation.”¹² Calamy, however, asserted that there was “A general love to the reprobate, and the fruit of this, a general offer, and general grace, and general reformation.” Gillespie remained unconvinced and countered Calamy’s claim by asserting that “The reconciling of a general love with absolute reprobation is not answered.... The general offers of the gospel are not grounded upon the secret decree” (*Minutes of the Sessions of the Westminster Assembly of Divines*, Sess. 522, 22 Oct. 1645, 152, 153–54, 155–56).

Dr Waldron, following Joel Beeke and Mark Jones’s *A Puritan Theology*, claims that the Puritans generally embraced the well-meant offer (13). The debate at the Westminster Assembly is enough to cast doubt upon this assertion, but, even if it were correct, many Puritan writings could also be cited on behalf of hypothetical universalism. One point that is often noteworthy in discussions surrounding the well-meant offer is how reluctant its advocates are to acknowledge hypothetical universalism as within Reformed orthodoxy, yet they will cite hypothetical universalist works on behalf of the Reformed pedigree of the well-meant offer. Dr Waldron is adamant that it is wrong to indiscriminately tell sinners that “Christ died for you,” making several useful arguments against doing so (123–30). Yet he mentions in passing the phrase “Christ is dead for you” from Edward Fisher’s *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* (125), which, as Jonathan D. Moore has decisively proven, means the same thing as Christ died for you (*English Hypothetical Universalism*, 117–24).

Given that Puritan authors, writing before and after the Westminster Assembly, may be cited in opposition to the well-meant offer, we believe that Dr Waldron’s conclusion is oversimplified. One such voice was the influential William Perkins. He argued that “there seems not to be in God such a will or (as they use to term it) such a wishing will, whereby He will indefinitely and upon condition that all and every man of all ages should be saved. For first, it argues a finite power and insufficiency in him that wills. For whatever any one desires and earnestly wills, that he will bring to pass, unless he be hindered” (*The Manner and Order of Predestination in Works*, 6.345). It is also noteworthy that Mark Jones, when passing remark on Martin Foord’s work on John Owen, stated that

12. In a footnote, Struthers offers the reading “or ‘a love’” and this is the rendering Chad Van Dixhoorn gives for the Minutes. See Chad Van Dixhoorn, *The Minutes and Papers of the Westminster Assembly 1643–1652*, 5 vols. (Oxford University Press, 2012), 3.695.

“Owen holds essentially to a hyper-Calvinistic position on the gospel offer, as opposed to Thomas Manton” (*Antinomianism*, 15n). While it is wrong to apply the pejorative label of hyper-Calvinist to Owen, there is no question that Owen rejected the well-meant offer.

In Owen’s book on limited atonement, *The Death of Death*, he affirms that a gospel minister must “offer Christ in the preaching of the gospel.” Yet Owen defines this offer from ministers as being to “command and invite all to repent and believe,” which did not signify any intention on the part of God to save all of those to whom the offer and invitation was addressed. Recognition of this point rendered the offer “neither vain nor fruitless,” as it was declarative of man’s duty and of what was pleasing to God if it be performed. To assume that the offer indicated that God desired to save everyone was, for Owen, irreconcilable not only with election and reprobation but also with God’s infinite perfection, as it implied a weakness. Owen clearly understood that we are to interpret language concerning God desiring what does not come to fruition in an anthropopathic sense. To interpret anthropopathic descriptions of God literally made no more sense than to assert that God has bodily parts on account of the Bible’s use of anthropomorphic language (*The Death of Death in Works*, 10.299–301, 311–12, 321–23, 401). Judging by the evidence presented, it would thus appear that there was not a settled consensus among the Puritans on this subject.

We find another seventeenth-century example of the gospel offer being defined in a manner that does not imply the well-meant offer in James Durham’s exposition of Revelation. Commenting on Revelation 22:17, Durham asserted that Christ was freely offered to sinners without money and without price:

The second *Come*, that commendeth the excellency of this Book, *Let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.* Is there yet any body that is not clear in their interest, let them come and take this word before Christ come; for, he will not get another word: as if He said, I have made many fair and free offers, and now I close My last offer with a good word, *Who ever will* take Christ, and life through Him freely, on the terms of free grace, *let him come*, and take Him without money and without price, *Isa. 55.1.* This is our Lord’s farewell, that He may press the offer of the Gospel and leave that impression, as it were, upon record amongst the last words of the Scripture; and His scope is to commend this Book and the offers He hath made in it, as most free and on the terms of grace, wherein Christ aimeth much to draw souls to accept it, And teacheth us that all that would expect comfort of His coming, and pray for it with a well-grounded confidence, they would first come to

Him, and close with Him, and make use of His offer. This maketh a comfortable meeting with Him, and who cannot say the first *come* to Christ, that he may come, let themselves come to Him, and hear and answer His call to them, that so they may turn over their request to Him (*A Commentary upon the Book of the Revelation*, 780; cf. 763–65).

Notwithstanding this clear affirmation of the free offer, Durham denied that there was any proper will on the part of God for the salvation of the reprobate. When commenting on the church at Laodicea, Durham criticised the French Huguenot theologian, Jean Dail   for asserting that God had a will for the salvation of all men:

Because he putteth *cold* and *hot* in the same balance together: so that whatever difference otherways be in His estimation of being *hot*, beyond that of being *cold*; yet in this place they are made equal, and nothing is asserted concerning the one, but is also asserted concerning the other: which doth clearly shew, that the Lord's expression is to be understood after the manner of men, (as was said) that is, as men use to express their hating of any thing, by this, I wish it were, or had been any otherway: that same is the Lord's intent here. I cannot therefore but somewhat wonder, that a Learned man (*Ioannes Dallaeus* in his *Apologie, &c.*) doth draw this place of the Lord's wishing that *Laodicea* were hot, to confirm that assertion of the Lord's having a will and desire of the salvation of all men, besides His signifying of what is acceptable to Him as considered in it self, by His Word (*A Commentary upon the Book of the Revelation*, 212).

Durham is clear that we are to understand God's wish or desire that the Laodiceans were either cold or hot after the manner of men. In other words, it is an anthropopathic description; it is not indicative of a real or frustrated desire for the non-elect's salvation.

Even as late as the nineteenth-century, the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian theologian, William Symington, did not use the term offer in the sense of the well-meant offer. Symington stated that "The universal offer made of Christ in the Gospel" was the same thing as the call to preach the gospel to every creature. He was careful, however, to point out that "the Gospel call may be regarded as expressive of man's duty, rather than of the divine intention" and that "the unlimited offer of the Gospel proves only that it is the duty of all men to believe in Christ for salvation, and not that it is the design or intention of God that all should be saved by him, or that he should obtain salvation for all" (*The Atonement and*

Intercession of Jesus Christ, 209, 211). Clearly, Dr Waldron's understanding of how the terms offer and free offer have been employed in historic Reformed theological discourse is much too simplistic.

Part of the reason for this mistake is that Dr Waldron assumes that John Calvin is the gold-standard of Reformed theologians who set the "historical backdrop for the climatic Reformed confessions" (11). While we reject the outworn Calvin versus the Calvinists thesis, Dr Waldron's analysis betrays an over-exaggerated view of Calvin's importance. Calvin was certainly a significant voice in the formulation of Reformed theology, but he was one voice among other significant Reformed theologians.¹³ Even if we accept that Calvin taught either the well-meant offer or hypothetical universalism, that concession does not automatically mean that the later confessions oblige us to hold to these views. The private opinions of John Calvin have no constitutional authority in any Reformed church, though they may be useful, when employed in a discriminating fashion, in helping us to ascertain the original intent of the confessions.

The author's recognition that the Reformed resurgence in the mid- to late-twentieth-century may be attributed to the influence of Banner of Truth and Westminster Theological Seminary (13–14) perhaps goes some way to explaining why so many mistakenly think that the well-meant offer and a strict particularist understanding of limited atonement are the only acceptable options from a confessional Reformed point of view.¹⁴ This reviewer would suggest that one of the reasons why there has been an increased interest in both hypothetical universalism on the one hand and in Reformed opposition to the well-meant offer on the other is because a growing number of people are coming to a more sophisticated understanding of Reformed orthodoxy from reading the original sources. The author basically concedes this point when he admits that the growing interest in the Reformed scholastics has raised questions in the minds of their readers as to the correctness of the well-meant offer (101). The obvious reason why it has done so is that at least some of their writings are not friendly to the position.

Sadly, Dr Waldron refuses to see the matter as an area of honest disagreement among Reformed brethren but resorts to calling critics of the well-meant offer hyper-Calvinists. When concluding his exegetical thoughts on John 5:34, a text

13. For more on this subject, see Richard A. Muller, *Calvin and the Reformed Tradition: On the Work of Christ and the Order of Salvation* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 2012).

14. An exception to this point is A. W. Pink, whose book *The Sovereignty of God* rejects the well-meant offer. The fact that Banner of Truth published a highly edited version of this book to fit better with their own prejudices perhaps only serves to further confirm the thesis. For more on this subject, see Ronald Hanko, "The Forgotten Pink," *British Reformed Journal* (March 1997): 1–24.

which he views as crucial to the whole debate, he labels as “Hyper-Calvinistic the attempt to deny or obscure the reality that God desires the salvation of all who hear the gospel” (33). Remarkably, he then cites the Scottish Covenanter, George Hutcheson’s commentary on this verse in opposition to the well-meant offer notion of a divine intention for the salvation of all, which effectively means he attributes hyper-Calvinist sentiments to Hutcheson, who affirmed that Christ “intends the salvation of his own, whom his love doth follow when they are among a crowd of enemies” and rejected that “he intended the salvation of all these ...” (*Exposition of the Gospel of John*, 88). The same pejorative label must also apply to Francis Turretin, whom he cites to the effect that the revealed will of God is not properly volitional. Turretin stated that the revealed will “does not properly include any decree or volition in God, but implies only the agreement of the thing with the nature of God (according to which he cannot but love what is agreeable to his holiness)” (*Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 3.15.11, i, p. 222).

Oddly, Dr Waldron severely criticises Matthew Winzer for making effectively the same point as Turretin (103, 110).¹⁵ From a Reformed viewpoint, it is difficult to see why this claim is controversial. The distinction between God’s decretive and preceptive will exists to clarify how God can command something while properly willing the opposite (Blacketer, “The Three Points,” 43). As John Owen surmised, “Commands do not signify what is God’s intention should be done, but what is our duty to do; which may be made known to us whether we be able to perform it or not: it signifieth no intention or purpose of God” (*The Death of Death in Works*, 10.243; cf. p. 344). In other words, the preceptive will of God is not the proper will of God. Samuel Rutherford, furthermore, stated “that *voluntas signi* in which God reveals what is our duty, and what we ought to do; not what is his decree, or what he either will, or ought to do, is not God’s will properly, but by a figure only, for commands, and promises, and threatnings revealed, argue not the will and purpose, decree or intention of God, which are properly his will” (*Christ Dying*, 416).

One point in this book which will likely find agreement with critics of the well-meant offer is Dr Waldron’s

15. The precise point that Matthew Winzer makes is that “the word *will* is being used in two different senses, i.e., equivocally, having two distinct points of reference. It is only the will of decree which is the will of God in the proper sense of the term, as an act of volition, for therein God has decreed what shall be done.... The will of precept has no volitional content, for it simply states what God has commanded *ought* to be done by man. Whether man wills to do it is absolutely dependent upon whether God has decreed that he shall do it. So it is quite inappropriate to say that God wills something *to be* with reference to His will of command, for the preceptive will never pertains to the *futurition* of actions, only to the *obligation* of them.” Matthew Winzer, “Murray on the Free Offer: A Review,” *The Blue Banner*, 9, 10–12 (October/December, 2000), 4–5.

interpretation of John 3:16, 1 Timothy 2:4–6, and 2 Peter 3:9. He argues that John 3:16 refers to the effective purpose of God to save the world of the elect, which seems best to fit the local context of the passage (132–33). Nor does he see 1 Timothy 2:4–6 as referring to “a benevolent will of God for the salvation of every man without exception.” Instead, he believes that it “teaches God’s saving purpose toward all mankind, that is, every kind of man” (133). After a lengthy discussion concerning the meaning of 2 Peter 3:9, he concludes (apparently in opposition to Calvin) that contextual considerations make it unlikely that this passage is referring to the well-meant offer (137). In this opinion, he differs from John Murray, who claimed that it did refer to God’s desire for the repentance of all men without exception (“The Free Offer of the Gospel,” 60–62).

Strangely, though, Dr Waldron had previously appealed to the John 3:16 proof-text to justify his opinion that the confessional phrase “freely offereth in the gospel” refers to the well-meant offer (52–53). While divines such as Edmund Calamy interpreted the passage in a manner similar to modern well-meant offer advocates, Samuel Rutherford, speaking before the Westminster Assembly, interpreted the text as referring to the elect church: “Christ speaks of a particular special love.... The love of one giving his life for his friends ... the love that moved Him to send His only-begotten Son. ... If the love in the iii. of John be the same with those, as in those places is meant the special particular love of God commensurable with election ... not one scripture in all the New Testament where it can be expounded for the general.... 2. The love in the iii. of John 16 is restricted to the Church” (*Minutes of the Sessions of the Westminster Assembly of Divines*, Sess. 523, 23 Oct. 1645, 158).

THE CONFESSATIONAL DOCTRINE OF THEOLOGY PROPER

The reviewer also finds it regrettable that Dr Waldron’s commitment to the well-meant offer appears to cause him to downplay the importance of the catholic and Reformed doctrine of God’s simplicity. In a footnote in the section of the divine simplicity, Dr Waldron comes to the extraordinary conclusion that “No historical clarity exists in the Reformed tradition with regard to the attempt to more carefully define the way in which the divine attributes belong to the simple being of God.” He asks, “Is this distinction between the attributes a distinction of some kind in the divine being itself? Or is this distinction between the attributes a distinction simply in the conceptions of the human mind?” The assertion that “Such questions are not given clear answers by the tradition” (15n–16n) is clearly incorrect. Any serious reader of the major Reformed dogmaticians from the sixteenth- to the eighteenth-century knows that they believed that the divine attributes are one in God and thus identical with both the divine essence and with each other, but only diverse in our

conceptions. Subsequent equivocations by later Reformed theologians on the divine simplicity are aberrations from Reformed orthodoxy's Augustinian and Thomistic approach to theology proper.

To substantiate this point, one need only carefully read the second chapter of the Westminster Confession "Of God, and of the Holy Trinity" and pay attention to expressions such as "infinite in being and perfection," "without body, parts, or passions," "most absolute," and the description of the three Trinitarian persons being "of one substance, power, and eternity" to understand that the Westminster Assembly viewed the divine attributes as one with the divine essence and with each other (2.1, 3). Hence, the Confession speaks of God ordaining the non-elect to wrath for their sin "to the praise of His glorious justice" (3.7). The underlying presumption here is that God is his justice and glory, and his glory is just, and his justice is glorious.¹⁶

While Dr Waldron professedly affirms the simplicity of God, he shies away from what he sees as mere "interpretations" of the doctrine (115). Thus, he cannot maintain that the "divine love is inseparable from the divine will" (114). Similar problems emerge with the author's understanding of divine impassibility, as he paraphrases the Southern Presbyterian theologian, Robert Lewis Dabney as teaching that "while God has no passions, he does have affections" (117). In addition to the earlier citation from Du Moulin, where passion and affection were used interchangeably, the idea of God possessing affections was strenuously rejected by Reformed scholastics such as John Owen in his critique of Socinianism (*Vindiciae Evangelicae in Works*, 12.109–10). With reference to God's eternal love, Owen asked, "Is it an affection in his eternal nature, as love is in ours? It were no less than a blasphemy once so to conceive" (*The Death of Death in Works*, 10.275). And the Formula Consensus Helvetica of 1675 stated that "God is infinitely removed from all that human imperfection which characterizes inefficacious affections and desires, rashness repentance and change of purpose" (*Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation*, 4.521–22). While we do not assert that the well-meant offer, in and of itself, is outside the bounds of the Westminster Confession, it does appear that the desire of its advocates to defend the position is leading them to adopt views of theology proper that are inconsistent with the confessional doctrine of God.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the historical evidence offered in this review presents a significant challenge to the claims of the author that the well-meant offer represents the teaching of the Reformed confessions. The most charitable conclusion we can reach is that the well-meant offer is extra-confessional and should not be made a test of orthodoxy among Reformed

brethren. Sinclair B. Ferguson's observation on the diversity of the Westminster Assembly is worth remembering here:

Uniformity was their goal. But it is evident from the way in which they achieved it that the spirit of their Calvinism was inclusive rather than exclusive. Unity in the church of God, they believed, required a sufficiently clear statement of the truth to exclude manifestly false teaching, and a sufficiently broad expression of its nuances to avoid excluding those who were in heart and head truly orthodox, whatever differences might remain ("An Assembly of Theonomists," 349).

Given the divided state of the conservative Reformed world at present, we would exhort confessional brethren to desist from needlessly dividing on this subject. If your zeal for the well-meant offer is so hot that you would exclude Gillespie, Rutherford, Perkins, Du Moulin, Twisse, Durham, Hutcheson, Turretin, and Owen from the pale of confessional orthodoxy, it is fair to conclude that such zeal is not according to knowledge.

Review: Jordan Cooper, "Prolegomena: A Defense of the Scholastic Method" A Contemporary Protestant Scholastic Theology (Weidner Institute, 2020). ISBN 978-1-952295-25-6. Paperback. 350 pages. Reviewed by Angelo O. Valle (OPC), Pastor of Christ Reformed Church at Alexandria, Pennsylvania.

Jordan Cooper's most recent work, *Prolegomena: A Defense of the Scholastic Method*, is an apologetic calling for a revival of Lutheran scholasticism as opposed to the various forms of Radical Lutheranism. In engaging the various players of Radical Lutheranism (e.g., Gerhard Forde, Steven Paulson, and Oswald Bayer) Cooper's desire is to winsomely present a favorable light on the Lutheran scholastic tradition as a better alternative. It should be noted that this book is a reworking of his doctoral dissertation and the first volume in a series that will include treatments on: the Doctrine of God; Theological Anthropology; Christology; Justification; Union with Christ; Law and Gospel; the Church and Sacraments; and (most fittingly for the end) Eschatology. What must be emphasized is that though this book is chiefly a historical theological work, it is hoping to be more than that. Cooper writes, "[this work and those to follow] are an attempt to bring the work of [the Lutheran scholastic] thinkers and apply them to contemporary debates in both theology and philosophy." (4)

As a whole, Cooper presents a very well-organized

16. Space precludes us from citing all the relevant primary sources on divine simplicity. We refer the reader to Peter Sanlon, *Simply God: Recovering the Classical Trinity* (Nottingham: IVP, 2014).

monograph for his readers. In each chapter, he provides a clear trajectory in the beginning and review at the end. Though that may sound elementary, its fluidity and comprehensive summation provides the reader with a clear understanding. His intentional structure is reminiscent of a professor guiding his students through a syllabus. The book itself is divided as such: 1) Introduction; 2) Current Scholarship on Theological Method; 3) Theological and Philosophical Foundations; 4) A Defense of the Scholastic Method; 5) Implications for Contemporary Issues.

The Introduction sets the tone for the rest of the book in its opening paragraph, “the scholastic theological method is one that can and should be used in the modern era.... Thus, I contend that it needs to be revived.” (1–2) Cooper’s own theological presuppositions are laid bare as he displays his own theological convictions in the confessional Lutheran tradition. In addition, Cooper’s own intellectual foundation comes forward in his self-admitted dependence on the 20th century contributions from historians such as Robert Preus and Richard Muller; both men being the leading voices for the resurgence of studies in the scholasticism of the Post-Reformation era.

The second chapter of the work is guided by the question, “What is the current state of scholarship concerning theological methodology within the Lutheran tradition?” (13) Cooper’s initial engagement provides his readership with their introduction to Radical Lutheranism. He defines the movement by a few players (Gerhard Forde, Oswald Bayer, and Steven Paulson) and some of their commitments such as a consistent concern for “justification [as] the central tenet and theme of all Christian theological discourse.” (14–15) In addition, there is a shared emphasis on divine speech-acts, a linguistic centered theological model, and a general rejection of an Aristotelian essentialist metaphysic. One of the difficulties with Radical Lutheranism is their redefining of traditional terminology. Justification no longer concerns itself with a “forensic declaration” but concerns itself (according to Forde) with God’s act of declaration by means of the pastor.

Gerhard Forde’s elevation of divine speech-acts establish proclamation as the heart of theology. Forde argues against the traditional confessional Lutheran formulations because of their emphasis on *being* rather than *act*. (18) By necessity, Forde is looking to reject anything that presents God in what He considers a static abstraction. His division between *primary discourse* (direct speech) and *secondary discourse* (speech about something) lies at the heart of his rejection of historical confessional Lutheranism in general, and the Lutheran scholasticism in particular. He argues that they never engage God, only ideas concerning Him which leaves God “inaccessible to the human creature.” (19)

Moving on to the second main contributor to Radical

Lutheranism, Cooper turns to Oswald Bayer. Bayer’s commitments to a linguistic-focused philosophical theological foundation leads him along the same lines as Forde. Like Forde, there is little concern for a metaphysical or abstract consideration of God. Bayer’s propensity towards linguistics redefines theology itself as “in essence a dialogue between God and man.” (24) Justification is again elevated to a central position; it is the means of identifying God. His emphasis on direct speech with God is his means of removing any gaps “between the practical and speculative approaches.” (25) Bayer’s metaphysical commitments are rooted in what he terms “relational ontology” which prioritizes the relationship between the Creator and the creature above and beyond a more traditional essentialist or Aristotelian metaphysic typical in the Protestant scholastic tradition. The core of the relational structures for Bayer are rooted in the law-gospel distinction, which are established in God’s divine speech-acts. For Bayer, theology is not rooted in concepts, but in the act of God. What Forde, Bayer, and Paulson have in common is their belief that “Luther functioned on the basis of linguistics rather than ontology ... [that] the central element of theology is the divine speech-act.” (41) Therefore, their main grievance against the Lutheran scholastics is that they are: 1) unfaithful to Luther’s theology; 2) pursue Aristotle and his philosophical convictions rather than those of Luther.

Steven Paulson is the third Radical Lutheran presented by Cooper. Paulson builds upon the intellectual trajectories of Forde and Bayer. His linguistic-focused approach emphasizes that “all theology should arise from preaching.” (35) Any sense of abstraction or theology apart from preaching leads to a “naked God” who is worse than useless, because this “God only brings wrath.” (35) The accusation that comes against the Lutheran scholastic tradition by Paulson is that it retreats into the speculative errors of the medieval church. What is most unexpected is that Paulson believes his theological discussions are a return to Luther’s theology. He sees himself as pursuing a purer Lutheranism. Paulson’s divergence from orthodox Lutheranism continues as any sense of the law as eternal and a reflection of God Himself is untenable, and a blatant rejection of Luther’s own theological primacy on proclamation. Like Forde and Bayer before him, Paulson rejects both the Thomistic and Aristotelian philosophical components in the Lutheran scholastic tradition.

Continuing in his explication of the current state of Lutheran scholarship, Cooper continues to examine those who would be committed to the confessional standards of Lutheranism (i.e., the Formula of Concord) while being influenced by the aforementioned Radical Lutherans. This list includes William W. Schumacher, Robert Kolb, and Charles Arand. Beginning with Schumacher, Cooper notes his priority of *becoming* over *being*, his emphasis on linguistics over essentialist metaphysics,

and the centrality of justification as the heart of all theological method. These priorities place Schumacher alongside the Radical Lutherans. Though committed to confessional Lutheranism, Schumacher prefers relational ontology and the primacy of linguistics. (51–53) His ideas are summarized in this way, “Speech is not merely one way that God acts but is definitive of who God is . . . theology is essentially a linguistic enterprise.” (54–55) With divine communication functioning as the core of justification, sin at its core is redefined as the “breaking of communication between God and his creatures.” (55)

Thereafter, Cooper redirects his readers to the resurgence of Protestant scholasticism in the twentieth century under the work of Robert Preus and Richard Muller. Preus and Muller are two sides of the same coin, with the former being committed to the Lutheran scholastics, and the latter to the Reformed scholastics. Both men by their work have highlighted that the enterprise of Protestant scholasticism at large has been primarily concerned with the adoption of an inherited methodology, as opposed to theological conclusions. Cooper clarifies for his readers, “the use of the scholastic method does not equate to an adoption of medieval theology.” (74) Contrary to the “Luther against the Lutherans” view that was more common in the earlier twentieth century (e.g., Rudolph Bultmann, Werner Elert, Albrecht Ritschl, Gustaf Wingren), Cooper highlights “the scholastic theologians” and their “purpose was not to depart from Luther and create their own theological system.” (61)

Instead the historian finds an intellectual continuity, and purposeful care from the Lutheran scholastics to advance theologically in a manner that was both intellectually consistent with Luther’s foundations, and devotionally applicatory. Scholastics, both of the Reformed and Lutheran persuasion, were concerned with doctrinal purity, and building upon the codification of the works of the first-generation of Reformers as seen in the creeds, confessions, and catechisms established by the second-generation of Reformers. Consequently, Preus argues for “a significant amount of continuity between Luther and the seventeenth-century writers who write in his name.” (64) This is central to Cooper’s thesis. Part of his main argument is that “Scholastic theology is the natural development of Luther’s theology, despite differences in the employment of philosophical categories.” (65) The Reformers and their heirs were “thoroughly steeped in the medieval scholastic tradition and sought to systematize their own theological developments.” (73) In other words, “Protestant scholasticism melds together influences from medieval scholasticism, humanism, and exegetical theology.” (74) As Cooper will express in subsequent chapters, the critical use of Aristotelean philosophy and metaphysics in Protestant scholasticism is not inherently at odds with Luther.

The third chapter of Cooper’s work, “Theological and

Philosophical Foundations,” ably traces out the historical development of Lutheran scholasticism. What was most helpful was not only the historical survey of the origins of Protestant scholasticism (which will certainly assist students of both the Reformed and Lutheran persuasion in discussions of Protestant scholasticism) but also the relationship of reason with faith. Cooper highlights the faith/reason dynamic in Luther’s thought in this manner, “scriptural truths are to be accepted on the basis of revelation rather than human logic, but this does not negate the usefulness of reason and philosophy as a secondary source of authority, even in spiritual matters.” (100) In addition, Martin Chemnitz and Johann Gerhard are the main Lutheran scholastics in view throughout this chapter as they are, according to Cooper, “the most significant Lutheran voices after the Reformation era.” (83)

In standing on the intellectual shoulders of Preus and Muller, Cooper defines scholasticism as “a particular academic method of theology, wherein doctrines are studied systematically with the use of technical philosophical and theological terminology, and with emphasis on the formation of various theses and refutations of various objections to these proposed theses.” (88) Scholastic theology is concerned with method, not with conclusions. Though much of the discussion this far is rather common in works surrounding Protestant scholasticism, Cooper’s careful analysis of Luther, Aquinas, and Aristotle are an asset to the reader. Cooper notes that Luther’s philosophical eclecticism makes it impossible to state that Luther wholly and uncritically observed the metaphysical structures of any individual. (93) When considering commonalities between Luther and Aquinas, Cooper emphasizes the necessity of nuance. (104)

The remainder of this chapter does trace out the historical influences of the medieval scholastics, Luther and the Lutheran scholastics. The topics include: the Utilization of Essentialism Categories; Platonic Essentialism; Aristotelian Essentialism; Essentialism in Lutheran Scholasticism; Causation; The Archetype/Ectype Distinction and Analogical Predication; Toward an Aristotelian-Platonic Synthesis; Platonism: An Evaluation; and Aristotelianism: An Evaluation. As the litany of topics covered make clear, “Luther and later thinkers did not draw purely on one philosophy in order to construct their thought. Instead, they borrowed from earlier Christian sources, and fluctuated between Aristotelian and Neoplatonic ideas.” (172) This sort of fluctuation is highlighted by Cooper in the Aristotelian precision in Gerhard’s dogmatic works, and Augustinian/Platonic emphases in his devotional works primarily in discussions of participation. (177–179) The intellectual grid by which the Reformed and subsequent generations approached pagan philosophy, according to Cooper, was to ascertain simply which conclusions were consistent with special revelation. (182) That which was at odds with

Scripture (e.g., Aristotle's claim of an eternal created order) was rejected. The critical reception of pagan philosophy is regularly highlighted as these "benefits [of utilizing Aristotle's distinctions] do not imply a complete adoption of an Aristotelian metaphysical system by the Lutheran scholastics." (185) Discussions on participation were also intriguing as they provided some discussion on a Western Catholic approach towards divine participation from a Thomistic angle, building on Aristotelian and Platonic elements "without subscribing to the pantheistic tendencies of Neoplatonism." (190) Following the Lutheran Scholastics, Cooper hopes to maintain the Creator-creature distinction even while speaking favorably of participation (both in its general and mystical union). (194)

What is made most clear by the end of this chapter, and this work as a whole, is that ideas are never neat and tidy. There is the reality of cross-pollination and adaptation. But there are philosophical foundations whose effects permeate (for better or worse) through the conclusions of those who adopt them. Here we might consider the philosophical commitments of the Radical Lutherans to linguistics and its impact for doctrines such as justification and sanctification. What Cooper consistently and regularly articulates for his readers is that "the use of Aristotelian concepts does not necessitate a complete adoption of his philosophical convictions." (194) He echoes these very sentiments for the reappropriation of Thomistic and Neoplatonic ideas by Christians as well.

The fourth chapter engages the "linguistic-existentialist approach" of Radical Lutheranism. (198) Cooper contends that the modern Radical Lutherans "are without grounding" and rest upon "misunderstandings of essentialism." (247) They are fundamentally eisegetical of both the biblical text as well as the "historical Lutheran documents." (247) With the rejection of essentialist categories, the Radical Lutheran conclusions lead to a rejection of "divine simplicity and impassibility ... in favor of a God who is himself impacted by the process of history." (279) One of Cooper's regularly repeated arguments is showcasing Luther's own propensity towards affirming a Platonic metaphysic in his Heidelberg Disputation; the clearest of Luther's works on the subject of metaphysics. (281) Cooper's critique against existentialism does not necessitate a wholesale rejection. Instead he follows Luther's eclecticism by allowing places for existentialism's usefulness. He affirms, "there is a strong existential element to Christian theology, and Lutheranism in particular." (282) But a bare existentialism cannot ground a Christian philosophy. Cooper's last sentence summarizes his point well, "without a substance-ontology as its root, these existential ideas are completely inadequate in giving any comprehensive theological system." (283)

Cooper's conclusion reiterates the central dogma that ideas have consequences. There are no theoretical aspects of theology that fail to impact the church practically. To that end,

Cooper's final chapter discusses the practical import of Radical Lutheranism for Lutheran identity, apologetics, and most appropriate to the present context, the "contemporary debates surrounding gender in the church." (285) To that latter point, Cooper contends in his closing comments that an essentialist ontology is equipped to guard the teaching of Scripture. Cooper writes, "the human person is not linguistically, relationally, or societally constructed, but persists within God-given categories of nature and gender." (328) Here the practical application of Cooper's contentions come forward. Therein lies Cooper's central question: What approach best cares for Christ's sheep in a post-modern, post-Christian world? Cooper is convinced that there is an ideological fork in the road between Radical Lutheranism and Lutheran scholasticism and that only the latter is able to engage the post-Christian culture and defend against its false ideologies by "providing logically coherent and convincing answers to difficult challenges that arise." (332) In short, Cooper concludes his work resolved to stand under the banner of Lutheran scholasticism and invites his readers to join him. For he contends, "There is simply no other option." (332)

In the author's opinion, Cooper is very talented in his ability to organize as well as communicate these complex topics in such a way that this book may become a valuable resource in years to come for those seminarians looking to be acquainted with the intellectual grounding of Protestant scholasticism at large, and Lutheran scholasticism in particular. Though he is chiefly concerned with the Lutheran scholastics, he does provide some helpful comments on some areas of cross-pollination of Reformed scholasticism with Lutheran thought (e.g., Francis Junius' distinction between archetypal/ectypal theology and its impact on Johann Gerhard). (161) His own careful review and comparison of Luther's philosophical commitments alongside that of the subsequent Lutheran scholastics was sufficiently articulated. Cooper's theological formulations and observations were always returning to a historically contextual reading of the moments which birthed them, recognizing that theology does not occur in a historical vacuum.

Some basic concerns for this initial work are more preferential than substantive. The chapters could have been further divided to allow for the ease of those being introduced to the subject of Lutheran scholasticism, especially if the aim of this work is for the seminary. In addition, the lack of an index will limit in part this work's usefulness, though by no means detracts from its substantive contribution. It ought to be noted that Cooper's talents as a writer make the work as a whole easy to follow, and enjoyable to read. His take on a subject often caricatured as both "dry and boring" has been made a pleasurable and informative delight for the reader. If the subsequent volumes of this series bear the same lucidity and historically contextualized awareness, they will be a vital tool for those interested in the Lutheran scholastic world.

Review: Benjamin Shaw, *Ecclesiastes: Life in a Fallen World* (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2019). ISBN 978-1-84871-868-5. Paperback. viii + 156 pages. Reviewed by Lane Keister.

The Rev. Dr. Benjamin Shaw (currently teaching at Reformation Bible College, previously at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary) has, unfortunately, not published much. Readers can hope that this publication presages more to come. He is a confessional Presbyterian teacher and minister, ordained in the Presbyterian Church in America.

Shaw's exposition of Ecclesiastes is condensed, well-researched (though the scholarship is worn lightly, a discerning reader can see the depth of understanding and broad reading behind the volume), witty, and conservative, although he is not afraid to go his own way at times. He does not quote often, and there are very few footnotes. However, when he does quote or reference another source, he uses quite a broad spectrum of voices, ranging from Jewish sources to cultural references to the Byrds' famous song "Turn, Turn, Turn," and the famous line about communication from *Cool Hand Luke*. This review should be seen as enthusiastically positive, with the few criticisms being seen as very minor points. Anyone seeking to gain a better understanding of the book of Ecclesiastes should turn to Shaw as one of their first ports of call.

Shaw defends Solomonic authorship of the entirety of Ecclesiastes (vii., 1–4, 129). He is aware of the objections regarding the supposed late Hebrew, as well as the objection that Solomon, husband of many wives, would not have written 9:9 ("Consider life with the wife whom you love all the days of your vaporous life which he gives to you under the sun, all your vaporous days," Shaw's translation), and he offers very plausible answers. Even if one were to disagree with Shaw on Solomonic authorship, the utility of the volume would not be much affected.

Shaw's positions on the important architectonic issues of Ecclesiastes are important to note. He argues that the much-discussed Hebrew word *hebel* (הֶבֶל) means "vapour," representing "that which is passing, or insubstantial" (6). Teasing out the meaning further, he says, "The person who tries to hang on to it will ultimately be frustrated and disappointed because it does not last" (7). The phrase "under the sun" (שָׁמַיְמָה) "means the here and now, the life that we can access by our senses. It does not mean, as some seem to think, the world apart from God" (7). In this, Shaw shows his independence of judgment. Shaw does not, therefore, see the book as having apologetic intent, as, for example, Phil Ryken would.¹ Shaw includes an intriguing suggestion as to the outline of Ecclesiastes, tying the organization of the book to the early chapters of Genesis (10–11). One could wish that Shaw would have come back a bit more often to this suggestion in

the remainder of the book. In addition, the outline suggested on 10–11 does not always correspond to the sections of comment. For example, on pages 10–11, he argues that 5:1–12 is a unit echoing Genesis 4:26. However, when he comments on chapter 5, the division is different (4:17–5:6, 5:7–17, with the titles of the two sections being "Fear God" and "The Problem of Stuff," not obviously connected to men beginning to call on the name of the Lord. Maybe there is a deeper connection present. If so, however, given that this is a more popular-level commentary, it might have been helpful for Shaw to be more explicit about that connection. Shaw's view of Ecclesiastes in relation to the person and work of Jesus Christ is unique, as far as I know. He argues that Christ is "in the warp and woof of the book.... Solomon speaks as Christ to the people of God of the Old Testament. So what we hear in the book is the voice of Christ. We do not need to scour the book looking for hints of Jesus, because his voice speaks in every word" (11). Given that Solomon is portrayed as *Qohelet*, the preacher; and Jesus is the Preacher par excellence, this way of formulating the matter seems very cogent.

Insights into the text of Ecclesiastes abound in this book. Fortunately for the reader, Shaw's style of writing is very clear and free of jargon. Shaw has the happy knack of discussing difficult or complex ideas in simple language. Shaw explains why the book of Ecclesiastes makes readers uncomfortable at times: "And I hated life" (2:17) is the cry of the child who has just discovered that life is not fair. It is a true cry that adults have learned to stifle, and that is why *Qohelet's* blunt statement of it makes us uncomfortable" (26). On the famous passage about times in chapter 3, Shaw remarks that "[M]an does not create these times. They have been appointed by God. Man merely learns to recognize them" (37). On the difficult 3:18, Shaw's interpretation rings true: "Even in a fallen world, where nature is 'red in tooth and claw' men ought to treat one another better than they do. Yet if one considers carefully the behavior of men, they treat each other no better than the beasts" (49). When it comes to governmental oppression, Shaw warns the reader not to be surprised by it, since Ecclesiastes does not see humanity as basically good (68). People today seem shocked by such behavior among rulers. Solomon was not so shocked. This makes the reader wonder if the hints at Solomonic oppression in 1 Kings 1–11, especially toward the end of the passage, might make Solomon's words here a study

1. Phillip Graham Ryken, *Ecclesiastes: Why Everything Matters* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), esp. 21. I am wondering, though, if there is quite as much difference between the two perspectives as Shaw's statement seems to imply. If the focus is on the here and now, on what our senses can access, then for a lot of people, at least, such would seem to exclude God from the picture, at least on occasion. I favor, at any rate, a more apologetic intent to the book than Shaw would.

in self-awareness. On 7:1, Shaw offers a penetrating analysis of how the two lines of poetry (seemingly disconnected at first sight) actually work together, namely, that death is what finalizes a person's character (90). Wisdom with an inheritance will prevent the inheritance from being wasted (96, commenting on 7:11). Shaw offers as good an explanation of 7:28 ("What my soul seeks I did not find. One man among a thousand I found and a woman among all these I did not find," Shaw's translation) as any I've seen. Often adduced as evidence of sexism in the book, Shaw's explanation completely clears Solomon of any such problematic thoughts: "What he has found is that one man among a thousand he has been able to understand, but he does not understand women at all" (106). Shaw thus interprets the soul-seeking of the verse to be a search for understanding. Shaw offers a highly nuanced treatment of 8:14 ("There is a vapour that is done upon the earth: that there are righteous treated according to the deed of the wicked, and there are wicked treated as the deed of the righteous. I said that this is vapour," Shaw's translation): "Solomon is not counselling complacency in the face of injustice. He is, however, calling on people to recognize and understand the fundamentally disordered state of the reality we inhabit" (119). The reader can see fairly clearly how this might apply to current racial tensions in the United States. Injustice is thus not systemic to only one people group. Injustice is systemic to the entire human race.

Chapter 12 is often seen to contain an extended metaphor of aging in the first verses. While Shaw cautiously accepts this (but without tying individual images to particular aspects of aging), he adds an important layer to the discussion: "[T] here is a certain eschatological slant to several of the images. I think the combination is intentional. There are really two *eschatons*, one for the individual and one for the world. The two bear not only a certain relation, but also certain similarities" (150). The reason this added layer is so important is that it puts aging within the larger context of a fallen world where humanity's sin leads to death, and so life also leads to death. Fortunately, this is not the final *eschaton* of the story. There is a way of escaping the ultimate end of the deathly pathway. It involves the fear of the Lord, salvation in Christ, and the way of life everlasting, which last part can be summed up with Shaw's understanding of 12:13–14, "It is 'for this is the all of man.' The idea is that this is what makes man whole. This is what fulfils man. It doesn't look like it from our fallen perspective. But if we have learned the lessons that Solomon has laid before us, then we realize it is this obedience to the commands of God that enables us to live profitably in this ephemeral world" (155–6).

2. Barbara W. Tuchman, *The Guns of August* (New York: Macmillan, 1962).

3. A. Craig Troxel, *With All Your Heart* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020).

As said earlier, this review is enthusiastic in recommending the volume to the reader. There are some questions and a few criticisms I would have. These criticisms and questions are very small matters, in general, and do not affect the usefulness of the book at all. Most of the time, Shaw is very clear on what he thinks the text means. There is one instance, however, where Shaw mentions two interpretive options regarding 2:25 without telling us which one he favors (33). Maybe this means he himself could not decide between the two. If that were the case, however, it would be better for the reader to know that this was the conclusion reached. Shaw mentions the fact that "surrounding cultures had a vigorous belief in the afterlife, and had very developed views of what took place after death" (50). I have no doubt that Shaw is correct on this point. It would have been nice, however, to see an example or two proving the point. I am not convinced, regarding the proverb of 4:12 ("And a three-fold cord is not quickly snapped," Shaw's translation), that it is simply 'a proverbial saying quoted to round off the argument' (Shaw, p. 57, quoting Reichert and Cohen). Maybe Shaw wants to head off a too-facile reading of the passage as referring to Christ. It does not seem to me, however, that Solomon is in the habit of simply adducing proverbs to round off an argument without thereby meaning much of anything by the quotation.

A very tiny quibble indeed I would have regarding his claim about World War I (Shaw mentions this in passing, such that the idea is hardly essential to his main point) that no one saw it coming (101). Having recently read Barbara Tuchman's Pulitzer Prize winning *Guns of August*,² I was struck with how many people not only knew the war was coming, but had plans for the first offensive over twenty years prior to the onset of hostilities. Now, maybe Shaw merely means that no one thought the war would look the way it did. This can certainly be said about the Germans, who expected to be an irresistible force.

My last quibble would be with Shaw's understanding of the heart in the Old Testament, which he regards as "not the seat of emotion, but the seat of the intellect, of the understanding" (149). I am not so sure that the emotions and the intellect/understanding can be so easily separated as that. I agree more with Craig Troxel's recent formulation that the heart is the seat of the mind, the desires, and the will.³ This would not exclude the emotions.

While the book is brief enough that an index might not be strictly necessary, it might still have been nice. I found only two typos in the volume (139, 155), so the volume is well edited. This book is heartily recommended to all readers, ranging from high-school age through seminary education and pastoral ministry. ■

PSALLO

Psalm 82:1–8

You have before you a metrical version of Psalm 82. Our translation is very straightforward, with only a few words being added in italics to smooth the meter. The tune has some triumphal and majestic elements, as well as a proportionate section of threatening tone, as does the Psalm itself. The name of the tune is taken from the first verse: **בְּקִרְבֵּי אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט**: “He Judges among the gods.” Regarding the choice of certain words, in verse two we have chosen the word “exalt” to translate the Hebrew word **נִשָּׂא** which means to lift up, or bear. This seems to bring forth the idea of the Psalmist, who chides wicked rulers who accept, or lift up, the persons or faces of the wicked, rewarding to them an undeserved dignity and favor in judgment. In verse three we kept close to the original, translating **שֹׁפֵט** as “judge” and **צַדִּיק** as “do thou right” departing from the Authorized version but closer to the Scottish Metrical version of 1650.

Psalm 82 is an important and timely Psalm for us to consider here in 2020, for we have witnessed nearly unprecedented, and certainly unexpected exercise (and lack of exercise) of civil authority in the months leading up to our publication. From mandatory orders including the closure of business and churches, and wearing of respiratory masks on one hand, and the withdrawal of help and protection of businesses, widespread permission of rioting, looting, and destruction of private and public property on the other, the action or perceived lack of action on the part of civil magistracy and security forces is certainly a relevant topic for our concerned citizen of our society. Thankfully, the Lord our God has provided light in His Word as to what He expects from civil leaders, and Psalm 82 speaks to His expectations.

This can be a confusing Psalm for the Christian, either in reading in the common versions of the Bible, or in singing from the Psalter, because of the Psalmist’s use of the word **אֱלֹהִים** *Elohim*, or God. Students of the Hebrew original will recognize the ending on that word to be a typical Hebrew plural, used as a “plural of majesty” as this word is often used in the Old Testament to speak of the one true and living God, perhaps even referring to His Tri-Unity.¹ But the Psalmist also uses this term to describe the “gods” of the earth, the men who are in mediate positions in the world, administering justice and judgment to the people under their jurisdictions. It is an

interesting turn of phrase. Literally, the Psalm reads, “Elohim stands in the congregation of El, in midst of the Elohim He judges.” There is an obvious literary device at work here, where the Psalmist draws a line of similarity or affinity between the judges, the mighty of the earth, and the Lord God Himself, Who has the final Word and Judgment over all. They are called gods because they have the power to enrich or impoverish, restrain or liberate, kill or sustain. Hear Calvin, “But here it would appear, from the scope of the passage, that this name of the Divine Being is applied to those who occupy the exalted station of princes, in which there is afforded a peculiar manifestation of the majesty of God.”² This majesty is characterized by the Apostle Paul as encompassing the service or ministry that civil authorities have under God as His ministers (Rom. 13:1–8). The first verse of this Psalm sets the tone for the whole, in that the Lord declares His authority over the judges of the earth, yet all the while declaring that same affinity with them. He is the God, the Mighty One, over all the earth, and these other judges, civil authorities are in that sense “gods” as they are called upon to administer the judgment and justice of the true Judge of all the earth (See Deut. 1:17, 2 Chron. 19:5–8). They are not independent operators, but as the Psalmist says, will answer the call when the Lord God calls that assembly of judgment to judge those who have judged in this world.

Next the Lord speaks to those judges and accuses them, and in His accusation implies, anthropopathically, that His patience with their injustice is wearing thin, beginning verse two with “how long will ye judge unjustly?” The Just Lord calls them to account for their favoring the wicked, and for their refusal to do justice on behalf of the poor, needy and fatherless, who are the under-represented of the society. And while it is sometimes true that the poor and fatherless are often mentioned in Scripture as needing just judgment, and

THE AUTHOR: The Rev. Todd L. Ruddell is pastor of Christ Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church (RPCGA) in Wylie, Texas.

1. The significance of the plural form in the Hebrew usage seems to be that of a plural of majesty or of intensification. This is the God above all other gods. He is the God of all power and might. He is the God behind all of the creation (Gen. 1:1). When we realize, however, that the God who reveals himself in the Old Testament is the Triune God, it is not inconceivable to see in the plural a suggestion of that triune nature. This is not to say that the doctrine of the Trinity may be proved by the plural form. It is to say, on the other hand, that when the triune character of God is fully revealed in the New Testament, it is not contradictory to the revelation of the Old Testament. This plural usage prepares us for the fuller revelation of the Three Persons of the Godhead. This is especially true of passages that suggest inter-divine consultation, such as, Gen. 1:26, “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...” Morton H. Smith, *Systematic Theology, Volume One: Prolegomena, Theology, Anthropology, Christology*, electronic ed. (Escondido, CA: Ephesians Four Group, 1999), 109.

2. John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, vol. 3 (Calvin Translation Society; repr. Baker, 1981), 330.

Psalm 82:1-8

A Psalm of Asaph.

B'qerev Elohim Yishpot

Todd L. Ruddell

¹God doth stand in the court of the might - y ones
³Judge for those des - ti - tute, for the fa - ther - less
⁵They know not nor will they, ev - er un - der - stand
⁶I said ye are gods all, sons of the Most High

He gives out judg - ment *true* in midst of the gods.
And do thou right un - to wretch - ed ones and poor.
For 'tis that they do walk on in dark - ness *deep*
⁷But you'll die; and as one of the princ - es fall

²Oh how long will ye judge work - ing un - just - ly
⁴De - liv - er thou the poor and the ones in need
And so the foun - da - tions *hold - ing* all the earth
⁸O God do thou a - rise, judg - ing the *whole* earth

And the face of wick - ed men will ye ex - alt.
And him take out from the hand of wick - ed men.
Made they are to sway *and pitch* back to and fro.
For that Thou in - her - it shall the na - tions all.

are often oppressed, let us also remember that the Just Lord forbids the wresting of judgment in their favor *simply* because they are poor. Note the wise ethic from the lawgiver of Israel, speaking by the Spirit of God: “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour” (Lev. 19:15). While it might be popular, and might please fallen human sensibility to believe that judgment ought always to go in favor of the poor because he is often oppressed, and therefore the scales ought to be tipped in his favor, note that the Just Lord requires equity in *every* case (See also Exod. 23:1–10; Deut. 1:17; 16:19.). However, there is an emphasis placed in our Psalm upon the common partiality against the poor and needy that must be acknowledged. Note that this idea compasses much of this Psalm, fully two out of the eight verses, indicating that perversity in judgment often goes against the poor, and judges here are warned against preferring the wicked who oppress them. Justice may be blind, but the Just Lord, the Judge of all the earth, is not (See Gen. 18:25).

The next portion of the Psalm speaks of the rulers of the earth, and the Just Lord condemns them for their willful ignorance, walking on in the darkness of their perverse judgment. Rulers are influential, and sin on their part often has destructive effects upon those whom they govern. Several Scripture texts make this apparent. When rulers forget that they are ministers of God, and that their judgments are supposed to be “for God,” and walk on in darkness, they are especially culpable, for as we said above, they have god-like powers in the earth. Hear the wisdom of the great King Solomon: “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn” (Prov. 29:2). Civil government is an institution given by our Creator to His creation in His goodness to us. But when it becomes perverse, the damage done is difficult to exaggerate. This is why the walking on in darkness of the rulers of the world is said to give rise to the shaking of the very foundations of the earth. When a ruler mocks the Just Lord he brings his government under His irresistible displeasure, causing his jurisdiction to totter and stagger under the weight of His judgment. Surely the foundations of any nation or government cannot stand against the judgment of the Just Lord, should He become angry. There is an invisible but real factor that judges and rulers ought to take into account in their executive, legislative, and judicial actions: They should seek the favor of the Just Lord, or, as Psalm 2:1–12 has it, instead of walking on in darkness, they should be wise, be instructed. Serve the Lord with fear,

3. William S. Plumer, *Studies in the Book of Psalms: Being a Critical and Expository Commentary, with Doctrinal and Practical Remarks on the Entire Psalter* (Philadelphia; Edinburgh: J. B. Lippincott Company; A & C Black, 1872), 782.

rejoice (in your position and ability to do good) and tremble (knowing that you too will be judged). Kiss, or do obeisance to the Son, let His anger be stirred, and you perish while in your way of wickedness. The pleasure of heaven is a necessary element to the perpetuity of any earthly kingdom, any nation-state, and ought to be a substantial portion of the calculus of any leader as he sets policy for his charge. When the law of the Lawgiver is ignored, when the judgment of the Just Lord is perverted, no nation that calls evil good, and good evil, that ensconces wickedness in law, and criminalizes that which is upright can expect to endure on the face of the earth for long. The Just Lord has given His fair warning.

Now hear the judgment from the Just Lord, and note the irony: “I said ye are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High.” What an esteemed position to occupy! What an authority and ability to do good, glorify God, advance His cause in the world, and be a helper to His Kingdom! But alas, we hear the sentence: “But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.” None of them are found worthy, and the best among them must meet this undesirable end. Literally, the text could be translated, “Indeed, like Adam ye shall die.” That first ruler of the world proved unworthy to the task, and so will you all thus prove. These rulers who refuse the Word of the Just Lord will be brought down to the grave like men, although “god-like” in their positions of authority in the world, and given to administer justice and judgment in the world for God. Hear Plumer: “it is a remarkable fact that cruel, ambitious and deceitful rulers are not apt to prolong their lives. Every generation gives examples of sore and sudden deaths of tyrants and oppressors.”³

The final verse of the Psalm gives rise, from the analogy of Scripture, to the fact that this Judge of all the earth is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, who will inherit all nations, as the promised Seed who would rule the world (See Gen. 3:15; 22:17–18; Ps. 2:1–12; 72:8; Dan. 7:13–14 Rom. 4:13; Gal. 3:16). As the Great King who rises in the place of the fall of the first ruler of the world, and as the One who triumphs over the “ruler of this world,” Jesus Christ has all authority in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18–20), and all judgment is committed unto Him (John 5:21–30), and He will inherit all nations (Ps. 89:19–37).

As we close, we must remember that there will be no true peace on this earth until it is brought by the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6–7). But there is hope even in our fallen world, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Judge of all the earth. The Great King David, of whom our Lord descended in His humanity, said this:

Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, ² The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me,

and his word was in my tongue. ³ The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. ⁴ And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain (2 Sam. 23:1-4).

We may not expect a perfect reign upon this earth, under the sons of Adam, but we might pray for our rulers that they would be just, ruling in the fear of God. As one ruler to another, with that knowing gaze of equals, David instructs the kings and rulers of the earth to take on not only a god-like authority and ability, but to be just, doing right, as the Just Lord instructs. When they do wickedness, the foundations of the world are out of joint, shaken out of their moorings. But when they follow the counsel of the Just Lord, they are like Him, in that they project the “light of the morning, when the sun rises, in a morning without clouds, and the clear shining after the rain.” They become healing, nourishing, ruling by right and doing good, and perform their true calling as

ministers of God, bringing their authority and ability to bear for his glory, and as gods upon earth, they give witness to the Judge of all the earth. In closing, hear and give heed to the word of the Apostle Paul:

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; ² For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. ³ For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; ⁴ Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:1-4).

Surely the “all men” of verse four pertains to those kings and others in authority, for whom we are to pray, that in being themselves united to Christ by faith, they will rule as He would have them do. And for the people of God in such a case, instead of the groaning we heard of earlier, we live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness. Lord, make it so!

TODD L. RUDELL ■

In Brief: David Dickson on Psalm 82:1, 8.

This Psalm agreeth with the time of David’s persecution by Saul and his counselors, the peers of the land, wherein the psalmist comforts himself in God’s supremacy, and his judging of all judges on the earth; for exercising whereof God comes unto their meeting, ver. 1. Then challenges them for their injustice and oppression, ver 2. Thirdly, reads the law and rule of their duty unto them, ver. 3. 4. Fourthly, condemns them as guilty ver. 5. Fifthly, pronounces sentence of doom upon them, ver. 6, 7. And then the psalmist closes the Psalm with prayer, ver. 8.

VERSE 1. *God standeth in the congregation of the mighty: he judgeth among the gods.*

From the Lord’s presence in the assembly of judges; *Learn:* 1. The name of a congregation or church is given in Scripture in the orderly meeting of rulers and governors, met for the execution of their office; as here, *God standeth in the congregation or church of the mighty.* 2. No judge is absolute lord over a people, but in subordination to God, who is Judge above all judges, and will judge of all the decrees of judges under Him. *God standeth in the congregation of the mighty: he judgeth.* 3. God does put His Name upon civil magistrates, and hath clothed them with honor; that as their eminency is a part of His image, so their decrees should be such as God will own. *He judgeth among the gods.*

VERSE 8. *Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.*

From the close of the psalm by this short prayer, wherein the oppressed servant of God prays that God would put order unto the government of His people, and redress the wrongs done to them; *Learn,* 1. Albeit the oppressed servants of God cannot find justice at men’s hands, yet there is help to be had from God, and prayer, shorter or longer, as the Lord furnishes unto them, must they seek their ease of mind and comfort; *Arise, O God, judge the earth.* 3. [*sic*] When magistrates or rulers do oppress God’s people, private persons may not go beyond their bounds, but must have their recourse to God, that He may set matters that are wrong in a better condition, as here the psalmist does. 4. As the Church of God among the Jews was acquainted with the prophecies of the enlargement of the Church and Kingdom of God among the Gentiles, and upon this ground prayed that He would not suffer His interest in His people then to decay by the malice of men: so may the Lord’s Church in any place or time upon the same ground pray for the like mercy; for still the reason holds, that God who is about to enlarge His Kingdom, will not lose what He has already; and so to pray: *Arise O Lord, judge the earth; for thou shalt inherit all nations.*

Amen. ■

OPUSCULA SELECTA

Canons of the Apostles as Copied from the Ancient and Catholic Books, *Magdeburg Centuries*, vol. 1, II.

INTRODUCTION

As noted in a prior article in this issue, *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici* (1646) is one of the most historically significant, highly commended, and best-known works arguing that the government of the church in its offices and structure is prescribed in Scripture and thus of divine right by the will and

THE TRANSLATOR: David C. Noe. INTRODUCTION AND EDITING: Chris Coldwell. This text was translated and first appeared as an appendix in *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici* (Naphtali Press and Reformation Heritage Books, 2020) as the second volume of the Naphtali Press Special Editions series of books.

1. *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici, or the Divine Right of Church Government* (Naphtali Press and Reformation Heritage Books, 2020), pp. 43, 100. See *Ecclesiastica historia, integram Ecclesiae Christi ideam, quantum ad locum, propagationem, persecutionem, tranquillitatem, doctrinam, haereses, ceremonias, gubernationem, schismata, synodos, personas, miracula, martyria, religiones extra Ecclesiam, & statum Imperii politicum attinet, secundum singulas centurias, perspicuo ordine complectens* [Magdeburg Centuries] (Basel: Joannem Oporinum, 1559–1574), vol. 1, part II, chapter seven, De Politia seu Gubernatione Ecclesiastici, cols. 530–542. The authors made use of the 1624 abridged edition, the text of which in this section was unchanged, except for fuller identification of the Scripture texts cited. *Ecclesiastica historia* (Basel: 1624), vol. 1, II, cols. 407–418.

2. This translation was first published in appendix II, in *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici* (2020), 331–350.

3. “The first three volumes of *The Centuries* were published in Basel in 1559, while XIII came out in 1574. Volumes XIV and XV were never published, although they had already been partly prepared.” Luka Ilić, *Theologian of Sin and Grace: The Process of Radicalization in the Theology of Matthias Flacius Illyricus* (Bristol, CT: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 126. “It was never quite completed, though drafts for the final centuries lie waiting at the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbützel.”

4. Werner Elert, *The Structure of Lutheranism: the theology and philosophy of life of Lutheranism especially in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (Concordia, 1962), 485.

5. Ronald Ernst Diener, “The Magdeburg Centuries: A Bibliothecal and Historiographical Study” (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Divinity School, 1978; Th.D. Diss.), 51–52, cited in Ilić, p. 118.

6. Ernst Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern*, Third Edition (The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 167.

7. Cited in Ilić, p. 123.

8. Ilić, p. 123–125.

appointment of Jesus Christ. The authors, the members of the London Provincial Assembly, many of whom were also Westminster Divines, argued that this government is a Presbyterian form, with the only biblical New Testament offices being that of pastor, ruling elder and deacon. *The Divine Right of Church Government* is a bibliographical treasure trove of references ranging from Greek and Latin Fathers, to Reformers, to contemporary writers of that day. The authors commend and twice refer to “the canons or rules of the apostles about church government, collected out of the New Testament, and digested into one methodical system by those renowned Centuriators of Magdeburg.”¹ As this compilation was so highly commended, and never translated as far as could be determined, the editor is pleased to present the text here.²

The Magdeburg Centuries is a history written in thirteen volumes by a group of Lutheran scholars under the editorship of Matthias Flacius Illyricus.³ In approaching history critically, it proved revolutionary and “is the basis of all modern church history.”⁴ The work was to be a “summation of the history of the church from the time of Christ ‘to the present time,’ the first of its kind since Eusebius.”⁵ “Each volume, or century, had chapters dealing with standard topics: the propagation of the church, the fate of the church, doctrines, heresies, rites and ceremonies, governance of the church, councils, lives of bishops and theologians, heresies, martyrs, miracles, Jewish affairs, other religions, and political matters.”⁶ Ill-suited as a writer as Flacius himself professed and due to the enormity of the work, a division of labor was required. “I wish that the writing be commended to some rather learned person of capable style—rather, not one but three people or four: two to seek out and gather materials from wherever, a third to compose those collected materials in writing, as it were, imitating some of the organization and honey making of bees.”⁷

... Flacius had acquired a vast knowledge of medieval sources. This later proved to be the foundation upon which he could begin constructing the *Centuries*, as this work was also based on working with primary documents. The division of responsibilities within the team of authors included the positions of “collector,” “scriptur,” and “inspector.” Flacius began gathering a group of Evangelical scholars around him, who would be carrying out the actual work of collecting and analysing sources, writing materials, editing, and other functions, while Flacius still remained the intellectual motor behind the project.... The group, called the *Collegium*, included five men: Johannes Wigand, Matthaeus Judex, Martin Copus, Abdias Praetorius and Marcus Wagner. Numerous other coworkers, supporters, and assistants were also involved....⁸

Gregory Lyon describes this research institution.

In the end it became a full historical institute, with a hierarchical structure and clear division of labor. There were funds for seven excerptors, who read the sources and copied out passages according to a guiding method. Two collectors with Masters of Arts degrees took the excerpts and assessed, arranged, and reworked the material into a coherent narrative. Above them were the inspectors, who judged the work being done and directed the hirelings; and at the top were five governors who were ultimately responsible for the entire project, its funding, and the final product.⁹

The history immediately became influential and often cited. “The *Centuries* caused quite a sensation... Indeed, they were the impetus for Cardinal Cesare Baronio’s massive counter-reformation church history, the *Annales ecclesiastici*, which paid the Centuriators the greatest of compliments by not mentioning their work at all.”¹⁰

Aside from a stray comment and reference to a church father or two, these apostolic canons are a collection of Scripture texts arranged by topic. The Bible version used appears to be from the Latin text of Erasmus. These have been replaced with the text of the Authorized Version. Ellipses indicate where the text is omitted in the Latin text and [bracketed] texts indicate text not given in the original text. Translations of Latin phrases such as “see also,” have been omitted. After the first instance, the title “A Canon on,” etc. has been generally omitted. The headings have been translated by David C. Noe.

CANONS OF THE APOSTLES AS COPIED FROM THE ANCIENT AND CATHOLIC BOOKS.¹¹

The apostles handed down particular, definitive canons that dealt with matters relating to the government of the church. These we will list in order below.

A Canon on Ranks

EPHESIANS 4:11–13. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ...

Different kinds of gifts

1 CORINTHIANS 12:8–11. For to one is given by the Spirit the

word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: 11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

Use of gifts

1 PETER 4:10–11. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Apostles

MATTHEW 28:19–20. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

ACTS 1:8. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Bishops or Presbyters

1 TIMOTHY 3:1–7. This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) 6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

9. Gregory B. Lyon, “Baudouin, Flacius, and the Plan for the Magdeburg Centuries,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, v64, No. 2 (April, 2003): 253–272, spec. 259.

10. Lyon, 258–259.

11. All footnotes are Dr. Noe’s, unless noted as by the editor (Ed.).

Deacons

1 TIMOTHY 3:8–10. Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; 9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. 10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

A general Canon on the duties of the church's ministers

1 TIMOTHY 4:1–2. I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

TITUS 2:15. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

A specific Canon on the reading of sacred Scripture

1 TIMOTHY 4:13. ... give attendance to reading...

2 TIMOTHY 3:15–17. And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

ROMANS 15:4. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

2 PETER 1:19. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts...

The proper way to teach

2 TIMOTHY 2:13–14, 15–16, 23. If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself. 14 Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. 15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. 23 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. TITUS 3:9. But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

1 TIMOTHY 4:7. But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

Summary of the gospel

1 TIMOTHY 1:15–16. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. 16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

1 TIMOTHY 3:16. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

2 TIMOTHY 2:8–9. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel: 9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

A general Canon on the proper way to exhort and rebuke

2 CORINTHIANS 5:13. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.

The proper way to rebuke those who are receptive to correction

2 Timothy 2:24–26. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, 25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; 26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

1 TIMOTHY 5:1–2. Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; 2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

The proper way to rebuke those who are stubborn

TITUS 1:10–14. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: 11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. 12 One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, the Creteans are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. 13 This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; 14 Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

On sins, some of which are flagrant and others are hidden

1 TIMOTHY 5:24–25. Some men’s sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. 25 Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

Flagrant sinners

1 TIMOTHY 5:20. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

A Canon on not yielding to private feelings

1 TIMOTHY 5:21. I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

The shared condition of teachers and hearers

ACTS 14:22. ... we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

2 TIMOTHY 3:12. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

1 CORINTHIANS 4:9–13. For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. 10 We are fools for Christ’s sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. 11 Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; 12 And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: 13 Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.

Remaining steadfast in the cross

2 TIMOTHY 2:3. Endure hardness.

2 TIMOTHY 1:8. ... be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God...

The reasons for the cross

1 PETER 4:15–16. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men’s matters. 16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

On ministers, that they must lead others by good example

1 PETER 5:3. ... being ensamples to the flock.

TITUS 2:7. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity...

1 Timothy 4:12. ... but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation...

Ecclesiastical rulings

1 TIMOTHY 5:19. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

Church ministers’ salaries

1 TIMOTHY 5:17–18. Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. 18 For the scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:14. Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

GALATIANS 6:6. Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

The feeding of ministers

1 TIMOTHY 5:23. Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities.

The duty of hearers toward their ministers.

HEBREWS 13:17. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:14. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

Separating the instruction from the faults of those who teach

MATTHEW 23:2–3. Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: 3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

Ordination

1 TIMOTHY 5:22. Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins...

A Second Canon on ordination

Cyprian. Epistle 4. De traditione divina... [The writers cite what is now classed as Epistle 68 by Cyprian. The passage in Latin and a translation are given on page 110.]

Testing spirits and teachings

1 THESSALONIANS 5:21. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

1 JOHN 4:1-3. Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

Maintaining good process, and on rebuking those who sin against us

MATTHEW 18: 15-17. Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

Mutual submission

LUKE 6:37. ... condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven...

MATTHEW 18:21-22. Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? 22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

COLOSSIANS 3:13. Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any...

Avoiding and excommunicating heretics

2 JOHN 9-10. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the

doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed... TITUS 3:10-11. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; 11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

ROMANS 16:17-18. Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

GALATIANS 1:8. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

Excommunicating other flagrant sinners

1 CORINTHIANS 5:11, 13. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. 13 ... Therefore, put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

2 THESSALONIANS 3:6, 14, 15. Now we command you, brethren ... that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. 14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. 15 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

Receiving back those who have fallen away

2 CORINTHIANS 2:6-8. Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. 7 So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. 8 Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.

GALATIANS 6:1. ... if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness...

Loosing and binding of sinners

JOHN 20:22-23. ... Receive ye the Holy Ghost: 23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

MATTHEW 18:18. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

A general Canon on what sorts of things should happen in congregations

1 CORINTHIANS 14:26, 40. . . . Let all things be done unto edifying. 40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

A Canon that in the church a colloquial language must be used with the people and not one that is unfamiliar

1 CORINTHIANS 14:4, 27–28. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth (i.e., he must interpret and explain Scripture)¹² edifieth the church. 27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. 28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

A Canon that the teachers of the church must submit their doctrine to the church's judgment and to that of others who have sound judgment

1 CORINTHIANS 14:29–32. Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. 30 If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. 31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. 32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

Baptizing of infants

MARK 10:13–16. And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. 14 But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. 15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. 16 And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

Origen and Cyprian provide evidence that the Apostles also established the practice of baptizing infants.

Women

1 CORINTHIANS 14:34–35. Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. 35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

Women should be in the assembly and pray with their heads covered

1 CORINTHIANS 11:5–6. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. 6 For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

Men should both pray and preach in the church with their heads uncovered

1 CORINTHIANS 11:4. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.

Congregational prayers

1 TIMOTHY 2:1–2. I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

A Canon on the study and use of God's Word, and on the singing of Psalms

COLOSSIANS 3:16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

EPHESIANS 5:18–20. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; 19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; 20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . .

Confession of true doctrine

1 PETER 3:15–16. But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: 16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

12. This is the Centuriators' commentary on the meaning of prophesying (Ed.).

A general Canon on different callings

1 CORINTHIANS 7:20–22. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. 21 Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. 22 For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.

Marriage

HEBREWS 13:4. Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled... .

1 CORINTHIANS 7:2, 9. ... to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. 9 But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

Divorce

MATTHEW 19:9. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

1 CORINTHIANS 7:10–11. Let not the wife depart from her husband: 11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.

Marriage between a Christian and an unbeliever

1 CORINTHIANS 7:12–15. But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. 13 And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. 14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. 15 But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.

Second marriages

1 CORINTHIANS 7:39. The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

1 TIMOTHY 5:14. I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house... .

The proper use of marriage

1 CORINTHIANS 7:3, 5, 29. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. 5 Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. 29 ... they that have wives be as though they had none... .

Those who have the gift of celibacy are free to marry or not to marry

1 CORINTHIANS 7:36–38. But if any man think that he becometh himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry. 37 Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well. 38 So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better.

Duties of husbands toward wives

COLOSSIANS 3:19. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

EPHESIANS 5:25. [Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it... .]

1 PETER 3:7. [Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.]

Duties of wives toward husbands

EPHESIANS 5:22–24. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

COLOSSIANS 3:18. [Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.]

1 PETER 3:1. [Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives... .]

Duties of parents toward children

EPHESIANS 6:4. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children

to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

COLOSSIANS 3:21. [Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.]

Duties of children toward parents

EPHESIANS 6:1–3. Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) 3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

COLOSSIANS 3:10. [And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him... .]

Duties of masters toward their servants

COLOSSIANS 4:1. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

EPHESIANS 6:9. [And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.]

Duties of servants toward their masters

EPHESIANS 6:5–8. Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; 6 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; 7 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: 8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

COLOSSIANS 3:22–24. [Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; 23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.]

TITUS 2:9–10. [Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; 10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.]

1 TIMOTHY 6:1–2. [Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. 2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.]

The life of widows

1 TIMOTHY 5:5–6. Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. 6 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

Widows should be supported by their own families if they have them

1 TIMOTHY 5:16. If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

What the character of widows should be if they are supported by church funds

1 TIMOTHY 5:9–14. Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, 10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work. 11 But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; 12 Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith. 13 And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. 14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

The character of elderly men

TITUS 2:2. That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

The character of elderly women

TITUS 2:3–5. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; 4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

The character of young men

TITUS 2:6. Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. 1 PETER 5:5. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the

elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility... .

The duty of the civil magistrate

ROMANS 13:3–4.¹³ For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

1 TIMOTHY 2:2. [For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.]

1 PETER 2:14. [Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.]

The duties of subjects toward civil magistrates

1 PETER 2:13–14. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. TITUS 3:1. Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work... .

ROMANS 13:1–2, 7. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

One must not obey the magistrate in whatever is opposed to God

MATTHEW 22:21. ... Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. ACTS 5:29. ... We ought to obey God rather than men.

Wealth

MARK 10:24–25. [And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them,] how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom

of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. 1 TIMOTHY 6:17–19. Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; 19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

The goal of all good actions

1 CORINTHIANS 10:31. Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

COLOSSIANS 3:17. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

The repeal of the law

MATTHEW 11:13. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

ACTS 15:10. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

ROMANS 8:3–4. [For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.]

GALATIANS 4:4–5. [But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.]

HEBREWS 7:18–19. [For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. 19 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.]

The indifferent use of foods

LUKE 10:8. ... eat such things as are set before you... .

1 CORINTHIANS 10:25[–26]. Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake: [26] For the earth is the Lord's...

COLOSSIANS 2:16. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink... .

13. The reference in both the 1560 and 1624 editions read "Rom. 12.," but the actual text given is that of Romans 13:3–4 (Ed.).

A Canon on not eating foods sacrificed to idols and what has been strangled

ACTS 15:29. That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled. . . .

ACTS 21:25. [As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.]

A Canon on the indifferent use of days or holidays, and on Jewish rituals

COLOSSIANS 2:16. Let no man therefore judge you . . . in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days. . . .

1 CORINTHIANS 7:19. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.

A Canon that on matters indifferent the weak and the strong was not mutually condemn one another

ROMANS 14:3. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

That those who are stronger must, in matters indifferent, take into account those who are more weak so as not to cause them offense

ROMANS 15:1. We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

ROMANS 14:15. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

ROMANS 14:21. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

1 CORINTHIANS 8:13. [Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.]

1 CORINTHIANS 10:28–29. [But if any man say unto you, this is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof: 29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?]

A Canon that things indifferent must be avoided if some consideration of necessity and worship intervenes or offense.

GALATIANS 5:2–4. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. 3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. 4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

1 CORINTHIANS 8:9–11. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. 10 For if any man see thee which hath knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; 11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

1 CORINTHIANS 10:27. If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

The use of things in different is for edification

1 CORINTHIANS 10:23. All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:19–22. For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. 20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; 21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. 22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

Christian Liberty

GALATIANS 5:1. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

1 CORINTHIANS 7:23. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.

Traditions of men

MATTHEW 15:9. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

GALATIANS 4:9–10. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in

bondage? 10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

COLOSSIANS 2:20–22. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, 21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not; 22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

TITUS 1:14. Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

The priesthood of the New Testament, that all Christians are priests

1 PETER 2:5, 9. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you... .

REVELATION 1:6. And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father... .

REVELATION 5:10. [And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.]

The abolishment¹⁴ of sacrifices, or the Mass

HEBREWS 10:14, 18. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. 18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

A Canon that in the administration of the Lord's Supper nothing must happen except what the Lord instituted, and that it is not an offering for the living and the dead but a remembrance of Christ's death

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–29. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. 27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall

14. I have here translated the adjective *abrogatis* differently than I translated the cognate noun *abrogatione* above (see On the repeal of the law, page 344), where I took it as “repeal”. This is important because Christ did not abolish the Law, and it cannot be what the authors mean.

be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

Physical exercise

1 TIMOTHY 4:8. For bodily exercise profiteth little... .

Fasting

MATTHEW 6:16–18. Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; 18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

Giving to the poor.

MATTHEW 6:1–4. Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. 2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: 4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

Prayer

MATTHEW 6:5–13. And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. 7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. 8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. 9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but

deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

The taking of oaths

MATTHEW 5:34–37. But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne: 35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. 36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. 37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

A Canon on the union of churches and of believers, and their mutual duties

1 PETER 3:8. Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous... .

1 CORINTHIANS 10:24. Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s wealth.

ROMANS 14:19. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11, 15. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do... . 15 See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

EPHESIANS 4:2–3. With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

GALATIANS 6:2. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

A Canon on rank or superior status among Christians

PHILIPPIANS 2:3. ... let each esteem other better than themselves.

ROMANS 12:10. ... in honour preferring one another... .

EPHESIANS 5:21. Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

A Canon on not seeking to be first in the church

MARK 9:35. ... If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.

MARK 10:42–45. But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. 43 But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: 44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. 45 For even the Son of man came not to be

ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

MATTHEW 20:15–28. [Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? 16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen. 17 And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, 18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, 19 And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again. 20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee’s children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. 21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. 22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. 23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. 24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. 25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.]

LUKE 22:25–26. [And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. 26 But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.]

1 PETER 5:3. Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being en-samples to the flock.

2 CORINTHIANS 1:24. Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

1 CORINTHIANS 3:21–23. Therefore, let no man glory in men. For all things are your’s; 22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your’s; 23 And ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.■

ANTIQUARY

The Identity of W. A. & Other Bibliographical Mysteries
in *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici* (1646–1654)

INTRODUCTION

There are many difficulties an editor faces in preparing and publishing an older text. There is much work necessary in order to make the text useful to the modern reader. Perhaps the most challenging difficulties faced are in the area of bibliography, in providing as useful and complete a tracing of an author's references to other works as possible. It is significant enough work to trace a reference to a contemporary or earlier edition cited by a writer. However, nothing is more challenging than when an author makes an unclear or incorrect bibliographical reference.¹ Over the years in editing a number of seventeenth century puritan and presbyterian works, almost every title has presented at least one challenging reference that turned into a small project in its own right. After many hours of sleuthing through sources for a solution, and publishing deadlines looming, one must at some point settle for as best a solution as time affords, however unsatisfying an incomplete solution may be. Often however, if one is focused on a particular time and genre of literature, the same mystery will raise its head again and the detective work is undertaken again to see if a fuller solution is possible. This may seem an

1. Often one may assign blame to the printer, but it is often unclear if the mistake is the author's or due to a mistake made by the compositor of the type.

2. "I have been more particular in this description because I think that it is a shame not to know the whole of a small thing...." Andrew Le Mercier, *The Church History of Geneva, in five books. As also a political and geographical account of that republick* (Boston, 1732), 14. The author discovered this statement when investigating the origin of the myth that John Calvin played at bowls on the Lord's Day, which was an apt description of what proved to be a lengthy investigation. "Calvin in the Hands of the Philistines: Or Did Calvin Bowl on the Sabbath?" (1998); updated in *The Confessional Presbyterian* 6 (2010): 44.

3. *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici, or the Divine Right of Church Government* (Naphtali Press and Reformation Heritage Books, 2020). Hereafter *JDRE*.

4. See several similar difficulties in Harrison Perkin's work with Ussher's reading list for ministers in this issue.

5. *JDRE* (2020), p. 120. By "the description expressed," the authors refer to part two, chapter one, wherein they describe the church government prescribed by Scripture, which they then defend throughout the rest of part two. See *JDRE* (2020), p. 87–88.

6. *JDRE* (2020), p. 120.

unnecessary expenditure of time, but this editor's motivation in such things, something akin to a guiding principle oftentimes, is well captured in a statement found in an old history or travelogue about Geneva: "It is a shame not to know the whole of a small thing."²

The recent project to produce a new critical edition of the London Provincial Assembly's *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici* afforded not only several challenging bibliographical mysteries to solve, but one mystery pertained to the authorship of a tract to which an appendix of that work is devoted.³ One may see these mysteries addressed throughout the new edition, but their number, variety and interesting nature were such that an article addressing them at length was well suited to the purpose for which this recurring column was founded.

JOHN GREENWOOD AND HENRY BARROW

The first bibliographical mystery to consider in *JDRE* is the case often faced when authors give an abbreviated or inexact title for a work.⁴ The authors write:

Now, about this *subject of the power* will be the great knot of the controversy, forasmuch as there are many different claims thereof made, and urged with vehement importunity. (To omit the Romish claim for the Pope, and the prelatical claim for the bishop.) The politique Eraſtian pretends that the only proper subject of all church government is the political or civil magistrate; the gross Browniſts or rigid Separatiſts, that it is the body of the people, or community of the faithful in an equal even level. They that are more refined (who ſtyle themſelves for diſtinctions ſake "Independents"), that it is the ſingle-congregation preſbyterated, viz., the *cætus fidelium*, the company of the faithful with their preſbytery or church officers [i.e. local church ſeſſion of offices]. The Preſbyterians hold that the proper ſubject wherein Chriſt has ſeated and entrusted all church power, and the exerciſe thereof, is *only His own church officers* (as is in the deſcription expreſſed).⁵

In a footnote at "Independents," the authors refer to *Antapologia*, the well known work by Thomas Edwards, and write as well:

Eſpecially ſee a little book in 12° [duodecimo] printed in 1619, ſtyled *A Collection of Certain Matters*, which on almoſt every page pleads for Independency and Independents by name, from which moſt of the Independent principles ſeem to be derived.⁶

There is nothing by that title and contents to be found under

that date in the English Short Title Catalogue for works published between 1473 and 1801.⁷ There is in fact no title matching this description to be found over that whole time period.⁸ If this title existed, given the date of 1619 and the subject matter, it would likely have had to have been printed on the continent. However, that no hint of this title’s existence can be found tends to indicate some error was made in title or date, or both. The closest match is *A Collection of Certain Letters* by Henry Barrow and John Greenwood, but it was published in 1590 and in 4° (quarto). While requiring an error in both date and description leaves some dissatisfying room for doubt, this early work containing the views of Barrow and Greenwood would match the description of an early work exhibiting the tenets of congregationalism, though the word Independent is not used even once. Barrow and Greenwood have been among those sought by historians as the founders of the congregational system in England. They were certainly identified with Brownism, John Browne being often cast as the father of congregationalism,⁹ though he recanted.¹⁰ Still, there is enough room for doubt that another work may have been in view, though those candidates cannot be identified by the information given.

THEODORET’S *HÆRETICARUM FABULARUM*

In a revision made to the second edition of *JDRE* (1647), the authors write, “Hereunto also the judgments of antiquity evidently subscribed, accounting a bishop and a presbyter to be one and the same office in the church, as appears particularly in Ambrose, Theodoret, Jerome, and others,” providing a long marginal note of sources. The citations from Jerome pose no real difficulty and those then attributed to Ambrose only needed to be corrected as now attributed to Ambrosiaster. There was some difficulty, however, with the quotation attributed to Theodoret. This note reads, “Theodoret, speaking against the Arian heretics, reports this truth which they held, viz., Presbyterum ab Episcopo [ordine & gradu], τάξις et ἀξιώματι, non differe (dixit Aerius): sed qui Presbyter est, episcopum dici, quatenus in uno aliquo actu, in quo a [ab] Presbyterio electus est, præest cœtui, quia in ecclesia nihil [confuse] {ἀτακτῶς} fieri [geriue] debet. Theodoret. in 4. lib. de fabul. Hærtic. Aerian.” “Theodoret, speaking against the Arian heretics, reports this truth which they held, viz., “Arius stated that an Elder is no different from a Bishop in rank and honor. But an elder is called a Bishop insofar as in any particular action, in which he was selected by the Presbytery, he exercises rule over the assembly, because in the church nothing should occur or be done in a disorderly fashion.”¹¹ After searching, it was clear that this quotation is not from Theodoret’s *Hæreticarum Fabularum Libri V*. With the potential of looking for a needle in a haystack, searching online books did

yield a surprising close match. All but the last Greek in braces appears in Lambert Daneau’s commentary on Augustine’s *De Hæresibus*.¹² With the small variations there is room to doubt this is the source, at least directly. Perhaps, rather than citing Daneau directly and somehow corrupting the citation, it may be the authors found the quotation in a work that misattributed the text to Theodoret. So, while the beginning of a solution may have been found, the path by which the authors obtained the misattributed text remains unclear.

AUGUSTINE AND BASIL

Another set of errors occur in a passage in *JDRE* dealing with Acts 4:4. “Though Calvin and Beza think the three thousand formerly converted to be included in this number of five thousand (Acts 4:4), yet divers both ancient and modern interpreters are of another mind, as Augustine in Tract. 31 [sic 39] in Joan. *Accesserunt corpori Domini, (i.e.) numero fidelium tria millia hominum, item alio facto quodam miraculo accesserunt alia quinque millia, i.e., there came unto the body of the Lord in number three thousand faithful men, also by another miracle wrought there came other five thousand. So Basilius on Psalm 115...* ”¹³

In the Augustine reference, there is a typographical error in all three early editions of *JDRE*. The reference should rather be to Tractate 39.¹⁴ The same reference to Basil appears in Rutherford’s *Due Right*, 426,¹⁵ which may be the source for

7. British Library, English Short Title Catalogue, www.http://estc.bl.uk/ (accessed July 11, 2020). Searches of union catalogues such as Worldcat.org, containing 450 million entries from 17,900 libraries worldwide and Copac, containing 45.5 million entries, also yielded no results (Copac is now Jisc Library Hub Discover, https://discover.libraryhub.jisc.ac.uk/).

8. The mystery is compounded by the fact that in the third edition of *JDRE* (1654), the date is changed from 1619 to 1646, which most likely was a typographical error given the authors highlight the work as the possible origin of the principles of congregationalism.

9. Patrick Collinson, *Godly People* (The Hambledon Press, 1983), 14, 347.

10. Champlin Burrage, *The ‘Retraction’ of Robert Browne, Father of Congregationalism: Being ‘A Reproofe of Certain Schismatical Persons [i.e. Henry Barrowe, John Greenwood, & Their Congregation] & Their Doctrine Touching the Hearing & Preaching of the Word of God’*. Written Probably Early in the Year 1588, Since Lost, & Now First Published with a Brief Account of Its Discovery (1907).

11. See *JDRE*, p. 186. The translation is given in the appendix, page 324.

12. See Lambert Daneau, *D. Aurelij Augustini Hipponensis Episcopi Liber de hæresibus* (1595), 176v.

13. *JDRE*, p. 257–258.

14. Augustine, *In Joannis Evangelium Tractus CXXIV*. PL 35. See column 1084. Cf. *NPNF1*, volume 7, page 223.

15. Samuel Rutherford, *The Due Right Due Right of Presbyteries, or, A Peaceable Plea for the Government of the Church of Scotland* (London, 1644), 426.

the reference in *JDRE*. It is incorrect. Basil does not address the subject in the Homily on Psalm 115,¹⁶ and Basil actually takes the same inclusive view as Calvin and Beza in his *Long Rules*. "... but all were governed under one and the same supervision, even though their full number was five thousand..."¹⁷ In *Due Right* just prior to the Basil reference, Rutherford cites Bede, who takes the 5,000 as a new group.¹⁸ However, it is difficult to postulate a conflation of the two citations and it may just be that Rutherford adduced Basil in error.

THEODORE BEZA ON ACTS 4:4

The remaining significant bibliographical mysteries in *JDRE* have happily more satisfying solutions. The first of these is a problematic reference that first came to view in the previously published Naphtali Press edition of the Westminster Assembly's *Grand Debate*, and came up again in *JDRE*.¹⁹ In the just adduced discussion of Acts 4:4, the authors of *JDRE* write, "Though Calvin and Beza think the three thousand formerly converted to be included in this number of five thousand (Acts 4:4)..."²⁰ The reference to Calvin was clear and without difficulty, but the citation from Beza was another matter. There is no "major" or "minor annotation" on Acts 4:4 in Beza's *Annotaciones* (1642), 306, and none traceable to the first publication

of the minor annotations.²¹ However, a note does first appear as a minor annotation in the edition of the New Testament prepared by Pierre L'Oiseleur de Villers.²² It reads, "Volentes diminuere numerum, auxerunt." L'Oiseleur explains in the preface that he added some notes where Beza's were not very full, out of those by Joachim Camerarius, whose notes were similar and for which action he claimed license from Beza granted some years before and by the fact that the late Camerarius (d. 1574) was Beza's devoted friend. "In his dedicatory epistle," L'Oiseleur explains "that some time ago Beza had left him the task of changing his *shorter* (breuiores) annotations into French and of explaining the more difficult and less common phrases with brief notes." "[He] published the shorter annotations as they stood in Latin, and added the explanations of the harder passages ... from Beza's own 'majores annotationes.' He claims that he followed his own judgment on very few occasions[,] indeed[,] merely adding some notes from Camerarius in Gospels and Acts where Beza's annotations were not very full. Altogether, his principal concern, he says, was to produce a work which could pass for Beza's own."²³

This note appeared in the subsequent editions of L'Oiseleur's version of Beza and in an English translation of it first published in 1576, both often reprinted prior to 1646. The English reads: "While they [i.e., the Sadduces] thought to diminish the number, they increased them."²⁴ It is from these editions that the *JDRE* authors may draw this attribution to Beza, regardless of actual author, referring to all as "Beza." This may be because by 1642 the distinction was known and in the 1642 edition the notes have been separated out and those of Camerarius placed at the end of the volume. Also, while it may have been sufficient to deduce a mere increase at Acts 4:4, Camerarius's full note is unambiguous, indicating the number increased to 5,000, which included the earlier 3,000. "Ὡσει χιλιάδες, et auctus est numerus illorum usque ad millia circiter quinque. Vel universorum, ut comprehendantur hoc numero etiam illa tria millia in capite secundo: Vel eorum qui tunc audierant Petri concionem tantus numerus accessit ad priores. Et notant Græci, quod res in contrarium veriter: Βουλόμενοι γὰρ ἐλαττεῖν τὸ σύστημα δειματοῦντες, μᾶλλον ἠύξησαν, volentes diminuere cœtum illum metu incusso, magis auxerunt."²⁵

In the Westminster Assembly's debate papers on church government, published as *The Grand Debate*, the Westminster divines cite Beza similarly but at 1 Corinthians 1:10. This was odd and a correct reference could not be found for the Naphtali Press edition of 2014. The manuscript of these papers was recently put online. There the reference is given as "2 Cor."²⁶ Both are clearly wrong, as Beza does not mention the 5,000 in either place and would have had no occasion to do so. This appended note on Acts 4:4 by L'Oiseleur must have been intended as well. This explanation just given corrects the brief and unsatisfactory note given in *The Grand Debate*.

16. See *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. Mark DelCogliano (2012).

17. Basil, "The Long Rules," in *Ascetical Works, FC 9*, 304. Cf. "Regulæ Fusius Tractatæ," Interrogatio XXXV, §3, , PG 31, col. 1008.

18. See on Acts 4:4 in *The Venerable Bede: Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, translated by Lawrence T Martin (Cistercian Publications, 1989).

19. *The Grand Debate The Reasons Presented by the Dissenting Brethren Against Certain Propositions Concerning Presbyterian Government And the proofs of them voted by the Assembly of Divines, sitting by authority of Parliament, at Westminster; together with the Answer of the Assembly of Divines to those Reasons of Dissent* (Naphtali Press, 2014), p. 77, and note 1.

20. *JDRE*, p. 257–258.

21. *Iesu Christi D. N. Novum Testamentum, sive Novum Foedus* (Geneva: Estienne, 1565), 19.

22. *Iesu Christi D. N. Nouum Testamentum* (London: Thomas Vautrollerus, 1574), 171v.

23. See Irena Backus, *The Reformed Roots of the English New Testament: The Influence of Theodore Beza on the English New Testament*, Pittsburgh theological monograph series, 28 (Pittsburgh, Pa.: Pickwick Press, 1980), 18, 21.

24. *The New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ translated out of Greeke by Theod. Beza; with brief summaries and expositions upon the hard places by the said authour, Ioac. Camer., and P. Lofeler Villerius* (1576; Baker, 1599), 49v.

25. Joachimi Camerarii, "Commentarius in Novum Foedus," in *Annotaciones* (1642), 99.

26. Braye volume, Confession, f. 44r, Westminster College, Cambridge. See "The Assembly's Confession of Faith presented to the Parliament (Braye volume: Confession)," <https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-WESTMINSTER-CONFESSION-00001/1> (accessed July 11, 2020).

ORIGEN CONTRA CELSUM

In the *JDRE* authors’ fourth argument for the divine right of the office of ruling elder, they adduce the testimony of ancient and modern writers. Among the ancient writers adduced, the authors make reference to Origen’s *Contra Celsum*.

Origen who lived about Anno 226 after Christ, declaring the trial of such as were to be admitted members of the church, has this passage, *Nonnulli præpositi sunt*, etc. “There are some rulers appointed who may inquire concerning the conversation and manners of those that are admitted, that they may debar from the congregation such as commit filthiness.”²⁷

The marginal note for this reference reads, “Origen. *contra Celsum*, lib. 3.” The *JDRE* authors are citing from Gillespie’s *Assertion*, as it is his English translation that is given.²⁸ Gillespie’s source appears to be the reply to Joseph Hall’s *Humble Remonstrance* (1640), by Smečtymnuus (the nom de plume for Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurston), which gives the full Latin and Greek.²⁹ “Hos inter quidam constituti sunt, qui in vitam et mores eorum, qui admittuntur, inquirant, ut scelerum reis interdicant aditu in suum commune concilium...” “παρ’ οἷς εἰσι τινὲς τεταγμένοι πρὸς τὸ φιλοπευστεῖν τοὺς βίους καὶ τὰς ἀγωγὰς τῶν προσιόντων, ἵνα τοὺς μὲν τὰ ἐπίρρητα πράττοντας ἀποκωλύσωσιν.”³⁰ However, the Latin is not in the texts of *Contra Celsum*.³¹ The solution to the difference is that the Latin text cited by Smečtymnuus is also found in Ames’s *Bellarminus Enervatus*.³² In Ames, it is clear the text is not directly from Latin texts of *Contra Celsum*, but from Jean Tarin’s Greek and Latin edition of *Origenis Philocalia*, an early anthology of Origen extracts said to have been compiled by Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen.³³

WILLIAM WHITAKER AND RICHARD SHEERWOOD

The third of the remaining mysteries and one of the most interesting to have resolved, occurs in a reference in the long argument from 1 Timothy 5:17 already noted. In answering a twelfth exception to their interpretation of the passage, the *JDRE* authors write:

3. If preaching presbyters only should be meant here, and under that phrase “that rule well,” their whole office in general, and the right managing thereof, should be contained—whereas “laboring in the Word and doctrine” (as this exception implies) is but one part thereof—then hence it would inevitably follow that a minister deserves more honor for the well

administration of one part of his office only, than for the well managing of the whole. How absurd! Here therefore, the apostle does not compare one primary part of the pastor’s office with the whole office and all the parts thereof, but one sort of presbyters with another, distinguishing the mere ruling presbyters from the ruling and preaching presbyter (as that acute and learned Whitaker has well observed).³⁴

The issue is with the reference given for Whitaker, which reads:

Illis verbis diserte distinguit apostolus inter episcopos et inspectores ecclesiae, si omnes duplici honore digni qui bene praesunt, maxime ii qui laborant in sermone et doctrina, perspicuum est fuisse aliquos qui non laborarunt. Nam si omnes fuissent tales sensus esset absurdus, sed μάλιστα ponit discrimen. Si dicerem, omnes academici qui bene student, sunt duplici honore digni, maxime ii qui laborant in studio theologiae, vel innuo non omnes incumbere studio theologiae, vel insulse loquor. Quamobrem fateor illum esse sensum maxime genuinum, quo pastores et doctores discernuntur ab aliis qui solum gubernabant, Rom. 12:8 de quibus in Ambrosio legimus in 1 Tim. 5:17.” “Whitaker in Praelect. ut refert in refutatione concionis Dounami Shervodius. *Altare Damasc.*, cap. 12, pp. 925–926.

The authors of *JDRE* are referencing something by William Whitaker cited in David Calderwood’s *Altare Damascenum*.³⁵ Calderwood is referring to the anonymously published *An answer to a sermon preached the 17 of April, anno D. 1608, by George Downname, doctovr of divinitie and intituled A sermon defendinge the honorable function of bishops* (1609), which he attributes to Shervodius, who must be Richard Sheerwood.

Little is known about the Nonconformist Richard

27. *JDRE*, p. 213.

28. *An Assertion of the Government of the Church of Scotland in points of Ruling Elders, and of the Authority of Presbyteries and Synods* (Edinburgh, 1641), 69.

29. Smečtymnuus, *An Answer to a booke entituled, An Humble Remonstrance* (1641), 72.

30. Migne, *PG* 11, §5, col. 987. See ANF v4, §51, pp. 484–485. *Contra Celsum: Libri VIII*, trans. M. Marcovich (Brill, 2001), 193.

31. See and compare Gelenius’s text in *Contra Celsum* (1605, 2.145), *Opera* (1557), 814; (1572, 1619), 2.454, and the earlier text in *Opera* (1512), 38v; (Froben, 1536), 53A.

32. Cf. *Bellarminus Enervatus* (London, 1630), p. 87.

33. *Origenis Philocalia* (1619), 201.

34. *JDRE*, p. 209.

35. *Altare Damascenum, seu, Politia Ecclesiae Anglicanae obrusa Ecclesiae Scoticae* ([Press of the Exiled English Church]: [Amsterdam,] 1623), chapter twelve, pp. 925–926.

Sheerwood, whose early work displays some “congregational elements.”³⁶ The publisher to the reader in John Paget’s *A Defence of Church Government* (1641), identifies the author of this work as “Mr. SH.” Paget, of the English Reformed Church, Amsterdam, the presumed publishers of Calderwood’s work, was an English Presbyterian ejected for nonconformity. He apparently knew both David Calderwood and Richard Sheerwood, and was involved in editing the latter’s reply to Downame’s rebuttal to *An Answer*.

[John] Paget further arranged book affairs and gave printing advice to many scholars who needed Amsterdam printers, such as Robert Parker of Doesburg, William Ames of Franeker, David Calderwood of Edinburgh, and Mr. Sh. (Sheerwood?) of England. The latter’s second reply to Doctor Downame (*A Replye Answering a Defense*, 1613, STC 20620) was committed to Paget “for the overseeing of the presse.” Mr. Sh’ gave Paget permission to edit and revise the manuscript as he saw fit.³⁷

Writing nearly twenty years earlier in 1623, Calderwood clearly attributes authorship to Sheerwood, and he must have known this from Paget or Sheerwood directly. This heretofore-unnoticed comment by Calderwood’ confirms scholars’ suspicions previously based on John Paget’s “Mr. SH” and a simple note in a copy of “Sheerwood” by Librarian James Kennedy.³⁸

36. See Polly Ha, *English Presbyterianism, 1590–1640* (Stanford University Press, 2011), 68.

37. *Trumpets from the Tower: English Puritan Printing in the Netherlands 1600–1640*, Brill’s Studies in Intellectual History, ed. A. J. Vanderjagt. Vol. 46 (Brill, 1994), 107.

38. Cf. Vanderjagt, *ibid.*, and Samuel Halkett and John Laing, *A Dictionary of Anonymous and Pseudonymous Publications in the English Language*, third edition, volume 1, edited by John Horden (1882–1888, 4 vols.; Harlow: Longman, 1980, volume 1 only), page 8, No. A142. James Kennedy (1842–1925), Librarian at New College, Edinburgh.

39. Samuel Miller, *The Divine appointment, the duties and the qualifications of Ruling Elders; a sermon preached in the First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, May 28, 1809* (New York: S. Whiting and Co., 1811), 12–13.

40. John Brown, *Vindication of the Presbyterian Form of Church Government* (1805), 177–178.

41. One may access Early Books Online at most major universities. Southern Methodist University also retains their set of the original microfilm reels before the series was digitized. Consulting the original reel confirmed the error was in the original photographing. The work has a clear break between the two parts, a long preface, and then the body of the work. A mistake was made in either perceiving the work was complete at the break or the actual original lacked the subsequent body of the work as well.

42. “Early English Books Online (EEBO) is a Proquest/Chadwyck-Healey subscription database of over 125,000 mostly English works printed between 1473 and 1700. The works are represented in digital images (in PDF and TIFF formats) and through bibliographical descriptions drawn from the English Short-Title Catalogue, the Wing

The passage in Calderwood is given and translated in John Brown’s *Vindication of the Presbyterian Form of Church Government*. Samuel Miller apparently picked up the English text from Brown as given in his *The Divine appointment, the duties and the qualifications of Ruling Elders; a sermon preached in the First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, May 28, 1809*.³⁹

Nor is the language of Dr. Whitaker, though a zealous Episcopalian, less strong and decided with regard to this passage. “By these words,” says he, in his *Prælection*. apud Didioclav. p. 681. ex Sheervodio, “the apostle evidently distinguishes between the bishops and the inspectors of the church. If all who rule well be worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine, it is plain that there were some who did not so labour: for if all had been of this description, the meaning would have been absurd; but the word especially points out a difference. If I should say that all they who study well at the university are worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the study of theology, I must either mean that all do not apply themselves to the study of theology, or I should speak nonsense. Wherefore I confess that to be the most genuine sense by which pastors and teachers are distinguished from those who only governed, Rom. xii. 8; of whom we read in Ambrose upon 1 Tim. v. 17.”⁴⁰

Both Brown and Miller, as well as the authors of *JDRE*, appear to have understood the Whitaker quotation to appear in his published *Prælectiones*. At least, none give any clue that the reference is to something unpublished. It is true though, that one will spend much time in vain searching for the passage in any of Whitakers’ works, and this may be why no one has traced the primary reference before now. In the Latin, Calderwood does not capitalize or put the word in italics, writing “prælectionibus suis,” which does raise the possibility this referred not to any of Whitaker’s published lectures, but to something unpublished.

It became essential to consult Sheerwood’s *Answer* of 1609 for any further clues as to where he obtained this statement by Whitaker. However, this book is very rare. The book is not digitized in the usual places to look online, and, maddeningly, the example in the Early English Books collection lacks the lengthy main text, having only the preface! This also proved not to be just an error in the digitizing of the work, but the same bulk of the work is missing from the old original microfilm,⁴¹ which captured the book on film when the Early English Books collection was first undertaken starting in 1938.⁴² It was necessary to find a physical copy. Happily, there was a good example of the book in the collection of the Library of

Congress.⁴³ The original English of the text Calderwood had rendered in Latin, reads,

D. Whitakers . . . in his reading upon these words, *the elders that rule well*, etc. *spake* (it may be in M.D.[s] hearing) to this effect. *By these words (saith he) the Apostle manifestly distinguisheth between the Bishops and Overseers of the Church. If all must have double honour that rule well, they especially which labour in the word; it is clear there were some which laboured not. For if all had been such, the sentence had been absurd: but Malista maketh a difference. If I say all the Students in the university that study well, are worthy of double honour; specially those that take paines in the study of divinity; either I shew that they were not all such, or I speak foolishly, etc. Wherefore I confess that sense to be the truest, whereby the Pastors and Teachers are distinguished from others, who governed only, Rom. 12.8, of whom we may read in Ambrose on 1 Tim. 5.1. I (aye?) but M.D. will reply and say, this testimony is not in print; true, but we hope it will be, and in the mean time let him know, that D. Whitaker elsewhere, spake as much as this cometh to, and put it in print also: against Duræus, lib. 9, p. 807.*

In Sheerwood’s text it is clear that the comment from Whitaker is drawn from some unpublished unidentified lectures to which he apparently had access or possessed.⁴⁴ At this writing, no unpublished lectures had been identified which Sheerwood and Downname may have heard as students, which may remain in manuscript.

WHO WAS W.A.?

The final mystery to note is probably the most significant from a bibliographical standpoint, because it involves identifying to whom the authors of *JDRE* were replying in an appendix added in the 1647 second edition. In that appendix is a reply to *Certaine Queries touching the Ordination of Ministers*, by an author who only gave his name as “W. A.”⁴⁵ Wing attributes this tract to William Aspinwall, flourished 1648–1662,⁴⁶ which is clearly a reference to the *Dictionary of National Biography* entry of 1885 (old *DNB*), which has the entry styled that way.⁴⁷ However, old *DNB* conflates two men of that name, neither of whom is likely to have been the author of this tract. William Aspinwall (d. 1673),⁴⁸ Lancashire, was a nonconformist minister ejected in 1662. Lancashire was a Presbyterian stronghold like the larger London Provincial Assembly. He with others signed the Lancashire Harmonious Consent against a universal toleration of beliefs, and it is highly unlikely he authored this tract. William Aspinwall (d. 1702), ejected minister of Mathersey, Nottinghamshire, is

said in new *DNB* to have been often confused with the previous W.A.⁴⁹ He would have been too young to be the author (admitted to Magdalene College as a sizar in 1654), and also does not seem aligned in any way with the views of the tract.

Catalogue, the Thomason Tracts, and the Early English Books Tract Supplement.” “In 1938, Eugene Power began photographing early printed books on microfilm, initiating the imaging project that would eventually become EEBO. Early production of these microfilms increased sharply at the beginning of World War II, when global conflict threatened many of the world’s libraries and the early modern resources they contained.” “History of Early English Books Online,” Folgerpedia, https://folgerpedia.folger.edu/History_of_Early_English_Books_Online (accessed July 11, 2020).

43. My thanks to Edgar Ibarra for searching for this passage in a full copy of the work at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. “An answer to a sermon preached the 17 of April, anno D. 1608, by George Downname, doctor of divinitie and intituled A sermon defendinge the honorable function of bishops: wherein all his reasons brought to prove the honorable function of our I. bishops to be of divine institution are answered and refuted. [Amsterdam, Netherlands: J. Hondius: G. Thorp], imprinted anno 1609. 58, [2], 166 p. ; 20 cm. (4to). BX7234 .A6. At one time attributed to John Rainolds, but now known not to be by him. Cf. STC (2nd ed.). Halkett & Laing (2nd ed.) attributes the work to Sheerwood. STC (2nd ed.) gives J. Hondius as the printer of the 1st pt. and G. Thorp as the printer of the 2nd pt. Signatures: *-7⁴ 8² A-V⁴ X⁴(-X4). STC (2nd ed.) 20605. Halkett & Laing (2nd ed.), I, p. 107.”

44. Sheerwood, *An answer to a sermon preached the 17 of April, anno D. 1608, by George Downname* (1609), p. 19. This is also made clear by Gisbertus Voetius, who writes, “et in praelectionibus suis M.S. [manu scriptum, hand written] ubi ita explicat locum 1 Timothy. 5. referente Sheerwodio in refut. concionis Georg. Downani” [sic]. *Politica Ecclesiastica*, vol. 2 (1669), p. 458.

45. *Certaine Queries touching the Ordination of Ministers. Soberly propounded to the serious Consideration of all the Parochiall Ministers of England in generall; and more especially those sundry Ministers in London[,] Authors of a late printed Booke entituled Ius divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici: or the divine right of Church-Government, etc. Or The opening of a Doore into a further discussion of the divine right of Presbyters by succession, and of the interest of particular Churches in the ordination of their owne officers: As also of mens preaching without ordination.* By W. A. a well-willer to the affaires of the Gospell (London, Printed by Mathew Simmons for Henry Overton, and are to be sold by J. Pounce at the lower end of Budg-Row, neere Canning-Street. 1647).

46. The work is not mentioned in *Dictionary of Anonymous and Pseudonymous Literature of Great Britain*, ed. Samuel Halkett and John Laing, 4 vols. (Edinburgh: W. Paterson, 1882–88; 2nd edition, 9 vols., 1926–62). Donald Goddard Wing, et. al., *Short-title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British America, and of English Books Printed in Other Countries, 1641–1700* (New York: Published by the Index Committee of the Modern Language Association of America, 1972–1988). See also, English Short Title Catalogue online, <http://estc.bl.uk/R201381>.

47. *Dictionary of National Biography*, volume 2, ed. Leslie Stephen (New York: MacMillan and Co., 1885), 194–195.

48. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2019), see “Aspinwall, William (d. 1702),” by Catherine Nunn (September 23, 2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/804>.

49. *Ibid.* The two men are handled in the one entry under “Aspinwall, William (d. 1702).”

A third William Aspinwall (d. after 1662), while he does not seem to be in the sights of Wing as a potential author, also does not seem a likely candidate to have authored the tract.⁵⁰ This W.A. moved to Massachusetts Bay in 1630, and while he did return to England and was an advocate for the Fifth Monarchists, this was not until 1653. Also, it is hard to imagine that this W.A. in New England would have the timely interest in the controversy. Nor would he have had sufficient time to have obtained a copy of *JDRE* published in England by December 2, 1646, read it, written and sent the *Queries*,⁵¹ and made arrangements to have them published in England by February 27, 1647.⁵²

From internal evidence, it appears that W.A. was associated with some prominent author opposed to the goals of the English Presbyterians, and that the authors of *Jus Divinum* knew who both were. Otherwise, why take time to answer a nobody? They did not appear to regard W.A. to be a scholar himself, at one point directing him to some English histories,⁵³ and they retort elsewhere, that if Christianity had ever been extinguished from Britain, “let W.A. or his master,” demonstrate it.

While the authors may have just been treating W.A. dismissively, and by “master,” simply have meant, “let him or his betters” demonstrate it, this may rather indicate W.A. was known as part of a group with a prominent leader and that this was a reference to a specific person. A clue that this may be the case and to who this “master” was, may lie in what at first seems an inexplicable reference in the colophon affixed at the end of the appendix (see the image on the facing page). The text cited is from Augustine *On the Trinity*. “Nemo sobrius; contra scripturam [scripturas], nemo Christianus; contra Ecclesiam, nemo pacificus senserit.” “No sensible person will

50. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2019), “Aspinwall, William (d. in or after 1662),” by Francis J. Bremer (September 23, 2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/76217>.

51. Ships with correspondence, books etc., could take two to four months and ports were likely closed in winter. David Cressy, *Coming Over: Migration and Communication between England and New England in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge U. Press, 1987), 222, 223, 233.

52. The dates are from Thomason’s copies of the works in question. *Catalogue of the Pamphlets, Books, Newspapers, and Manuscripts Relating to the Civil War, the Commonwealth, and Restoration, Collected by George Thomason, 1640–1661*. 2 vols. (British Museum, 1908), 1.478, 496, 502.

53. *JDRE*, footnote 20, page 309.

54. Augustine, *On the Trinity*. Cf. *PL* 42, col. 893. *The Trinity*, FC, v. 45, trans. Stephen McKenna (1963; CUA Press, 2002), 144.

55. John Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution: Religion and Intellectual Change in Seventeenth-Century England* (Tamesis Books, 2008), 143.

56. Thomason, 1.491.

57. Coffey, *ibid.*, Preface, p. [vii].

58. Goodwin responded that this was misconstruing his words. See Coffey, 145–146.

59. Coffey, 145.

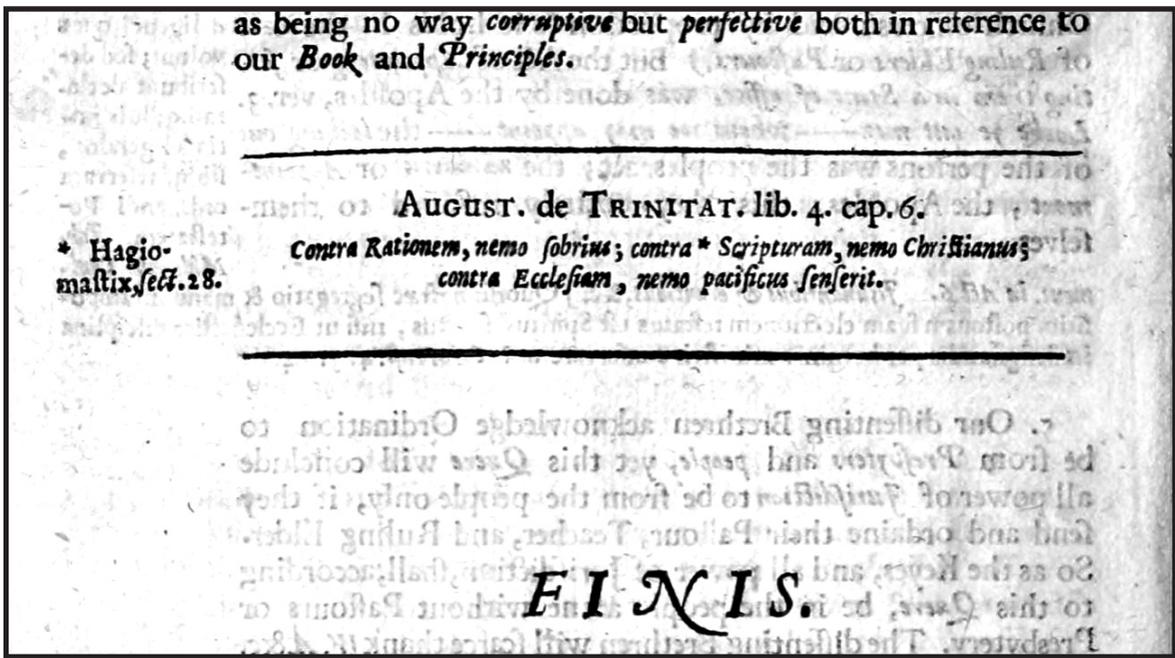
decide against reason, no Christian against the Scriptures, no peaceful man against the Church.”⁵⁴ The marginal note affixed to this statement, seemingly unusual for a colophon, refers to section 28 of John Goodwin’s *Hagiomastix, or the Scourge of the Saints*, published by Henry Overton, who published the *Queries* as well as several other titles by Goodwin. It is clear the authors of *Jus Divinum* are not citing Augustine from Goodwin, but are censuring something written by Goodwin in the cited section by means of the quote from Augustine.

John Goodwin was perhaps the most vocal and industrious writer opposed to everything the authors of *JDRE*, indeed the Westminster Assembly and all English and Scottish Presbyterianism, wished to accomplish in the Reformation of the English church. John Coffey, in comparing Goodwin with Samuel Rutherford, makes this very clear in the opening preface to his work on Goodwin.

Like Samuel Rutherford, John Goodwin was a zealous and learned Protestant divine, and a prolific pamphleteer during the 1640s and 1650s. Both men addressed major contemporary controversies over armed resistance, predestination and free will, and religious toleration. Both were resident in London in the critical years of the mid-1640s. It is not clear if they ever met face to face, but they were certainly familiar with each other’s work. Yet Rutherford and Goodwin represent radically different versions of early modern Protestantism. Rutherford was a Scot; Goodwin was English. Rutherford was a Covenanter; Goodwin a supporter of the regicide and the republic. Rutherford was a high Calvinist; Goodwin a champion of Arminianism. Rutherford was a formidable proponent of divine right Presbyterianism; Goodwin a leading Independent. Rutherford defended traditional Reformed notions of religious uniformity and coercion; Goodwin became one of England’s leading tolerationists.⁵⁵

John Goodwin’s *Hagiomastix* was published by February 5, 1647,⁵⁶ and opposed the punishing of heresy by the state expressed in the “High Presbyterianism of the City clergy.”⁵⁷ The book sparked a complaint to authorities claiming Goodwin rejected the Scriptures as the Word of God, citing text from Section 28 of *Hagiomastix*, the section singled out for censure in the colophon.⁵⁸ The publisher Henry Overton, fearing confiscation by authorities, hid the unsold copies.⁵⁹

Why did the authors put this seemingly gratuitous censure of Goodwin (as far as the subject of either *JDRE* or *Queries* was concerned) at the end of their response to the *Queries*? Rather than being completely unrelated, this colophon may show that the authors of *JDRE* knew who W.A. was and it may be a significant clue to his identity.



The colophon and marginal note at the end of the appendix in the 1647 edition of *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici*.

The controversy brought calls for John Goodwin’s congregation to depose him as their minister, which prompted a published defense of him by the church, again by Overton, signed by sixteen men of the congregation, all prominent Londoners, including Overton,⁶⁰ and John Price and Daniel Taylor, both whom Goodwin encouraged to lay preach and who also wrote pamphlets at his “behest.” Another among the sixteen is a William Allen, a “leading member of the church” and a merchant “in overseas trade.”⁶¹

Allen later led a split in the congregation, forming a Baptist church, which engaged him in a pamphlet exchange with his former pastor, who interestingly responded to Allen’s *Some Baptismal Abuses Briefly Discovered* (May, 1653), with *XL Queries*. Allen responded as W.A.⁶² He eventually via some counseling from Richard Baxter, renounced his separatism in a 1660 publication and returned to the Church of England at the Restoration.⁶³ Allen later wrote several doctrinal works.⁶⁴

Given the comments noted by the authors of *Jus Divinum*, the colophon linked to Goodwin seemingly unrelated to their response to the *Queries*, the connections between Goodwin, Allen, Overton, etc., Allen’s subsequent known publications, and one under the name W.A., and given that none of the William Aspinwalls are the likely author, William Allen certainly appears to be the true author of the *Certaine Queries*, to which the authors of *JDRE* replied in their appendix.

CONCLUSION

Editors do not go into projects desiring such mysteries as the above to solve, the time-consuming satisfactory solution of which may prove elusive. However, there is a very satisfying sense of accomplishment when there is some resolution to such perplexing references, particularly if it is a mystery standing for some several centuries. That there were so many bibliographical mysteries to solve in this revision of *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici*, certainly made for some interesting detective work.

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60. Overton died in 1648. He left £5 to “Mr. John Goodwin my Reverend Pastor.” *English Goodwin Family Papers*, vol. 1 (Hartford, Conn., 1921), 345.

61. *An Apologeticall Account, of Some Brethren of The Church wherof Mr. John Goodwin is Pastor: (On the behalf of the Church)...* (London: J.D. & R.I for Henry Overton). Coffey, 126, 128, and 249–250. Dr. Coffey found the case for Allen compelling, noting a similar presbyterian reference to “Price’s master,” the presbyterians being “well aware” of Goodwin’s “mobilising his inner circle” to pamphleteer. Correspondence with Matthew Vogan and John Coffey, August 19, 2019.

62. *An answer to Mr. J.G. his XL queries ...* by W.A. (1653).

63. Thomas Jackson, *The Life of John Goodwin* (1872), 34, 334. Coffey, 252.

64. These were collected and published by the Bishop of Chichester. *The Works of Mr. William Allen* (1707); see Coffey, p. 284. Like John Goodwin, Allen was an Arminian.

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ET MORTUUS ADHUC PER EAM LOQUITUR

David Dickson on Lamentations 1:9

Her filthiness is in her skirts; she remembereth not her last end; therefore she came down wonderfully: she had no comforter. O LORD, behold my affliction: for the enemy hath magnified himself.

VERSE 9. "HER FILTHINESS is in her skirts." The prophet goes on in his lamentation mixing with confession of sin and prayer to God for relief of the kirk's misery, and here acknowledges that her filthy sins are so open and manifest that they cannot be hid. To show the same, he takes a comparison from filthy diseases that cannot be hid, because the filthiness of the disease is such as the marks of it are seen on his [*the*] garment. So were Jerusalem's sins manifest to all her onlookers. Openly known, not only in her outward enormities against God's Laws, which was in all ranks and estates of persons, which were joined with impenitence, but also they had sundry avowed sins which they avowed wherein they gloried, while [*which*] they maintained [*continued in; defended*] against the prophets that studied [*strove*] to reclaim them, and thought pride of it, as if a mad body [*person*] should glory to defile his clothes with his own excrement and show it before all men. So they gloried in their idolatry, which they had borrowed from the nations and would not let it be said that they were wrong. Therefore, Jeremiah excuses not, nor yet extenuates sin, but makes a clear confession of it, and says it is so vile and open that it can neither be excused nor denied.

Then he shows another of her faults, that she remembered not her last end. That is, she forgot that one day she would be brought to a reckoning before God, she remembered not the end of her sinning, nor God's judgments and wrath due for it. She forgot all of it. She was unfitted for a while, that she would be visited at a set day, or if she remembered, having some fretting thoughts, yet it was not worth the name of remembrance. For she forgot that she behoved to abide God's sentence at the latter day.

Then he says that she came down wonderfully; that is, judgments that none looked for came upon her, a judgment she was not afraid for, being lifted up in her imagination that all was right. But before she was aware, she was brought

from her throne and brought low, brought exceedingly low. Then he tells that being thus brought low, she had none to comfort her, for her lovers and confederates took advantage of her ruins to build up themselves. From faithful pastors and prophets, she would not take counsel. For when she remembered that she had refused warning of her danger, it augments her challenge and grief. Her brethren and kinsmen that had been partakers of her sin and judgment could not comfort her. The false prophets could not comfort her, for they soothed her in her sin and idolatry and deceived her. She disobeyed the true prophets and the false deceived her and misled her. Thus was she comfortless from man.

Therefore, Jeremiah returns himself to God by prayer and seeing there was none to comfort her, he prays that God who had brought her low, would raise her up again, and backs his prayer with a reason: because "the enemy hath magnified himself." [It is] as if he had said,

Lord, I excuse not her sin, for they are gross and manifest their guiltiness, and it is open and cannot be denied. I confess they were unwise when it was foretold what would be the end of their doings, that they believed it not and considered not that Thou had a day to reckon with them, but lifted themselves in their pride. And therefore, now after a strange manner are they brought down, and there is none to lift them up nor comfort them. Therefore, I pray Thee to do it, for enemies are insolent because Thou hast stricken them.

1. That Jeremiah makes a confession of the manifest and open pollution of [the] one only visible kirk in all the world, we see that the true kirk of God may be so polluted and defiled, as besides secret evils, professors [*professing Christians*] may be filthy with open gross sins, of idolatry, yea, any avouched breaking of God's Law. What visible kirk on earth [was there] but this [one]? And yet defiled.

USE ONE. Think it no wonder to see spots in the best kirks, some of them defiled with one error, and some with another, spots of idolatry, when this only kirk had the preeminence.

USE TWO. Let none glory in a visible kirk, when such filthiness may be in it.

USE THREE. Abhor not every kirk that has spots, for where shall we go where no blots are to be seen?

USE FOUR. Beware of their error who for a seen fault in the kirk, makes a separation from her, so long as they embrace and hold to main grounds, but rather study to amend her than separate from her. Yet I speak not this to tolerate or excuse error, but speak against them, confess them to God and pray them to amend them.

3.[*sic*] "Her filthiness is in her skirts." He opposes their

open pollution to those who were secret, and it lets us see that whether we be kirk or persons, where there are hid and secret sins, if they are not repented of, will break out in open sins. Where the rotten sores of sin are not taken with [owned], they will break out in open corruption that turns to a boil and breaks the skin, or will be like a fester that breaks from the bone to the skin. For secret sins not being heeded beget more sins of that kind and leaven the whole lump and at last break out into a running issue to defile others.

APPLICATION. What is the cause that so many of our professors [professing Christians] break out to open sins and impenitence, and therefore, one secret sin is punished with another till they break out in the open? Therefore, to be free of open sin, take heed to the fountain and cleanse it, lest it breaks out to your shame; for after slighting of God's service, comes neglect of it, and after neglecting it, comes swearing and loathing, and after loathing, some idol is taken by the hand, some base lust instead of God, and then the open sin breaks out that all the world may see your shame. Take heed to your heart, how sin stirs at the first, and resist the beginnings of it. Take the youngest children of Babel and dash their heads against the stones [Ps. 137:9], for if sin be not borne down within, it will [catch] fire and break out to open shame. If any secret idol gets room, such as the love of the belly, the love of credit or riches, then secret idolatry is ready to break out in open idolatry, and at last open avowing and defending of it. This land is fast going on to open idolatry and public idolatry, for the secret sins are not acknowledged. Our garments are already sparkled [bespattered] and defiled, and our nation has begun to meddle with points of God's worship, to chop and change and to bring in human devices, and yet will not grant it as a fault, but the gangrene will spread till our shame be openly seen.¹

4. "Her filthiness is in her skirts; she remembereth not." He brings forth this to justify God's casting open of her nakedness and knits the sins with her judgment of wonderful down coming that came after, so open sin is punished with open judgment. It lets us see that it is a righteous thing with God to suffer unrepented sin within to break out into open [sin], so also to bring open judgment upon sin, for secret sins have secret judgments, and open sins open judgments.

USE. In secret, mark [take note] and you shall see a secret plague, for it is plague whether you mark it or not. For if you comport [bear] with your wicked nature, God's Spirit shall withdraw, and darkness shall come where light was or your peace shall be removed, [and] then security and impenitency at last breaking out in open sins, which is followed with open plagues, and as wide as is the measure of sin, as wide are the vials of God's wrath. And when the open plague is lighted [descended], then the beginning of secret [sin] and the growing of it is seen.

"She remembered not." That is, she forecast not what would be the end of her sinning or believed not when it was told her that bitterness and wrath would be the end, or she looked not to the day of her presenting before God's tribunal; therefore, she went on [sinning] till the judgment came. It lets us see that many's sin, the cause why they lie still in it, is because they remember not their last [end] or day [of] judgment. They forget that they must make account for all their thoughts, words, and deeds, omissions and commissions, as those who remember not a day of payment, and care not how much debt they take on, but look how sweet debt is in the ontaking, it is as bitter to lay on the person for not paying of it.

USE. Let Jerusalem's fault be our advertisement, and let us remember our last end and look what will be the end of any course we follow. When we are given to follow any lust or passion, separate from any sinful lust that would lead you captive, where away it will lead you, what will be the end [there]of. And if you urge your conscience to tell yourself the end of a sinful course, albeit it be silent for a while, yet it will tell you that in the hinder end, you must come to judgment. That you may take tent [pay attention] to your ways and resolve not to take a course but that which may bring comfort at your latter end. What is the cause that so many plump [fall with a thud] in hell before they be aware, but not considering their latter end?

APPLICATION. You that take no pains in God's service, [that] come to the kirk and sleep and care not how you profit by the Word, but to you, one day is another's [is like another]. Brother, you remember not your last end, for if you knew what endless torment would be the upshot of your course, you would not walk in it. I beseech you who heretofore have neglected your duty and forgotten your last end, do no more so, for it is appointed for all men once to die and after death to come to come [sic] to judgment [Heb. 9:27]. Remember your end that you may be kept from the course of the devil, the world, and [what] your own ill nature would lead you to [Eph. 2:1-3].

2. "She came down wonderfully." That is, she got an unexpected fall, to the astonishment of the onlookers. It shows that fearless sinners get fearless [sic fearful] falls, and careless sinners get comfortless mourning.

USE. Be afraid you who are secure, for fearful judgments abide you, but if you be guarded against judgment, be not feared, for it is only careless and fearless sinners that fall wonderfully. Let your heart walk in the fear of the Lord all the day long [Prov. 23:17]. So shall you not get a fearful fall. Pray to remove the ill of security that you may escape their judgment.

1. This refers to the articles of Perth Assembly (1618), which reintroduced kneeling at communion, private baptism and communion, confirmation by bishops, and holy days. Dickson and others suffered under the imposition of these articles

“She had no comforter.” They who are warned of their danger and take it not [*take not warning*], it is justice when they are stricken, and they find no comforter. The warned sinner is worthy of no comforter when he is stricken.

USE. Timeously [*promptly*] fear, else you shall be comfortless when you have most need.

“O Lord, behold.” One might ask, if she was comfortless for her fearless sinning, why goes she go [*sic*] to God with it[?] But there was not any other outgate. It lets us see that albeit a kirk or person, by their fearless sinning, has drawn heavy judgments out of God’s hand, albeit their sins were never so great and heinous, yet there is no fleeing from God. He must be gone to for He is the only redresser of evils, and there is more pity to be found at the hands of an offended God [than in] all the world beside. Would [to] God that sinners enclosed upon all hands [*all sides*] would flee to the open door that is toward God, for when all other comforts are closed, there is room left to come unto God by prayer. The sinner that is not cut off still has an open door to God.

USE. Have you provoked God and are driven to straits, and your conscience says that man cannot help you, and you see that heaven is not barred upon [*excluded from*] you? Then turn yourself to God by prayer and knock at the door of mercy and be sure to find mercy, which will be a sure remedy. What arguments uses he to be heard in prayer? “Behold,” he says, “my affliction and the enemy magnifying himself.” That is, “look upon a pitiful stroke and look upon an insolent enemy that insults over us and puts us to naught.” We see as the Lord is provoked by sin to strike, so strokes provoke Him to pity, and the fairer the stroke or affliction be, the readier God is to pity.

USE. If you have provoked and sinned against God, bring out your strokes before God to get pity. For albeit you can get no comfort from this, that your strokes are for sin, yet you may draw comfort from this: the Lord pities misery, for as the Lord is just to punish sin, so He is pitiful to pity the afflicted.

“The enemy hath magnified.” [I.e.,] “Proud heathen idolaters triumph over us and insult over us.” This case seems so desperate like as none can be more, that the worst men have the mastery over God’s kirk, yet Jeremiah makes it an argument to find pity of God. It lets us see that the thing that would make a worldling despair will make and furnish matter of prayer to the godly and give confidence of relief. As our misery is great, so is God’s pity, for it is exceeding great. Therefore, when you are ready to despair, present yourself before the eye of a pitiful [*pitying*] God.

From David Dickson, *Sermons on Jeremiah’s Lamentations* (Naphtali Press and Reformation Heritage Books), Sermon 4 on Lamentations 1:9-10, pp. 75–79. Text slightly edited. ■

THE EDITORS

General Editor/Publisher: Chris Coldwell. Through Naphtali Press, Mr. Coldwell has edited and published new editions of classic Presbyterian and Reformed books since 1987. He is a member of the Lakewood Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), in Dallas, Texas.

Editors: C. N. Willborn, Ph.D. Dr. Willborn is Senior Pastor-Teacher of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Adjunct Professor of Historical Theology at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Taylors, SC and Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Jeffrey C. Waddington: Dr. Waddington (PhD, Westminster Theological Seminary 2013) is pastor of Faith Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Fawn Grove, PA, and an ordained minister in the OPC. He has served as a teaching assistant in the apologetics and systematic theology departments at Westminster Seminary for the last 19 years and as adjunct professor of systematic theology from 2017–2019. Jeff is the author of numerous articles and book reviews in various journals and periodicals. He serves as a panelist at the Christ the Center podcast at Reformed Forum and as Vice President of its board.

Frank J. Smith, Ph.D., D.D. Dr. Smith is the pastor of Atlanta Reformed Presbyterian Church (RPCNA) in Atlanta, Ga.; is a Lecturer of History at Georgia Gwinnett College, Lawrenceville, Georgia; and serves as Chancellor of Tyndale International University, Los Angeles.

Alan Strange, Ph.D. Dr. Strange is Professor of Church History and Theological Librarian for Mid-America Reformed Theological Seminary and also serves as the associate pastor for New Covenant Community Church (OPC) in Joliet, Illinois.

Wayne Sparkman, Th.M. Mr. Sparkman is director of the The Historical Center of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) which is the Archives and Manuscript Repository for the Continuing Presbyterian Church.

David C. Noe, Ph.D. Dr. Noe is Professor of Classics at Calvin University and a Teacher of the Word in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. His work can be found online at LatinPerDiem.com

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