A PARAPHRASE OF FIRST CORINTHIANS 13 FOR THE THEOLOGICAL STUDENT

by Maurice Hanna

If I speak with the eloquence of preachers and professors, but have not love, I am just making a big noise. And if I have profound insight, and can make sense out of all lectures and all books, and if I have faith strong enough to change any administrative policy, but I have not love, I am nothing. If I give away my entire income, and burn myself out studying and working, but have not love, I gain precisely nothing.

Love is patient and kind with the dull and the slow; love is not jealous of other's achievements, nor is it boastful of its own good grades; love is not arrogant and rude with underclassmen. Love does not insist on having the last word at every bull session; it is not irritable and resentful when misunderstood by fellow students and contradicted by teachers; it does not get happy when others do poorly and fail, but is delighted when they excel and are honored. Love puts up with the most exasperating people, trusts in the most trying circumstances, hopes in the severest ordeals, and maintains its constancy in face of the ultimate in opposition.

Love persists when everything else succumbs to the judgement of time. If there are great plans for the future, they will come to an end. If there is brilliant oratory, it will cease. If there are many books in your library, they too will vanish away.

For our fund of information is severely limited, and our plans for the future are fraught with grievous miscalculations; but when the final state arrives, these preliminary stages will have spent themselves and will yield to eternal fullness.

When I was a child, I spoke in the idiom of a child, I understood like a child, and I tried to figure things out like a child. But when I became a seminary student, I gave up childish ways—or did I?

For now we can only discern the faint outlines in a mirror, but then we shall really see things—sharp and clear—just like looking directly into another person's face.

Now I comprehend only an infinitesimal amount of all there is to know, but then I shall know everything there is for me to know, just as God knows all about me.

And now in this life there continues to be intellectualism, professionalism, and love; but the greatest of these is love.

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EDITORIAL

The Christian Church and the Freedom of Art

The Marxist always failed to grasp that the artist is unaware of any definition of art lying outside of art itself, and that if art accepted any extrinsic definition it would be like a woman describing herself as up for sale.

---Alberto Moravia*

The end of the seventeenth century brought one of the gravest schisms in the history of the Church—the schism between the Church and the artist. Owing to this fissure, the Church has employed an aesthetic theory to the arts which makes of them a superstructure: 'Art, if it is to be good art, reflects the Christian verities.' In allowing this course of action, the Church has lined itself up with Marxism as a dominant force seeking to submit art to an ideology.

Such an aesthetic has ruinous effects once the nature of art is remembered. Moravia reasons that we could be dealing with two different fronts, in the first of which planning and directives are valid, whereas in the second validity comes from the absence of planning and directives. In demanding from art a direct contribution to an external necessity, the Church has either furthered the death of art or alienated itself from it. Moravia states succinctly, "Banish nature from art—nature with its contradictions, its variety, its imagination, its freedom—and you get an art deprived of educational value, whatever the ideology that inspires it."

If we accept the autonomy of art as well as of Christianity, the problems of aesthetics remain and careful thought is urgently needed. Yet all too often the Church refrains from such action, choosing rather to concern itself with professional needs and scientific methodologies. She has erected her own models of art: saccharine art, the beauty parlor Christ, and Sunday School art. Nothing speaks so boldly as silence; and the silence which the Church has sustained regarding a proper understanding of art is only now beginning to be broken.

Where is that part of the Church which calls itself Evangelical? It speaks loudest (in its deep, deep silence); and yet the world goes on in many of its activities without it. We need to come to grips with the world of art, and with our own misuses of the art forms. It seems as if there is no better place for this rapprochement to begin than here at Fuller. We cannot afford to limit our interests to those fields which are specifically designated as ministerial and theological. A whole world is outside. They might not listen! We might not listen!

B.O.B.

* Quotes are from "When Art Becomes Propaganda" by Alberto Moravia, in Saturday Review, April 17, 1965.
It may be that some religious poetry demonstrates a fatal inability to grasp the ultimate realities of life, but modern criticism also has often found itself adrift because it has not been able to relate the world of the poem to these same ultimate concerns of life. Perhaps this is merely a symptom of the alienation-in-general of the modern world; however, it seems that, because of the "priestly" function of the critic, he cannot shirk his duty to mediate between the poem and the reader and to break down artificial barriers which hinder understanding in all its fulness. While many advances have been made in the way of helping us better to understand our heritage of religious poetry, much still remains to be done if we are to dispel the commonplace objection that the world of a religious poem is by its very nature sealed off from life.

Inferior "Christian" poetry and song does exist, of course, though this ought not to prejudice us against the finely-wrought religious lyrics of the medieval poets, the majesty of Paradise Lost, or the "metaphysical" verse of George Herbert, whose work demonstrates a remarkable scope of poetic vision. Nevertheless, the last two centuries of pietistic awakenings in our country have produced a great deal of this inferior work, which has little more than propaganda value. Despite the real concern of the author of "Rescue the Perishing" for Christian values, he has given us some poetry which is as blatantly propagandistic as a Socialist work song. Let us not emulate Marxist criticism, which measures all art by its usefulness to the cause.

The utilitarian bias is insufficient as an aesthetic. Surely our society tends toward utilitarianism, rationalism, positivism, for such is the nature of the modern current of ideas in our land. Most of us tend to see reality as possible to be explained through words which, in turn, are valuable as they are converted into action. This kind of approach to language is unrealistic in the light of the gospel and of what we know about language itself. As the study of linguistics has demonstrated, words have little or no meaning when in isolation. Meaning is a function of structure: sentence, poem, parable, etc. When we are dealing with a poem, we find that the finite, limited words of which it is composed are interrelated in a network of meaning that makes it microcosmic in nature. The poem cannot be paraphrased: it cannot be reduced to something less than itself if it is to retain its integrity as a poem. Thus what counts primarily in a poem is what it is, not what it does in the matter of winning friends and influencing people. Such an approach is in line with Pauline Christianity, which holds that what counts about a person is what he (through the grace of God) is, not what he does. So we might apply the doctrine of "faith alone, through grace" to literature.

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Our value system will then demand that a poem or song or hymn not be preferred for its advertising value, but for its vision of this world and/or what is ultimate.5

The comments above may be taken as a challenge to Dr. Johnson, who wrote:

All that pious verse can do is to help the memory and delight the ear, and for these purposes it may be very useful; but it supplies nothing to the mind. While it may be dangerous to disagree with Dr. Johnson upon certain issues, there can be no hesitation on our part when we say that genuinely religious poetry must supply something to the mind. As we approach a poem such as Shakespeare's Macbeth which treats temptation, sin, and judgment, we find the whole order of human life mirrored in its artistic vision. But of course, to achieve this vision, religious poetry must be not merely pious.

The vision of George Herbert's "Love (III)," which appropriately completes the series known as The Temple, is eschatological. This poem is best introduced by the words of George Ryley, who wrote in 1715:

A Christian's coming to Heaven is the effect of Divine Love. Therefore, after a contemplation on the state, it's proper to ruminate a little upon that which enstates us there.6

The first lines describe the speaker's reception in heaven:

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sinne.

"God is love," and the soul deeply feels his shortcomings upon coming into the holy place. However, "quick-ey'd Love," noticing his reticence, inquires "If I lack'd any thing."

A guest, I answer'd, worthy to be here:
Love said, You shall be he.
I the unkinde, ungratefull? Ah my deare,
I cannot look on thee.

Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
Who made the eyes but I?

Truth Lord, but I have marr'd them: Let my shame
Go where it doth deserve.
And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?
My deare, then I will serve.

You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat:
So I did seat and eat.

The poem thus closes with the homely metaphor of the speaker sitting at table and eating.

Now, it may be asked, how is Herbert's poem different from verse which is less aesthetically satisfactory? Even on the level of its literal meaning, "Love (III)" dramatizes a single emotion and a single event, both of which are united in a structure which is greater than the sum of its component parts. The event is announced by God (Love) who bids the Soul welcome to eternity; but the Soul knows that he is not worthy to see God through his own merit. His eyes are here symbolic both of his knowledge of God and his service and obedience to Him. Out of context, we might think of the passage "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not
that thy whole body should be cast into hell." In context, we still will think of this verse, though the eyes, which remind the speaker of the guilt and sin for which he was responsible on earth, are related organically to the emotion of contrition, which grows from sin-consciousness. When God speaks, we remember that our guilt is the sign of a fall—a fall from the grace of God, who is Creator of the eyes of man. So God gives man freedom and will, though man himself has then marred these gifts through his own disobedience and wilfulness. The vision of the poet encompasses a whole life in the structure of his poem, and yet it is not cluttered by extraneous material. The statement is marvelously economical.

The economy of Herbert's poem is even more remarkable, however, when we perceive the poem's literal meaning to be interpenetrated with further levels of understanding. The primary level is a dramatization of Luke 12:37:

Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

But, concerned as it is with the experience of man's sin and God's forgiveness, the poem strikingly presents a vision of contact between the seen and the unseen, of that which mediates between life and faith for the Christian. Worship of God in this life is represented as analogous to the service of God in heaven; thus the service of worship, which is central to our lives, makes it possible for us now to conform (however imperfectly) to the eternal pattern. So we are able to pray, "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

"Love (III)" is a Eucharistic poem. It tells us how human beings can approach God through Thanksgiving (eucharistia) and have communion with Him. The Christian service of Communion is for the poet a reflection of the heavenly meal of Luke 12:37. For Herbert, the Christian tradition of worship as an approach to God means that in Communion we sit down at board to eat, and we eat heavenly food—the elements of bread and wine being sacramentally representative of the gift of Love offered on the cross. This experience of Communion is at the very heart of the Christian experience for the poet. Only through Communion can we have any experience of what entering heaven will be like. Consequently, God's table is approached with awe, a bowed head, and a penitent heart.

While it may be popular today to divide the religious from the aesthetic (a la Kierkegaard), Herbert knows no such division. The vision of the poem, made possible through the church service, encompasses the creation and its Creator, man and his estrangement, repentance, forgiveness, and salvation. The poem is a structure which lives and moves and has its being in the God of Love. The poem is not in itself ultimate, for that would be idolatry, but it does treat matters of ultimate concern. As Herbert's poem demonstrates, the artistic structure of a religious poem simply cannot afford to cut itself off from the creation and what is at the center of Christian life: worship of the living God as revealed through the incarnation of Jesus Christ.
FOOTNOTES

1 I do not in this paper mean to minimize the importance of communication and action, but these should be more firmly grounded in understanding of the structures of communication. When the Bible speaks of the Word of God, it means the Word of God in all its wholeness. The Christian Gospel cannot be spread by a caricature of itself: it must be presented in its wholeness.


3 Surely we can no longer accept the Senecan equation of Words = Things. If we are to limit our intellectual world to our language, we may find that we have forged fetters for our souls. See Jonathan Swift's brilliant satire of the Senecan equation in *Gulliver's Travels*, Book III, Chapt. 5.


5 The best religious poetry is contemplative, in the highest sense of the word. Surely this does not mean that we may necessarily separate poetry and action; action may indeed flow from contemplation, properly conceived.


A NOTE ON DR. HOLMES' NOTE ON MCILNAY'S "NOTE ON ULTIMATES" by Thomas B. Talbott

Dr. Arthur Holmes' criticism of the McIlnay essay is a superb example of precise analysis; yet, it fails to penetrate the logical structure of the McIlnay argument. This structure, in its simplest form, runs as follows: (1) Either every event is caused or some events are not. (2) If every event is caused, then significant explanation is impossible. (3) If some events are not caused, then significant explanation is impossible. Therefore (4) significant explanation is impossible. Now in light of this argumentative structure four comments of a general nature are in order. First, the problem of free will must be viewed merely as illustrative of the difficulty into which one is immediately plunged whenever a break in the causal sequence is postulated. Second, whether or not the argument is sound, it is clearly valid; and since it is valid, McIlnay must remain a skeptic until he is offered some reason to believe that one of his premises is unsound. Skepticism is, of course, its own refutation, and McIlnay admits this in his final paragraph. This is the root of his awful dilemma. He cannot rationally affirm skepticism, but neither can he rationally deny skepticism. If he affirms skepticism, he has already denied skepticism; but, unfortunately, if his argument is sound, he cannot deny skepticism without sacrificing logic and thus affirming skepticism. Consequently, Dr. Holmes' first two paragraphs only state half the problem. Third, introducing the possibility of relative degrees of truth does not help dissolve McIlnay's
dilemma. We like to believe that "well formulated arguments" are better than "poorly formulated arguments", but it is precisely the significance of this distinction which McIlray's argument militates against. In what sense is it even meaningful to speak of intellectual progress? In order to answer this question we must first destroy McIlray's argument. Finally, after "demonstrating" the rational unavoidability of skepticism, McIlray justifiably concludes that the difficulty, indeed impossibility, of making significant metaphysical judgments is "evidenced in the fundamental lack of consensus in metaphysical judgments." Here we must be careful not to substitute the phrase "evidenced by" for "evidenced in". Any college sophomore knows that lack of agreement does not imply an argument's insignificance, but one who is already committed to an argument's insignificance can justifiably look upon lack of agreement as illustrative of this insignificance.

The real issue, however, is whether McIlray's argument is sound. Dr. Holmes argues that it is not; and in this I concur, but fail to see how he establishes his point. His analysis is penetrating, but irrelevant. He would, I believe, focus his attention on premise (2). No where does he seriously challenge premise (3) by defending the possibility of uncaused events, and premise (1) is sound simply in virtue of the fact that it is tautological. Dr. Holmes' problem, then, is to demonstrate, or at least indicate, that universal causality does not negate the possibility of rational judgments in the manner in which McIlray assumes that it does; but in his attempt to do just this, it seems to me that he becomes involved in a mere verbal argument. He asks, for example, "Is (a) a caused action (b) determined, and an (a') uncaused action (b') undetermined? Throughout the essay, this is assumed." But is it? McIlray does not define his terms in the context of his essay, but an examination of his usage shows that he used the terms "causality" and "determinism" interchangeably. This is not an assumption; however, it merely indicates that he defines the two terms in such a way that they are equivalent. Surely he is not to be denied the freedom of stipulation. Dr. Holmes' concern for a precise understanding of McIlray's use of "chance" and "cause" is certainly legitimate, but I am afraid that definition alone is incapable of solving the problem. Upon reading McIlray's essay, it is evident that by "chance" he means an event, such as Epicurus' atomic swerve, which occurs for no reason. Now if one's choices are reduced to this kind of chance, they are devoid of intrinsic, personal significance because they are capricious. (And notice that Dr. Holmes' use of the word "chance" in a causal sense has nothing to do with McIlray's use of the same word.) To be sure, a capricious event or choice may significantly affect a person's life and in this sense acquire personal meaning, but, intrinsically, capricious choices are necessarily devoid of personal significance in that in themselves they are totally unrelated to the individual. Moreover, McIlray evidently uses the word "cause" in a traditional sense; that is, event x is said to be caused if and only if there exist certain preconditions, a,b,c,....,n, such that given a,b,c,....,n, x necessarily occurs or conversely could not have failed to occur. Now according to these definitions, causality

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and chance admittedly are not all inclusive alternatives, and admittedly free will may not "logically reduce all to a matter of chance." But is this relevant to McIlray's central thesis? (Note his use of the word "seems" in the fifth paragraph!) From his second paragraph it is obvious that the reason he rejects free will is not that it reduces to chance, but that it involves a break in the causal sequence (as he uses the term "cause"). In other words, his central thesis is that every explanation must involve a causal agent, but this destroys the possibility of explanation.

Dr. Holmes has cheated when he suggests that McIlray sets up a faulty disjunction between free will and determinism—a pseudo-metaphysical problem. The fact is that it is a very legitimate disjunction, given McIlray's categories; and if these categories are in some sense deficient, Dr. Holmes should not only state why, but clearly isolate and delimit categories which are more meaningful. This he has not done. He suggests that "determinism" may have other meanings, but what other meanings? Can "determinism" be defined in such a way as to allow the possibility that an event which does occur may not occur? And even if so, by calling this "determinism" do we not muddle up the language? Traditional philosophy has already assigned a meaning to "determinism", and by assigning other meanings to the word we merely increase the possibility of equivocation. I note, however, that all the types of causality mentioned by Dr. Holmes are ultimately embraced by our previously states operational definition. Hence, the dilemma is not relieved by the introduction of these other kinds of causes. Furthermore, by admitting that undetermined freedom does not exist, Dr. Holmes likewise admits, unless he has changed the meaning of "determinism" and not clearly stated this for us, that his own argument is determined in the following sense: Given the total conditions under which he wrote, his argument could not have been constructed in any way other than it was. But if his conclusions were determined in this sense, why should we accept his conclusions and not McIlray's?

Shifting attention from the metaphysical problem of freewill to some other kind of freedom does not in any way help matters. By attributing freedom primarily "to the human person as a functional unity" and identifying this freedom with value-determinism, Dr. Holmes is trapped by McIlray's third paragraph. "It will not do to say that to act freely is simply to act in accordance with one's nature. Since one's nature is what it is because of something else (the creation of Divine Being, the chance coming together of certain chemicals, or whatever one might believe here) this yet leaves us with ultimate determinism." Either our choice of values is determined (in the sense McIlray uses the term) or it is not. If it is not, then we have not avoided ultimate determinism in its most vicious sense.

What are we to say then? Is skepticism the only "rational" option, even though it is not a "live" option? And if so, are we to quit, give up philosophical dialogue, and vegetate? This, of course, we cannot do. We cannot conform our lives to the hypothesis of skepticism, and I know from personal acquaintance that McIlray agrees. We can only live in hope. We must act, and so we act as if significant decisions are possible. Pragmatically speaking, this may work. We make predictions which cannot be justified until the actual moment of verification; we think we find our predictions verified, but in reality we cannot know why they are verified nor even that they are verified. Thus the human predicament.
But here the human spirit revolts. Is there nothing that we can do? The answer is yes, there is yet something we can and must do. We must follow Dr. Holmes' suggestion. "We must retrace our steps. How did we get into the cul-de-sac? Where in the argument could we have gone astray?" Granted, we may be forced back into the skeptical box, but then we must retrace our steps again—we must always remain skeptical of our own premises. The quest must continue. Perhaps tomorrow we might be enlightened.

Focusing attention upon McIntay's premises, it becomes evident that he makes one capital assumption; namely, that if an event is uncaused, it is unexplainable. This is clearly assumed in his second paragraph, and we have subsumed it under premise (3). It is here that I should attack. Premise (2), it seems to me, is beyond criticism, especially given McIntay's own categories. But premise (3) is open to very serious doubt. Dr. Holmes suggests this when he writes that "even if freedom is uncaused (which I doubt) it is not 'by chance' and therefore (if this follows) meaningless." We have already seen that determinism and chance are not all inclusive alternatives; they do not form a complete disjunction. If we negate what is meant by "determinism", we have no more defined "chance" than we define "cat" by negating the definition of "dog." It follows that we must leave open the possibility that freedom is an irreducible philosophical category, just as, in the context of the McIntay essay, causality is an irreducible philosophical category; and just as causality cannot be "defined" in terms of anything but itself without being reduced to something other than itself, so freedom cannot be "defined" in terms of anything but itself without being reduced to something other than itself. Both causality and freedom may in the strictest sense be indefinable. (Note that our previously stated operational definition of "causality" was not a philosophical definition—as such, the phrase "necessarily occur" would have begged the question. All basic categories are indefinable for the same reason that G. E. Moore's simple idea of 'goodness' is indefinable. Basic categories can only be apprehended and impressed.)

Our job, then, is to delimit the meaning of 'freedom' as a philosophical category. The first thing we have to say in this regard is what freedom cannot be and still be freedom. Freedom cannot be identified with either the capriciousness of chance or the necessity of causality. Here we must be careful to avoid any and all verbal disagreements. It may be that Dr. Holmes sometimes uses the word "cause" in the same sense that I use the word "freedom" (although I doubt it). In my view, neither Aristotle nor Whitehead nor Temple ultimately escape the element of necessity, but even if they do, I recommend the word "freedom." "Cause" can be defined in such a way that it comprehends freedom as well as cause, but for the sake of clarity we should use two different words.

Thus far, our discussion has little relevance to the McIntay argument. To suggest the possibility of other categories is not to solve his dilemma. We must first show him that significant explanation does not always involve a causal agent, and we must secondly show him the significance of freedom.

(1) I have no intention of outlining the logic of explanation. The scope of this essay does not allow it, and I would be unable to do so anyway. I suggest, however, that McIntay continue thinking in this area. Just what is the nature of explanation? Is a sentence which does not involve a causal agent by definition not an explanation?

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Surely there is room for more discussion. Observe the following: John crossed the street. Why? Because he chose to do so. Why? Because on the basis of a process of deliberation he arrived at a decision to make this choice. Why? Because he desired to come to a decision. The desire causes the deliberative process, but not the outcome. The deliberative process is not determined, but it does determine the choice. May it not be possible to posit a relation other than causal between the desire and the choice? Is not the assertion that John chose his course of action on the basis of the deliberative process of his own freedom equally as good an explanation as the assertion that billiard ball A moved on the basis of a causal connection existing between itself and another moving ball B?

(2) Freedom is indefinable. One either knows what it is or he does not. If he does not, reason will drive him toward skepticism. For the purposes of communication I describe freedom as that process of deliberation which allows one to arrive at a decision. I exclude capriciousness and necessity from my meaning. If the conclusion of a process of deliberation is determined by a character or anything else, in effect the conclusion has already been arrived at and there is no process of arriving at the conclusion. There is only choice in accordance with one’s nature. (I do not, however, exclude the effect of character on the deliberative process. Character is that which is created by freedom in operation, and as such it alone places limits on freedom. Existence precedes essence, but essence is always becoming. Moreover, that freedom is cast into a condition with which it is forced to interact is undeniable. This is why we are not to judge. We never know whether a person appears unlovely merely because of an unfortunate condition or whether he actually has an unlovely character. Only God can judge.)

This paper has already run too long. If McInay does not understand my usage of “freedom,” I can only try again. If he understands and asks me how I know it exists, I shall ask him how he knows that causality exists. And he will surely answer, “I do not know that it exists.”

Dear Editor:

I do not have time for a careful analysis of Tom Talbott’s thoughtful paper, nor am I sure it’s needed. My objective was not to resolve Phil’s dilemma and solve the problem of freedom—hence Tom correctly observes that I shifted the ground of discussion. Rather I purposed (1) to suggest that skepticism is both premature and unpracticable, and (2) to point some directions for fruitful enquiry regarding the meaning of “causation” and “freedom.”

In effect I suspect Tom has failed to grasp this. He still defines (a) causation as necessary, and in a Humean style implying discrete events. This is the very mechanistic model I tried to set aside, as I think Aristotle, Temple, Whitehead, etc., do. I think causation and freedom are not mutually exclusive. Likewise he defines (b) freedom as uncaused action. Here I suspect semantical differences between

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DR. ARTHUR F. HOLMES is Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Department of Philosophy at Wheaton College.
us, for we are both trying to reformulate the category of freedom. He
regards it as ultimate; I regard it as a function of the category of
personality. But in either case we agree that it is not "mechanistic
indeterminism" a la Lucretius. This means, in his analysis of Phil's
argument, that I both question premise (2) and challenge the mutual
exclusiveness of the disjunct (1). I suspect causation operates in
degrees, because events are our abstractions from a more wholistic
process.

Try non-directive counselling as an example of causation and free­
dom combined. The patient determines his own course of action, but
says "how could I do otherwise?" [Martin Luther, too]. Freedom is
exercised (and constrained) in personal situations. This is hardly
reducible to successive events, etc., yet causation is still at work.

As for not establishing my conclusion, it's evident from para­
graph 1 of this further note that I did not try to. My point regard­
ing proofs is simply that philosophical positions are parts of world­
views, and that these are chosen rather than proven; but that this
does not preclude helpful philosophical dialogue, using analysis, phe­
nomenological data, and help from the history of philosophy, etc.--as
well as the perennial dialectic. I hardly think a few pages could
settle any problem of any magnitude, but I'm glad they can stimulate
discussion of a constructive sort.

Sincerely,
Arthur F. Holmes

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This letter marks the end of the discussion which began in the
April issue of the opinion with the publication of Philip McLlnay's
Note on Ultimates. Dr. Holmes' critique provoked the preceding eval­
uation by Thomas Talbott, and Holmes has again responded to the issue
in the previous letter. We regret that we were not able to give Dr.
Holmes enough time to respond in greater detail. Nevertheless, we
trust that this discussion will provoke further discussion, and that
each reader of the opinion will attempt to clarify these issues in his
own mind. Thomas Talbott's remarks on Dr. Holmes' last word are two:
1) He agrees that he failed to grasp that Holmes' purpose was not to
resolve McLlnay's dilemma. 2) Talbott also thinks that many of his
"disagreements" with Holmes may be chiefly semantical.

-CLS

A WORD TO SOME CALVANISTS
by Philip McLlnay

There are certain people who hold, by Scriptural conviction, to
what is commonly called divine predestination: that is, they believe
what Scripture teaches is true, and they believe Scripture teaches
that God predetermines all events, including human choices.

To these peculiar individuals I wish to address the following con­
sideration. Let us grant, for purposes of this discussion, that a
correct exegesis of Holy Writ will yield a view of the Sovereignty of
God which implies an ultimate causal connection between the will of
the Almighty and every human decision (hence, the faith by which a

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person is presumably redeemed is the result of his "act of will," the
direction of which is determined by God).

If this alleged teaching of Scripture is correct, if this causal
connection is the case, then significant communication is at an end.
For if all human activity is determined (by God, or otherwise), then
a Biblical writer's assertion to this effect is, in itself, determined
and therefore cannot admit of validation. It was determined that St.
Paul say what he has said, that Bertrand Russell say what he has said,
that whoever has judged between them precisely so judge, and so on,
ad nauseam. Propositional communication is reduced to nonsense.

Therefore the man who finds in Scripture a doctrine of predestina-
tion (as we have defined it)* must conclude either (a) that Scripture
errs, or (b) that all the statements of Scripture are meaningless.
(Of course, if he is right, his concluding "(b)" likewise would be
meaningless; or his concluding anything else, for that matter.)

* There are some who would reject this description of Divine Sover-
eignty. I ask only that they accept the full implication of such re-
jection: namely, that there are some events, notably, human choices,
which lie outside an absolute causal control by God. Either all
events are unconditionally foreordained by God or some events are not.
This is a tautology: it is necessarily true.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor:

Kudos to BB for his excellent editorial in the March issue of the
opinion. Mr. Braman laments that too many of us are too busy doing
practical work assignments or other gainful employment. Not only this,
but Mr. Braman laments that too many of us are either afraid, unable,
or too preoccupied to enter into anything even vaguely resembling ser-
ious intellectual or theological pursuit. Now, mind you, these are
weighty matters.

I contend that the situation which Mr. Braman described exists
because of four reasons: 1) our preoccupation with the B.D., 2) our
need for diversion from our academic studies, 3) our "trying to do too
many things," and 4) our need for an atmosphere that nurtures scholar-
ship.

Firstly, we have become preoccupied with the B.D. We have be-
come enmeshed in the world's standards of success and acceptance.
The B.D. has become a necessary mean to an important end. So, we take
the required courses, pass the required tests, file the necessary
forms and merrily move towards our "calling." To many, the B.D. mere-
ly means having the right union card to apply for a job that is offer-
ed in a closed shop--the institutionalized American Church.

Secondly, there is a sense of the need of diversion from our
academic studies. This, I believe is engendered by lack of funds,
non-interest in our subject matter as presented, and a tension be-
tween studies and practical experience. Many in our midst have faced
or are facing dire financial straits. As a result, many have to work.
This work saps us of our time, energy and interest. Thus, some of us
are really too tired to fully appreciate our studies--much less duti-
fully interact with our studies. Yet, the bills have to be paid and
we have to get the B.D. For others, the way some of the lectures,
seminars, reading of tomes and writing of papers are pursued bespeak

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of boredom and uninterest. And the attention span of a bored student is very short. Not only do we need diversions because of finances and disinterested; but many of us need to work on an experiential plane with some of the theories which we learn from day to day. The tension here is very real. Yet conflict of some sort is still one of the best stimulants to learning. Thirdly, "we are trying to do too many things." The very nature of our institution—interdenominational and independent and evangelical—is both our strength and weakness. By attracting many different men and women interested in various aspects of ministry, we tend not to have any force or ideology which is centripetal, but only centrifugal. Perhaps along with the consolidating of the FMF, SAC, PEC, MYM into the Church in Mission Co-ordinatorship, we might see some attempts at integration, rather than just diversity, diffusion and fission in our practical concerns and conferences. An attempt might also be made to begin a voluntary internship program here in the greater LA area—in which some can be exposed to the multi-faceted ministry of the Church as middle year interns at home or during an extended four-year course.

Fourthly and finally, there needs to be an atmosphere which stimulates and nurtures scholarship. Too often many of our assignments might be classified as plain "busy work." Granted, we must learn certain tools, "cepts," and theories, we must read major theological works and classical tomes. But perhaps the one thing most lacking in regards to a wholesome, stimulating academic atmosphere is the lack of interaction at the personal level. Some of us will never quite be the scholars the professors desire us to be. But are scholars the only ones worthy of the attention desired by all the students? The faculty-student teas, receptions and open houses are very commendable attempts. Perhaps some informal get-togethers in the refectory, student lounge or faculty offices might also be of help.

In closing, I would suggest that three basic ingredients make up a stimulating academic community: 1) integrity, 2) humility, and 3) responsibility. We must ask and answer these questions: What are our motives as students and faculty as we approach our respective roles within our community? Are we willing to learn from others? And are we willing to pay the price for the excellence in theological education of which many of us are desirous?

Thanks to BB for stimulating our thinking.

Sincerely,
Roger Fung

THE SEARCH

And I set my heart to find the meaning of this religion,
This Christ one,
This enchanting shadow of truth
that has gripped the hearts of men so.

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WILLIAM H. WALKER III is a Junior at PTS. He received a BA in History from Wheaton College in 1964.
I walked the ways both broad and clean
That led to much masonry,
Some simple—some strange,
But whose contents—strange as well—
Bespoke so little the truth I imagined.
Perplexed was I to find that key
That all important key,
Whose imitation had been proffered me,
Whose imitation so transparent was:
Hail Christ of Christmas!
Hail Christ the crucified!
Hail Christ the church!
There was also a stoney path which I followed,
Which some had taken before.
These few I found had learned to pray,
Had come to kneel near their rude altar...
Their Burden too weighty,
Their Humanness too poignant,
Their honesty overwhelming.
With need they came,
And out of the pathos of their joy
Did they return
To face for another hour
That bitter pain which had brought so much joy.
And so I found my key,
But its weight proved far too heavy
To one so unfamiliar as me.

--William Henry Walker III

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