



STROMATA

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Stromata

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Student Body of
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I love reading. I read all the time, as much as I can. So when Student Senate sent out an email in Fall of 2010 asking if anyone was interested in editing the *Stromata*, I jumped at the opportunity. It was a chance to read more, and the thought excited me.

But editing is a funny thing: you read something you enjoy over and over again, over and over and over, over and over so many times that you get to the point where you hate it and never want to read it ever again. And not only that, but you never want it to be read ever again. By anybody. And then you realize you're just being silly and selfish and this is really a great piece of writing and it really deserves to be read and shared and enjoyed.

And that's the big secret that I've tried to uncover during my three-year stint as editor of the *Stromata*. We have incredibly gifted people among us, people who have great thoughts and write great things that stretch us, challenge us, grow us, encourage us, and glorify God. And their work ought to be shared and read and distributed and studied. But so often, we concern ourselves with ourselves, class-to-class, semester-to-semester, never enjoying the fruits of the labor of our colleagues. We go through our entire 2-4 years (or perhaps more, if we are PhD students), with tunnel-vision, focused on our own work, worried about our own grades, concerned with our own development and growth. And we forget, sometimes, to be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.

I have found nothing to be more satisfying, during my time at CTS, than to talk with others about their work. We are all here to write papers and read texts and learn and learn and learn. And while some enjoy this work more than others, all enjoy it more when it is shared. *Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!* We grow when we share our ideas, burdens, hopes and fears with one another.

I would like to thank Dean Jeff Sajdak, for providing oversight and guidance; Joshua Smith, for sharing the workload and providing a second set of eyes; Student Senate, for all of their support and encouragement; and the fine people at Calvin Printing Services for all their work. I would especially like to thank all of those who submitted articles for consideration this year, whether or not what you submitted made it to print, your generosity with your work is inspiring. *Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.*

— JCM

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Michigan Springtime Righteousness

The first few sunny days of spring
Are just like the joy that righteousness brings
Laughter and hope and lingering
Because I just can't get enough

Temperatures rise, reverse the fall,
And instantly everyone hears the call
To run outside, reject these walls
Because freedom comes in the sun

Though clouds storm back and darken day
Blue skies prophesy it won't be this way
In peaceful grass my head will lay
Because I'll love as I am loved.

When winter comes commit to live
Like spring is what you know you'll have
Without your help, God freely gives
Because his Son once took the cold.

— *Kyle Brooks*

Adams, James E. *War Psalms of the Prince of Peace: Lessons from the Imprecatory Psalms*. Phillipsburg, N.J.: P & R Pub. Co., 1991. 126 pages.

&

Zenger, Erich. *A God of Vengeance?: Understanding the Psalms of Divine Wrath*. Tr. Linda M. Maloney. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996. 104 pages.¹

These two books share a common motive: the imprecatory psalms are frequently misunderstood and often ignored. Even though the Psalms as a whole have been awarded a unique place in Christian theology and devotion, the imprecatory Psalms are either rejected as unusable in church liturgy or misapprehended as having a gentile perspective. This rejection comes from their seemingly ostensible expressions of sinful revenge or worldly sentiments of retaliation. Readers skip over imprecatory Psalms or verses containing hostile images because of their interpretive difficulties, not attempting to discern them. Some denounce them as unchristian and others try to forcibly remove them from the Psalter.

James E. Adams and Erich Zenger, however, disagree with the dismissal of imprecatory Psalms. According to them, the inspiration of Scripture is fundamental for resolving the issue. Since the Psalms are also the word of God given by the Spirit of God, they should be used, albeit with shrewd discernment. Both Adams and Zenger point out that images of retaliation, vengeance, and destruction are not unique to the Psalter. To the contrary, violence against enemies is found not only in the Old Testament, but the New Testament as well. It is impermissible for any reader who receives the canon of Scripture to skip over these psalms, let alone eliminate them from the canon. Instead, they should learn to do justice to their interpretation.

Yet, these two authors have very different approaches the issue. Adams argues that the Psalms should be understood in light of the New Testament, especially as Christ and his apostles understood them. He seems to cling to the principle of the Reformers that Scripture interprets Scripture. Adams points out that

¹ Originally submitted to Prof. C. Bosma in Fall 2012 for OT506: Psalms.

there are many instances of Jesus quoting the Psalter as his own words. The apostles often hear Christ's voice speaking in the words of the Psalms, even with psalms not related to Jesus in the gospels (cf. Heb. 2:11-12; 10:5). Based on these facts, Adams contends that imprecatory psalms should be interpreted as the apostles interpreted them: as the words of Christ and not of an average human.

Furthermore, Adams goes on to insist that the "I" in the Psalter is Christ himself. He argues this point from the fact that the psalmist regularly expresses not only his perfection, but also his guilt. On the one hand, it is natural for Jesus to reveal his perfection since he has no sin at all. But on the other hand, he takes the sinner's place, thus confessing sin as if he is himself a sinner. For Adams, these statements are permissible based on the longstanding interpretative tradition of reading the Psalms through the voice of Christ. The prayers of vengeance are, therefore, appropriate warnings from Christ, the King of the earth, to his enemies.

Concerning the role of David, Adams also has a New Testament perspective on it. He argues that David is the principal human author of the Psalms since the New Testament ascribes even unattributed psalms to David. David represents the Anointed of God, the Christ. In fact, David speaks far beyond his own understanding and experience through the Spirit of Christ in him. Therefore, the Psalms are to be understood as words of the Anointed of God, the Christ. This fact leads us to trust that God will definitely destroy the powers of evil since God is willing to answer the prayers of His son, the Christ.

Contrary to Adams' New Testament focus, Zenger concentrates on the Psalter itself. Zenger argues that before approaching the imprecatory psalms with the eyes of systematic or biblical theology, it is essential to observe the profile, intention, and function of the violence-laden picture of God pervading these Psalms, as well as their historical context, linguistic shape, and theological passion. Zenger chooses seven psalms generally rejected, in whole or in part, from the Roman Catholic Church's Liturgy of the Hours. For each psalm, he provides his own translation and commentary in light of form criticism, focusing on their structure as defined by literary features. This takes up substantial space in the book, which reveals his primary concern. Throughout his examinations, Zenger insists on distinguishing between the vio-

lence of the wicked and the saving violence of God. The imprecatory psalms do not provoke violence toward victims; rather, they evoke God's present acts to end the violence of the wicked on behalf of the victim.

Zenger suggests the purpose of the imprecatory psalms is not only to teach us to face real violence in our world, but also to not lose hope. God, through judgment, will indeed restore everything to how it should be. From this perspective, we can say that God does not intend the violent and turbulent state of the world. In this sense, it can be said that these psalms are a theodicy.

The imprecatory Psalms also teach that God is personally touched by those suffering injustice, and that he listens to their cries. Therefore, we can urge God to bring about justice for the sake of his name, because he cares for his people. Based on his sensitivity for the sufferer, God can relinquish his announced judgment and punishment if the wicked repent. But by removing phrases of judgment and punishment, we make God a impassive spectator of his created world.

After careful textual analysis, Zenger goes on to identify reasons the imprecatory psalms have been rejected. First, there is a semantic issue: problems arise from the usage and translation of the terms conveying both the judgment and wrath of God. Zenger argues that the biblical concepts of God's judgment and wrath differ from the way they are understood within a modern, conceptual framework. Biblically, God's judgment and wrath are covenant tools which oppose illusory innocence and bind God and his people.

The second reason for the rejection of these psalms is their literary genre. Readers sometimes ignore their poetic nature; but the Psalms should be treated as the poems that they are. Since poetry involves culturally based imagery, people should know that some of the images are only understandable in light of their cultural and religious background. With the aid of historical and form criticisms, we can explore their original meaning.

Adams and Zenger also have a practical concern for using the imprecatory psalms: Are they appropriate as Christian prayers? Even though their answers appear positive, they differ in approach. On the one hand, Zenger argues that these psalms help God's people to release their fear, anger, and vengeance into God's hands. They teach us that in prayer we do not need to hide anything before God. At the same time, they urge people to con-

front the harshness of reality, including their own cruelty and hatred, and draw near to God as a result. The imprecatory Psalms make people realize the deficiency of human judges and courts to establish perfect justice. These psalms can comfort victims of violence and injustice by showing them that God hears their cries and cares for them and will bring justice. Readers can also hear and mourn the suffering of others. With all these positive effects, it is absolutely legitimate to pray these psalms personally and communally.

On the other hand, Adams argues that we should avoid giving a place to our personal revenge against others. Rather, we must surrender all of our vengeance to the Lord. He argues that human beings are too prone to use these psalms with evil intentions, and suggests three guidelines for using them. First, we should follow the way that Christ prayed, surrendering all right for vengeance to God. Second, we must pray these psalms on the basis of God's judgment. Third, the goal for praying these Psalms should be the conversion of the wicked. In doing so, people can remove their anger and revenge from their hands and hearts and commit themselves to God's wise charge.

Here again, Adams takes a New Testament perspective of the imprecatory psalms. God accepts our prayers only through Christ; therefore, when we pray the imprecatory Psalms, it is necessary to join ourselves to Christ. In doing so, all our prayers can be made known to God.

Adams insists that these psalms must also be preached in their covenant context, with an eye toward their fulfillment in Christ. They should be interpreted Christologically. Of course, he affirms Zenger's observation concerning the necessity of historical and cultural context for expounding the Psalms. However, Adams emphasizes the fact that they are the message of God for his people today. The saving message of Christ must be preached from these Psalms.

These two books shed light into a dark corner of scripture. The primary concern of both authors is almost the same. Although they have different approaches to the issue, they agree that the church should not only receive the imprecatory psalms as God's word, but also use them in personal and communal prayer. Ignoring or removing the imprecatory psalms causes us to miss an important perspective: God is a righteous judge. Therefore, let us restore these Psalms to the prayer lives of contemporary Chris-

tians and let us preach them from the pulpit. With the help of these two books, we can have a more appropriate and practical point of view on the imprecatory Psalms.

—*Sa Myung Kang*

Craig, William Lane. *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2008. 415 pages.

In his signature work, *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics*, Christian apologist and philosopher William Lane Craig offers a defense of the Christian faith by attempting to provide a rational justification and warrant for it. *Reasonable Faith* deals with a number of questions leveled against traditional Christianity, including the absurdity of life without God, history and miracles, and Jesus' self-understanding and resurrection. Craig begins the book by asking, "How do you know that Christianity is true?" He distinguishes between *knowing* and *showing* what is true to help make his case for Christianity (58).

In the next section of the book, *De Homine*, Craig discusses the absurdity of life without God. This section lies out chronologically what various philosophers and theologians thought about life without God, and comes to the conclusion that life would be absurd without God. If there were no God, the universe and humanity would be doomed to death. If there were no God, immortality would not be a possibility and life itself would be absurd, drained of any ultimate significance, value, or purpose.

In the next section, *De Deo*, Craig provides arguments for God's existence that are helpful for individuals looking to understand contemporary cosmology. For example, Craig helpfully explains and analyzes multiverse theory, the idea that there are multiple pocket-universes within a meta-universe, and the implications it would have for belief in God (146). Craig writes using his knowledge as a philosopher and a theologian to show the meaning of basic theories and principles of physics for Christians, and how they should, or should not, influence our faith. He identifies the orthodox theories in contemporary culture and their significance for the faithful Christian. In doing so, Craig provides safe ground for Christian presuppositions in examining the sciences. Readers come away with the tools to analyze science and differentiate between orthodox and unorthodox dogmas seen in the contemporary sciences.

Craig focuses on the historical knowledge and problem of miracles in *De Creatione*. To Craig, the Christian knowledge of history reveals historical truth claims about God (240). Craig refutes the idea that history can be examined neutrally (222-23). Regarding miracles, Craig asserts that modern presuppositions only exist in theology as a result of previous forms of deism. His chapter expounds this by looking at the theology of Spinoza, Newton, and Hume.

The final section of Craig's book, *De Christo*, begins by exploring the self-understanding of Jesus. Jesus believed himself to be the Son of God and he lives up to that claim. Craig does an excellent job of presenting a case for seeing Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of the messianic promises. For example, Craig offers a helpful analysis of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem on a donkey as a fulfillment of the prophetic text of Zechariah 9:9-10 (304). Craig concludes his writings on Christ by discussing the resurrection. He utilizes both biblical and extra-biblical literature to advocate the truth claims of the resurrection, connecting it to the Old Testament prophecies it fulfills. In one case, he examines and refutes the specific objections of the atheist biblical scholar Bart Ehrman against a bodily resurrection (350-51).

In summary, William Lane Craig's book *Reasonable Faith* is helpful for both personal and academic study. Its style lends itself to use as a textbook and includes what for some may be slightly sophisticated terminology, but offers more depth than a basic introduction to apologetics. It goes beyond the basics of introductory apologetics to offer a thorough overview of history, science, philosophy, and apologetics. Craig's five part book covers a lot of apologetic ground and argues well for the reasonableness of the Christian faith. I would recommend it to any reader interested in theology or Christian apologetics.

—*Shelby Gemmen*

Keller, Timothy. *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power, and the Ony Hope that Matters*. New York, NY: Dutton, 2009. 210 pages.

“For Thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee.” St. Augustine's words are a famous depiction of the relationship between humanity and the God that created them. The familiarity of such a phrase is certainly a com-

ment as to St. Augustine's apt description of the human condition, and its relevance. The human heart desires fullness—fulfillment, and restlessness is the impetus for the hearts' seeking. The problem results from the condition of the human heart—it's unable to find what will satisfy the desire for rest on its own, namely, rest in God. Desiring what will not satisfy in place of what will is the universal condition called sinfulness. The Bible uses the term idolatry for this act of living for anything other than God. But how can modern, Western people possibly entertain such antiquated concepts like sinfulness and idolatry?

Recently, a pastor in New York City wrote on the nature of our heart-condition. In *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power and the Only Hope that Matters*, Dr. Timothy Keller insightfully diagnoses the root of human sinfulness as a heart condition of inordinate desire, exposing the idols of modern North American culture.

At the core of Keller's book is an attempt to persuade the reader recognize the condition he is describing, and live into its solution. The book opens with tragic accounts of what is wrong in the world—suicide, misery, meaninglessness, and a profound emptiness. Having primed the pump for readers to accept the truth of the horrible situation in which they find themselves, he offers a name for what's wrong—idolatry. Keller suggests that what we live for is a manifestation of what human beings desire in their hearts:

Every human being must live for something. Something must capture our imaginations, our heart's most fundamental allegiance and hope. But, the Bible tells us, without the intervention of the Holy Spirit, that object will never be God himself.
(3)

Recent illustrations add to the persuasiveness of Keller's argument; the reader cannot but help acknowledge the severity of the situation in the wake of the United States' economic catastrophe. Keller identifies the rash and irreparable actions prompted by the catastrophe, several of which end in suicide. Although these are extreme examples, Keller insightfully explains how suicide is the manifestation of a reality his readers know, too. The reader has tasted the reality Keller is talking about. Keller is able to awaken the restlessness of his readers, urging them to consider his diag-

nosis as true: that idolatry and sin have led us to this unsatisfying reality.

Keller's insightful diagnosis is further developed by identifying disordered human desire as the primary drive of sin:

Idolatry is ... what is fundamentally wrong with the human heart. ... Paul [makes] a long list of sins that create misery and evil...but they all find their roots in...the inexorable human drive for 'god-making'. In other words, *idolatry is always the reason we ever do anything wrong.* (165-66)

Keller is doing more than providing a North American social commentary. His concern extends beyond commenting and convincing readers that people do wrong things, he is interested in diagnosing the root cause of sin. In fact, it is only in the introduction that Keller does the work of persuading readers that sin exists. After the opening pages, it is assumed throughout the rest of the book. Using the framework of idolatry, Keller is able to rightly name the root of human sin as "that which we desire so much our life is built around it."

But is Keller right in his diagnosis that idolatry is the root cause of human sin? Scripture reveals that there was a time during which Adam and Eve knew God. Here is a picture of rest, of peace and contentment that unfortunately doesn't last very long. The serpent comes to the woman and plants seeds of doubt, lying to her in a conversation in the garden. The text tells us that after talking with the serpent: "The woman saw that the tree was good for food...a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise" (Gen. 3:1-6, ESV). Is this initial sin in fact the first instance of idolatry as well?

From the text it seems clear that it was a new desire, a new estimation of the forbidden tree which inspired Eve's taking and eating and sharing of the fruit. Up until this point Eve's life was oriented around God, but in this moment she desires an object more than God, elevating its status in such a way that she can disobey a divine command. This is idolatry.

Many generations later, when God leads the people of Israel out of Egyptian slavery, he provides a law, a set of ordinances and principles by which the Israelites are to live and remain in God's company. Interestingly, the first and second commands given by God are against idolatry. Keller cites Martin Luther's

Large Catechism for an apt description of why “the Ten Commandments begin with a commandment against idolatry...because, he argued, the fundamental motivation behind lawbreaking is idolatry” (166). Exodus recounts God giving the commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai, while at the same time the people of Israel take their gold jewelry and make it into an idol to worship. Surely scripture is highlighting that idolatry (although not the only sin) is at the beginning of human sinfulness.

Idolatry is not only the root and beginning of human sinfulness, but also a primary way in which it manifests. Idolatry is not the only sin (God goes on to issue 9 other commands). But if desire is the impetus for action, then all sin is in fact the result of wrong desire. Idolatry becomes a way to name its manifestations. Keller persuasively exposes idols in his home culture of North America. He names the “deep idols” of our hearts. They are those desires which take the place of God and inspire us to make created things the focal point of our lives; power, approval, comfort and control are all desires at the heart of our idolatry of money, sex, people, rightness, and success (64).

With each instance, Keller highlights how North American culture has elevated these created things and found ways to make lives around them. He names the consequences of each manifestation of idolatry, inviting the reader to see how that particular idol does not in fact satisfy the restlessness of the human heart. His attempts to unsettle the reader allows them to better hear how Christ offers the rest the idol promises but cannot deliver.

Jesus must become more beautiful to your imagination, more attractive to your heart, than your idol. That is what will replace your counterfeit gods. If you uproot the idol and fail to ‘plant’ the love of Christ in its place, the idol will grow back. ... We want to love Christ so much *more* that we are not enslaved by our attachments. (172-73)

Keller analyzes the language of marketing and advertising, and points out how it creates wants and needs in order to offer solutions and satisfaction. It’s the language and logic of the people of his flock (New York City) and of the greater American culture. He correctly identifies an important distinction concerning idolatry: the root is not desire itself but *disordered* desire.

This reveals that Keller’s book is culturally bound to a North American context. His argument is limited to a culture that per-

ceives life in terms of choice and wants, and thus he presents a gospel call couched in the terms “this is what you really want”.

The scriptural stories that Keller uses throughout the book as analogues of our human predicament are persuasive but, can only be in a culture that perceives reality in terms of desire, autonomous choice and wants. For example, Keller’s presentation of the Jacob story, in which “Jacob sought to get his life validated from having a physically beautiful wife” (40-41), has little meaning in a culture where family honor and communal decisions shape the selection of marriages.

Although Keller’s argument is couched in culturally-bound, choice-based language, this does not mean that the truth of idolatry is limited to North Americans. Saint Augustine, a 3rd century North African, offers an assessment of human desire congruent with what Keller presents in this book. The great disparity of time and cultural distance between Timothy Keller and St. Augustine’s words is not enough to undo the congruence of their words. There must be something fundamentally true about human sinfulness, the desires at its root and the “inexorable human drive for ‘god-making’” (165-66).

Tim Keller’s book *Counterfeit Gods* is a winsome and adept analysis of the way that sin disrupts our lives. His argument is that disordered desire has led us astray to the practice of “god-making.” These desires that we have are God given, but not rightly directed. We strive to fulfill the restlessness of our hearts, and that fulfillment involves finding something to orient the whole of one’s life around. Anything can become the focal point of human strivings, the rule by which people measure the days of their lives. These things take the place of God in peoples’ lives. It sounds strange at first, but Keller fills his book with examples from North American society that illustrate that there are things in life which become ultimate values. This may be an abundance of wealth, it may be power, it may be freedom or rightness. But whatever it is, the point is people make gods of created things to orient their lives around. Undoing human idols is more complicated than simply removing that which humans love most. Keller aptly identifies idolatry at the core of the human condition:

—*Matthew Burns*

Suk, John. *Not Sure: A Pastor's Journey from Faith to Doubt*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2011. 211 pages.

Doubt is in the air. Especially religious doubt. It's popular, trendy, and almost to the point where it's considered a kind of mile-marker on the road of faith for many young Christians. In some ways, it seems to be the "born again" pre-requisite for Christians today.

But that doesn't seem to me to be the brand of doubt author John Suk deals with in his book *Not Sure: A Pastor's Journey from Faith to Doubt*. Rather than the chic doubt so in vogue these days, Suk appears to be wrestling with the kind of serious faith crisis that some Christians occasionally stumble into. The book is Suk's account of his ongoing dark night of the soul, and as such, it needs to be taken seriously. We do a disservice to struggling Christians like Suk when we dismiss doubt as untenable or easily explained. That goes doubly for those of us who occupy Sunday pulpits on occasion. Suk's point that doubt is sometimes a part of faith should be well taken, because it's either true or a whole host of people, myself included, are left with an invalidated Christian faith.

That's one part of why this book was so intriguing for me; to be sure, I've felt the same panicked "Can this really be true?" welling up inside me from time to time that Suk has, and it's no walk in the park. Part of why I identified with Suk's treatment of doubt is because I've been there. And I've been there as a member of the same historically Dutch-immigrant, North American, Christian Reformed denomination that Suk grew up in. In fact, I'm even a student at the same seminary where Suk himself trained to be a pastor

So, to say the least, I was intrigued by the book and Suk's story. In some ways, it's my own.

In other ways, it's not, though, and our developmental progression is certainly different. Suk sees his personal development mirrored in western society's broader relationship with Christian belief: enchanted, oral faith became literate, modern, and scholastic faith, which has now eroded into the post-modernist faith of secondary orality thanks, in part, to a rise in technological advances. Suk uses all of this in *Not Sure* as a snapshot of his own shift from confident, modernist Christian to post-modern, doubt-

ing, agnostic believer. It's a fascinating narrative, and Suk does a nice job drawing the connecting lines between his story and that of the larger Christian culture.

As a result, Suk ends up fairly displeased with modernist Christian doctrine and confessional statements or, at least, their traditional presentation in the church. As he describes it, his frustrations result from post-modernism's erosion of the certainty and authority that modernist faith once held for both him and western society as a whole. Understandably, then, in the vacuum of what was once sure faith, doubt arose and with it the pervading fear that we can't actually know anything with any firm degree of certainty. After years surrounded with a smothering modernistic certainty, Suk encountered post-modernism and found himself both hungering for less certainty and fewer easy answers, but also floundering in his newly discovered rootlessness.

In spite of my respect for Suk's struggle and the way he describes it, though, I couldn't help but feel a bit dismissive as I read his book. Maybe that's because my experience is almost 180 degrees opposite of Suk's. Contrary to Suk, my march through the modernist, logical approach to faith came only after I had already drunk deeply from the well of post-modern, relativist thought during high school and college. That is the water in which I've swum for much of my life. Ironically, for me it was in the certainty of modernist Christian doctrine and tradition that I finally found an answer to the rising anxiety I had over our culture's hesitance to answer anything with a degree of authority.

I can certainly empathize with Suk, and I can even understand why he feels the need to chuck church confessions and doctrines and systemic theologies. Mystery and humility are important when approaching the throne of God (something we too often forget), and there are some answers to questions of faith that I refuse to give, simply because I know I don't have them. But again, while Suk comes at this whole crisis from the modernist side, I've approached it from the post-modern side. I'm young. I'm twenty-five, so the cultural changes that Suk describes aren't cultural changes for me. They're simply culture. It's what I grew up with. It was the hidden curriculum that existed outside my classrooms and syllabi in college, and I am very much used to it. Thus, my friends and I who were reared post-modern (quite unintentionally on the part of most of our parents) have hungered for some degree of knowing. Something. Anything. And we have

found that knowing available to us in the church. In its confessions. In its doctrines. In its liturgy. In the very staples of faith Suk would dispose of. Not without some hesitation and some questioning and a few reservations. But that's where we have found a bit of the certainty we've been yearning for, and, to be honest, as part of a generation that seems to always proclaim how little we can actually know, it's good to feel like we can indeed know *something*.

As a result, I wondered a bit to myself what the big deal was as I journeyed along with Suk. Again, I'm not trying to dismiss his doubts. For those of us that wrestle with them, it's important for our doubts to be taken seriously, and I can understand and appreciate that these developments in culture, thought, and academia have been distressing for Suk. But I wonder how much of his distress has come from how new these things are to him. They're not new to me, and so they don't distress me nearly as much as they do him (though, again, the occasional faith crisis I undergo is no small hill to climb). To put it another way, I finished the book, put it down, and thought, "Yeah, I agree with a lot of that. It makes complete sense to me. But what does it matter?" Maybe that's just the post-modern in me speaking. Or maybe it's the possibility that the only people actually distressed by all of these developments are all of the modernists looking anxiously in on my generation. The rest of us in the church are simply living those changes out and still finding faith a viable option, and we're enjoying the bit of firm ground we finally feel like we have.

—*Brandon Haan*

I Prayed the Other Day

I prayed the other day:
My words tumbled over under piled high to heaven
Like hiker's cairn with added cares one atop another
And when I couldn't lift one more
There I stood with helpless gaze,
At the mountain I'd created.
And in the silence still
I stood,
In sweat and grime and dirt and dust.
And waited: But only saw
Slate sky above
boiling with roiling rage
Ready to deluge me...

And then I felt a gentle shower—
Cleansing dew like nectar:
Heaven's answer.

—Jonathan Fischer

Satisfy Us With Your Unfailing Love¹

Psalm 90

Derek W. Buikema

I still remember the first time I seriously considered the words of Psalm 90. I was in 4th grade, and my teacher, a godly woman named Mrs. Duimstra, told me, “You know, Derek, life is short. It goes by very quickly.” I remember replying by saying something like, “I’m not sure what you’re talking about. It has taken me *forever* to get to fourth grade.” She went on. “You know Derek, the Bible says that life is short. It says that a thousand years are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night.” She was quoting the words of Psalm 90. At that point I had to admit that she must be right. If the Bible says it, then life must be short. But it was difficult at the time to feel as though life passed quickly.

As I’ve grown (I’m no longer in 4th grade), I’ve found I can begin to understand what Psalm 90 is saying. Our lives are short. I find, however, that I don’t understand it nearly as well as my older brothers and sisters in the faith. They’ve told me how true the words of Psalm 90 are. Life is, in fact, short. And that is part of what Psalm 90 tells us. Life is short. But that is not all it says. Psalm 90 tells us that life is also meaningful. And it explains this in an exceedingly beautiful way. Psalm 90 is a rich, beautiful, and mysterious psalm. It is a psalm of both lament and praise. One that is about death, yet it is full of life. It is a psalm that expresses the fear of God, and yet places boundless trust in him. Its message to us is clear. Life is short, but it is worthwhile.

This morning we’re going to be looking at the psalm in three points, and my hope is that these three points will reflect the seeming opposites that are held together in this beautiful psalm. First, we are going to talk about how God is distanced from us—different from us, distinct from us. Second. We will talk about how God is close to us. Third, we are going to talk about how life is meaningful because of the fact that God is near.

First, God is distanced from us. The psalmist, who we are told is Moses, points this out in two ways. First, God is eternal, and we are temporary. Second, God is holy and we are sinful.

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At the very beginning of the psalm we see birth imagery applied to the earth and to the mountains in verse two. It is as if Moses is saying, “See those massive mountains? Yeah, those are babies. Do you see the plain stretching in front of you as far as you can see? Yeah, from God’s perspective that’s just an infant.” God is far greater and more expansive than even the largest, most striking geographical features. But God is not simply great in majesty or size, he is also eternal. *From everlasting to everlasting you are God*, says the psalm. God always has been, and he always will be.

In contrast to this, we are temporary:

*You turn men back to dust,
saying, “Return to dust, O sons of men.”
For a thousand years in your sight
are like a day that has just gone by,
or like a watch in the night.
You sweep men away in the sleep of death;
they are like the new grass of the morning—
though in the morning it springs up new,
by evening it is dry and withered.*

Have you ever seen time lapse photography? Sometimes nature programs will use time lapse photography. I think it’s pretty cool. You can see a flower bloom, grow, flower, and die within a matter of seconds because its life is sped up. Psalm 90 here gives us the time lapse photography view of our lives. We spring up in the morning, but by the evening we are dry and withered. Our lives are as brief as a watch in the night. Life is short.

Some playwrights and artists have correctly identified this phenomenon. They have understood this first aspect of Psalm 90. Samuel Becket, best known for his play *Waiting for Godot*, wrote a play called *Breath* that has been performed many more times than *Godot*, though it is much less well known. The play goes like this. Once the audience all has come and is seated in the theater where the play is about to be performed, the curtain is lifted to reveal a theater littered with garbage. The cry of a baby is heard, followed by one pained inhalation and one pained exhalation. After that, the curtain goes down and the play is over. All told it is about 33 seconds. The meaning of the play is not difficult to discern. It is saying that life is one pained inhalation, and one pained exhalation, and then it is over. It is filled with rubbish

and pain, and it is extremely short.

Shakespeare says much the same thing in his Scottish play:

Life is but a fleeting shadow
A poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and
then is heard no more
It is a tale
Told by an idiot
Full of Sound and fury
Signifying, nothing.

Both of these playwrights are getting at something of what Psalm 90 is saying. Life. Is. Short. It is over very quickly.

However, this is not all Moses is telling us in this Psalm, because not only are we temporal, but we are also sinful:

*We are consumed by your anger
and terrified by your indignation.
You have set our iniquities before you,
our secret sins in the light of your presence.
All our days pass away under your wrath;
we finish our years with a moan.*

He’s talking about the fact that even our secret sins, the ones that no one else on earth know about, are brought to light before our great God and Father who is Holy and Righteous and therefore justly angry with our sin. Because we are sinful, we live a life before a holy God consumed by his indignation and terrified by his wrath. We know we stand rightly condemned before him. It is a fearsome thing to stand as a sinner before the presence of a holy God.

This is a desperate picture of life given to us at the beginning of Psalm 90. A life that goes by in an instant, that is filled with difficulty and sorrow, a life lived in *fear* before a holy God.

It makes sense that Moses would write this Psalm, doesn’t it? One thing we know about Moses is that Moses saw God’s glory. Do you remember that story? Moses, feeling particularly bold, said, “Show me your glory.” And God said, “You can’t look upon my face and live, but what I’ll do for you is this: I’ll hide you in the cleft of a rock, and I’ll allow my glory to pass by you. I’ll proclaim my name ‘The LORD, The LORD, the compassionate and gracious’ as I pass by you.” God said, “once I pass by I will

let you glimpse the back side of my glory.”

So Moses just saw the back side of God’s glory, and yet that was so much that it made his face shine. It terrified the people of Israel when Moses came back into the camp. He needed to veil his face so that the people would not be afraid of him. This is a man who knows who God is, and therefore knows what he’s talking about when he says that God is from everlasting to everlasting, but we are temporary. God is holy, but we are sinful. It’s a tough picture that we’re given.

And yet, something strange begins to happen in verse 13 of this psalm. That’s what takes us to our second point that God is close to us. In verse 13 the whole feel of the psalm changes, and Moses starts doing something very odd. He starts giving God commands. He says this, *Relent, O Lord, how long will it be? ... Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love. ... Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us. ... Relent, Satisfy us, Make us Glad.* Why does Moses begin giving commands to God? He’s just told us how great and everlasting and holy our God is. Where does he find the courage to come before God and start issuing commands? Is this just foolishness? Is it arrogance? How is it that Moses can come before God and say these things to him?

The key is found in verse 14 where he says, *Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love.* This word translated “unfailing love” is a Hebrew word. The word is *hesed*, and it is often translated “unfailing love” or “loving-kindness.” That is one aspect of the word, but the word itself is really getting at God’s covenant loyalty or his covenant faithfulness. Moses is saying, *Satisfy us with your covenantal faithfulness.* Now what does that mean?

There were often times in the Old Testament when God decided to come close to his people. And often when he would come close to his people, he made a covenant with them. He made promises to them. He did this with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. Each time he told them, “I will be your God, and you will be my people.” He promised to keep Israel, to hold on to them, to not let them go. God showed his covenant faithfulness to Moses by giving him the law. Moses knew who God was, and he knew he was a God faithful to his covenants, who promised to draw near and not let go. That gave him the confidence to pray bold prayers. To say, *RELENT! Satisfy us with the fact that you came*

close and promised you would not let us go. Make us glad for as many days as you've afflicted us. They are bold prayers, but they come from a place of trust, because Moses knew who God was, and knew who he had promised to be.

My question for us is, have you ever made this sort of thing your prayer? Have you ever joined with Moses and Psalm 90 and prayed bold prayers? We can because we have it even better than Moses did. We have it better because we have the fullest picture of how God is faithful to his covenants. The story of the Old Testament is one of God again and again and again being faithful to his covenant, but his people Israel again and again and again being faithless. So God took upon himself the responsibility of holding up both sides of this covenant and sent his Son, Jesus Christ. Christ came close, the fullest picture of God's nearness to us. In faithfulness to those covenants that God had made years ago to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Christ was faithful and he went to the cross, bearing the sins of his people. He bled and died on the cross and was raised again on the third day. When he did that, he redeemed us and put us into this story: the story of Moses and Psalm 90. He made us the sort of people who are able to pray bold prayers. He allowed us to know his character and therefore to be able to approach him, realizing that he's always faithful. He's nearby, so we can come to him and pray bold prayers like this.

Have you ever made this your prayer? Maybe you're the sort of person who reads Psalm 90 and recognizes that God is great and holy and that we're small and sinful. Maybe because of that realization you're scared to come into God's presence and bring all your prayers to him—even the difficult and bold ones. Maybe you see his greatness and think, “Who am I to bring prayers to him?” Psalm 90 shows to us that, regardless of where we are, we can approach him. He draws us near because he's faithful to his covenant. Come before him, therefore, and pray bold prayers.

Finally, because God is near to us, life is meaningful.

There are a couple other striking parts of this passage. The first is this. The first is that Moses spends a fair bit of time talking about how short our life is, and yet he says, “Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” That is sort of an odd prayer. If life is over in an instant, why do we need God to teach us to number our days aright? If life really is as short as Moses says, why does it matter how we live?

It is actually precisely because life is so short that we need to number our days aright—that we need to pray this prayer for God to help us live wisely, live rightly. Let me try to illustrate this with a story.

When I was younger, we had neighbors three doors down from our house, and they were the coolest neighbors because they had a pool. Now and again they would invite us to come swim, and those days were always the best. My mom at the end of our time would tell us it was time to go, and each time she would tell us that me and my siblings would beg for five more minutes. (Now, a couple of years ago, I was talking with my mother and she told me that she knew we were going to ask for five more minutes each time we swam, so she always told us it was time to go five minutes before it was actually time to go – my mother is a wise woman) She would grant five more minutes. In those five minutes, I swam with more zest and gusto and energy than any time before, because I knew my time was short. I was going to need to go home soon, and I was going to have to leave it all in the pool.

In essence, Moses is giving us the five minute warning. “Life is short, you’re going to need to go home soon. You’ve got to leave it all here. Live well, live wisely. Live for the Lord. Call out to him and ask him to make us number our days rightly so that we might live wisely.” Every year it seems a new distraction is invented, a new way to fritter our time away. It should lead us to say, “Lord, teach us to live our lives rightly so we may live well.”

The last thing strikes me comes at the very end of the Psalm. He says, *Establish the work of our hands for us, yes establish the work of our hands*. This section of the Psalm always gets to me. I always wonder what the work is that Moses is asking God to establish. Moses was the leader of a desert people, and the majority of his life was spent leading his people through the wilderness, wandering, day after day, until the whole of the unfaithful generation who lost their courage when standing at the entrance to the promised land died. Here is the leader of this wandering desert people praying, *Lord, establish our work*. What could this work possibly be that he wanted established? “Establish our wandering?” “Establish our gathering of manna?” I’m confused when I hear it. What work was being established?

I’m thankful, though, that Moses prayed it, because I know

that I can pray it too. I don't know about you, but sometimes I wonder what God could possibly be doing with my life. I'm 28 years old now, and I've only ever been in school. I wonder, “Lord, what could you do with a life like mine?” And so I pray, *Lord, establish the work of my hands*. I do this because I know that he is the one who establishes work – I don't. He's the one that takes my labor and makes it meaningful.

My grandfather, my dad's dad, was the principal of a school in the Chicagoland area. He loved that job and felt very fulfilled in it. Through a series of difficult circumstances he was asked to resign just at the point in his life when he was becoming the most productive. That was very difficult for him and my grandmother. He left this place where he felt worthwhile and as though his work was meaningful and he took a job working for his uncle—a shoe-store owner. My grandpa left a job of prestige and began getting on his knees, helping people get their shoes on so that they might purchase them. He said that was a really tough transition for him and he asked me once why God allowed that to happen. Why did God take him from labor that he found so fulfilling and place him into work where he didn't see much of a point.

I couldn't give him an answer at the time. I still can't speak to why God did what he did. What I can say is that if Moses prayed that God establish the work of a wandering desert people, then I can pray that God would establish the work of my grandpa as he's on his knees fitting shoes.

The beautiful thing is that we know that God did establish the work of Israel. In the book of Deuteronomy we have a record of Moses' final speech to the people of Israel before he died. In Deuteronomy 2:7, right before Israel was to enter the promised land, a land Moses would never see, he said, “Israel, the Lord has blessed all your work.” The Lord has established your work. It is an amazing truth. All their wanderings were somehow established. It is easy for us to see how that could work out now, isn't it? God was preserving a people for himself in the desert, and from that people would one day come the savior of the whole world. Jesus would come from that people. Talk about establishing work, the savior of the whole world came from that people. That is work that was established! Jesus came from them!

And Christ's work was also established. The redemption that Christ came to bring was established at the cross, and therefore

we have the assurance that God – the one who does establish work – will do the same with our own. Thus, we know that when we enter God’s rest we will be able to hear the beautiful words of our God, “Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter my rest.” God’s the one that establishes work, so let’s make this our prayer as well. Establish the work of our hands for us, yes establish the work of our hands.

To conclude, I’d just like to say that Mrs. Duimstra, my 4th grade teacher, was right. Life is short. Moses is right, life is short, and it is difficult. We’re like the grass that springs up in the morning, but in the evening is dry and withered. I’d also like to say, however, that those playwrights are only half right. They both got that life is short, but they both claimed that life was rubbish, or that it signifies nothing. We as Christians understand that though life is brief, it is profoundly meaningful because it is lived with a God who is close to us, it is lived in the face of a God who loves us, is close to us, and enables us to pray bold prayers. And it is lived with a savior, Jesus Christ, who has already had his work established, and therefore gives us the guarantee that at the end of all things, we are to hear, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” Amen. Let us pray.

The Man¹
Matthew 4:1-11
Tae Kyung Jun

My friend, George tried to mimic his father when he was a young child. His father was a magician. He amused the children by performing tricks. Kids liked to see his magic every day. He could change his scarf into a white rabbit and turned a rose into a dove. He could do everything. So, George wanted to be a magician like his father. Later he learned to juggle with four balls from his father, and he practiced the basic skills of magic.

When he was 17, he performed magic tricks for friends, neighbors, and his father's coworkers. He changed a \$1 bill into a \$100. It was amazing! \$100! This money could buy bread, lots of Coca Cola, and even pizza! He also changed my shabby clothes and dirty flip-flops into new ones. It was surprising! He became a star in my hometown. He could do everything his father did.

According to George, nothing is impossible when it comes to magic. He said, "You start to learn magic skills from me, you know? You don't need to go to church and you don't need to believe in God. Magic can create everything Jesus did. Can't it?" George believes that magic transcends Jesus works and magic is far above Jesus. For a while I believed his words.

Similar to George, the tempter in our story senses that he is a man who can do whatever he wants. He can change the stones into bread to fill the stomach. He can change a \$1 bill into \$100. He can change my shabby clothes and dirty flip-flops into new bright ones too. His eyes are sunken and ringed with dark circles. His hair is colorfully dyed, his flapping trousers are the latest fashion style, and his earrings are 99% gold. He also has the power to wind a person around his fingers. Surprisingly he has even two wings on his back.

Can you see him? He is flying above the hot desert. Suddenly he comes down and stands before another man who is wearing shabby clothes, dragging his dirty flip-flops through the desert. He has not eaten anything for forty days and forty nights. He's lost so much weight, he's nothing but skin and bones, a mere skeleton. If you give him bread to fill his stomach, he will

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probably grab it quickly and bite it immediately. Can you discern who the man is? The man is Jesus, the Son of God.

Have you ever thought the Son of God has not felt the hunger pangs of starvation? Jesus feels unequal to the conversation but he answers in a weak voice, "I'm very hungry." Why does Jesus fast for forty days and forty nights? Can anybody in here so much as skip dinner tonight? My goodness! That would kill us. Jesus absolutely needs to fill his stomach with bread and he needs to drink cool water to quench his thirst.

And it is at this moment of dire need that the tempter comes to Jesus and says, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread and eat it to fill your stomach first. But if you fail to change them to bread, you'll realize you're not the Son of God and you must die soon from hunger." The tempter knows man's weakness and focuses on Jesus' empty stomach. The tempter wants to deceive Jesus with bread.

Then the tempter snatches Jesus, he spreads his wings, flies to the holy city and makes Jesus stand on the highest point of the temple and says again, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down! Your father will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you in their hands." Doesn't Jesus, as a man, want to reveal his supernatural power? The tempter wants to push Jesus to use his power and cause him to show myself to be the Son of God but without the Cross. Ultimately, the tempter desires that Jesus will choose to be a great person among the people, instead of the Son of God; similar to the serpent tempting Eve into wanting to be like God, in Genesis. Again, the tempter takes Jesus to a very high mountain and shows Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and its glory and says, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." The tempter shows his ostentation and display of self, just as my friend George did. Why does he show off his power to Jesus? He wants Jesus to become a great man but not the Son of God. Doesn't Jesus want to use his power, like his father?

The tempter also comes to us and says, "If you are a daughter/son of God, show me your faith and power." Many people might answer him, "Well..., to be honest, I don't have enough faith. I'm still prone to some degree of sin. I'm a sinner. But if you can stand me up, I'll be happy. I want to be successful, to have power, and to have enough money to be wealthy." In other words, people do not want to be poor. Many see the poor as a

burden. Almost 30,000 children die from hunger every day in the world. Many are jobless and wander in the street. Hunger forces people to return to their sinful life.

I have another friend, John. He is not a great magician and he has no parents (his mom and dad died when he was a young child). He is a poor orphan who always wears shabby clothes and drags his dirty flip-flops. He usually skips breakfast and lunch. He drinks a lot of water every day. At first, I did not realize why John drank a lot of water every day. But now, I think I know.

After John and I graduated from middle school, we entered different high schools. He entered a school far from my hometown, so far, that he had to stay in a dormitory. On the other hand, I entered a school that I was able to commute to from my home; just like from Englewood or Burton to Calvin Seminary. John learned martial arts in school because it was free and they gave him bread, milk, and new clothes, though it was a uniform. So, John trained really hard and became strong. I heard he could knock five persons off at a time. John became a leader and had the power to lead others, not only at school but also other school students in my hometown. Later, many people came to like John, and followed him. He was really a popular man! But, as soon as he became famous, he also learned to drink alcohol, enjoy smoking, and have sexual relations, rather than maintaining a relationship with God the Father. John soon fell into temptation. I'm sorry to say that the tempter overpowered him. What can John do?

But sometimes dramatic things happen when people fall into temptation. The same Jesus in our reading today shows us man's weakness. Jesus is very hungry and he panics with temptation. But, God pats him on the back and reminds him of his promise to defeat the tempter. So, Jesus finds refuge from three hard temptations in God's Word. Jesus assures us that although it is very hard to defeat temptation, with God's Word, all things are possible. Jesus, by his grace, conquered all temptation by using the "sayings of God." All of Jesus' answers, by his grace, react with the "sayings of God" to the tempter. We can see Jesus, by his grace, continuing to say God's Word, though he has no power to live on.

Jesus says, "It is written: people do not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God"; "It is also written, 'do not put the Lord your God to the test'"; "Away from

me, Satan! You shall worship the Lord your God and serve him only.”

Even though Jesus does not have the power to say these things, he, by his grace, keeps holding onto the “sayings of God.” Finally the tempter runs away from Jesus. Jesus defeats Satan! And God sends his angels to Jesus.

And now Jesus smiles, because the angels bring the new white clothes that Jesus likes to wear, new leather shoes, and prepares a lot of food. Jesus sits on his chair in the hot desert restaurant and picks up his chopsticks to eat expensive sushi, though he wants to eat only bread and milk.

God, by his grace, the man (Jesus) stands up to Satan using God’s word to defeat him. By the grace of God, all things are possible.

And now Jesus encourages us to stand up before our temptations. Jesus enables us to face severe temptations. He says, “Don’t try to ignore your temptation, but face up to it by my grace. I promise to help you.”

Finally my friend, John, went to jail because he knocked five people over again, only this time it wasn’t for a TaeKwondo demonstration. Three years later, he gets out of prison and decides to put the past behind him and start life anew. Before he leaves our hometown, John and I have a chance to go to a prayer center on the top of a mountain. We pray to God and fast for seven days and seven nights. Is it possible to stop eating for seven days and seven nights? God enabled us to only seek his grace for seven day, drinking a little water without bread and milk. It’s not an amazing thing because Jesus didn’t eat or drink for forty days and forty nights!

Three days in, while praying on the top of the mountain, suddenly, John cries out and praises God. God comforts him and God gives him his grace. He hears God’s voice, “My son, I will use you among the nations and I will give you my power, my strength, and my word. Remember, John, I will always stand you up for my Kingdom.” After fasting, John smiles at me and says, “God will always be with you. I will miss you...” Then he leaves for the United States.

Twelve years later, I came to the United States too, and I can see that John is a changed man. He is no longer a man bound to his shadowy past. I can’t see any of John’s darkness. He gives me a hug and tells me, “Tae Kyung! I really missed you! You

know? God, by his grace, all things are possible! As you can see, God changed me to follow Jesus.” He continues to say, “my friend, I want to say this. Don’t ever forget this. Jesus defeats Satan for you and me, Jesus conquers death for you and me, Jesus rises from the dead for you and me.” Words from his mouth are the “sayings of God.” His heart is filled with Jesus.

By the grace of God, he can, and indeed, he does, enable us to change ourselves and also enables us to defeat any temptations from Satan. From Monday through Saturday, why don’t we defeat our bad habits? God enables you to break away from any temptations through Jesus. You will conquer temptation like the man, Jesus, did.

‘But She Will Be Saved Through Childbearing’

Take and eat not from the Tree
Of know’dge of good and evil
Lest on that day Man surely die
To taste a tree so lethal

But, lithely branches, shapely bole,
Femina Formosissim’Arbor
And so plucked he from tree the fruit
When lively branches offered

Still blessed she our dear’st mother
Blessed he, fruit of her womb
Hung from tree soured to vinegar
The sweetest fruit man to consume

So, take and eat now from the Tree
Where good fruit hung for evil
And on that day taste *man alive!*
The glory of God Eternal

—*Michael Lee Kornelis*

Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit but Imitate God:
Ephesians 4:25-5:2¹
by Hanbyul Kang

In Ephesians 4:22-24, the apostle Paul exhorts his Ephesians readers “to put off the old self” and “to put on the new self.” Following this passage, Ephesians 4:25-5:2 gives various applications of this exhortation for the Christian life. But the text is not just a list of various admonitions. Along with the renewal of life, Paul points out an important and fundamental truth which is at the root of these admonitions—“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit.”² Those who grieve the Holy Spirit will practice the vices listed in the text. In contrast, those who do not grieve the Holy Spirit will maintain their virtues. They are beloved children of God, and will try to imitate God. The Holy Spirit will work in those believers to make them like God. Following this central theme, this paper will analyze Ephesians 4, dealing with the Greek and textual variants, examining the interpretive and theological issues raised, and providing practical applications.

Structure

The main structure of Ephesians 4:25-5:2 is:³

4:25: negative-positive (“Put off falsehood and speak truthfully”)

4:26a: positive-negative (“In your anger do not sin”)

4:26b: positive (anger is limited until the sunset)

4:27: positive (no foothold for the devil)

4:28: negative-positive (stop stealing but work)

4:29: negative-positive (no unwholesome talk, rather, what is helpful)

4:30: negative (“do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God”)

4:31-32: negative-positive (remove harsh traits and take on

¹ Originally submitted to Dr. M. Avila in March 2013 for NT526: Ephesians.

² Peter T. O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 345. O’Brien says, “This admonition not to grieve the Holy Spirit, which is of central importance to the whole paragraph (4:25-5:2), provides a further motivation for the earlier warnings.”

³ Klyne Snodgrass, *Ephesians: The NIV Application Commentary*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 248.

gentle ones)

5:1: positive (“be imitators of God”)

5:2: positive (“live a life of love”)

The passage mainly shows negative-positive structure. Only v. 30 has a negative structure and 5:1-2 gives positive commands. Also, instead of a negative-positive structure, v. 26a shows a positive-negative structure, which has 26b and 27 as subordinate commands.

Exegesis

4:25: Διὸ ἀποθέμενοι τὸ ψεῦδος λαλεῖτε ἀλήθειαν ἕκαστος μετὰ τοῦ πλησίον αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἐσμὲν ἀλλήλων μέλη. Verse 25 begins with διὸ (“therefore”), which indicates that this text is connected to the previous context. The Greek participle ἀποθέμενοι (“putting off”), which already occurred in v.22, can be translated as a verb (“put off”; NIV) or participle (“putting off”; ESV, KJV, NAS, RSV). Clinton Arnold argues that this participle should be interpreted as an imperative⁴ while O’Brien maintains that the participle ἀποθέμενοι functions as an imperatival participle.⁵

Paul begins, “Laying aside falsehood, speak the truth.” Moreover, the apostle emphasizes that it is not enough to stop lying passively but one must speak the truth actively. The Greek text of “speak the truth” is similar to the Septuagint (LXX) version of Zechariah 8:16. The following chart compares the two:

Zechariah 8:16 (LXX)	Ephesians 4:25
λαλεῖτε ἀλήθειαν ἕκαστος πρὸς τὸν πλησίον αὐτοῦ	λαλεῖτε ἀλήθειαν ἕκαστος μετὰ τοῦ πλησίον αὐτοῦ
speak the truth—each of you—to his[or her] neighbor	speak the truth—each of you—with his [or her] neighbor

⁴ Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians: Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 299. Arnold states that it is consistent with the pattern in which negative commands are mentioned first, and positive commands follow them throughout the passage.

⁵ O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 337; Imperatival participle may function just like an imperative. This use of the participle is not to be attached to any verb in the context, but is grammatically independent per Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basic*, 650.

The only difference is to replace *πρός* with *μετά*. with the corresponding article. The LXX translates the Hebrew *אמת* as “truth,” “faithfulness,” or “righteousness.”⁶ The motivation of ‘speaking the truth’ in the Zech. 8:16 is different from that in Eph. 4:25. In Zechariah it argues against untrue, divisive judgments and evil devices to speak the will of God. But Eph. 4:25 appears to be ethical and sociological.⁷ However, it is not the only reason for having this motivation. The real motivation should be the fear since God always watches human hearts (cf. 1 Sam 16:7; 2 Chr 16:9; Matt 9:4; Luke 16:15; Rom 2:11).

4:26: ὀργίσεσθε καὶ μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε· ὁ ἥλιος μὴ ἐπιδύετω ἐπὶ [τῷ] παροργισμῷ ὑμῶν. Two imperatives are used in this passage. The difficulty of the text is that if it is a command ‘Be angry,’ this translation implies justification of the anger. Although anger is not intrinsically sinful, the Bible mostly describes human anger as negative. God is the only one who can have righteous anger. There are debates among the commentators on how to translate this phrase properly. Most of them today think that the first imperative is concessive or conditional.⁸ Daniel Wallace handles this passage thoroughly in his article and categorizes possible translations into seven options:

- (1) Declarative indicative: “You are angry, yet do not sin.”
- (2) Interrogative indicative: “Are you angry? Then do not sin.”
- (3) Command imperative: “Be angry, and do not sin.”
- (4) Permissive imperative: “Be angry (if you must), but do not sin.”
- (5) Conditional imperative: “If you are angry, do not sin.”
- (6) Concessive imperative: “Although you may get angry, do not sin.”
- (7) Prohibitive imperative: “Do not be angry and do not sin.”⁹

⁶ Markus Barth, *Ephesians*, (New York: The Anchor Bible Doubleday, 1974), 512.

⁷ Markus Barth, *Ephesians*, 512.

⁸ Snodgrass, *Ephesians: The NIV Application Commentary*, 249.

⁹ Daniel B. Wallace, “Orgizesthe in Ephesians 4:26: Command or Condition?” *Criswell Theological Review* 3 (1989): 354.

First of all, the option of translating the text as a declarative indicative is to be eliminated. R. O. Yeager argues that “ὀργίζεσθε can be present middle indicative” with concessive καί: “Although you are provoked, do not go on sinning.”¹⁰ However, considering the flow of the reasoning from v. 25-32 and the context of ten imperatives and two hortatory subjunctives, a declarative indicative is not appropriate here. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether καί can be considered concessive between two imperatives. Besides, the phrase of v. 25 is the same as that of Psalm 4:4 from the Septuagint, where it is translated as an imperative.

Second, the interrogative indicative should be also removed for the same reason: to use indicative with imperative is uneasy among the imperatives. Third, the translation as prohibitive imperative should be rejected. According to this translation, the negative μή governs both ἀμαρτάνετε and ὀργίζεσθε. Yet ὀργίζεσθε cannot be governed by the negative particle due to the word order.

Concerning permissive, conditional, and concession usages, grammarians usually do not distinguish between conditional imperative and concessive imperative.¹¹ Semantically, concession is one *kind* of condition.¹² But many of them make a distinction between permission and condition. In the text, not much difference exists between permission and condition because of μή ἀμαρτάνετε—“be angry, if you must, but don’t sin” and “if you are angry, don’t sin.”¹³ Therefore, permission and condition are treated as one here—condition. Consequently, two options are on the table—condition or command.

When translating the phrases of John 7:52 ἐραύνησον καὶ ἴδε

¹⁰ R. O. Yeager, *The Renaissance New Testament*, 18 vols. (Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican, 1983), 307.

¹¹ A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, (4th ed.; Nashville: Broadman, 1934), 948.

¹² Wallace, “Orgizesthe in Ephesians 4:26,” 357.

¹³ Wallace, “Orgizesthe in Ephesians 4:26,” 357-358.

(“search and see”) and 1:46 ἔρχου καὶ ἴδε (“come and see”) as a condition, they will be “If you search, you *will* see,” and “If you come, you *will* see” respectively. This translation sounds fine at first but Wallace points out that the second imperatives are changed into future indicative.¹⁴ If Eph. 4:25 is translated this way, it will be, “If you are angry, you *will not sin*.” Therefore, Wallace concludes that a command is more appropriate than a conditional sense.¹⁵ According to this option, Eph. 4:26 places a moral obligation on believers to be angry depending on circumstances.¹⁶

On the other hand, Psalm 4:4 in the LXX uses the exact same expression ὀργίσεσθε καὶ μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε. This could suggest that Paul is directly quoted the LXX here. However, there is a problem with this view. The word ὀργίσεσθε renders רָגַז in Hebrew Bible, which does not mean “be angry” but “tremble, shake.” The Targum also translates this word as “tremble.”¹⁷ Hence, it is not likely that Paul directly made use of the text of Psalm 4:4 from Septuagint.

Sunset was considered as the time limit for resolving the day’s activities in the ancient world. It is said that the Pythagoreans resolved their anger before the sun sets.¹⁸ Deuteronomy 24:15 says, “You shall give him his wages on his day before the sun sets.” A similar idea is found in the Essenes’ Damascus Rule —“They shall rebuke man his brother according to the commandment and bear no rancor from one day to the next.”¹⁹ In the same verse Paul uses another Greek word for anger, παροργισμός (“angry mood, anger”) at the end. The word

¹⁴ Wallace, “Orgizesthe in Ephesians 4:26,” 368.

¹⁵ Wallace, “Orgizesthe in Ephesians 4:26,” 371.

¹⁶ Wallace, “Orgizesthe in Ephesians 4:26,” 372. O’Brien (*The Letter to the Ephesians*, 339-40) says, “Since anger is not explicitly called ‘sin’, it has been suggested that the reference here is to righteous indignation, while the anger of v. 31 which is to be put away is evidently unrighteous anger. There is a proper place for righteous anger.”

¹⁷ Wallace, “Orgizesthe in Ephesians 4:26,” 358.

¹⁸ O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 340.

¹⁹ Andrew Lincoln, *Ephesians: Word Biblical Commentary*, (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 302.

παροργισμός is probably synonymous for ὀργή, with a prefix παρά.²⁰ This term is rarely used in biblical Greek.²¹

4:27: μηδὲ δίδοτε τόπον τῷ διαβόλῳ. The term διάβολος is used for a slanderer in classical literature.²² The ‘devil’ is described as adversary, foe, deceiver, accuser in the Old Testament and rendered as Satan. The translation ‘foothold’ (τόπος) is literally ‘place.’ The Greek idiom ‘to give place to’ means to give someone or something an opportunity.²³ If Christians do not solve the anger problem promptly as mentioned in a previous verse, the devil will use it for his own purpose.²⁴ Uncontrolled anger will give the devil the place to work. It does not mean that the devil is the source of the anger.²⁵

4:28: ὁ κλέπτων μηκέτι κλεπτέτω, μᾶλλον δὲ κοπιάτω ἐργαζόμενος ταῖς [ιδίαις] χερσὶν τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἵνα ἔχη μεταδιδόναι τῷ χρείαν ἔχοντι. This is the third admonition of Paul. In the Old Testament, theft is a sin and the New Testament also prohibits theft (Mark 10:19). In contrast, diligent work was highly valued (Proverbs 6:6-10; 10:4; 31). Ancient Greeks and Romans considered stealing was wrong,²⁶ and stealing was replaced by hard work.²⁷ The present participle (ὁ κλέπτων) is used here and some suggest that it should be translated as an imperfect, “he who used

²⁰ Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 314; Hoehner comments, “It seems that the prepositional prefix (παρά) intensifies this word. Whereas ὀργή is the disposition of anger, παροργισμός is provocation, exasperation, violent anger or a ‘state of being intensely provoked.’ A good rendering is ‘festering anger, provocation, or irritation.’” (*Ephesians*, 621-22).

²¹ Wallace, “Orgizesthe in Ephesians 4:26,” 365.

²² Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, 622.

²³ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 314.

²⁴ O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 340.

²⁵ O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 341.

²⁶ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 315.

²⁷ Andrew Lincoln, *Ephesians: Word Biblical Commentary*, 303.

to steal” with frequentative or durative force.²⁸ However, since the participle is not affected by time, the better translation is a noun with the article—‘the thief.’²⁹

There is a textual issue in the phrase ταῖς [ιδίαις] χερσὶν τὸ ἀγαθόν. The differences of the manuscripts are numerous:

Manuscripts	Greek Text
ⲛ ² B a vg st ww ῑ ^{46, 49vid}	ταῖς χερσὶν τὸ ἀγαθόν
P 6. 33. 1739. 1881 <i>pc</i>	τὸ ἀγαθόν
L Y 323. 326. 614. 630. 945. <i>al</i>	τὸ ἀγαθόν ταῖς χερσὶν
629. <i>pc</i>	αὐτοῦ/ ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ τὸ ἀγαθόν
ⲛ* A D F G 81.104. 365. 1175. 1241 ^s . 2462 <i>pm it vg^{cl}</i> syr goth arm eth	ταῖς [ιδίαις] χερσὶν τὸ ἀγαθόν

Based on the external witnesses, ταῖς ἰδίαις χερσὶν is preferred. The classical usage of ἰδίαις was common in colloquial Greek at that time. However, since ἰδίαις was absent in ῑ^{46, 49vid} B, the UBS committee decided to enclose ἰδίαις within brackets.³⁰ Paul exhorts his readers to work hard and help those who are needy.³¹

²⁸ Lincoln, *Ephesians: Word Biblical Commentary*, 303; O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 342; F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), 175 [§339(3)].

²⁹ O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 342.

³⁰ Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, (New York: United Bible Societies, 1975), 537-38.

³¹ Barth, *Ephesians*, 517: “Abbott calls this motivation “striking and characteristic” but utters his own objection in the name of “the law of nature.” He is convinced that according to natural law the prime object of work is the working man’s own subsistence and the support of his family.”

4:29: πᾶς λόγος σαπρὸς ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν μὴ ἐκπορευέσθω, ἀλλὰ εἴ τις ἀγαθὸς πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν τῆς χρείας, ἵνα δῶ χάριν τοῖς ἀκούουσιν. Paul changes the topic in the fourth admonition to how the believers should talk one another. The Greek word σαπρὸς means “bad, evil, unwholesome.”³² It could refer to “rancid” fish, “rotten” wood, “withered” flowers, “putrid” smell, or “diseased” lung.³³ Christians should be cautious of the words they speak. In contrast to σαπρὸς words, Christians’ words should be beneficial to others.

The word χρείας may describe want, poverty, a request, (military) service, business, function, intimacy, a rhetorical device, or a pregnant sentence.³⁴ Grammatically it is the objective genitive of οἰκοδομὴν (“build up”),³⁵ or a genitive of quality,³⁶ signifying ‘the needed up-building.’ Paul uses the language of construction work to exhort his readers to build up one another with good speech.

4:30: καὶ μὴ λυπεῖτε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐν ᾧ ἐσφραγίσθητε εἰς ἡμέραν ἀπολυτρώσεως Paul commands his readers not to grieve the Holy Spirit.³⁷ The word λυπέω means to ‘wound,’ ‘insult,’ ‘cause pain,’ or ‘produce remorse.’³⁸ The language of Paul in the text echoes Isa. 63:10 in which the people of Israel rebelled against God and grieved his Spirit, so that God became their enemy. In Isa. 63:10 of the Septuagint, the

³² Walter Bauer, F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 913.

³³ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 316

³⁴ Barth, *Ephesians*, 518.

³⁵ Arnold, *Ephesians: Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, 305.

³⁶ O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 345.

³⁷ To grieve the Holy Spirit of God is different from to quench the Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19).

³⁸ James F. Holladay Jr., “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit,” *Review & Expositor*, 94 (1997): 84.

verb *παροξύνω* is used, meaning ‘to cause a state of inward arousal,’ ‘urge on,’ ‘stimulate.’ It is notable that Isa. 63:10 is in the indicative (*παροξύναν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον αὐτοῦ*) in the LXX but Paul has turned it into an imperative.³⁹

Isaiah 63:10 (LXX)	Ephesians 4:30
<i>παροξύναν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον αὐτοῦ</i>	<i>μὴ λυπεῖτε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ</i>
They grieved his Holy Spirit	Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God

‘Grieving’ the Holy Spirit is not a minor case of hurt feelings but an instance of immense suffering, like a spouse’s betrayal.⁴⁰ It tells us the Holy Spirit is a person who can be offended and lied to as in the story of Anaias and Sapphira (Acts 5). Therefore, Paul warns his readers not to grieve the Holy Spirit. If believers do not have the ear to listen to the word of God and obey, it makes the Holy Spirit grieved.

According to Isa. 63:9-13, God delivered the people of Israel out of the slavery of Egypt and was present with them in the wilderness, feeding them with manna. God dwelt with them by the tabernacle and gave them numerous signs and miracles, but the people of Israel failed to believe in God and suffered from calamities. Therefore, it is not enough that God is *with* them but God should be *in* them as Jer. 31:31-34 says. In contrast to the old covenant, which is the Ten Commandment, God talks about the new covenant in which he will put his Spirit in them and write his law in their heart. Despite God’s presence among them, they broke the old covenant. They needed something more—sealing. The Spirit is the instrument of the sealing for those who already experience God.

The term *σφραγίζω* refers to a seal to secure, sealing up, or marking for identification.⁴¹ First of all, “to seal” means *to make*

³⁹ O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 346. Markus Barth states that *μὴ λυπεῖτε* resembles grammatically Ten Commandments which have only prohibition (Barth, *Ephesians*, 547).

⁴⁰ Holladay Jr., “Do not Grieve the Holy Spirit,” 84.

⁴¹ Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 980.

inaccessible.⁴² In the book of Daniel, King Darius sealed the gate of the cave to keep anyone from having an access. The high priests set a guard after the Roman sealed the tomb of Jesus in order to prevent the disciples from stealing his body. In Rev. 20:3, Satan is thrown into the abyss and it is sealed. A vision is also sealed, so that no one can know and understand it (Dan. 12:4). Secondly, it means *to give authority*.⁴³ In Gen. 41:42, Pharaoh gave Joseph a signet ring, authorizing him to enact his policies.

Third, σφραγίζω means *ownership*.⁴⁴ By the seal of the Spirit, God places his own divine imprint on our hearts forever.⁴⁵ Some commentators hold that this sealing refers to either water baptism or occurs during that baptism.⁴⁶ However, water baptism is not a topic in the flow of the text. The meaning of ‘sealing’ here is much more than that because the Holy Spirit himself seals. As Romans 8:9 says, those who do not have the Spirit of God do not belong to Christ. Strikingly, Jesus Christ said that he would ask the Father and send the Spirit by his name, so that the Paraclete might be with believers forever (John 14-16).

4:31: πᾶσα πικρία καὶ θυμὸς καὶ ὀργὴ καὶ κραυγὴ καὶ βλασφημία ἀρθήτω ἀφ' ὑμῶν σὺν πάσῃ κακίᾳ. The first thing to be removed is πικρία. This word means bitterness, animosity, anger, and harshness.⁴⁷ The following words are *rage* and *anger*, which the

⁴² Eldon Woodcock, “The Seal of the Holy Spirit,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 155 (1998): 40.

⁴³ Eldon Woodcock, “The Seal of the Holy Spirit,” 142.

⁴⁴ Eldon Woodcock, “The Seal of the Holy Spirit,” 146. In Revelation 7:3, for example, 140,000 people of God are sealed on their forehead, representing that they belong to God.

⁴⁵ Gordon D. Fee, “Some Exegetical and Theological Reflections on Ephesians 4:30 and Pauline Pneumatology,” *Spirit and Renewal* (1994): 129-144.

⁴⁶ Eldon Woodcock, “The Seal of the Holy Spirit,” 148.

⁴⁷ Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 813. This word also is a metaphor for the description of something that has a bitter taste such as a plant or water (e.g., the water at Marah in Exod. 15:23) (Arnold, *Ephesians*, 307).

Stoics distinguish, the former denoting an initial explosion of rage and the latter a more settled feeling of gnawing hostility.⁴⁸ The Greek word βλασφημία denotes defamatory or abusive speech. The word κακία means wickedness, malice, ill-will, malignity, and Paul regards all these vices as κακία.

4:32: γίνεσθε [δὲ] εἰς ἀλλήλους χρηστοί, εὐσπλαγχνοί, χαριζόμενοι ἑαυτοῖς καθὼς καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐν Χριστῷ ἐχαρίσατο ὑμῖν. Using the adversative conjunction δὲ, Paul lists the virtues in contrast to the vices of v. 31. Paul exhorts believers to be χρηστός (fine, kind, benevolent) and εὐσπλαγχνός (tender-hearted, compassionate). In the Old Testament, kindness is one of the attributes of God (Psalm 136; Jer. 33:11).⁴⁹ As Christians receive underserved grace from God through Jesus Christ, genuine believers will take it for granted to forgive one another in the community. The Greek verb χαρίζωμαι generally means “to grant a favor” or “to give cheerfully or graciously,”⁵⁰ but here is translated “forgive.”

A slight textual variant exists: some manuscripts (ŕ^{49vid} B D^{gr} K Y 33 1739 syr^{p, h} arm *al*) support the reading ἡμῖν instead of ὑμῖν. It may have been accidental because of the confusion of the pronunciation between *υ* and *η* in later Greek.⁵¹

5:1: γίνεσθε οὖν μιμηταὶ τοῦ θεοῦ, ὡς τέκνα ἀγαπητά. The preposition οὖν denotes that the text continues from the context of the preceding passages. The word μιμητής means an “imitator,

⁴⁸ Lincoln, *Ephesians: Word Biblical Commentary*, 308.

⁴⁹ O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 351.

⁵⁰ Barth, *Ephesians*, 523.

⁵¹ Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, (New York: United Bible Societies, 1975), 538.

copier” positively “impersonator” or negatively “imposter.”⁵² This command reminds readers of the breathtaking commandments of God and Jesus Christ: “You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy” (Lev. 19:2), and “Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matt. 5:48). It is an impossible commandment for humans to keep but only those who possess the Spirit of Christ can imitate God the Father by the power of the Spirit. The beloved children of God are those who have his Spirit in their hearts.

5:2: και περιπατεῖτε ἐν ἀγάπῃ, καθὼς και ὁ Χριστὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς και παρέδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν προσφορὰν και θυσίαν τῷ θεῷ εἰς ὄσμῃν εὐωδίας. The term ἀγάπη means “affection, love, the love of God and Christ.”⁵³ Jesus Christ showed his love for human beings by death on the cross. The prepositional phrase ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν shows the object for which Christ laid down his life.⁵⁴ It is not just a mere example but requires God’s children to follow the steps of Christ. Jesus Christ says, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me” (Luke 9:23).

The word θυσία means a burnt offering or sacrifice.⁵⁵ In the Old Testament they had a sacrificial system to deal with their sins. The text says that Christ’s death is an offering and sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.⁵⁶ Jesus’ death was the radical obedience to God, and God exalted him to the highest, so that everyone might kneel before Jesus Christ (Phil. 2).

The textual variants are ἡμᾶς (î⁴⁶ ⚭^c D G K Y 33 614 1739

⁵² Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, 644-45. Interestingly, Philo concludes that we ought to flee from earth to heaven and this flight means to become like God as far as possible and to become like him, i.e., holy, just, wise, similar to the text.

⁵³ Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 6.

⁵⁴ Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, 648.

⁵⁵ Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, 648.

⁵⁶ The term ὄσμῃ refers to an “odor, smell,” whether it is pleasant or unpleasant (Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, 650).

it^{pt} vg syr^{p, h} goth arm *al*) and ὑμᾶς (⌘* A B P 81 it^{pt} cop^{sa, bo} eth *al*). A slight preponderance of weight favors ἡμᾶς based on the external witnesses.⁵⁷

Conclusion

Ephesians 4:25-5:2 addresses how to ‘put off the old self’ and ‘put on the new self.’ Paul declares to his readers the most important thing in Christian faith—the Holy Spirit. The way to put on the new self is to wear Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. Once the Holy Spirit comes to our heart, since he is God himself, the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit is powerful enough to change Christians and make them imitate the Father. What believers should be cautious of is grieving the His Spirit and giving an opportunity to the devil. If they keep those in mind, the renewal of life will be done by the Holy Spirit who dwells in the hearts of Christians. Therefore, to accept the resurrected Jesus Christ by the Spirit is the only way not to grieve God but please the Father, becoming his beloved children.

⁵⁷ Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 538.

Judah's Speech: Genesis 44:18-34¹

Sa Myung Kang

The Pericope and Its Theme: Genesis 44:18-34

Genesis 44:18-34 shows God's complete transformation of Judah and his brothers that made possible their reconciliation with Joseph in Genesis 45. Judah's transformation resulted in God's reunification of the family as his channel of blessing to all nations.

In Genesis 44, as in the Joseph narrative (Gen. 37-50), Judah takes the leading role among the brothers.² As for Judah's character, it has undergone a big change in the story.³ He appears first as an insufficient leader in Genesis 37, and even gets worse in Genesis 38. However, "His primary role begins in 43:8-9, where he guarantees the safety of his brother Benjamin, and it climaxes in his willingness to take the place of Benjamin in 44:18-34."⁴ The hostility he harbors towards Joseph, the favored son, in chapter 37 is replaced here by a desire to protect Benjamin from harm.⁵ His speech qualifies him to be not only a leader, but a channel of God's blessing!

Judah is especially worthy to be considered a leader. It is Judah, rather than Reuben, who persuades Jacob to send Benjamin with him to Egypt (Gen. 42:37-43:15). Judah urges Joseph not to make Benjamin his slave, and offers himself in place of Benjamin. His speech eventually causes Joseph to reveal himself (Gen. 44:14-45:1). Waltke emphasizes Judah's extraordinary character:

¹ Originally submitted to Dr. M. Williams in Spring 2012 for OT501: Art of Hebrew Narrative.

² Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible Book by Book: A Guided Tour* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 27.

³ Jacob also matured "from a man who loves too much and not wisely, who is all too prone simply to surrender to seeming tragedy (37:34-35; 42:35-38), to one who can take charge of a situation (43:11-14)." See W. Lee Humphreys, *Joseph and His Family: A Literary Study* (Studies on Personalities of the Old Testament; Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1988), 25.

⁴ Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible Book by Book*, 27.

⁵ Mark A. O'Brien, "The Contribution of Judah's Speech, Genesis 44:18-34, to the Characterization of Joseph," *CBQ* 59 (1997): 436.

Jacob rewards Judah with kingship because Judah exemplifies Israel's ideal of kingship. The brother who at his beginning of the Joseph narrative sells Joseph into slavery later *voluntarily* offers himself to become a slave in the place of Benjamin because of his compassion for his father (Gen. 44:33–34). Joseph *involuntarily* was sold into slavery. Judah is the first person in the Bible to offer himself as a substitute to suffer the penalty for another.⁶

The passage shows how God transforms those he has chosen through his providence. The transformation of Judah and his brothers results in their reconciliation with Joseph. This reconciliation is significant since God's purpose to bring his blessings to all nations was intended not only for Joseph but also his brothers.

Structure and Literary Characteristics

Many scholars agree that this part of Judah's speech is "the longest and most impassioned speech in Genesis."⁷ This speech develops in a very controlled and well constructed way. The speech of Judah can be divided into three parts:⁸ (1) vv. 18-29: Judah's review of the past, (2) vv. 30-32: Judah's concern about the likely consequences resulting from the separation of Benjamin, and (3) vv. 33-34: Judah's offering of himself, the climax of the speech. As far as literary characteristics are concerned, even though the focus will be on the transformation of Judah, it is important to keep in mind Judah's transformation is representative of the rest of the brothers.

The Favoritism Motif

Judah changed how he viewed the favoritism of his father (Gen 44:20, 30). Judah predicts Jacob's unbearable sadness if they return to him without Benjamin. He underlines the bond of affection between Jacob and Benjamin by saying "His life is bound up with his." At one time, the favoritism of one son [Jo-

⁶Bruce K. Waltke and Charles Yu, *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 689.

⁷Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16-50* (WBC 2; Dallas, Tex.: Word, 1994), 425.

⁸Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 425.

seph] over the others brought out the brothers' hatred, leading them to sell him as a slave. As a result, they all experienced the tragic consequences of their sin. Here, however, something has changed in their mind. Judah and his brothers are willing not only to understand their father, but also protect him from a broken heart despite its basis in favoritism. Now the same favoritism is cited as grounds for mercy; the love for his father must override "all other grudges."⁹

The Repeated Mention of Jacob

This repeated mention of his father shows precisely the change of Judah's stance.¹⁰ The focus of Judah's plea is his father.¹¹ His entire speech is motivated by the deepest empathy for his father.¹² Judah mentions his father explicitly fourteen times in his speech. Adding that to his pronominal references, Joseph refers to his Jacob some twenty-five times.¹³ He also points out the effect of Benjamin's departure on Jacob, twice through quotations (Gen. 44:22, 27-29) and twice in his own words (v. 31).¹⁴ This shows that his attitude to Jacob has surprisingly changed. He was the man who led his brothers to deceive their father. Now his speech demonstrates his strong affection to his father.

The Responsibility of Judah

In verse 32, Judah reveals his bearing the responsibility of

⁹ Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 426. Alter explains this as follows: "it is a painful reality of favoritism with which Judah, in contrast to the earlier jealousy over Joseph, is here reconciled, out of filial duty and more, out of filial love." See Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 174.

¹⁰ In a broader sense, Meir Sternberg argues persuasively that the "structure of repetition" device enables biblical narrators to reveal the indirect portrayal of character effectively. See Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1985), 375.

¹¹ John G. Butler, *Analytical Bible Expositor: Genesis* (Clinton, Iowa: LBC Publications, 2008), 416.

¹² Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 175.

¹³ Butler, *Genesis*, 416.

¹⁴ George Savran, "The Character as Narrator in Biblical Narrative," *Prooftexts* 5 (1985): 7.

what he formerly promised by saying כִּי עֲבָדְךָ עָרַב אֶת־הַנֶּעֱרַב “Since your servant became surety (עֲרַב) for the lad.” Judah had promised before his father that he would be surety (אֶעֱבְרָנוּ) for Benjamin (Gen. 43:9). Now His speech shows his changed disposition to what he has already promised. He looks completely different from his appearance in

Genesis 38, where he had no sense of responsibility. There, he was the irresponsible one who did not keep the promise to Tamar (Gen. 38:11) because of his loss. The Judah we encounter here demonstrates in his speech his transformed sense of responsibility for his promises.

The Self-sacrifice of Judah

The climax of his plea (Gen. 44:32-34) clearly reveals that Judah complete transformation into a channel of blessings to others. Judah sees that to detain Benjamin would mean his father’s death.¹⁵ So, Judah begs Joseph for a reprieve, offering himself as a substitute for Benjamin to avoid his father’s demise. This is a huge change. He appears as “the first voluntary self-sacrifice recorded in the Bible.”¹⁶ The love for his father makes Judah offer himself voluntarily to be a slave instead of Benjamin, the one more loved by his father.

These features mentioned above show that Judah, as a representative of his brothers, has drastically changed his attitude toward his father and the one loved more by the father. This transformation shows that God’s faithful work in keeping his promises to Jacob’s family despite their wickedness, which threatens his promises. They become the appropriate channel of God for blessings to all nations.

Role Within the Joseph Story

The main theme of the Joseph story is that God uses Joseph to preserve his channel of blessing to all nations in spite of great threats to its continuing existence and fulfillment. The first threat is initiated within Jacob’s own family. In the first scene of the

¹⁵ George W. Coats, *Genesis, with an Introduction to Narrative Literature* (Forms of the Old Testament Literature 1; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 292.

¹⁶ Waltke and Yu, *An Old Testament Theology*, 111.

Joseph story, they were all inappropriate as God's channels of blessing to all nations. Their evil characters are the greatest challenges to God's plan when they try to kill Joseph and sell him as a slave, separating him from his family. God, however, works in Jacob's family through the tragic separation of Joseph.

The passage serves as a turning point in the Joseph story, showing how God has resolved the challenge to his plan. In order to use Joseph to preserve his channel of blessing to all nations, God needed to transform the family of Jacob both individually and, through reconciliation, corporately. For that, God worked in the life of Joseph and his brothers, using various events to transform them. Judah's speech clearly shows his transformation.¹⁷ Judah, as a representative for the rest of his brothers, expresses genuine love for Jacob and Benjamin.¹⁸ In the beginning of the Joseph story, the tragedy of Jacob's family begins with hatred,¹⁹ whereas this passage, the climax of the Joseph story, resolves that tragedy with love. Judah's speech exemplifies how the entire family has reached the place God wanted them: Judah voluntarily offers himself in place of another to set him free. His transformation proves a decisive factor for the reconciliation of the entire family. This reconciliation reinforces the fact that God uses Joseph to preserve his channel of blessings to all nations.

¹⁷ Claus Westermann and John J Scullion, *Genesis 37-50: A Continental Commentary* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2002), 134. The Masoretes themselves "commence a new *Parashah* with v 18, rightly perceiving that Judah's speech is the turning-point in the relations between Joseph and his brethren." See John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis* (New York: Scribner, 1910), 485.

¹⁸ Laurence A. Turner, *Announcements of Plot in Genesis* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1990), 157. According to O'Brien, as the most surprising thing he argues that "the narrator portrays the brothers as changed men at the time of their first encounter with Joseph." See O'Brien, "The Contribution of Judah's Speech," 436.

¹⁹ Separation is a common outcome of anger in the Old Testament: Gen. 27:44-45; Exod 11:8; Num 24:10; 1 Sam 20:34, 29:4; 2 Sam 3:8, 6:8, 19:42; 2 Kgs 5:11-12; Esth 1:12, 7:7; 1 Chr 13:11; 2 Chr 25:10. See Matthew Richard Schlimm, *From Fratricide to Forgiveness: The Language and Ethics of Anger in Genesis* (Siphrut 7; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 59.

Role Within the Book of Genesis.

The main theme of Genesis is that God separates out one through whom he would bless all nations.²⁰ The story of Joseph fits into that theme, exemplifying God's separating actions to preserve his chosen people to fulfill his promise. God uses the evil work of Joseph's brothers for good, which separates Joseph from his family (Gen. 37). Even though that separation caused by hatred is not God's intention, God uses it to give both Joseph and his family an experience of God's faithfulness. By the providence of God, Joseph is sent ahead of his family to Egypt so God could preserve Israel from the severe, seven-year famine that would have exterminated the family.

The transformation of Judah and the brothers in the passage reveals how God works within those whom he chooses to reinforcing his plan. They are made appropriate servants by reconciliation so that God could preserve his channel of blessing to all nations through Joseph. Their transformation does not mean that they become perfect. Rather, it shows how God works in the lives of his people; the sovereign God is able not only to use evil deeds for good, but also to transform his people in such a way as to bring out his image in them. Judah is the first one in the Bible who offers himself as a substitute to suffer the penalty for another: the complete opposite of where he started, at the head of his brothers selling Joseph into slavery.

Relation to God's Redemptive Work in Christ.

Viewing this story in a wider context, Judah represents transformed beings bearing the likeness of Christ, for serving as God's channel of blessings to all nations. It can be seen in Genesis that the author intends to relate Judah to Perez, who is an allusion to David (cf. Gen. 38). He is blessed as "the lion" through whose lineage will come the Davidic king (49:8–12) and eventually the messianic king himself, Christ Jesus.²¹ Jesus is the one

²⁰ According to Michael Williams, God's *separating actions* to bring divine blessings for the nations through him who he has chosen is the main theme of Genesis. See Michael Williams, *How to Read the Bible through the Jesus Lens: A Guide to Christ-Focused Reading of Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012).

²¹ Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible Book by Book*, 33.

who lies down his life for his friends (Jn. 15:13). It is Jesus who makes his people resemble his own image (Gal. 2:20). He is also the one who wants his people to follow him, and imitate his life for self-sacrificial love for others (Jn. 15:2).

Jesus also uses the transformation of his people to fulfill God's redemptive work. He is a friend of sinners and the weak. He heals them and changes them into tools for his kingdom, revealing his saving work. Surprisingly enough, his disciples are even all betrayers. Yet, Jesus never forsakes them. Rather he transforms into fitting servants to join in God's redemptive work. Moreover, he builds his church on the foundation of the apostles (Eph. 2:20). They deserve their title because of their mirroring of Christ's self-sacrifice by giving up their lives for the body of Christ, the church. Jesus indeed makes his disciples appropriate channels for blessings to all nations!

Relation to the New Testament

Jesus also transformed Paul, further reinforcing God's plan for blessing all nations. Paul himself experienced the same transforming work of God in his life as Judah did, as he confesses in Romans 8:28-29. "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brothers." It is clear how Paul, formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an arrogant man, understands how God transforms those whom he chooses (1 Ti. 1:13, 15, cf. Ac. 7:58; 8:1, 3; 9:1). God's grace was abundant for the great sinner, bringing faith and love in Christ Jesus (1 Ti. 1:14; Ac. 9:4-6). He became one who gave his life as a sacrifice for others, pleasing to God. God transformed the worst man to preach the good news to all nations.

The apostle Mark's life shows the same pattern. Mark was rejected by Paul when he asked to join him on a missionary journey, having abandoned Paul on a previous trip (Ac. 13:13). It caused Paul to have a dispute with Barnabas, thus separating them (Ac. 15:37-39). Even though there is nowhere to indicate the fact in the Bible how Mark is transformed, he must be changed by God's grace. Mark later accompanied Paul and they were even in prison together (Col. 4:10). Moreover, Paul acknowledges that Mark is helpful to him in his ministry (2 Ti.

4:11). Even though Mark was once problematic for Paul's ministry, later by the grace of God, he became the man who strengthened the ministry of Paul.

Significance for Believers Today

The transformation of Judah and his brothers proves a remarkable example for believers today. Their example gives believers the confidence that not only is God always with them, but he also works within them, transforming them into better likenesses of Christ. Furthermore, God makes their transformations play an important role in his plan to bless the nations.

Sometimes, however, believers feel as if they are inappropriate for the task of passing on the blessings of God to others because of their weaknesses, sins, or difficult circumstances. They view themselves as the early Judah, who was eager to harm others.

Nevertheless, believers can have hope in Christ. Believers must remember that God's grace is abundant for sinners like Judah and Paul as well as for us. It is God who works for the good of those who are called according to his purpose in all things and every situation, as he proved in astonishing fashion in the lives of Judah and Paul. How can anyone have predicted Judah and Paul's transformation? They were deeply unworthy, with no hope. Yet, we see now how Judah was totally transformed into a worthy servant by God's work, willing to sacrifice himself for another. It can be seen in the life of Paul as well (Phil. 2:17). We see in the attitudes of Judah and Paul the likeness of Christ, who died for our sin to save us and give us eternal life in him. God, the God who was with Judah and Paul and transformed them, is not only with us, but is also transforming us into useful servant for his wondrous plan.

Believers, therefore, should not be discouraged because of their unpleasant situations or conditions. Rather, they should have confidence that by the grace of God they will be appropriate channels of blessings to all nations as Judah and Paul. For they can be sure of this very thing, that the one who began a good work in them will perfect it (Phil. 1:6). Believers are called to join the transforming work of God with their whole hearts (Phil. 2:12). They will experience many difficult situations over the course of time. That is because God disciplines those he loves and sometimes punishes them so that they may share his holiness (Heb. 12:6-10). However, ultimately God makes the

transformation of believers play a very important role in his plan. It will reinforce the work of God.

Consequently, many will be astonished because of their transformation and see the presence of God in their lives, thus glorifying God. Then the people of God will humbly confess with Paul, “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me” (2 Cor. 15:10). We can do nothing but thank God for the transforming power of God’s amazing grace!

‘The LORD will Provide’

I took my son, my only son
We walked up Mount Moriah
Heavy shoulder’d the wood the boy
An altar pitch’d with resin
To be lai’d down in dark yard of
Wilted grass and dirt soulless
Writ I on altar stone his name
For fear God should forget him

There bound my son, my only son
For death the strongest binder
Stretch’d out my hand the rose a blade
No angel came to stay it
Raised up my eyes lo and behold!
No ram caught in the thistle
Not ‘til my son with me walk down
Walk down from Mount Moriah

— *Michael Lee Kornelis*

A Calvinist Critique of Just Peacemaking Theory¹

Sooncheol Lee

Christian theories on war and peace offer perennial fodder for controversy and debate.² Two traditional Christian answers concerning war are Just War Theory³ and Pacifism.⁴ Just War theorists contend that violence could be justified if it inevitably sustains justice. Pacifists, on the other hand, assert that violence

¹ Originally submitted to Mr. Nathan J. Archer in December 2012 for BT801: Research Methodology

² On the debate over war, see David Clough and Brian Stiltner, *Faith and Force: A Christian Debate about War* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2007).

³ Concerning Just War Theory, see Darrell Cole, *When God Says War Is Right: The Christian's Perspective on When and How to Fight* (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbook Press, 2002); Oliver O'Donovan, *The Just War Revisited* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Hans Boersma, "Violence," in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Kevin Vanhoozer (London: SPCK; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 834-837; Arthur F. Holmes, *War and Christian Ethics: Classic and Contemporary Readings on the Morality of War* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005); Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (New York: Basic Books, 2006); Davis Brown, *The Sword, the Cross, and the Eagle: The American Christian Just War Tradition* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008); Daniel M. Bell, *Just War as Christian Discipleship: Recentering the Tradition in the Church Rather than the State* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2009); John Howard Yoder, Theodore J. Koontz, and Andy Alexis-Baker, *Christian Attitudes to War, Peace, and Revolution* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2009).

⁴ Concerning Pacifism, see John Howard Yoder, *Nevertheless: The Variety and Shortcomings of Religious Pacifisms* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1992); idem, *The Politics of Jesus: vicit Agnus noster* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994); idem, *Nonviolence: A Brief History* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010); John Milbank, *The Word Made Strange: Theology, Language, Culture* (Oxford, UK; Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1997); Stanley Hauerwas, *The Wisdom of the Cross: Essays in Honor of John Howard Yoder* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999); Thomas Trzyna, *Blessed are the Pacifists: The Beatitudes and Just War Theory* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2006).

could not be in harmony with peace in any circumstance. After the development of nuclear weapons, Just War theorists continue their stance on the grounds of nuclear deterrence, whereas pacifists argue for a move toward nuclear disarmament.⁵ In the late 20th century, a handful of scholars have suggested Just Peacemaking Theory as a new paradigm for the problem of war.⁶

⁵ On Nuclear Deterrence, see William V. O'Brien, "Just-war Doctrine in a Nuclear Context," *Theological Studies* 44 (1983): 191-220; John D. Johnson and Marc F. Griesbach, *Just War Theory in the Nuclear Age* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1985); James Turner Johnson, *Can Modern War Be Just?* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984); Robert L. Holmes, *On War and Morality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989); Koos van der Bruggen, "Ethics and Deterrence after the Cold War," in *Studying War-No More?: From Just War to Just Peace*, ed. Brian Wicker (Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing House, 1993), 22-32. About Nuclear Disarmament, see Frank Epp, *A Strategy for Peace: Reflections of a Christian Pacifist* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1973); John S. Feinberg and Paul D. Feinberg, *Ethics for a Brave New World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1993).

⁶ Stassen collaborates with twenty-two Christian ethicists in order to develop Just Peacemaking Theory as a new Christian approach to war and peace. He works with Seven Brion-Meisels, David Bronkema, John Cartwright, Michael Dyson, Duane K. Friesen, Alan Geyer, Barbara Green, Gary Gunderson, Judith Gundry-Volf, Theodore Koontz, John Langan, Edward LeRoy Long Jr., David Lumsdaine, Patricia McCullough, Peter Paris, Rodger A. Payne, Bruce Russett, Paul W. Schroeder, Michael Joseph Smith, David Steele, Ronald Stone, Susan Thistlethwaite in his book: *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices for Abolishing War* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 1998).

Glen Harold Stassen is the formulator and a major current proponent of Just Peacemaking Theory.⁷ Stassen's Just Peacemaking Theory pursues nonviolent actions to prevent war, but affirms the possibility of United Nations intervention by means of violence in order to achieve peace.⁸ Stassen has written most comprehensively on the subject of Just Peacemaking in *Just Peacemaking: Transforming Initiatives for Justice and Peace*, *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices for Abolishing War*, and *Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context*.⁹

Stassen's Just Peacemaking Theory is propounded as a new paradigm that severs Just War Theory from Pacifism, blends a biblical faith commitment with political engagement, and intends to unite persons of various faiths and cultures in actually diminishing war and other forms of politically aroused violence.¹⁰ Stassen maintains that Just Peacemaking Theory can be a better answer to the problem of war than the ones provided by tradi-

⁷ Glen Harold Stassen, "A New, Transformative Peacemaking Ethic," *Review and Expositor* 82 (1985): 257-272; idem, "New Paradigm: Just Peacemaking Theory," *Council of Societies for the Study of Religion Bulletin* 25 (1996): 27-32; idem, "Just Peacemaking as Hermeneutical Key: The Need for International Cooperation in Preventing Terrorism," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 24 (1998): 171-191; idem, "The Unity, Realism, and Obligatoriness of Just Peacemaking Theory," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 23 (2003): 171-194; idem, "'Yes' to Just Peacemaking: Not Just 'No' to War," *Church & Society* 96 (2005): 64-81; idem, *Living the Sermon on the Mount: A Practical Hope for Grace and Deliverance* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006). Other works on Just Peacemaking Theory include Lisa Sowle Cahill, "Just Peacemaking: Theory, Practice, and Prospects," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 23 (2003): 195-212; Ronald H. Stone, "Realist Criticism of Just Peacemaking Theory," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 23 (2003): 255-267; Simeon O. Ilesanmi, "So that Peace May Reign: A Study of Just Peacemaking Experiments in Africa," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 23 (2003): 213-226.

⁸ Stassen, *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices*, 8-10.

⁹ Glen Harold Stassen, *Just Peacemaking: Transforming Initiatives for Justice and Peace* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992); idem, *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices*; Glen Harold Stassen and David P. Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003).

¹⁰ Cahill, *Just Peacemaking*, 1.

tional ethics like Just War Theory and Pacifism, especially in a nuclear context.¹¹ Despite his claims of novelty and mediation, Stassen’s Just Peacemaking Theory looks very much like traditional formulations of Christian Just War Theory, adapted to a nuclear context. My thesis is that Stassen’s Just Peacemaking Theory is another approach following that of John Calvin regarding the problem of war in a nuclear context. Stassen’s theory seems to combine some aspects of Just War Theory and Pacifism, and has fundamental connections with Calvin’s Just War Theory with regard to the circumstance of nuclear war.¹²

Previously, there have been no scholars who have examined Stassen’s Just Peacemaking Theory through a Calvinist perspective. In this paper, I will analyze the substantial elements of Stassen’s Just Peacemaking Theory alongside Calvin’s Just War Theory. I do not intend to argue that the Just Peacemaking Theory could be an effective method to prevent warfare. However, I do

¹¹ Stassen, “New, Transformative Peacemaking Ethic,” 259-260. Stassen does not give any credence to the ethics of the crusades in spite of mentioning the ethics of the crusades as one of the traditional answers to the war problem. In this paper, I will also define the traditional answers to warfare as Just War Theory and Pacifism.

¹² John Calvin, *Calvin’s Institutes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Associated Publishers and Authors, Inc., 1997); idem, *Commentary on Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1999); idem, *Commentary on Isaiah* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1999); idem, *Commentary on Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1999); idem, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1999); idem, *Commentary on Timothy, Titus, and Philemon* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1999); idem, *Sermons on Deuteronomy* (Edinburgh: Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1987); idem, *Sermons on Galatians* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1997). Other works on Calvin’s Just War Theory include Franklin Charles Palm, *Calvinism and the Religious Wars* (New York: H. Holt and Company, 1932); Arthur C. Cochrane, “John Calvin and Nuclear War,” *Christian Century* 79 (1962): 837-839; William Kyle Smith, *Calvin’s Ethics of War* (Annapolis: The Academic Fellowship, 1972); Paul Munday, “John Calvin and Anabaptist on War,” *Brethren Life and Thought* 23 (1978): 239-247; Keith Boudreaux, *Calvin and the Sermon on the Mount: An Investigation into His Theological Method* (Vancouver, British Columbia: Regent College, 1987).

intend to argue that Stassen's Just Peacemaking Theory shares fundamental similarities with Calvin's Just War Theory in a nuclear context.

First, I will examine what Stassen's Just Peacemaking Theory is, comparing it to Just War Theory and Pacifism to more clearly understand its core assumptions. On this foundation, I will utilize Calvin's exegesis to analyze the biblical basis of Stassen's Just Peacemaking Theory, mainly in light of the Sermon on the Mount. In the end, I will analyze the practices of Stassen's Just Peacemaking Theory and demonstrate that Stassen's Just Peacemaking Theory adds nothing significant to Calvin's Just War Theory when considered for a nuclear age. It is my position that Stassen could be thought of as a modified disciple of Calvin regarding the problem of war in a nuclear context.

What is Stassen's Just Peacemaking Theory?

Just War Theory proposes several criteria for waging war. A just war must meet all the criteria; otherwise, it is wrong to fight.¹³ For instance, the traditional Just War theorist, Augustine of Hippo, insists that there are certain criteria under which it is just to go to war (*jus ad bellum*), and certain circumstances that determine whether a war is fought justly or not (*jus in bello*).¹⁴ The former criteria are those of a just cause, the right authority, the right intention, proportionality of ends, and last resort; the latter are those of the proportionality of means and the noncombatant protection/immunity.¹⁵ Calvin, in his *Institutes*, also suggests certain criteria concerning the lawfulness of war: a just cause, the proportionality of means, a just intention, and last resort.¹⁶

Pacifism insists that people must never make war but instead should be peacemakers. For example, the prominent Pacifist John Howard Yoder has made a powerful and persuasive biblical argument for nonviolence as crucial to the calling of Christians in *Politics of Jesus*.¹⁷ Like Yoder and Stanley Hauerwas, John

¹³ Stassen, *Just Peacemaking: Transforming Initiatives*, 232.

¹⁴ O'Brien, "Just-war Doctrine," 192.

¹⁵ Boersma, "Violence," 836.

¹⁶ Calvin, *Institutes*, 4. 20. 10-12.

¹⁷ Stassen, *Just Peacemaking: Transforming Initiatives*, 231.

Milbank considers Jesus’ way of life as one founded on “non-rivalry, non-retaliation and mutual sharing.”¹⁸

Just Peacemaking Theory is the most recently developed theory for the ethics of peace and war, designed to stand beside Just War Theory and Pacifism.¹⁹ As Stassen explains, Just Peacemaking has a different emphasis than the traditional positions. “The older paradigms debate whether war is justifiable; The Just Peacemaking Theory focuses discussion on the proactive practices that prevent war and create peace.”²⁰ Therefore, Just Peacemaking Theory has a somewhat different domain than Just War Theory and Pacifism.

The ten practices in Just Peacemaking Theory are grouped under three theological themes: transforming initiatives, working for justice, and building community (See Table 1).²¹ The first four peacemaking practices are initiatives based on an understanding that discipleship is the authoritative, Christian model for moral practice, with emphasis on Christ’s call for his disciples to humbly pursue peacemaking.²² This emphasis on peacemaking initiatives is based especially on the discovery that throughout the Sermon on the Mount the acme of every teaching is always a transforming initiative.²³

Table 1: Ten Practices of Just Peacemaking Theory

Three Divisions	Ten Practices for Abolishing War
1. Peacemaking Initiatives	1. Support Nonviolent Direct Action
	2. Take Independent Initiatives to Reduce Threat
	3. Use Cooperative Conflict Resolution

¹⁸ Milbank, *The Word Made Strange*, 312; Boersma, “Violence,” 835.

¹⁹ Stassen, *New Paradigm*, 27.

²⁰ Glen Harold Stassen, “Just-Peacemaking Theory,” in *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*, ed. Green B. Joel (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 442.

²¹ Cahill, “Just Peacemaking,” 201.

²² Stassen, “Just-Peacemaking,” 443.

²³ Stassen, “Just-Peacemaking Theory,” 443.

4. Acknowledge Responsibility for Conflict and Injustice
- 2. Justice**
 5. Advance Democracy, Human Rights, and Religious Liberty
 6. Foster Just and Sustainable Economic Development
- 3. Love and Community**
 7. Work with Emerging Cooperative Forces in the International System
 8. Strengthen the United Nations and International Efforts for Cooperation and Human Rights
 9. Reduce Offensive Weapons and Weapons Trade
 10. Encourage Grassroots Peacemaking Groups

Stassen's Just Peacemaking Theory was born out of the scriptural discovery that the structure of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount is not twofold antitheses but rather three transforming initiatives. For example, Stassen explains that Matthew 5:21-26 commands someone involved in a relationship of anger or hostility to go to the adversary and maintain peace.²⁴ According to Stassen, there is no command not to be angry; the command is to go, talk, and make peace, an essential instruction in Jesus' time of increasing conflict.²⁵ Stassen paid attention to nonviolent confrontations as the analogous practice to make peace in this time. "Mohandas Gandhi's and Abdul Gaffar Khan's practice of nonviolent direct action in India's struggle for independence, Martin Luther King Jr.'s similar practice in the civil rights struggle, and practices of nonviolent direct action spreading worldwide are clear analogies

²⁴ Stassen, "Just-Peacemaking Theory," 443-444.

²⁵ Stassen, *Living the Sermon on the Mount*, 63-65

of Jesus’ teaching for our historical context.”²⁶

The next two just peacemaking practices are those of justice. The biblical prophets repeatedly insist that returning to God and practicing justice is the way to prevent the destruction brought on by war. As Isaiah proclaimed justice based on God’s compassion for those suffering injustice, so also did Jesus.²⁷ Stassen exemplifies the practice of justice by referencing the conversion of dictatorships in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Eastern Europe to democracies.²⁸

The last four practices on community building are based both on Jesus’ teaching that all on whom God shines the sun and drops rain, even one’s enemies, are to be included in the community of neighbors, and his reciprocal action with a Samaritan woman (John 4:5-30) and the Syrophenician woman (Mark 7:24-30).²⁹ In practice, Stassen acknowledges this involves the need for worldwide police action through the United Nations.

Acting alone, states cannot solve problems of trade, debt and interest rates; of pollution, ozone depletion, acid rain, depletion of fish stocks and global warming; of migrations and refugees seeking asylum; of military security when weapons rapidly penetrate borders; and of international terrorism. The problems are international. Therefore, the practice of supporting cooperative action via the United Nations and regional organizations is crucial.³⁰

Stassen even confirms the use of the military force of the United Nations in cases when it is necessary to stop a massacre.³¹ Such a humanitarian intervention could be the condition of using a military power in regards to Just War. Moreover, Stassen approves the possibility that humanitarian intervention does not have to be the one and only motive. “The intervention may still be just even if its motives are mixed. For example, In-

²⁶ Stassen, “Just-Peacemaking Theory,” 444.

²⁷ Stassen, “Just-Peacemaking Theory,” 444.

²⁸ Stassen and Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 171-172.

²⁹ Stassen, “Just-Peacemaking Theory,” 444.

³⁰ Stassen and Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 172.

³¹ Stassen, *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices*, 8.

dia's intervention in former Eastern Pakistan and Tanzania's in Idi Amin's Uganda are often cited as unilateral interventions that nevertheless ended humanitarian disaster."³² In the end, Stassen's Just Peacemaking Theory consists of a wide variety of nonviolent actions in addition to restricted violent means utilized by the United Nations to prevent war.

Both Just War Theory and Pacifism aim at the same goal, that is, the restraint of war. But there is a difference: Just War theorists restrict the possibility of war by means of strict criteria on war as much as possible, whereas Pacifists demand nonviolent action in any and all cases. "[Pacifism] is categorically opposed to war and all forms of violence while [Just War Theory] insists on the moral ambiguity or even the nonmoral character of war, and therefore grants its justifiability if certain criteria are met."³³ Consequently, the critical difference between Just War Theory and Pacifism is whether or not violence could be acceptable.

Just Peacemaking Theory is similar to Pacifism in that they both encourage nonviolent action to prevent war and make peace. But Just Peacemaking Theory also agrees with Just War Theory by affirming military violence, especially when it is taken up by the United Nations to stop massacres. Therefore, Stassen's Just Peacemaking Theory tries to combine the two traditional Christian positions in order to prevent war.

Stassen's attempt to find a new paradigm on peace and war has led him to focus the discussion on proactive practices to prevent war and maintain peace, especially in a nuclear context.

Just War Theory and Pacifism debate whether we should participate in war when it comes. But that is too late. If nuclear war comes, we will all participate in it, whether we want to or not. ... We need another Christian ethic ... an ethic of preventive, transforming initiative ... that can guide us in realistic and freeing action now before the war occurs. ... I believe there is such a Christian ethic.³⁴

Stassen does not intend for Just Peacemaking Theory to re-

³² Stassen, *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices*, 164.

³³ Ilesanmi, *So that Peace May Reign*, 214.

³⁴ Stassen, "New, Transformative Peacemaking Ethic," 259-260.

place Just War Theory and Pacifism, but to supplement them.³⁵ Just Peacemaking Theory’s emphasis on preventing war makes it unique. While the practices of Just Peacemaking Theory all seem useful, they are not able to bring universal peace or the abolition of war.³⁶ Stassen’s Just Peacemaking Theory does not deal with the problem of what happens if all efforts of proactive practices fail. It seems necessary for Stassen to present more persuasive answers to the anticipated failure of preventative practices.

The Biblical Basis of Just Peacemaking Theory

Stassen constructs Just Peacemaking Theory from his exegesis of the Sermon on the Mount. Traditional exegesis claims that Jesus’s sermon emphasizes the interior aspects of the law rather than the commandments themselves. But Stassen contends that the Sermon on the Mount has a threefold structure, not the traditional twofold structure.

Stassen contends that there are fourteen triads in the Sermon on the Mount (See Table 2).³⁷ These fourteen triads are organized into three steps: (1) traditional righteousness, (2) diagnosis of vicious cycle, and (3) transforming initiative.³⁸ The emphasis in the threefold pattern, claims Stassen, lies on the last step: transforming initiatives.

Table 2: Fourteen Triads of the Sermon on the Mount

Traditional Righteousness	Diagnosis of Vicious Cycle	Transforming Initiative
1. You shall not kill.	Nursing anger or saying, “You fool!”	Go, be reconciled while there’s time.*
2. You shall not commit adultery.	Looking with lust—adultery in heart.	Remove the cause of temptation (see Mark 9:43-44).

* Bold text indicates Matthean passages paralleled in Luke, Mark, or James.

³⁵ Stassen, *Just Peacemaking: Transforming Initiatives*, 231.

³⁶ Stone, “Realist Criticism,” 266.

³⁷ Stassen, *Just Peacemaking: Transforming Initiative*, 42-46.

³⁸ Stassen, *Living the Sermon on the Mount*, 63-183.

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3. Who divorces, give certificate. **Divorcing involves you in adultery.** (Go, be reconciled.)
4. You shall not swear falsely. **Swearing by anything involves you with evil/judgment.** **Let your yes be yes, your no be no** (see James 5:12).
5. Eye for eye, tooth for tooth. Violently resisting. **Turn other cheek. Let him have cloak/shirt.** Go two miles. **Give to one who begs.**
6. Love neighbor and hate enemy. If you greet only brethren... Loving and greeting only those who love you, as tax collectors and Gentiles do. **Love your enemies, and pray for them.** **Be all-inclusive, as your Father in heaven is.**
7. When you give alms... Sounding a trumpet, as hypocrites do. Don't let your left hand know what your right gives.
8. When you pray... Praying in public as hypocrites do. Pray in secret.
9. Praying with empty words. Thinking their much speaking will be heard. **Pray like this: Our Father...**
10. When you fast... Looking dismal as hypocrites do. Anoint your head and wash your face.
11. **Do not invest treasures on earth** (Luke 12:33-34: Sell them and give alms). **Moths, rust, and thieves consume; waste, steal, and your heart and eye get divided and darkened.** **Invest your treasures in God's reign. Your whole self will be light.**
12. **No one can serve two masters.** **You'll hate one and love the other. Can't serve God and Money.** **Don't be anxious about possessions, but seek first God's reign and justice.**

more traditional twofold structure.

In his commentary on Matthew 5:21-26, Calvin affirms the traditional teaching of the Ten Commandments because he knows that the Pharisees abase the law.⁴⁴ In opposition to the corruption of the law by false expositions, Christ vindicates it and points out the law's true meaning from which the Jews had strayed.⁴⁵ There is no difference between Calvin and Stassen on the interpretation of the Ten Commandments to this extent. What differs between Calvin and Stassen is Jesus' emphasis on this remark. Calvin explains that Jesus wants to lead people to a higher level of the law, that is, love as fulfillment of the law.

Till now, the scribes have given you a literal interpretation of the law, that it is enough, if a man keep his hands from murder and from acts of violence. But I warn you, that you must ascend much higher. Love is the fulfilling of the Law, and I say that your neighbor is injured, when you act towards him otherwise than as a friend.⁴⁶

Calvin interprets Matthew 5:21-26 through a twofold structure: "You have heard of old, don't kill; however, I say don't even be angry." Calvin recognizes that Jesus is interpreting the Ten Commandments by drawing out rules for holy and godly living.⁴⁷ For Calvin, Jesus in Matthew 5:21-26 wants the disciples to not only refrain from murder, but also to avoid anger as well. "According to Calvin, the mistake of the Pharisees was to restrict the teaching of the Ten Commandments to the outward political sphere only. Instead, Jesus teaches us that we must go far deeper than that and understand that even Moses required the spiritual services of the Law and not merely an outward observance."⁴⁸

Stassen emphasizes reconciliation in Matthew 5:24 as a transforming initiative. However, Matthew 5:23-26 contains two short

⁴⁴ Calvin, *Commentary on Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, Vol. 1, 187.

⁴⁵ Calvin, *Commentary on Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, Vol. 1, 187.

⁴⁶ Calvin, *Commentary on Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, Vol. 1, 188.

⁴⁷ Calvin, *Commentary on Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, Vol. 1, 183.

⁴⁸ Boudreaux, *Calvin and the Sermon on the Mount*, 57. See Calvin, *Institutes*, 2. 8. 6-11 for three rules of interpreting the Decalogue.

parables that help explain and confirm the theme on anger.⁴⁹ Consequently, Calvin finds it more acceptable to identify the essence of Matthew 5:21-26 as “Don’t even be angry” rather than “Be reconciled.”

The other triads could be analyzed in the same way. It seems more plausible that Jesus’ intention in Matthew 5:27-30 is “Don’t even look in lust, because that is committing adultery in your heart” rather than “Remove the cause of temptation.” Calvin’s traditional, twofold structure is a more convincing explanation of what it seems Jesus intends to tell the disciples in the Sermon on the Mount than Stassen’s threefold pattern. Calvin would not recognize Stassen’s triads for the Sermon on the Mount. Ultimately, Stassen’s triads seem more suited to supporting his Just Peacemaking Theory than explaining Jesus’ teachings in the Sermon on the Mount.

The Practices of Just Peacemaking Theory

Stassen’s ten practices are not very different from Calvin’s thoughts as stated in his *Institutes* and commentaries. Calvin contends that magistrates who are appointed by God should provide for common peace and safety.⁵⁰ Calvin also stresses the importance of peacemaking in his commentary on Romans 12: “We are not to violate peace, except when constrained by either of these two things [*if it be possible, and, as far as you can*].”⁵¹ In the same vein, Calvin’s commentary on Genesis 31 emphasizes the refined self-interest that brought about a non-violent solution to the conflict between Laban and Jacob by moving them (almost indiscernibly) from uncompromising extremes to an armed neutrality.⁵²

Stassen suggests peacemaking initiatives are one of three basic practices to move forward in abolishing war. Four practices come out of this practice that provide for nonviolence, reconciliation, and conflict resolution. Calvin handled the subject from another standpoint, that of loving God and loving our neighbor.

⁴⁹ Boudreaux, *Calvin and the Sermon on the Mount*, 58.

⁵⁰ Calvin, *Institutes*, 4. 20. 9.

⁵¹ Calvin, *Commentary on Romans*, 287-288.

⁵² Calvin, *Commentary on Genesis*, Vol. 2, 904; Smith, *Calvin’s Ethics on War*, 123.

“Our Liberty was ... given us ... that, having peace with God in our minds, we should live peaceably among men.”⁵³ Calvin maintains that “in general, therefore, all violence and injustice, and every kind of harm from which our neighbor’s body suffers, is prohibited.”⁵⁴ This aligns with Stassen’s suggestion of supporting nonviolence, taking actions to reduce threat, using cooperative conflict resolution, and struggling to remove injustice.

Compared with other divisions, the justice part seems to be vulnerable because it has only two practices for abolishing war. Stassen contends deprivation of human rights amounts to an absence of peace and that government should more highly esteem human rights such as civil rights, economic rights, and participation rights.⁵⁵ Although Calvin did not live in a democratic age, he thought the government ordained by God should not betray the liberty of the people. This principle, is certainly not opposed to Stassen’s idea that liberty should be a priority.⁵⁶

In the section “Love and Community”, Stassen struggles to systemize worldwide cooperation for abolishing war. Calvin, however, elaborated well on the leagues or alliance of neighboring countries.

On this right of war depends the right of garrisons, leagues, and other civil munitions. By garrisons, I mean those which are stationed in states for defense of the frontiers; by leagues, the alliances which are made by neighboring princes, on the ground that if any disturbance arise within their territories, they will mutually assist each other, and combine their forces to repel the common enemies of the human race; under civil munitions, I include everything pertaining to the military art.⁵⁷

The United Nations, Stassen’s exemplar of international cooperation, could be regarded as an amplified conception of alliances between neighboring countries that Calvin references. But Stassen’s United Nations emphasizes proactive actions to prevent

⁵³ Calvin, *Institutes*, 3. 19. 11.

⁵⁴ Calvin, *Institutes*, 2. 8. 39.

⁵⁵ Stassen, *Just Peacemaking: Transforming Initiatives*, 103.

⁵⁶ Calvin, *Institutes*, 4. 20. 31.

⁵⁷ Calvin, *Institutes*, 4. 20. 12.

war, departing from Calvin’s idea of forming alliances to join armies against common enemies of the human race. Moreover, Calvin claimed that both kings and their people must sometimes take up arms for public retaliation.⁵⁸

Calvin asserted that the civil government is ordained by God to keep peace in order that godliness and honesty be promoted.⁵⁹ Calvin also regarded war as a tool of the state, a police action, for securing an instrument of justice and peace.⁶⁰

Although lawful, war ought to be nothing else than an attempt to obtain peace; yet sometimes an engagement is unavoidable, that they who have the power of the sword may use it, and defend themselves and their followers by arms. War, therefore, is not in itself to be condemned; for it is the means of preserving the commonwealth.⁶¹

Calvin, then, sees one potential role of civil government as a police force intended to maintain peace by means of force.

Stassen affirms the use of the military army of the United Nations for humanitarian reasons. The United Nations serves as a police force intended to promote justice and peace. There is no intrinsic difference between the role of the United Nations in Stassen’s Just Peacemaking Theory and the character of civil government in Calvin’s Just War Theory. Both the United Nations and civil governments have the authority to take police action in order to maintain justice and peace.

Even though Stassen permits the United Nations the right of using military force, Stassen does not grant the same right to individual countries.

Regardless of what you believe about the efficacy of military force, you know clearly ... that no army needs to be stationed on your corner. This book does not argue about the need for armies; ... we need effective practices that restrain violence and create movement in the direction of justice.⁶²

⁵⁸ Calvin, *Institutes*, 4. 20. 11; Munday, “Calvin and Anabaptists,” 243.

⁵⁹ Calvin, *Commentary on Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, 25-28.

⁶⁰ Cochrane, *Calvin and Nuclear War*, 838.

⁶¹ Calvin, *Commentary on Isaiah*, Vol. 1, 78.

⁶² Stassen, *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices*, 9-10.

Contrary to Stassen, Calvin affirms the need for military armies of individual countries because Calvin believes that Jesus also admits the necessity of war and soldiers.

If Christ had condemned all wars, the soldiers seeking counsel concerning salvation would have been advised to cast away their weapons and withdraw completely from military service. “But they were told: ‘Strike no man, do no man wrong, be content with your wages’ (Luke 3:14). When he taught them to be content with their wages he certainly did not forbid them to bear arms.”⁶³

For Calvin, “participation in military affairs was ordained by God and helpful in the propagation of his righteousness in a chaotic world.”⁶⁴

Of course, some would counter by saying that the concept of war has changed from what it was in Calvin’s 16th century, to Stassen’s 20th century. Calvin would never have been able to imagine the sheer destructive power of a nuclear bomb. Although nuclear armament may simply be a pragmatic political measure to enable governments to protect their countries and maintain justice and peace, it seems likely that Calvin would oppose nuclear war as an extremely inhuman and immoral means of waging warfare.⁶⁵

It is the duty of all magistrates here to guard particularly against giving vent to their passions even in the slightest degree. ... Let them not be carried away with headlong anger, or be seized with hatred, or burn with implacable severity. Let them also (as Augustine says) have pity on the common nature in the one whose special fault they are punishing.⁶⁶

It is important to remember that waging nuclear war in actuality and the threat of retaliation by means of nuclear armament ought not be equated. Calvin might consent to the use of nuclear weapons as a deterrent to prevent war since he contends war

⁶³ Calvin, *Institutes*, 4. 20. 12.

⁶⁴ Munday, “John Calvin and Anabaptist,” 245.

⁶⁵ Cochrane, *Calvin and Nuclear War*, 838.

⁶⁶ Calvin, *Institutes*, 4. 20. 12.

must be the last resort: “Assuredly all other means must be tried before having recourse to arms.”⁶⁷

Both the United Nations and civil government could potentially make a mistake in decision-making. Stassen presents the veto as a countermeasure of making a wrong decision in the United Nations. Likewise, Calvin put an emphasis on the duty of an individual citizen to resist any illegal extension of government authority.⁶⁸ Therefore, it could be said that Calvin’s civil government and Stassen’s United Nations both have a safety net against poor decision-making, civil resistance and the veto respectively. By and large, the characteristics of Stassen’s United Nations function similar to Calvin’s civil government as a police force intended on maintaining justice and peace.

Conclusion

I have demonstrated that Stassen’s Just Peacemaking Theory is not a new paradigm but a variation of Calvin’s approach to the problem of war and peace in a nuclear context. First, I have examined what Stassen’s Just Peacemaking Theory actually is. Just Peacemaking Theory is similar to Pacifism in that each seeks basically nonviolent actions. It is likewise similar to Just War Theory in that it affirms violence through the United Nations.

Second, I have compared Stassen’s exegetical basis for Just Peacemaking Theory from the Sermon on the Mount with Calvin’s exegesis. Stassen contends that Jesus teaches with a threefold structure, not a twofold structure. But Calvin’s twofold structure is a more convincing explanation of Jesus’s intended message for his disciples.

Finally, I have examined the practices of Stassen’s Just Peacemaking Theory and demonstrated that it is not significantly different than Calvin’s Just War Theory except for the consideration of this nuclear age. I have specifically demonstrated that the character of Stassen’s role for the United Nations is along the same lines as the role of Calvin’s civil government as a police force intending on preventing war and making peace.

It should be noted that, even though Stassen’s Just Peacemaking Theory has similarities with Calvin’s Just War Theory, there

⁶⁷ Calvin, *Institutes*, 4. 20. 12.

⁶⁸ Smith, *Calvin’s Ethics on War*, 42.

are some significant differences. Stassen places more emphasis on proactive actions to prevent war while Calvin speaks more about whether war is justifiable. Also, Stassen does not approve of individual countries having the same right to use armies as the United Nations, while Calvin affirms the need for the individual countries to have military forces in order to protect the peace.

Coons and Camels

It's been said

The backyard raccoon

Greedy for what deadly glitters

Will find a gleam inside glass bottle

Reach, grasp, pull,

and find bottle's neck too narrow:

Tight fist traps his grasp.

(Coonskin caps are quite the rage, I've heard.)

Hasn't it been said

That a camel would fit through needle's eye

Before that coon would find itself

free in the forest

treasure in hand?

—Jonathan Fischer

Biandrata, Gentile, and Calvin: Antitrinitarian Controversies in Calvin's *Institutes*¹

Reita Yazawa

The Italian antitrinitarians Giorgio Biandrata (1516-1588) and Giovanni Valentino Gentile (d. 1566) played an important role in the formation of Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity. They motivated Calvin to expand his discussion on the trinity in chapter 13 of Book 1 of his 1559 edition of *Institutes of Christian Religion*.² This is not a dispute between a biblicist and rationalists. Rather, as Richard Muller points out, this is a fight between two different biblical interpretations.³ By describing this battle of antithetical biblical interpretations, this study hopes to improve understanding of how Calvin's struggle with the Italian antitrinitarians is reflected in his doctrine of the Trinity.

Some, although not much, research has been done on this topic. Earl Morse Wilbur describes the history of Unitarianism as a linear development, beginning from Servetus, succeeded by Biandrata, Gentile, and other Italian antitrinitarians, leading to Fausto Sozzini.⁴ Antonio Rotondò, who describes the interaction

¹ Originally submitted to Dr. Carroll Williams on November 20, 2006 for ST485: Th. M. Research Methodology. For the translation of Latin texts, I thankfully acknowledge that I received assistance from Mr. Kory Plockmeyer (then a Calvin College Classics major student and now a chaplain at Campus Edge Fellowship at Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan).

² John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, vol. 20 of *The Library of Christian Classics*, ed. John Baillie, John T. McNeill, and Henry P. Van Dusen (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960). The birth and death year specified in parentheses right after each name come from the following source. Paolo Simoncelli, "Biandrata, Giorgio," trans. Robert E. Shillenn in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*. Hereafter abbreviated as *OER*. William V. Hudon, "Gentile, Giovanni Valentino," in *OER*.

³ Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics – The Rise and Development of Reformed Theology, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), vol. 4, *The Triunity of God*, 79. Hereafter abbreviated as *PRRD*.

⁴ Earl Morse Wilbur, *A History of Unitarianism. Socinianism and its Antecedents*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947).

between Calvin and the Italian antitrinitarians, opposes this widely accepted presupposition. He tries to prove that the Italian antitrinitarians' position developed from their “consistent application of the method of philological analysis to the question of the unity of God first raised by Servetus.”⁵ Joseph N. Tylenda tries to arouse a scholarly interest in the important role of Giorgio Biandrata in the history of the radical reformation.⁶ Other than these important works, however, it has to be said that studies particularly paying attention to Calvin and the Italian antitrinitarians are limited, partly because many of the primary and secondary sources are written in Latin, Italian, or French. Studies seem especially limited on the impact of the controversy between Calvin and the Italian antitrinitarians on the *Institutes*. That is why Muller points out: “Textual and topical relationships between these explicit attacks on Servetus and Gentile as well as the other Trinitarian additions to the 1559 *Institutes* ... and Calvin's polemical treatises against these writers remain to be examined.”⁷ Hence, this topic deserves further research.

We will focus this study on the discussions between Calvin and the Italian antitrinitarians Giorgio Biandrata and Giovanni Valentino Gentile since these two formidable proponents of antitrinitarianism figures lived and worked around the same time as Calvin. Biandrata's questions and Calvin's responses to them are available in English.⁸ A representative portion of Biandrata's writings is translated into English and available in a reprint ver-

⁵ Antonio Rotondò, *Calvin and the Italian Antitrinitarians*, trans. John and Anne Tedeschi, vol.2 of *Reformation Studies and Essays* (Saint Louis: Foundation for Reformation Research, 1968), 28.

⁶ Joseph N. Tylenda, “The Warning That Went Unheeded: John Calvin On Giorgio Biandrata,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 12 (1977): 24-62.

⁷ Richard A. Muller, *The Unaccommodated Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 253 (note 79).

⁸ I am indebted to Joseph N. Tylenda's pioneer work in this respect. See Appendix 1 and 2 of Tylenda, “John Calvin on Giorgio Biandrata,” 52-62.

sion of Unitarians' anthology.⁹ Also, Gentile's words along with a description of his life and thought are accessible in *A Short History of Valentinus Gentilis the Tritheist* published in 1696.¹⁰ Gentile's own words in his trial and in a later writing along with Calvin's response to them are described in Latin, *Impietas Valentini Gentilis* (1561).¹¹ Petrus Barth and Guilelmus Niesel carefully examined internal developments of each edition of Calvin's *Institutes* with editorial comments on possible influence from other sources.¹²

First, these two Italian antitrinitarians will be placed in a broader framework of their time by surveying the historical development of Unitarianism. This helps grasp the backgrounds of these figures. Second, we will draw out interactions between Calvin and Biandrata. Third, the battle between Calvin and Gentile will be scrutinized. Finally, we will analyze how Calvin reflects these discussions in his *Institutes*. Through these examinations, it will be concluded that Calvin's discussion on the doc-

⁹ Antal Pirnát, "Introduction," in *De falsa et vera unius dei patris, filii et spiritus sancti cognitione libri duo*, ed. Giorgio Biandrata and Francis Dávid, vol. 2 of *Bibliotheca Unitariorum*, ed. Robert Dán, (Albae Iuliae, 1568; reprint, Utrecht: Foundation Bibliotheca Unitariorum and Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1988).

¹⁰ Benedict Aretius, *Valentini Gentilis iusto capitis supplicio Bernae affecti brevis historia & contra eiusdem blasphemies defensio articuli de sancta Trinitate* (Geneva, 1567), translated as *A short history of Valentinus Gentilis the Tritheist, tried, condemned, and put to death by the protestant reformed city and Church of Bern in Switzerland, for asserting the three divine Persons of the Trinity, to be [three distinct, eternal Spirits, &c.]* (London: E. Whitlock, 1696).

¹¹ John Calvin, "Impietas Valentini Gentilis detecta et palam traducta, qui Christum non sine sacrilega blasphemia Deum essentiatum esse fingit," in *Ioannis Calvinii opera quae supersunt omnia*, ed. Guiliemus Baum, Eduardus Cunitz, and Eduardus Reuss (Brunswick: Schwetschke, 1863-1900; reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint, 1964), 9:361-420. Hereafter abbreviated as *CO*. This document contains Gentile's confessions in the trial: "Confessio Valentini Gentilis illustrissimis dominis Genebensibus oblata" and "Altera confessio eiusdem, iussu illustrium dominorum exarata." It also contains Gentile's later writing *Protheses* and Calvin's response to Gentile's argument.

¹² Petrus Barth and Guilelmus Niesel eds., *Joannis Calvinii Opera Selecta*, vol. 3 (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1957). Hereafter abbreviated as *OS*.

trine of the Trinity is heavily influenced by these two Italian antitrinitarians.

Biandrata and Gentile in the History of Antitrinitarianism

In order to put Biandrata and Gentile into a proper historical context, it is necessary to survey the history of antitrinitarianism. According to Muller, the antitrinitarian movement is defined as “a radical biblicism coupled with a renunciation of traditional Christian and philosophical understandings of substance, person, subsistence, and so forth, as unbiblical accretions.”¹³ With this radical biblical interpretation, they stood against the Nicene and post-Nicene patristic tradition.¹⁴ Michael Servetus is considered “the most significant early exponent of the teaching.”¹⁵ With his abundant knowledge of patristic documents, he attacked post-Nicene tradition as a distortion of the original form of Christianity and promoted a return to pre-Nicene biblical interpretation. He rejected many trinitarian theological terms as unbiblical, especially the terms “Trinity,” “person,” “essence,” and “hypostasis.” God was understood to have manifested himself three times through “God as Father, God in Christ, and God as the power of the Spirit.” It is well known that Servetus was put on trial for heresy and sentenced to death.

Around this time, the city of Geneva was a center for Italian refugees.¹⁶ After an institutional system of inquisition began in Italy, Geneva provided them a convenient hiding place. In 1542, they founded a Protestant church and they welcomed Ochino (c.1487-1564/65), one of the refugees, as a preacher. After some time of inactivity, the movement revived in 1552 with a Sunday service and regular week-day gatherings. One man who visited the church in 1554 played an important role in the ongoing Trinitarian discussions. His name is Matteo Gribaldi (d. 1564). As a layman, he tried to explain the doctrine of the Trinity to ordinary people. Yet eventually he was accused of believing in three gods

¹³ Muller, *PRRD*, 75.

¹⁴ Muller, *PRRD*, 21.

¹⁵ Muller, *PRRD*, 75-76.

¹⁶ Wilbur, *History of Unitarianism*, 213-216.

and forced to disavow his belief in Bern, 1557.¹⁷ It seems that Gribaldi stressed the aseity of God and recognized the Son and the Holy Spirit as derived from the Father.¹⁸

His thought was succeeded by Giorgio Biandrata, Gian Paolo Alciati (d. 1565), and Giovanni Valentino Gentile.¹⁹ Threatened by these activists, the Geneva consistory decided to require them to sign a confession designed to force them to recant their belief.²⁰ They were expelled from Geneva and after some wandering, finally settled in Poland.²¹ Lelio Sozzini (1525-1562) and Bernardino Ochino also moved there.²² Lelio Sozzini is reported to have made a deep impact on Italian, Polish, and Transylvanian antitrinitarians with his radical interpretation that denies Christ's divinity and contended that Christ was given the status of divine son due to his moral excellence.²³ Poland became a flourishing center of the Radical Reformation in the late 1540's and during the 1550's. Peter of Goniads (d. 1573) publicly announced his opposition to trinitarian dogma in 1556. When an Italian theologian Francis Stancarus (1501-1574) arrived in Poland in 1559 and espoused a radical view of Christ as mediator based only on the merits of his human nature, antitrinitarian discussions caused turmoil among Polish churches. At last, the Polish Church was divided in 1563 between the "major church" (*ecclesia maior*) which supported traditional confessions and the "minor church" (*ecclesia minor*) which expounded an antitrinitarian view. Lelio's nephew Fausto Sozzini came to Poland in 1579 and promoted Christ as a paradigm for human beings to follow and denying original sin. He established a dominant influence upon Polish and Lithuanian Unitarians. Because of its emphasis on God the Father as the only one God, the antitrinitarian movement seems to have had an intimate connection with the development of Unitarianism. In this way, Italian antitrinitarians found their place in

¹⁷ Lech Szczucki, "Antitrinitarianism," trans. AnnMarie Mitchell, in *OER*, 57.

¹⁸ Muller, *PRRD*, 77.

¹⁹ Wilbur, *History of Unitarianism*, 223.

²⁰ Muller, *PRRD*, 77.

²¹ Muller, *PRRD*, 77-78.

²² Muller, *PRRD*, 78.

²³ Szczucki, "Antitrinitarianism," 57.

Poland, Lithuania, and Transylvania and developed their own views in opposition to the traditional, orthodox view of the Trinity and the atonement.

As Rotondò points out, the period of conflict between Calvin and the Italian antitrinitarians does not cover the entire history of antitrinitarians.²⁴ Their activities continued beyond Calvin’s death in 1564. Hence, it may not be fair to summarize their teachings only by their discussions with Calvin. However, if we see this development starting from Geneva and culminating in Poland, it can safely be said that Biandrata and Gentile, who played an important role in antitrinitarian immigration from Geneva to Poland and had direct discussions with Calvin, may have had an influence upon Calvin’s revision of his *Institutes*.

Calvin and Biandrata

Biandrata’s Questions to Calvin

Tylenda predicates Giorgio Biandrata as “one of the Founding Fathers” of the Radical Reformation, especially when it comes to antitrinitarianism.²⁵ Rotondò introduces this figure as “the Italian radical whose experiences best reflect the doctrinal and organizational evolution of the movement.”²⁶ Born in Saluzzo Italy, around 1515-1516, he studied in Montpellier and received his degree at Bologna in 1538.²⁷ In 1540, his reputation as a distinguished physician led him to a position as a personal doctor to Queen Bona Sforza, wife of King Sigismund in Poland. After his stay in Kraków, he moved to a court in Alba Julia where Isabelle, another daughter of Sigismund, was living as a wife of John Zápolya, King of Hungary and a governor of Transylvania. When Isabelle and her son were displaced from Hungary in 1552, Biandrata also left Transylvania with them. He journeyed to his homeland Italy, staying in Pavia for four years. In 1557, he came to Geneva and settled there.

Here, Biandrata began to pursue his theological quest and bothered his pastor Celso Martinengo with many questions. Dis-

²⁴ Rotondò, *Calvin and the Italian Antitrinitarians*, 2.

²⁵ Tylenda, “John Calvin on Giorgio Biandrata,” 24.

²⁶ Rotondò, *Calvin and the Italian Antitrinitarians*, 24.

²⁷ Tylenda, “John Calvin on Giorgio Biandrata,” 26. Simoncelli, “Biandrata, Giorgio,” 151.

appointed by Martinengo's refusal to continue relations with him, Biandrata now began to cast questions directly to Calvin.²⁸ In the first place, Biandrata asks to whom they refer exactly when Jesus or the apostles speak of God: "Are we to look for a God other than the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and how are we to understand the words of Christ and the apostles when they speak of the Father?"²⁹ He quotes biblical passages where God's oneness is emphasized such as "Your God is one God," "He whom you say is your God, is my Father," "for us there is one God, who is the Father from whom are all things," "one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God, the Father of all," and "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."³⁰ For Biandrata, God is only the Father only and any terminology that obscured this distinctiveness seemed unacceptable.

In relation to this judgment, he further asks about the appropriateness of the use of the term "person."³¹ According to Biandrata, it is impossible to "say of a person 'God from whom are all things,' because a person is neither to be invoked nor worshiped."³² Again, he uses Scripture to establish his argument: "when he said, 'Ask the Father in my name,' is it a person who is being petitioned," "are we to pray to a person and not to God when he said, 'Pray like this, Our Father'?"³³ For him, use of a term "person," seems to be unbiblical and has no relevance since the Bible never mentions it.

It is to be noted that Biandarata constructs his argument based on his own biblical interpretation. Biandrata repeatedly demands

²⁸ Tylenda, "John Calvin on Georgio Biandrata," 28.

²⁹ Georgio Biandrata, "Carissimo Ioanni Calvino praeceptorum Georgius Blandrata S. D.," in *CO*, 17:169. All translation of this document comes from Appendix 1 of Tylenda's article. "John Calvin on Georgio Biandrata," 52.

³⁰ Biandrata, "Carissimo Ioanni," in *CO*, 17:169. Tylenda, "John Calvin on Georgio Biandrata," 52.

³¹ Biandrata, "Carissimo Ioanni," in *CO*, 17:169. Tylenda, "John Calvin on Georgio Biandrata," 53.

³² Biandrata, "Carissimo Ioanni," in *CO*, 17:170. Tylenda, "John Calvin on Georgio Biandrata," 52.

³³ Biandrata, "Carissimo Ioanni," in *CO*, 17:169. Tylenda, "John Calvin on Georgio Biandrata," 52.

Calvin show clear biblical evidences that support the doctrine of the Trinity: “We ask for the clear testimony of the Scriptures and the places where God is clearly mentioned and at the same time includes three persons”³⁴; “Is it sufficient for the faithful to believe in God the Father, in the one Lord, Jesus Christ, and the one Holy Spirit, inasmuch as this pertains to the article of the Trinity, without any further speculation on the one essence, for Scripture, after all, is likewise silent about it?”³⁵ These remarks show that Biandrata is neither an apostate nor a conscious traitor. Biandrata does not have a sacrilegious intention, but wishes to obtain well-grounded knowledge about God. Indeed, these questions “seem to indicate a mind trying to frame for itself a clear, intelligible, scriptural, and reasonable statement of the central Christian doctrines, yet persistently puzzled by the theological terms used to explain them.”³⁶

Calvin's Response to Biandrata

Calvin responded in length to Biandrata's questions. Calvin states:

When we profess a belief in one God, we understand by the word of God the one simple essence in which we include the three persons or hypostases. Therefore, as often as the name of God is used without qualification, we believe that it designates the Son and the Spirit no less than the Father. However, when the Son is added to the Father, then a relationship intervenes, and hence we distinguish the persons. In fact, because the properties indicate the order among the persons, as the Father is principle and origin, then as often as the Father and Son are mentioned together, or the Spirit, the name of God is specially assigned to the Father. In this way the unity of essence is retained and the order of relationship is set forth; this, however, does not take anything away from the divinity of the Son or of the Spirit.³⁷

³⁴ Biandrata, “Carissimo Ioanni,” in *CO*, 17:170. Tylenda, “John Calvin on Georgio Biandrata,” 53.

³⁵ Biandrata, “Carissimo Ioanni,” in *CO*, 17:171. Tylenda, “John Calvin on Georgio Biandrata,” 54.

³⁶ Wilbur, *History of Unitarianism*, 224.

³⁷ John Calvin, “Ad quaestiones Georgii Blandratae: Responsum Ioannis Calvini,” in *CO*, 9:325.

And later he goes on:

Now when the apostles say that he, whom Moses and the prophets have declared to be Yahweh, is the Son of God it is always necessary to look to the unity of essence. Therefore, it is an abominable sacrilege for us to call the Son another God distinct from the Father, because the simple word God does not allow any relationships; nor can God be said to be this or that in reference to himself.³⁸

When speaking of God's name, it must be acknowledged that not only the Father, but also the Son and the Holy Spirit are designated at the same time.³⁹ Calvin here distinguishes between "the order among the persons" and "the unity of essence," asserting the former does not obfuscate the latter.⁴⁰

Whereas Biandrata demands explicit reference to the word "Trinity," or "person," Calvin recognizes these expressions as the "meaning" of what Scripture conveys to believers:

Those who shamefully misrepresent the orthodox faith by the pretense that speculation on the essence and the three persons is useless, advance a malicious subterfuge, for we do not speculate beyond what Scripture offers us, but we give its simple and genuine meaning. No one will acknowledge from his heart that Christ is his God unless he first acknowledge a diversity of persons in the unity of essence; the plurality of gods, which some dream up, is a damnable nightmare.⁴¹

Despite this harsh anathema, Biandrata was not persuaded to discard his conviction and continued his activity even after he was expelled from Geneva.

³⁸ Calvin, "Ad quaestiones Georgii Blandratae," in *CO*, 9:325.

³⁹ Calvin, "Ad Quaestiones Georgii Blandratae," in *CO*, 9:325. Ty-lenda, "John Calvin on Georgio Biandrata," 54.

⁴⁰ Calvin, "Ad Quaestiones Georgii Blandratae," in *CO*, 9:325. Ty-lenda, "John Calvin on Georgio Biandrata," 55.

⁴¹ Calvin, "Ad Quaestiones Georgii Blandratae," in *CO*, 9:331. Ty-lenda, "John Calvin on Georgio Biandrata," 61.

Calvin and Gentile

Gentile's Claims against Calvin

Another expatriated Italian, Giovanni Valentino Gentile, also arrived in Geneva around 1557.⁴² There was already a discussion regarding such terms as “οὐσία,” “ὑπόστασις,” “*Trinitas*,” and “ὁμοούσιον.”⁴³ He began to get involved in this discussion and eventually became a competent advocate of antitrinitarian thought.⁴⁴ He was convicted by the Geneva magistrates in the spring of 1558. The magistrates demanded that he accept a confession expressing traditional faith. Whereas Biandrata left Geneva, Gentile continued his polemical attack against Calvin and was arrested and imprisoned (9th June 1558).⁴⁵ Though subsequently sentenced to death, Gentile escaped execution by feigning penitence, acknowledging his error.⁴⁶ He fled from the court and retained his original conviction.⁴⁷ Arriving in Lyon, Gentile wrote pamphlets in response to his trial.⁴⁸ *Antidota* and *Protheses* are representative of his writings produced at this time.⁴⁹

Rotondò mentions that one of the antitrinitarian documents which Calvin kept in mind during the revision of his *Institutes* was the record of Gentile's trial.⁵⁰ It is estimated that the judicial proceedings involving Gentile took place in 1558, from May to September.⁵¹ In his forward to the 1559 edition of the *Institutes*, Calvin talks of being ill while revising his *Institutes*.⁵² McNeill identifies this period of revising work as from October 1558 to

⁴² Hudon, “Gentile, Giovanni Valentino.”

⁴³ Aretius, *Short History of Valentinus Gentilis*, 18.

⁴⁴ Aretius, *Short History of Valentinus Gentilis*, 18.

⁴⁵ James Mackinnon, *Calvin and the Reformation* (London: Longmans, Green, And Co., 1936), 167.

⁴⁶ Mackinnon, *Calvin and the Reformation*, 167.

⁴⁷ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” 389. Aretius, *Short History of Valentinus Gentilis*, 19.

⁴⁸ Rotondò, *Calvin and the Italian Antitrinitarians*, 23.

⁴⁹ Aretius, *Short History of Valentinus Gentilis*, 23, 29-30. Rotondò, *Calvin and the Italian Antitrinitarians*, 23.

⁵⁰ Rotondò, *Calvin and Italian Antitrinitarians*, 17 (note 35).

⁵¹ Mackinnon, *Calvin and the Reformation*, 167.

⁵² Calvin, “John Calvin to the Reader,” in *Institutes*, 3.

May 1559.⁵³ Hence, Calvin's revisions and the trial occurred concurrently.

Aretius begins his work by discussing Gentile's affirmation that the Father is the only, true God.⁵⁴ Gentile said in the trial:

I confess the only one God of Israel as the only true God whom the Holy Scripture announces to us. Vain sophistries deny that this God has the Son, that this God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that this same Jesus Christ whom God sent, as far as he is the Word, is the true and original Son of the only one omnipotent God the Father.⁵⁵

He also contended continuously in Lyon as follows: "The Father is not hypostasis, or a person, in one God, but by the Apostle's witness, he is the one God, from whom comes all things" (6);⁵⁶ "The Father alone is the one God, that is, he is found without any beginning or origin" (7);⁵⁷ "Jehovah is the one Father of the Word (*logos*), and he is the one God of Israel, they are the same names for the first person of the Trinity" (40).⁵⁸ This is the crux of his thought and other special features originate from this conviction.

The second feature of Gentile indicated by Aretius is that "the Son is not of himself, but of the Father, to whom he is subordinate as to his *maker*, [or *essentiator*.]"⁵⁹ The acts of his trial also record his own word "*essentiator*" (maker of essence or essence-giver): "I assert that the Father (thus said Christ) is the only true God and the maker of essence (*essentiator*), that is, the form-giver of individuals (*informator indiviuorum*)."⁶⁰ Gentile was consistent when he said later: "That one Jehovah ought not to be spoken of as essence, but the maker of essence (*essentiator*)"

⁵³ Calvin, *Institutes*, 3 (note 1).

⁵⁴ Aretius, *Short History of Valentinus Gentilis*, 40.

⁵⁵ Calvin, "Impietas Valentini Gentilis," in *CO* 9:389.

⁵⁶ Calvin, "Valentini Gentilis," in *CO* 9:374. The number in parenthesis following a quotation stands for that of Gentile's theses.

⁵⁷ Calvin, "Valentini Gentilis," in *CO*, 9:374.

⁵⁸ Calvin, "Valentini Gentilis," in *CO*, 9:383.

⁵⁹ Aretius, *Short History of Valentinus Gentilis*, 40.

⁶⁰ Calvin, "Valentini Gentilis," in *CO* 9:390.

(36),⁶¹ “Unless the Father is the maker of essence (*essentiator*) for the Son and the Spirit, that is, unless he is the communicator of his attributes through the eternal generation and eternal procession of time, three would not be one, nor would any of the rest of the persons be fully and completely God” (37).⁶² Accordingly, in Gentile’s thought, a difference or qualification is introduced between the Father and the other two: the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The third reported characteristic of his thought is a distinction in substance among the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.⁶³ The following confessions in the trial suggest that Gentile already had a belief which he later formulated into his theses: “Therefore, I assert that the Father is the one essence itself: however, the Word is the reflection of God’s glory and the expressed image of his substance,”⁶⁴ “How do they recognize the only true God as the Father if they deny that he is synonym with the essence, who is the only true God? How do they recognize Jesus as Christ if they make, against the authority of the Scriptures, the Son a person of that sophistry?”⁶⁵ Later in *Protheses* he asserted more clearly: “Unless there is a substantial distinction between the God-Word (*God-logos*) and the invisible Father, the Word (*logos*) would not have been able to be conceived in the womb of the virgin, otherwise, the Father would have been incarnated at the same time” (18)⁶⁶, “Unless the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are three intelligent substances of his nature, they are spoken of as being of the same substance falsely” (29).⁶⁷ On one hand, Gentile believes that the Father is the only true God. On the other hand, by the Father’s role as the essence-giver, essence is transmitted to the Son and the Holy Spirit. The result is “Three Eternal Spirits” differing “from each other in Order, Degree, and

⁶¹ Calvin, “Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9:382.

⁶² Calvin, “Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9:382.

⁶³ Aretius, *Short History of Valentinus Gentilis*, 41.

⁶⁴ Calvin, “Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9:390.

⁶⁵ Calvin, “Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9:392.

⁶⁶ Calvin, “Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9:377.

⁶⁷ Calvin, “Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9:380.

Propriety of Essence.”⁶⁸ Thus, he was later accused of being a “Tritheist” (a person who believes in three gods).⁶⁹

The fourth point reported is that he detests the term “Trinity,” saying that it is “a mere human invention.”⁷⁰ Gentile says:

Who does not see, O supreme God in force, in this devilish invention, the whole Trinity is defiled with sophistry, making God rich or futile: the Father, his person is sophistry, the Word, or the Son is a person in his own way, and the Holy Spirit proceeding from these two fictitious and counterfeit persons is a person as well. Who does not see this?⁷¹

He rejects Trinitarian terminology since it cannot be found in the Bible⁷² and criticizes Calvin and his followers for believing in a “Quaternity” of four essences: the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and God.⁷³ As Muller explicates, for Gentile, “the unity of God and the distinction of the Persons could be maintained only by rejecting the notion of ‘Trinity’ as unbiblical and by recognizing the subordination of the Son and Spirit to the Father.”⁷⁴

Calvin’s Response to Gentile

Calvin responded to these attacks. It is important to explore Calvin’s reactions here because most of the discussions identified in this section show up again when we scrutinize the 1559 edition of the *Institutes* in the following section. To the first point, the claim that the name God in a true sense should be restricted to the Father, Calvin responds:

Even if the name of God is common to the Son, it is rational that we affirm the name sometimes ascribed particularly (κατ’ ἐξοχήν) to the Father. This is because, as it is written in an-

⁶⁸ Aretius, *Short History of Valentinus Gentilis*, 41.

⁶⁹ See the title of Aretius’ book. *A Short History of Valentinus Gentilis the Tritheist*.

⁷⁰ Aretius, *Short History of Valentinus Gentilis*, 40. See the first point.

⁷¹ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9:389.

⁷² Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9: 392.

⁷³ Calvin, “Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9:390, 391.

⁷⁴ Muller, *PRRD*, 81.

other place, the Father is the fountain and the source of the deity.⁷⁵

Truly, every time you say that only the Father is true God, you relinquish the Son to none other than a fiction of deity.⁷⁶

Calvin makes a distinction between the divine being in essence and a relation in persons: “The Father’s council is nothing else than this: with regard to the person, even if you say that the origin which the Son gets from the Father remains, by no means does that obstruct that each would be essence and deity. Hence, as far as the essence is concerned, the Son is God *absque principio*. While in the person of the Son is the *principium* from the Father.”⁷⁷ Whereas begetting and procession concern relative, personal relations, in terms of essence, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share the full deity.⁷⁸

As to the second point, Calvin quotes Gentile’s term “*essentiator*” in his argument: “If only the Father is the maker of the essence (*essentiator*), there will be no communion of Father’s Spirit and the Son’s Spirit. You want the person of the Spirit none other than the derivation from the primary essence which is proper to the one Father”⁷⁹ The Father seems to have “infused (*transfundit*) his deity into the Son.”⁸⁰ Due to this infusion, the divinity seems to “have been torn up (*lacera erit*) and diminished (*diminutio*).”⁸¹ Calvin seems to notice here the danger of subordination of the Son and the Holy Spirit to the Father.

The third point was on God as three distinct essences. It seems difficult to find the expression “*Three distinct Essences or Sub-*

⁷⁵ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9: 406.

⁷⁶ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9: 406.

⁷⁷ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9: 368. For this portion of translation, I referred to Muller, *PRRD*, 81.

⁷⁸ Muller, *PRRD*, 81.

⁷⁹ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9: 401.

⁸⁰ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9: 402. “Praestigiis autem tuis filium Dei fabricas essentiatum et simul tamen absque essentiali, nisi quod pater suam divinitatem in eum transfundit.”

⁸¹ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9: 402. “Atqui, si ex parte, tam lacera erit divinitas, et ex transfusione sequetur diminutio.”

stances”⁸² explicitly in the accounts of Gentile’s judicial proceedings. A dominant contention is that God is the Father alone and the Father retains the essence.⁸³ It seems that the idea of three distinct essences did not become clear until he wrote *Protheses* and *Antidota* in Lyon. Nevertheless, this notion appears to be already implicit in Gentile’s thought at this stage. As described above, Gentile defined the Father as the “*essentiator*” who is the divine essence and the Son as his “reflection” or “expressed image of his substance.”⁸⁴ Although Gentile restricts the primordial “essence” to the Father alone in the trial, he later called the Son as “*Essentiatus*,” who received his being from the Father.⁸⁵ Aretius testifies to the development of his thought: “The Father alone is God of himself [ἀυτόθεος], not begotten [ἀγέννητος], Maker of all things [*Essentiator*]. But that the Son was made [*Essentiatus*], or received his Being from another ; is indeed God, but not ἀυτόθεος ; and so likewise the Holy Ghost ; and by consequence that they are not One but *Three Eternals*.”⁸⁶ This means that the Father’s essence or being may be imparted to the Son and the Holy Spirit by “infusion,”⁸⁷ while the Father remains “ἀυτόθεος, *i.e.* God of himself,”⁸⁸ the one, true God. Here also is Gentile’s attempt to secure the Father’s supremacy over and subordination of the Son and the Holy Spirit.⁸⁹ Calvin had already noticed this latent jeopardy and took a precaution against it: “If you respond that the essence-giving Father nonetheless remains to be the one God, the essence is at the Father’s disposal: Therefore, Christ will be figurative God and by outlook or name only, not God Himself. Because for God, nothing is more proper than being based on that sentence: He who is, sent me to

⁸² Aretius, *Short History of Valentinus Gentilis*, 41.

⁸³ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9: 390-393.

⁸⁴ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9: 390.

⁸⁵ Aretius, *Short History of Valentinus Gentilis*, 43.

⁸⁶ Aretius, *Short History of Valentinus Gentilis*, 42-43.

⁸⁷ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9: 401. See the word “transfundit” there.

⁸⁸ Aretius, *Short History of Valentinus Gentilis*, 43.

⁸⁹ Muller, *PRRD*, 81.

you (Ex. 3:14).”⁹⁰ For Calvin, the essence possessed by one person leads to the evaporation or abstraction of the two other persons.

The fourth attack was concerning Trinity. Gentile caricatured the trinitarian faith of Calvin and the magistrates, saying their belief was “Quaternity.”⁹¹ Directly responding to this denunciation, Calvin argues: “Your error itself smiles upon you: Essence is in itself the true God, while person is essentially God; Therefore, it is the Quaternity, not the Trinity. They say this as if we fabricate three gods conflated out of material of essence, and thus the essence made each person from [a] different part. We assert that the Son is essentially God since He is the one God whose essence is simple: Yet with regard to person, He was born from the Father. If the persons are separated from the essence, your argument is fine: but we think in one God three persons. Accordingly, the Father is God, and at the same time, the Son is the same God.”⁹² Gentile’s conception of God as the Father alone with the Son and the Holy Spirit his subordinated derivations is, for Calvin, “not the unity of three, but the integrity of one God with two created things.”⁹³

After his stay in France, as in the case with Biandrata, Gentile also found a place in Poland for spreading his antitrinitarian thought with other comrades.⁹⁴ Later he was captured again and decapitated in Bern in 1566, two years after Calvin’s death.

Antitrinitarian Influences in the *Institutes*

Influence of the Discussion between Calvin and Biandrata

Biandrata’s argument clearly influenced the revision of the 1559 edition of the *Institutes*. This can be proved if the first portion of Calvin’s reply is compared with the first paragraph of section 20 of chapter 13, Book 1 of the *Institutes* which deals with the Trinity:

⁹⁰ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9: 402.

⁹¹ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9:390,391.

⁹² Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9: 402.

⁹³ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9: 405.

⁹⁴ Mackinnon, *Calvin and the Reformation*, 203.

Therefore, let those who dearly love soberness, and who will be content with the measure of faith, receive in brief form what is useful to know: namely, that, when we profess to believe in one God, under the name of God is understood a single, simple essence, in which we comprehend three persons, or hypostases. Therefore, whenever the name of God is mentioned without particularization, there are designated no less than the Son and the Spirit than the Father; but where the Son is joined to the Father, then the relation of the two enters in; and so we distinguish among the persons. But because the peculiar qualities in the persons carry an order within them, e.g., in the Father is the beginning and the source, so often as mention is made of the Father and the Son together, or the Spirit, the name of *God* is peculiarly applied to the Father. In this way, unity of essence is retained, and a reasoned order is kept, which yet takes nothing away from the deity of the Son and the Spirit. Certainly, since we have already seen that the apostles declared him to be the Son of God whom Moses and the prophets testified to be Jehovah, it is always necessary to come to the unity of essence. Thus we regard it a detestable sacrilege for the Son to be called another God than the Father, for the simple name of God admits no relation, nor can God be said to be this or that with respect to himself.⁹⁵

If this quotation is compared with Calvin's response to Biandrata quoted in section 3 of this paper, it is clear that most parts of the response are incorporated into this paragraph.⁹⁶ Barth and Niesel put an editorial comment that vestiges of antitrinitarian controversies, especially those of Biandrata can be recognized here.⁹⁷ If the original document of Calvin's response is put side by side with the primary text in the *Institutes* offered by Petrus and Barth, it is clear that sentences from the response are built into the text of the *Institutes* almost verbatim. McNeill's textual critic and Petrus's and Barth's note suggest that this portion has been added in the 1559 edition. The questions and answers are estimated to have been exchanged in late 1557.⁹⁸ If these facts are taken into consideration, it is highly probable that the debate stimulated Calvin to expand his discussion on the Trinity, using

⁹⁵ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xiii.20 (pp. 144-145).

⁹⁶ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xiii.20 (p. 144, note 43).

⁹⁷ Barth and Niesel, *OS*, 134 (note 1).

⁹⁸ Tylenda, "John Calvin on Georgio Biandrata," 29 (note 19).

his previous discussion with Biandrata as constituent material.

Influence of the Discussion between Calvin and Gentile

Calvin’s discussion with Gentile also affected the revising work of the *Institutes*. This can be confirmed from the fact that each point of the arguments traced in the previous section can be found in the 1559 edition of the *Institutes*, especially the newly added sections 23 to 29.⁹⁹ The first point of discussion was whether God is only the Father or not. Calvin recognizes this issue in his revising work, calling the antitrinitarians “certain rascals”¹⁰⁰: “First they allege the specious argument that Christ is commonly called the Son of God and infer from this that no other than the Father is, properly speaking, God. Yet they do not observe that, even though the name ‘God’ is also common to the Son, it is sometimes applied to the Father par excellence (κατ’ ἐξοχήν) because he is the fountainhead and beginning of deity – and this is done to denote the simple unity of essence.”¹⁰¹ A significant fact is that almost the same content as Calvin’s argument in Gentile’s trial is repeated here.¹⁰² It is also prominent that the same word (κατ’ ἐξοχήν) is used in both of Calvin’s discussions. Clearly, Calvin takes up primary features of Gentile’s thought.

The second feature concerning “*essentiator*” recurs in the *Institutes*: “Indeed, they do not refrain from this dreadful manner of speaking: the Father is distinguished from the Son and the Spirit by this mark, that he is the only ‘essence giver’ (*essentiator*).”¹⁰³ The specific word used in the discussion between Calvin and Gentile appears in his *Institutes* again.¹⁰⁴ This fact indicates Calvin keeps Gentile in mind in this polemic argument.

As was discussed in the previous section, this notion of giving

⁹⁹ McNeill indicates that these sections were added in the 1559 edition of the *Institutes* as indicated by a letter “e” at the beginning of each section. Calvin, *Institutes*, xxvii, 149, 151, 153, 154, 155, 157, 158.

¹⁰⁰ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xiii.23 (p. 149).

¹⁰¹ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xiii.23 (p. 149).

¹⁰² Barth and Niesel, *OS*, 140 (note a).

¹⁰³ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xiii.24 (p. 149). McNeill also refers to Gentile’s document in a footnote.

¹⁰⁴ Barth and Niesel, *OS*, 140 (note 3).

essence from one agent to another produced a sense of “infusion.”¹⁰⁵ Eventually this idea developed into the concept of “Three Eternal Spirits distinguish’d by a gradual and due Subordination,”¹⁰⁶ which comprises the third characteristic of Gentile’s thought. For Calvin, this subordinating framework seems to be threatening the divinity of the Son:

But they are obviously deceived in this connection, for they dream of individuals, each having its own separate part of the essence. Yet we teach from the Scriptures that God is one in essence, and hence that the essence both of the Son and of the Spirit is unbegotten.¹⁰⁷

Now if we concede that all essence is in the Father alone, either it will become divisible or be taken away from the Son. And thus deprived of his essence, he will be God in name only. The essence of God, if these babblers are to be believed, belongs to the Father only, inasmuch as he alone is, and is the essence giver of the Son. Thus the divinity of the Son will be something abstracted from God’s essence, or a part derived from the whole.¹⁰⁸

If the distinction is in the essence, let them answer whether or not he has shared it with the Son. Indeed, this could not be done in part because it would be wicked to fashion a half-God. Besides, in this way they would basely tear apart (*lacerarent*) the essence of God. It remains that the essence is wholly and perfectly common to Father and son. If this is true, then there is indeed with respect to the essence no distinction of one from the other. If they make rejoinder that the Father in bestowing essence nonetheless remains the sole God, in whom the essence is, Christ then will be a figurative God, a God in appearance and name only, not in reality itself. For there is nothing more proper to God than to be, according to that saying, ‘He who is has sent me to you’ [Ex. 3:14, Vg.].¹⁰⁹

These discussions correspond to those of Calvin in Gentile’s trial

¹⁰⁵ Calvin, “*Impietas Valentini Gentilis*,” in *CO* 9: 402.

¹⁰⁶ Aretius, *Short History of Valentinus Gentilis*, 43.

¹⁰⁷ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xiii.24 (p. 153).

¹⁰⁸ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xiii.23 (p. 150).

¹⁰⁹ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xiii.23 (pp. 150-151).

analyzed in the preceding section.¹¹⁰ In the trial, Calvin also warned that Gentile’s claim can tear apart (*laceratur; lacera erit*) God’s essence.¹¹¹ Besides, the last sentence in the quotation above is transcribed from that in the minute of the trial almost verbatim and even the location of the quoted biblical passage is the same.¹¹² These evidences also bear witness to the influence of this discussion in Calvin’s revising work of his masterpiece.

The fourth criticism was on the Trinity. One thing to be aware of is that, in his dispute, Calvin duplicates the expression which Gentile intentionally used, “Quaternity”:

They also foolishly think they may conclude from our statement that we have set up a quaternity, for they falsely and calumniously ascribe this fiction of their own brain to us, as if we pretended that three persons came forth by derivation from one essence. On the contrary, it is clear from our writings that we do not separate the persons from the essence, but we distinguish among them while they remain within it. If the persons had been separate from the essence, the reasoning of these men might have been probable; but in this way there would have been a trinity of gods, not of persons whom the one God contains in himself.¹¹³

Notice Calvin’s reproduction of a concession, granting the possible validity of Gentile’s separation of the persons from the essence, which is contrary to the fact. Although Calvin makes a distinction between relations and essence, he does not do so in the clear-cut manner of Gentile. When it comes to “an absolute sense,” the Son “exists of himself,” but when personal relations matter, the Son “exists from the Father.”¹¹⁴ Hence, “his essence is without beginning; while the beginning of his person is God himself.”¹¹⁵

These observations corroborate Benjamin Warfield’s following statements:

¹¹⁰ Barth and Niesel, *OS*, 145 (note 1).

¹¹¹ Calvin, “Impietas Valentini Gentilis,” in *CO* 9: 401, 402.

¹¹² Barth and Niesel, *OS*, 142 (note b).

¹¹³ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xiii.24 (pp. 153-154). Barth and Niesel, *OS*, 145 (note c and 3).

¹¹⁴ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xiii.25 (p. 154).

¹¹⁵ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xiii.25 (p.154).

In the meantime, however, the troubles in the Italian church in Geneva had broken out, culminating after a while in the controversies with Valentinus Gentilis (1558), in which new occasion was given for asserting the self-existence of Christ, and this brought it about that something more on this subject was incorporated into the ‘Institutes’ of 1559.¹¹⁶

Based on the evidence we have found through a comparative analysis of Gentile’s documents, Calvin’s response to them, and Calvin’s discussion in his *Institutes*, we can consent to Warfield’s claim.

Conclusion

We found that the two Italian antitrinitarians, Biandrata and Gentile, played a significant role in discussions between Calvin and the Italian antitrinitarians. Then, we detected that the interactions between Calvin and Biandrata lasted for a long period of time. Next, we found that Gentile’s trial motivated Calvin to clarify further his position concerning the Trinity. After that, we examined how these discussions were incorporated into Calvin’s *Institutes*. We confirmed that key words used in the discussions between Calvin and Biandrata, or Calvin and Gentile are replicated verbatim in the arguments in the 1559 edition of the *Institutes*. Also, similarity and closeness of contents or contexts seem to be apparent.

All things considered, it seems clear that Calvin had concurrent discussions with these Italian antitrinitarians and formulated and clarified his own view of the Trinity in this polemical context. As Barth and Niesel suggested, this is evident in the 1559 edition of *Institution*, which contains specific sections directed to this polemical discussion on the Trinity. It can be concluded that Calvin’s discussions on the doctrine of the triune God with two Italian antitrinitarians, Biandrata and Gentile, influenced Calvin to expand chapter 13 of Book 1 of his 1559 *Institutes*, especially section 20 and 23 to 29.

¹¹⁶ Benjamin B. Warfield, “Calvin’s Doctrine of the Trinity,” in *Calvin and Augustine*, ed., Samuel Craig (Philadelphia: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Company, 1956), 241-242.

Barefoot

Take off your shoes every man
Feet feel the holy ground
For every bush is burning
Law etched int' every mount

Take off your shoes every man
The Lord to wash your feet
In every quickened river
In every reddened sea

Take off your shoes every man
Papa taste the leavened bread
For every Fowl's a quail
E'en white wine is red

Take off your shoes every man
Guard not your naked heel
For every thorn is worn
And every snake bite healed

—*Michael Lee Kornelis*



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