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FIDES ET HUMILITAS:
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Editorial:
Retrieval, Resourcement, and the Reformation:
Tradition, Scripture, and the Protestant Reformation

The rise of Humanism is accompanied by the common expression of *ad fontes*, and thereby can be credited for making Patristic texts the source of inquiry. As it follows, the debate between the Roman Catholic Church and Reformers resided in who could lay claim to the most accurate interpretation of Augustine.[1] The Protestant Reformation, in perhaps the most primary way, was a revolution of one book, the Bible. A fresh return to the Scriptures brought with it a re-infusion of biblical theology and a resurgence of the gospel message.

The reorientation towards God's word did not, however, lead to a rejection of church tradition. The desire for reform raised a particularly thorny question in debate among Reforming and Roman Catholic theologians: what is the place of church tradition? Were the Church Fathers (the early commentators on Scripture) on the side of the Reformers or Rome? Were the creeds, councils, and other early writings to be trusted or trashed?[2] Everyone agreed upon the

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[1]Carl Trueman, "The Renaissance," in *Revolutions in Worldview: Understanding the Flow of Western Thought*, ed. W. Andrew Hoffecker (Philipsburg, PA: P&R Publishing, 2007), 182.

[2]For more critical inquiry on the use tradition and Scripture, consider Robert W. Jenson, *Canon and Creed*, Interpretation (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010); Jaroslav Pelikan, *Credo: Historical and Theological Guide to Creeds and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005); Richard Bauckham and Benjamin Drewery, eds., *Scripture, Tradition, and Reasons: A Study in the*

importance of Scripture, but the Reformation sparked a heated debate on the role of church tradition.

As the architects of the Reformation argued, the Word of God both preached and publicly read was the lifeblood of the church. Scripture is transformative, leading people to communion with the living God. But this view of Scripture did not mean that Reformers believed that everyone should interpret the Bible based on their own whims. Scripture needed proper interpretation for it to be used as God intended. This was one of the main issues in the church as the Reformers saw it: the Bible had become subservient to tradition, when it should have been the other way around.[3] Thus, for the Reformers, recovering the interpretative tradition of the Church was pivotal in order to avoid the kinds of errors that sparked the Reformation in the first place. For the Reformers, *sola scriptura* was not deployed to remove themselves from reading the Church Fathers and medieval theologians, it was a way to verify their place among the theological and exegetical traditions of the church.

Reformers looked back to the Fathers, and among many, to Augustine of Hippo in particular.[4] It was in his writings where

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Criteria of Christian Doctrine (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000); D. H. Williams, *Tradition, Scripture, and Interpretation: A Sourcebook of the Ancient Church*, Evangelical Ressourcement: Ancient Sources for the Church's Future (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006).

[3]See chapter 11, "Holy Writ and Holy Church," in Heiko A. Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 361–422.

[4]For more on the Reformers's use of the Fathers, consider Irena Backus, ed. *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West: From the Carolingians to the Maurists*, Vol. 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1997); Anthony N. S. Lane, *John Calvin: Student of the Church Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999); H. Ashley Hall, *Philip Melanchthon and the Cappadocians: A Reception of Greek Patristic Sources in the Sixteenth Century*, Academic Studies 16 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014).

Reformers saw the true rendering of church tradition in the proper interpretation of Scripture in regards to salvation. Augustine, in his debates with the British monk Pelgaius, asserted the inability of man to obey God apart from his supernatural work of grace working in one's heart to bring about love for God and his commands. Pelagius and his followers said that man had the innate ability to follow God's commands. Augustine, reading Paul in Romans 5, said, "The reign of death is only destroyed in any man by the Saviour's grace." Reformers noted that such a view, which was the proper reading of Paul and other New Testament writings, was absent or had become extremely muddied within late medieval theology. So crucial was Augustine to the Reformation cause that one theologian described the Reformation as an "Augustinian renaissance."[5]

Reformers also affirmed what was traditionally called The Rule of Faith, which asserted that any interpretation of Scripture that deviated from the original apostolic declaration was suspect. The Rule of Faith (*regula fidei*) is the apostolic summary of the Bible's redemptive storyline.[6] Christian basics such as Jesus as fully God and fully man, God as triune, and other faith commitments were to be found in Scripture and confirmed by the Rule of Faith (cf. Irenaeus, *Apostolic Preaching*). Works such as John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* were considered summaries of the redemptive message of God found in Scripture and confirmed in the Rule of Faith. Alongside this

[5]Timothy George, *Theology of the Reformers* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1988), 48.

[6]Everett Ferguson, *The Rule of Faith: A Guide*, Cascade Companions 20 (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2015); George R. Sumner and Ephraim Radner, eds., *The Rule of Faith: Scripture, Canon, and Creed in a Critical Age* (New York: Church Publishing, 1998); Paul M. Blowers, "The *Regula Fidei* and the Narrative Character of Early Christian Faith," *Pro Ecclesia* 6, no. 2 (1997): 199–228.

interpretative tradition, Reformers recognized that the early centuries of church teaching always had Scripture as their final authority. The Reformers saw no difference between themselves and the faithful who had come before them, defending the faith and asserting the primacy of Scripture in the life of the church.

Other developments such as the papacy and various councilior decisions were suspect because biblical and early historical warrant was missing. Reformers affirmed the early creeds of the church and promoted their usage within the church. Reformers, therefore, were not wary of church tradition, simply unbiblical church tradition. They recognized that Christianity was a historically-rooted faith and that the body of Christ included faithful men and women who preceded them. Recovering the biblical gospel did not mean tossing all the practices and traditions into the garbage.

What do we learn from the Reformers in regards to Scripture and tradition? First, tradition is not something to cast aside. We are a people with a rich heritage and tradition. We need to look at the early centuries of the church to appreciate (and perhaps reclaim) the interpretive tradition, which saw the redemptive story of God as the primary message of Scripture. God is a triune God, enacting salvation by means of the eternal Son, dispensing power to the church by means of the Spirit. This was central to the early proclamation and what the Reformers sought to recover. This also includes reading scripture with the great tradition of the Christian faith.

Second, Scripture is the lifeblood of the church. Throughout the early preaching, theological defenses, and other writings, the tradition of the church asserted the primacy of the revealed word of God. This inerrant authority was the means by which the church was shaped and

formed. Reformers saw themselves simply walking in the same pattern set forth by the earlier tradition of the church.

Last, no tradition rises above the final authority of Scripture. *Sola scriptura* does not mean scripture as the sole authority or *nuda scriptura*, but rather the final authority. Christians from the beginning have never believed in "No creed but the Bible." But they have always believed, "No creed valid without the Bible." The church and its people can err, but God's word does not. We are to conform our worship, theology, and our daily lives to Scripture as the *norma nomands*, not the other way around. In the shifting sands of cultural whims, the church should always stand upon the unwavering foundation of God's word, recognizing the Orthodox tradition of theological reflection, which confirms the validity of the Scripture as our best and final authority. In the crucible of the Reformation debates on Scripture and tradition, this was the most valuable principle to be recovered.

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Finding Wine in the Water Jar: A History of Interpretation of John 2:1–11

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Abstract: Throughout much of the church's history, interpreters have understood the *sensus literalis* of a biblical text to contain or lead to further spiritual senses. This understanding is particularly illustrated in how the church has historically interacted with the Gospel of John. Therefore, in this article I will use John 2:1–11 as a test case for how many throughout history have understood the *sensus literalis*. In doing so, I contend that the fullest readings neither diminished authorial intent nor a multiplicity of meaning. Rather, they recognized the *sensus literalis* of the biblical text to lead to further spiritual meanings. As a result of this study, many of the spiritual interpretations advocated throughout the history of the church will be found consistent with the literary and theological intent of John's Gospel.

A survey of the history of interpretation shows that the church has wrestled with the proper tension between the literal and spiritual meanings of the biblical text. In our contemporary setting, the church continues to grapple with this hermeneutical question. On the one hand, many modern interpreters are hesitant to employ spiritual

readings that were more prevalent during previous eras.[1] It is said that to do so necessarily leaves interpreters "drifting on the sea of uncertainty and conjecture."[2] Therefore, in fidelity to the grammatical–historical method of interpretation, the spiritual senses of the biblical text are sacrificed in the name of obtaining the author's single meaning. On the other hand, some postmodern interpreters diminish authorial intent in order to allow for a multiplicity of meaning.[3] David Steinmetz forcefully asserts, "The medieval theory of levels of meaning in the biblical text, with all its doubtful defects, flourished because it is true, while the modern theory of a single meaning, with all its demonstrable virtues, is false."[4]

Are readers of the biblical text then forced to pit authorial intent against a multiplicity of meaning? Not necessarily. Throughout much of the church's history interpreters have understood the literal sense (*sensus literalis*)[5] of the biblical text to contain or lead to further

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[1]Particularly with John's Gospel this hesitancy is illustrated among commentators such as, C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978); D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991); Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995).

[2]Robert L. Thomas, *Evangelical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002), 158.

[3]See David C. Steinmetz, "The Superiority of Pre–Critical Exegesis," *Theology Today* 37, no. 1 (1980): 32; Stephen E. Fowl, *Engaging Scripture* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998), 33–40.

[4]Steinmetz, "The Superiority of Pre-Critical Exegesis," 27.

[5]The phrase *sensus literalis* is being used to articulate the literal sense of the biblical text as, "reading for its literary sense, the sense of its communicative act. This entails, first doing justice to the propositional, poetic, and purposive aspects of each text as a communicative act and, second, relating these to the Bible considered as a unified divine communicative act: the word of God" (Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There*

spiritual senses. This understanding is particularly illustrated in how the church has historically interacted with the Gospel of John. For instance, Eusebius recounts how Clement of Alexandria classified it as a "spiritual Gospel."[6] Therefore, it may be advantageous for contemporary interpreters to explore how the church has historically employed spiritual readings of John's Gospel in relation to reading a literal level.

To this end, I wish to present John 2:1–11 as a test case for how many throughout history have understood the *sensus literalis*, recognizing how this passage yields a range of meanings that are inherit to the literary intent of John's Gospel. In doing so, I contend that the fullest readings neither diminished authorial intent nor a multiplicity of meaning. Rather, they recognized the *sensus literalis* of the biblical text to lead to further spiritual meanings.

With the above thesis in mind, this article is divided into two main sections. The first provides a brief history of interpretation from the patristic era until the present, highlighting key representatives of each period and their interpretive emphases. The second approaches John 2:1–11 by following the lead of those interpreters who viewed the *sensus literalis* to encompass multiple levels of meaning. As a result of this study, many of the spiritual interpretations advocated throughout the history of the church will be found consistent with the literary and theological intent of John's Gospel.

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a Meaning in This Text?: The Bible, The Reader, and The Morality of Literary Knowledge [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998], 312.).

[6]Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, 6.14.7.

A History of Interpretation of John 2:1–11

The Patristic Era

From the perspective of many modern interpreters, the patristic era is characterized as time dominated by fanciful interpretations that were not grounded in the text of Scripture. Though it is true that the patristic era emphasized spiritual readings of the text, it would be too simplistic to assume that their approach was devoid of exegesis. Rather, as Reno and O'Keefe affirm, methods of exegesis were essential to "reading the details of scripture so that they fit together into an interlocking whole."[7] With this goal in mind, the early church employed an intensive reading of Scripture looking for "hints and signs amid the tiniest details of the text."[8] By finding verbal associations that provided contact between one passage and another, the fathers prepared a way for a comprehensive reading of Scripture.

Such an intensive reading is visible in the early church's treatment of John 2:1–11. Primarily, the passage is interpreted Christologically. For instance, significance is found in that the wedding occurs on the third day (v. 1). Cyril of Alexandria says this statement represents "the last days," and that it also looks forward to the defeat of the curse at the resurrection.[9] At a macro-level the entire wedding and miracle were universally interpreted in light of the Christ event. Probably the most elaborate interpretation was that of Augustine.

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[7]John J. O'Keefe and R. R. Reno, *Sanctified Vision: An Introduction to Early Christian Interpretation of the Bible* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2005), 45.

[8]O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision*, 46.

[9]Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*, ed. Joel C. Elowsky, trans. David R. Maxwell, vol. 1, Ancient Christian Texts (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 91.

Viewing Christ as the fulfillment of the Old Testament, he interpreted the water to represent the Old Testament read apart from Christ. Therefore, without Christ the Old Testament is tasteless.[10] In light of Christ fulfilling the Old Testament, Augustine then reads the rest of the passage through the lens of this reality. For example, the six water jars represent the six ages leading up to the last days of Christ. Each age prophesied of the Christ, but as Augustine states, "so long as these things of which I speak were not preached among the peoples, the prophecy was water, it was not yet changed into wine."[11] Other emphases by patristic interpreters include, understanding the location of the wedding being in Galilee as a sign that the gospel had gone out to the Gentiles. Both Cyril of Alexandria and Eusebius understand this as a fulfillment of Isaiah 9, where in the "latter times [God] has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations."[12] Additionally, others see the wedding as representing Christ's incarnation, whereby he humbles himself to serve.[13]

Though patristic interpreters were quick to read the text at a spiritual level, it does not follow that the text was not at all engaged at

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[10]Augustine of Hippo, "Lectures or Tractates on the Gospel According to St. John," in *St. Augustin: Homilies on the Gospel of John, Homilies on the First Epistle of John, Soliloquies*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. John Gibb and James Innes, vol. 7, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, First Series (New York: Christian Literature Company, 1888), 64.

[11]Augustine of Hippo, "On the Letter and the Spirit," in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, ed. Philip Schaff, vol. 5 (New York: Christian Literature Company, 1887), 66–67.

[12]Joel C. Elowsky, ed., *John 1-10*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 88; W. J. Ferrar, *The Proof of the Gospel Being the Demonstratio of Eusebius of Caesarea* (New York: Macmillan, 1920), 170.

[13]Elowsky, *John 1-10*, 88, 90, 96.

the literal level. For instance, most interpreters recognized that on the surface the miracle showed Christ to be the creator.[14] One in particular who devoted time to interact at a textual level was Theodore of Mopsuestia. In doing so, Theodore emphasized the importance of the human author, giving attention to the grammatical and linguistic questions of the text.[15] For example, though the miracle itself is a spiritual event, it merely highlights Jesus's creative power.[16] Again, Theodore interprets the "third day" as a chronological marker, indicating that the event took place three days after Jesus's baptism.[17] Furthermore, he viewed John's detail about the "six water jars" as providing historical context to the situation, thus giving credibility to the miracle.[18]

Patristic interpreters also interpret the account at a moral or tropological level. In this way several elements of the Wedding at Cana are seen as prescriptive for Christian living. First, the text serves as an affirmation of marriage, and a refutation to heretics who reject marriage.[19] Second, since Jesus honors his mother's request to address the wedding crisis, he serves as an example to honor one's parents. However, as Chrysostom notes, Jesus's respectful rebuke to his mother

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[14]Irenaeus *Adv. Haer.,* 3.11.5.

[15]Bruce A. McDonald, "Theodore of Mopsuestia (350–428)," in *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 968.

[16]Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, ed. Joel C. Elowsky, trans. Marco Conti, Ancient Christian Texts (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2010), 27.

[17]Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 26.

[18]Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 27.

[19]Elowsky, *John 1–10*, 89.

also teaches Christians that when parents "require anything unseasonably, and cause hindrance in any spiritual matter, it is unsafe to obey."[20] Finally, the disciples aid as examples for us to believe in Christ as the Son of God.[21]

From this brief survey of patristic interpretations, it is evident that the spiritual sense dominates. Though there are differences among the interpreters, nearly all see Christ's miracle to signify the fulfillment of the Old Testament. Also, most draw similar moral readings from the text. Cyril of Alexandria seems to be conscience of both the literal and spiritual senses of the text. By examining the plain sense, Cyril explains that the miracle shows Christ's creative power and his glory.[22] Nevertheless, at a deeper level the text also speaks to Christ's fulfillment of the Old Testament, and how this salvation historical event impacts the church. Though Cyril, and others do not delineate their method, this absence should not be seen as a lack of concern for the plain sense of the text. Rather, it is best to view their limited interaction with the literal sense in light of their aretegenic goal for writing.

The Medieval Era

During the Medieval period there is great continuity with patristic interpretations. Specifically, Augustine's impact is perceived among many Medieval interpreters. For instance, Bede the Venerable (673–

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[20]John Chrysostom, *Saint Chrysostom: Homilies on the Gospel of St. John and Epistle to the Hebrews*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. G. T. Stupart, vol. 14, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post–Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church (New York: Christian Literature Company, 1889), 74.

[21]Elowsky, *John 1–10*, 97.

[22]Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*, 1:90–91.

735) follows Augustine's interpretation concerning the water turned to wine, stating "[Christ] soon turned those mandates which seemed fleshly to spiritual teaching, and he changed the whole exterior appearance of the letter of the law to the gospel of virtue of heavenly grace – which is the meaning of his having made wine from water."[23] Again, along with Augustine, Bede interpreted the six water jars to correspond with the six ages leading up to the preaching of Christ, and that the measurements of the jars are also a reference to the Trinity.[24] From another angle, Bede also understood the whole wedding to function as an allegory of Christ's incarnation. He says, "His nuptial chamber was the womb of his incorrupt mother, where God was conjoined with human nature and from there he came forth like a bridegroom to join the church to himself."[25]

Two other interpreters of the Augustinian tradition, include Bonaventure (AD 1217–1274) and Aquinas (AD 1225–74) Like Augustine, they both interpreted the "third day" as the age of grace and the time of Christ.[26] In the same way, the miracle itself testifies to how the shadow of the Law has been transformed into the joyful wine of reality (Heb 10:1).[27] Aquinas, referencing Bede, viewed the wedding to be an allegory, picturing Christ's incarnation.[28] Furthermore, similar to

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[23]Bede the Venerable, "Homily 1.14," in *Homilies on the Gospels*, trans. Lawrence T. Martin and David Hurst (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1991), 136.

[24]Bede the Venerable, "Homily 1.14," 138.

[25]Bede the Venerable, "Homily 1.14," 135.

[26]Saint Bonaventure, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, trans. Robert J. Karris, vol. 11, Works of St. Bonaventure (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 2007), 145; Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, trans. Fabian R. Larcher and James A. Weisheipl (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2010), 133.

[27]Bonaventure, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 11:145–46.

Augustine, Bonaventure and Aquinas saw the text anagogically representing the marriage of Christ and the church.[29]

Though spiritual readings were still prevalent at this time, interpreters began to ask questions regarding how the spiritual or allegorical sense should be attained. Giving greater attention to such questions, Christopher Ocker notes that a shift in thinking occurred where the literal sense was understood to be "the meaning first intended by the author; therefore 'every passage of holy Scripture has a literally meaning, which is not always what is first signified by the literal words, but is often what is designated through the thing that is signified by the literal words.'"[30] Simply stated, the literal sense of Scripture was understood to contain or lead to the other spiritual senses. This change is well illustrated by the format of both Bonaventure's and Aquinas's commentaries. Both designate their literal, allegorical, and tropological interpretations, commenting on the text from three different perspectives.

Bonaventure's commentary begins with a structural outline of the text dividing John 2:1–11 into five parts: (1) the occasion; (2) the petition; (3) the transformation; (4) the acknowledgement; (5) the manifestation.[31] It is this literary structure that provides the foundation or starting point for all other readings. Although Aquinas does not parse his commentary out into separate divisions, he too

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[28]Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 133–34.

[29]Bonaventure, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 11:145; Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 133.

[30]Christopher Ocker, "Biblical Interpretation in the Middle Ages," in *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters*, ed. Donald K. McKim, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2008), 19.

[31]Bonaventure, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 11:139.

bases his readings on the literary structure of the passage.[32] As a result, the wedding occurs on the third day, a chronological marker. However, the third day has more than a literal meaning, as shown above. In the same way, both Bonaventure and Aquinas give a historical description of the six water jars and how the Jews used them for ceremonial cleansing. Nevertheless, there still remains a deeper spiritual meaning to the six water jars.

An emphasis on the literal interpretation is highlighted among the writings of Nicholas of Lyra (1270–1349). For Lyra the spiritual meaning of the text is contained in the literal. To illustrate this relationship, Lyra likened the literal sense to the foundation of a structure, which supports and upholds the spiritual meaning.[33] Therefore, the theological themes of John's Gospel are to be identified in the structure of the text. For example, Lyra relates the Wedding at Cana with John's prologue, where the revelation of Christ's divinity is described. Because Christ's divinity is integral to John's purpose, it should appear throughout the Gospel, including the Wedding at Cana.[34] As a result, the spiritual senses of the text are regulated by John's larger narrative structure.

The Reformation

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, greater attention was given to the literal sense of the Scripture. With the impact of the

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[32]Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 132–33.

[33]Mark Hazard, *The Literal Sense and the Gospel of John in Late-Medieval Commentary and Literature*, ed. Francis G. Gentry, Studies in Medieval History and Culture (New York: Routledge, 2002), 4.

[34]Hazard, *The Literal Sense and the Gospel of John* , 31.

Renaissance, a renewed interest developed in the original languages and the historical meaning of the text. As a result, some began to resist allegorical and tropological interpretations. However, as Richard Muller states, this resistance did not result in "a bare literal understanding of the text but rather an understanding that took into consideration the larger theological context and specifically the meaning of the divine author as presented in the Bible as a whole."[35] In other words, since the Scripture was divinely inspired, interpreters "supplemented a close grammatical reading of the text with figural or typological interpretation."[36]

Though interpreters at this time read the Scriptures theologically, many emphasized a historical and literal interpretation. This emphasis is illustrated by John Calvin (1509–1564) who in his commentary only devoted himself to a surface level reading of John 2:1–11. For example, Calvin provides geographical details as to the location of Cana of Galilee.[37] Mary serves merely an illustration of compassion, and Christ's correction of her is to show that she crossed her bounds. And when examining the six water jars, they merely serve to set the historical context, and reinforce the validity of Christ's miracle.[38] Considering the passage a whole, Calvin surprisingly makes no mention about the fulfillment of the Law and the New Covenant.

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[35]Richard Muller, "Biblical Interpretation in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Grand Rapids: IVP Academic, 2007), 22.

[36]Hans W. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (London: Yale University Press, 1974), 19–20.

[37]John Calvin, *Commentary on the Gospel According to John*, trans. William Pringle (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010), 82.

[38]Calvin, *Commentary on the Gospel According to John*, 87.

Instead, the miracle is merely seen as an instrument to display Christ's glory.

Even with a shift to a more literal reading of the text, not everyone had an aversion to spiritual readings. Martin Luther (1483–1546) would be such an example. Though Luther is most notably recognized for his role in the Protestant Reformation, methodologically he was a Medieval interpreter. In his Postils, Luther examined the text spiritually to cultivate faith in Christ. Therefore, the wedding speaks to married people, to understand that "Christ shows that he wants to supply what is lacking in marriage by giving wine when it ran out, and making it out of water."[39] For Luther this means that Christ will turn the afflictions the married couple endures into "joy and delight."[40] Beyond this moral reading of the text, Luther also stands in continuity with earlier interpreters. First of all, the wedding represents Christ and the church.[41] Secondly, the miracle speaks to the reality that Christ has come to fulfill the Law.[42] Specifically, the six water jars represent the Old Testament, which is merely water. And the changing of water into wine is the word of the Gospel that brings a right understanding of the Law.[43] Finally, Luther also interprets the servants, as preachers of the New Testament, and the chief waiter represents the priesthood.[44]

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[39]Martin Luther, "Gospel for the Second Sunday After Epiphany: John 2:1–11," in *Church Postil*, ed. Benjamin T. G. Mayes and James L. Langebartels, vol. 76, Luther's Works (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2013), 239.

[40]Luther, "John 2:1–11," 240.

[41]Luther, "John 2:1–11," 245.

[42]Luther, "John 2:1–11," 246.

[43]Luther, "John 2:1–11," 247.

[44]Luther, "John 2:1–11," 248.

Reflecting on this time period, one notices that John 2:1–11 is interpreted rather thinly. Except for a minority (e.g. Luther), many interpreters abandoned a spiritual reading of the text. Certainly, theological truth could be extracted, but nothing beyond Christ's divine power being put on display. Beyond this theological truth, the text could be used to affirm marriage, appreciate the example of Mary's compassion, and provide grounds for believing in Jesus as the Christ. Nevertheless, Luther seems stand in between the extremes of the patristic tendencies of over–spiritualization and the overly literal interpretations during his day.

The Modern Era

With the rise of the Enlightenment a premium was placed on empiricism, naturalism, and a scientific view of history. As a result, a critical shift from the Renaissance occurred where language was viewed less as a depiction of reality, and more representational of the knowledge of the world.[45] With this change in thinking, biblical interpreters began to view the Scriptures as a representation of ancient history, which contained God's revelation.[46] Therefore, the biblical text was no longer the source of truth. Instead truth is contained in the distant past, which now must be uncovered.[47] This search for the "true" history behind the Bible is illustrated in Gabler's biblical theology program. The literal sense of Scripture became

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[45]G. T. Sheppard and A. C. Thieselton, "Biblical Interpretation in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Grand Rapids: IVP Academic, 2007), 47.

[46]Sheppard and Thieselton, "Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," 48.

[47]Sheppard and Thieselton, "Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," 60.

synonymous with "the intent, purpose and scope of human testimony within a biblical book."[48] This redefinition of the literal sense of Scripture produced a scientific approach to the Bible over against a spiritual one.

This shift in biblical study is seen in the interpretations of John 2:1–11 by men such as John Bengel (1687–1752),[49] Brooke Westcott (1825–1901),[50] and to some degree also Matthew Henry (1662–1714)[51] and J. C. Ryle (1816–1900).[52] For instance, all of these men merely interpret the third day (v. 1) as a chronological marker in the text. Neither do these interpreters see any significance in the location of wedding being in Cana of Galilee. At this point Westcott devotes his comments to geographic points seeking to discern the most likely location.[53]

An emphasis upon the original languages is illustrated in both Westcott's and Lange's commentary discussing Jesus's words to his mother, *τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί* (v. 4).[54] Each examines how the phrase was used

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[48]Sheppard and Thieselton, "Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," 65.

[49]John Albert Bengel, *Gnonmon of the New Testament*, 7th ed., vol. 1 (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004).

[50]Brooke Foss Westcott, *The Gospel according to St. John : The Greek Text with Introduction and Notes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954).

[51]Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994).

[52]J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: St. John*, vol. 1 (New York: The Baker and Taylor Co., 1867).

[53]Westcott, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 36.

[54]Westcott, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 36–37; John Peter Lange, *A Commentary on the Holy Scripture: John*, trans. Philip Schaff, vol. 41 (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), 105.

in the Old Testament to argue that Jesus's response was friendly. Along these same lines, Lange devotes an entire section of his commentary to the exegetical and critical questions of the text.[55]

As attention is given to the miracle itself (vv. 6–10) most interpreters devoted space to historical and archeological findings to describe the purpose of the water jars in Jewish culture. Similar empirical questions are raised concerning the size of the water jars, as well as explanations for why they would be made of stone.[56] By concerning themselves with the plain meaning, the theological truth of the text is clear, the transformation of water into wine displays Jesus's divine power.

Although great attention was given to historical, archeological, and philological issues, there were some interpreters who incorporated the spiritually sense into their commentaries. These include Matthew Henry, Brooke Westcott, and John Lange. Nevertheless, one interpreter who distinguishes himself from the rest is Charles Spurgeon. Spurgeon's sermon interprets the passage both allegorically and tropologically.

Specifically, the Wedding at Cana is spiritualized to show Christ's work of the kingdom. Under this rubric, the wine is "a type of his grace, and the abundance of it as a type of the abundance of his grace which he doth do liberally bestow."[57] Therefore, Spurgeon draws out several moral principles that are "hidden" in the text regarding how

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[55]Lange, *A Commentary on the Holy Scripture: John*, 41:102–08.

[56]Westcott, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 37; Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: St. John*, 1:97; Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 1925; Bengel, *Gnonmon of the New Testament*, 1:565–66.

[57]Charles H. Spurgeon, "The Waterpots at Cana," in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, vol. 26 (Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications, 1972), 494.

Christ works to bestow the grace of the kingdom.[58] For example, regarding Jesus's command to fill up the water jars (v. 7), Spurgeon says, "when Christ is about to bestow a blessing he gives a command."[59] Spurgeon concludes that just as Jesus gives a command before he performs a miracle, so he gives the command to believe the Gospel before conversion. Again, Christ's command is to be done with zeal. Therefore, the instruction to fill the water jars up to the brim speaks of giving people the full gospel, rather than a half gospel.[60] Furthermore, filling the water jars also speaks to filling our minds and hearts with Scripture so that he may change our preaching from water into wine.[61]

Having briefly examined representatives during the modern era, it is apparent that the literal sense is highly prized. The prominence of a more scientific approach to the Scriptures reflects the influence of the Enlightenment, which valued empiricism as the standard for rationality.[62] However, some interpreters still interpreted the text at both a literal and spiritual level.

Recent History

The twentieth and twenty-first centuries reflect both continuity with and progression beyond modern scientific approaches to Scripture. Until the mid-twentieth century biblical studies were dominated by historical-critical methods of interpretation represented by the

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[58]Spurgeon, "The Waterpots at Cana," 495.

[59]Spurgeon, "The Waterpots at Cana," 495.

[60]Spurgeon, "The Waterpots at Cana," 498.

[61]Spurgeon, "The Waterpots at Cana," 502.

[62]Ellen T. Charry, *By the Renewing of Your Minds: The Pastoral Function of Christian Doctrine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 6.

Tübingen school of theology.[63] However, by the late 1900s and the aftermath of WWII, there was a shift away from the objective idealism which characterized the modern era. This shift resulted in a new emphasis upon the theology of the Bible and the application of literary analysis.[64] Even with a return to study the biblical text as a theological document, most interpreters were still far removed from the spiritual approach that characterized the patristic and Medieval eras.

When discussing recent interpreters, it is best to begin with one of the most influential scholars in the last century, Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976). With Bultmann's demythologizing program, "Historical stories and legends are narratives, the main intent of which is religious rather than historical."[65] In other words, Bultmann argued that Jesus's message was a presupposition of New Testament theology rather than a part of it.[66] Therefore, his approach to the Gospel of John aimed to interpret its theological message.

Applying this approach to John 2:1–11, Bultmann first examines the text according to its narrative structure in order to unpack what he calls the "παραδοξον of the miracle."[67] By following the flow of the narrative it becomes apparent that the story symbolizes the

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[63]T. H. Olbricht, "Biblical Interpretation in North America in the Twentieth Century," in *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 88–92.

[64]Olbricht, "North America in the Twentieth Century," 93–98.

[65]D. Fergusson, "Rudolf Bultmann," in *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 267.

[66]Charles H. H. Scobie, "History of Biblical Theology," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and Brian S. Rosner (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 16.

[67]Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, ed. G. R. Beasly–Murray (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), 115.

"revelation of the δοξα of Jesus."[68] Specifically, it shows "the divinity of Jesus as the Revealer, and it becomes visible for faith in the reception of χαρις and αληθεια."[69] Once this basic understanding is drawn from the text, the other details must be interpreted in light of it. Therefore, the water "stands for everything that is a substitute for the revelation, everything by which man thinks he can live and which yet fails him when put to the test."[70] The ignorance of the chief steward in verse 9, "represents the blindness of men confronted by the Revealer."[71] And finally, it may be that verse 10 should "be interpreted in this sense, namely that the divine action runs contrary to all human rules."[72]

Another significant interpreter is Leon Morris (1914–2006). In his commentary he begins by placing the Wedding at Cana within its theological context within the gospel of John. Commenting on the significance of the signs, Morris states, "They point beyond themselves. This particular miracle signifies that there is transforming power associated with Jesus. He changes the water of Judaism into the wine of Christianity, the water of Christlessness into the wine of the richness and the fullness of eternal life in Christ, the water of the law into the wine of the gospel.[73] From this comment Morris places himself within the consistent stream of the history of interpretation that sees the miracle to point beyond the plain sense, to speak of a new spiritual

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[68]Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 119.

[69]Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 119.

[70]Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 120.

[71]Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 121.

[72]Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 121.

[73]Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 155.

reality. Nevertheless, the rest of Morris's commentary does not reflect this theological significance.

Instead, he resorts to a more scientific approach merely examining historical, cultural, and grammatical elements of the text. Commenting on the actual miracle, Morris again gives a fairly shallow reading. Regarding the six water pots, he is open to the possibility that they symbolize the imperfection of Judaism, but then offers a strong objection, that "the narrative contains nothing that would symbolize completeness, which would surly be required to correspond to the incomplete. Jesus does not create or produce a seventh pot."[74] Instead of the details of the event having symbolic significance, Morris sees these elements functioning apologetically to give creditability to the miracle.

The final interpreter to be examined is N. T. Wright (b. 1948). Wright stands out from many in recent history because he reads the text according to its spiritual sense for the edification of believers. Nevertheless, Wright's spiritual reading is rooted in the literary cues given in the narrative. In other words, he allows John's narrative to set the tone for how the Wedding at Cana should be read. Essential to understanding this passage is to see that this miracle is a "sign" (v. 11). Wright states "the signs are all occasions when Jesus did . . . what he'd just promised Nathanael that he would do. They are moments when, to people who watch with a least a little faith, the angels of God are going up and coming down at the place where Jesus is."[75] In other words, "They are the moments when heaven and earth intersect with each

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[74]Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 161.

[75]N. T. Wright, *John for Everyone: Chapters 1–10* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 21.

other."[76] Therefore, this miracle illustrates what John states in his prologue, that the word became flesh (1:14). Literally heaven came to earth in the person of Jesus. From this account then, we see that when Jesus is present and people do what he tells them to do, transformation occurs (v. 9).[77]

The Sensus Literalis of John 2:1–11

What becomes unmistakable from a history of interpretation of John 2:1–11 is that the fullest readings recognize the multifaceted nature of John's Gospel. Understanding the *sensus literalis* in this way acknowledges the interconnectedness of the literal and spiritual levels of meaning that are inherit to John's literary structure. Consequently, the literal or plain sense serves to lead the reader to dig for the deeper spiritual truths beyond surface of the text.

The Prologue and The Plain Sense

Essential to an intensive reading of John is an awareness of the theological themes. By following the lead of Nicholas of Lyra in particular, the prologue of John establishes these themes that reappear throughout later narrations. Therefore, as one approaches John 2:1–11 the literary structure leads to spirituals truths that parallel those found in the prologue and are expounded upon elsewhere throughout the Gospel. These themes from the prologue include: Jesus as creator (1:1–3, 10); Jesus's incarnation (vv. 9, 14); Jesus's rejection (v. 11); belief and acceptance of Jesus (v. 12); the new birth (vv. 12–13); the glory of Jesus (v. 14); the superiority of Jesus over the Law (v. 17); and the

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[76]Wright, *John for Everyone*, 21.

[77]Wright, *John for Everyone*, 22.

revelation of the Father in Jesus (v. 18).

From a plain reading of John 2:1–11, John wants his readers to understand that this "sign" of transforming water into wine "manifested [Jesus's] glory" (v. 11a). Furthermore, this sign was to elicit the response of faith in Jesus exemplified by the disciples (v. 11b). Verse 11 then serves as an explanatory statement, giving a surface level meaning to the text. Therefore, to grasp this meaning is to obtain John's intent. However, reading at a surface level does not exhaust the text's meaning. Rather, it serves as a foundation for further meaning. In fact, verse 11 explicitly states that the literal events at the Wedding at Cana represent spiritual realities. In other words, John is teaching us how to read his Gospel. It is therefore, the reader's responsibility to listen closely to John's cues to uncover these spiritual meanings.

This understanding of how verse 11 functions, is the conclusion that Bultmann arrived at. However, Bultmann admitted that he did not know how much of the spiritual meaning is to be read back into the narrative.[78] In this regard, we may be helped by Lyra's observation that the prologue to John's Gospel provides the limitations for what spiritual meanings are to be found. Along these lines it is significant to note that both the manifestation of Jesus's glory and the example for belief are two themes found in the prologue. If Lyra is on the right track, then other spiritual readings of this passage should also correspond with the theological themes given in the prologue.

Reading Beyond the Surface Level

Already the surface meaning of the text has been identified. The story of the Wedding at Cana is a manifestation of Jesus's glory, soliciting

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[78]Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 120.

belief in him (v. 11). The narrative in which this meaning is located can be structured as follows: the setting (vv. 1–2); the miracle (vv. 3–10); and the significance (v. 11). However, as argued throughout this paper, we must not be satisfied with such a basic understanding of the text. Rather, John intends us to read more deeply, discerning the greater spiritual realities that lie therein. In order to unearth these fuller meanings, readers must listen closely to the text grasping its multifaceted character.

The Setting (vv. 1–2). Approaching this narrative, John first establishes the setting in which this "sign" will occur. It is said that the wedding was on the "third day" (v. 1). At a literal level, John very well may have intended to communicate that the wedding took place three days after Jesus' exchange with Nathanael.[79] On the surface, this is likely correct. However, the entire story anagogically reflects heavenly realities. As John's prologue has already taught, heaven has come down to earth (1:14). And as Wright aptly notes, this manifestation is most clearly seen in the passion of Christ (chap. 19–20).[80] It is no coincidence then that Jesus shows his glory at the resurrection, three days later (20:1). What then is the significance of the "third day" in 2:1? It's a sign of the new creation, and the age of the Spirit. Or as Cyril of Alexandria recognized, it represents the "last days" and the defeat of the curse.[81]

In the same way, further significance should be found in that the sign occurs at a wedding (v. 1). Again, at a surface level Jesus and his disciples were at a real Jewish wedding. However, this should also

[79]Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 167.

[80]Wright, *John for Everyone*, 22.

[81]Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*, 1:91.

recall in the readers mind the uniting of Christ and his church. This theme is established in the prologue where John says that Jesus "came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (1:11–12). Therefore, when people receive Jesus they become part of his family. In 2:2 it must be noticed that Jesus was "invited" to the wedding. In other words, Jesus was "received" and as a result, a miracle of transformation occurs (vv. 3–10; cf. 1:12). Read this way, it is not a stretch to see the wedding as a picture of Christ's incarnation and coming into the world, and as a marriage between him and his church.[82]

Closely related to this spiritual reality is the detail concerning the location of the wedding "at Cana in Galilee" (v. 1). Many modern interpreters strive to identify this historic location.[83] Again, certainly this was a real historical place. However, Lyra is correct that historical realities have a double meaning.[84] In the patristic period, this geographical detail represented Jesus's coming to the Gentiles.[85] Linking this interpretation with the prologue, John has already told us that Jesus's people did not receive him (i.e. the Jews, 1:11). However, in 4:25 John tells us that Jesus went out to Galilee and he was "welcomed." It is important to understand that Galilee was on the outskirts of Judea. Later in 7:1, John says Jesus went about in Galilee, because in Judea

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[82]Bede the Venerable, "Homily 1.14," 135; Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 133.

[83]Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 190.

[84]"The intimate relationship of literal and spiritual senses implied a double understanding of history: history means both earthly experience and the revelation that framed and informed it" (Hazard, *The Literal Sense and the Gospel of John*, 11.).

[85]Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*, 1:88.

“the Jews were seeking to kill him.” Furthermore, Cyril of Alexandria sees a fulfillment of Isaiah 9, which speaks of God’s glory being made known in “the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations” (Isa 9:1).[86]

The Miracle (vv. 3–10). Just as the setting contains multiple levels of meaning, so does the recounting of Jesus’s miracle. Examining the water being transformed to wine, one could simply see this as a manifestation of Christ’s creative power.[87] However, much more is going on. The six stone jars are mentioned with the comment by John that they were “there for the Jewish rites of purification” (v. 6). This is important, because already in the prologue John has told us that Jesus’s coming marks the fulfillment of the Law, and the full manifestation of God’s “truth and grace” (1:17). Therefore, Jesus’s transformation of the water contained in the purification jars, represents the fulfillment of the Old Covenant.

At this point, even more meanings arise from the miracle. First, the six jars likely recall the six days of creation leading up to the seventh day of rest. Again, the creation theme is given precedent in the opening verses of the Gospel (1:1–4). Jesus has now come to bring about God’s rest in the new creation. Second, the new creation motif is not only mentioned in 1:12, but is again spoken of in John 3, where Jesus commands Nicodemus to be born again (vv. 3, 5–6; cf. Ezek 36:26–38). Reading this theme into the miracle at Cana, recalls the miracle of regeneration, whereby hearts are transformed. Third, there may also be merit in interpreting the stone jars as the stone hearts of men. Already the themes of regeneration from Ezekiel have been evoked.

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[86]Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*, 1:88.

[87]Calvin, *Commentary on the Gospel According to John*, 85.

Interestingly, the imagery of "stone" along with "water" is used in both passages (vv. 6–7; Ezek 36:26, 33).

Once a reader begins to dig deeper into the spiritual realities of the text, it is not difficult to see how previous interpreters found multiple levels of meaning. One more example of this type of reading may prove helpful. Charles Spurgeon likened the miracle at Cana to the task of preaching the gospel. Just as Jesus told the servants to full the jars to the brim (v. 7), so we are to give people the full gospel.[88] One may object saying that John never mentions preaching the gospel in this text. And certainly on the surface he does not explicitly say such a thing. However, John has already told us his intent in verse 11. Part of the purpose of this "sign" is to solicit belief. Reading this purpose back into the details of the text is illuminating. Belief is illustrated in the servants, who are to "Do whatever [Jesus] tells [them]" (v. 5). The servants then take the transformed water and serve it to the guests. If the transformation of the water into wine represents the spiritual reality of regeneration, then it also speaks to what happens when the gospel is preached. Therefore, the belief that John calls for in this text looks like obeying Jesus (v. 5) and serving people with the good news (vv. 8–10).

Conclusion

From the outset, I have sought to address whether students of the Scriptures must choose between authorial intent and a multiplicity of meaning. In order to help answer this question I presented John 2:1–11 as a test case for how many throughout history have understood the *sensus literalis*, recognizing how this passage yields a range of meanings

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[88]Spurgeon, "The Waterpots at Cana," 498.

that are inherit to the literary intent of John's Gospel. In doing so, I argued that the fullest readings neither diminished authorial intent nor a multiplicity of meaning. Rather, they recognized the *sensus literalis* of the biblical text to lead to further spiritual meanings.

Therefore, at least as it concerns reading John's Gospel, it seems that interpreters should not polarize authorial intent and a multiplicity of meaning. Instead, the latter should be a natural extension of the former. Nevertheless, as hermeneutical discussions continue, it would be advantageous for further study to see how the church has interpreted other portions of Scripture, especially the New Testament epistles. Perhaps such a study would give greater insight into how Holy Spirit has guided the church to read the Scriptures, revealing the endless glories of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Early Christian Wives as Household Missionaries:
An Analysis of 1 Peter 3:1-6

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ABSTRACT: Following the pattern of a Greco-Roman household code, 1 Pet 3:1–6 provides advice to wives who were susceptible to domestic abuse at the hands of their unbelieving husbands. As the *paterfamilias*, the husband could exercise physical punishment on (who he deemed to be) an insubordinate wife—such as a woman who would not partake in the worship of the emperor or household gods. A Christian woman could therefore suffer abuse for refusing to submit to practices that contradict the Christian faith. In this essay, I engage with some Greco-Roman practices and David Horrell's concept of a female missionary disposition in mixed marriages. With an eye toward the redemption of their husbands, Peter encourages the wives in his ecclesial communities to take a missionary posture in the home, which will hopefully lead to the salvation of their spouses. Thus, a Christian wife's presence in the household is intended to serve a redemptive purpose.

Wives in the early church were expected to marry, raise children, and handle the day-to-day affairs of a home.[1] They were expected to

[1]The specific context of which I am referring is the first-century apostolic church.

remain faithful to their husbands and be pillars of morality. The household structure in the Roman empire[2] was one in which the members of a family were subject to the *paterfamilias*, a title reserved for the head of the household, the husband, who had absolute power and authority.[3] Wives were given little respect within this structure. An angry husband could be harsh or abuse his wife with few repercussions.[4] Women could find themselves in abusive relationships from which there were few legal recourses and little hope of escape.

What was the solution for Christian wives who found themselves in such households? Were they permitted to leave or divorce their

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[2]Justo Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*, vol. 1 (New York: Harper Collins, 1984), 33–37, notes the persecution that Christians in the first century faced under Nero and Domitian. First Peter, likely written before AD 72 (Karen Jobes, *1 Peter*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005], 18), perhaps during the persecution of Nero, as evidenced by phrases such as "fiery trial" (4:12), was one of the few voices of hope to Christian women who experienced little sympathy from a hostile empire.

[3]Jane Gardner, *Family and Familia in Roman Law and Life* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), 1–2, provides insight into the life of the *Paterfamilias* and his *familia*: "A *familia* was still a *familia* even if it consisted of only one person. Ideally, however, the notion of *familia*, in the strict legal sense, which provided the structural framework for Roman Law consisted of: an adult male Roman [sic], the *paterfamilias*, lawfully married, with children born to him and his wife (or successive wives), together with the children, if any, of sons (and their sons, and so on in the male line only, through as many generations as might simultaneously live). The paterfamilias was sole owner of all the property of the *familia* . . . Within the *familia*, he was virtually autonomous; he had *patria potestas*, legal power, over the persons of his children and descendants—and, in early Rome mainly, usually of his wife as well. This was an authority which extended, theoretically at least, to a power of life and death over those under his legal control." See also Susan Treggiari, *Roman Marriage: Iusti Coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian* (Clarendon: Oxford, 1991; repr., 2002), 13–36.

[4]A husband could, if he so desired, decide to free his wife from their marriage, in much the same way as children could be released from the *potestas* of their father (Bruce W. Frier and Thomas A. J. McGinn, *A Casebook on Roman Family Law* [Oxford: Oxford University, 2004], 94). Upon the initiative of the husband, this was one way in which a woman could have been delivered from an abusive marriage.

husbands? Without regard for circumstances, the NT exhorts wives to submit to their husbands (1 Cor 14:34; Col 3:18; Titus 2:5).[5] The underlying assumption is that the context of their obedience is a home in which both the husband and wife are followers of Christ. Ephesians 5:22–33 contains one such admonition. Here, Paul calls women to "submit to their own husbands as to the Lord" (Eph 5:22). In turn, husbands are to "love their own wives as Christ loved the church" (Eph 5:25). This ideal scenario, however, was not a reality for many women in the early church.

Some early Christian women were married to unbelieving spouses, that is, they were in "mixed marriages."[6] Their less than idyllic relationships would have likely lead them to ponder whether they should submit to their unbelieving husbands or disobey them; whether they should remain with their husbands or abandon them. After all, why would a Christian woman subject herself to a man who does not acknowledge Christ as king? Why would she obey a man who has no regard for Paul's admonition to husbands in Ephesians 5, making verbal and physical abuse, or the threat of such behavior, a real possibility? Add to this the potential that their husbands likely practiced a false religion, such as worship of the emperor and worship of household gods, of which all the members of a home were

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[5]The idea of submission in the NT is normally associated with the word *ὑποτάσσω*. Often in Peter and Paul's writings the term is used with the dative case, underscoring "submission involving recognition of an ordered structure . . . to whom/which appropriate respect is shown" (BDAG, 1042). See Eph 5:22; Col 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Pet 2:18, 3:1. Harold Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 122, traces *ὑποτάσσω* to the Hellenistic period "where it meant to place or arrange under or be subordinated" in writings such as Polybius 3.36.7; Plutarch *Pompeius* 64; and *Nicias* 23.4.

[6]I take this term from David Horrell, "Fear, Hope, and Doing Good: Wives as a Paradigm of Mission in 1 Peter," *Estudios Biblicos* 73/3 (2015): 409–429

expected to partake.

Peter's First Epistle to scattered churches in Asia Minor (Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia; 1 Pet 1:1) provides hope for early Christian women who lived under the threat of such abuse. In 1 Peter 3:1–6, he encourages these women to take a missionary posture in the home.[7] Peter's instructions are in striking agreement with Paul's in 1 Corinthians 7:12–16, in which Paul encourages women to be a sanctifying influence in the household, for the sake of both their husbands and children.

This article will focus on Peter's advice to wives in 1 Peter 3:1–6. Here, I will show that Peter is aware that wives in his ecclesial communities are susceptible to abuse that would not be tolerated in "unmixed" Christian households, that is to say, homes in which both the husband and wife are followers of Christ. His advice is sensitive to this reality. Even still, Peter does not part ways entirely with cultural expectations, for his instructions follow the general pattern of a Greco-Roman household code. In view of this, I will examine the nature of Peter's household code before discussing his advice to wives.

The Petrine Household Code

The Petrine household code begins in 2:18 and ends in 3:7. In Hellenistic literature, a household code is a listing of obligations of various members of a household toward one another.[8] Such codes are common in antiquity and address the reciprocal relationships

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[7]Horrell argues that in 1 Peter 3:1–6 wives are to take a "missionary stance" in the household (Horrell, "Fear, Hope, and Doing Good").

[8]J. Ramsey Michaels, *1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word, 1988), 121.

between master and slave, husband and wife, and fathers/parents and children. Aristotle presents one of the clearest presentations of these reciprocal relationships: "The primary and the smallest parts of the household are master and slave, husband and wife, father and children. . . . We ought therefore to examine proper constitution and character in each of these relationships."[9] The NT discusses these pairings in passages such as Colossians 3:18–4:1 and Ephesians 5:21–6:9. The household code in 1 Peter follows the reciprocal pattern of relationships in Hellenistic literature and the NT. Peter, though, focuses his advice on the master and slave (2:18–25) and the husband and wife pairings (3:1–7).

Although his exhortation to wives follows those to the slave, Peter does not assume that the relationship between the husband and wife is like that of the master and slave.[10] The only similarity is their motivation for submission—for the Lord's sake (2:13).[11] Therefore, the weaker partners in the relationships, slaves and wives, are expected to submit to the stronger partners, masters and husbands, out of reverence for Christ. Consequently, the former may be vulnerable to

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[9]Aristotle, *Pol.* 1.2.1, trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library 21 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), 13.

[10]The adverb Ὁμοίως, "also" or "too," does not imply that Peter sees the relationship in this manner. See BDAG, 707–708. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 156–57; Thomas Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, The New American Commentary, vol. 37 (Nashville, TN: B & H, 2003), 148.

[11]Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1988), 135. Importantly, Peter does not condone the evil practice of slavery. He tries to make the best of a social reality present in the first-century, exhorting slaves to submit to their master (both kind and crooked, 2:18–25). If they should suffer, then they are walking in the footsteps of Christ, who suffered in their place. While Paul also calls for submission to masters (e.g., Eph 6:5–9), he also says that, if possible, slaves should seek to gain their freedom (1 Cor 7:22).

the latter's abuse and mistreatment.[12]

Wives in the Petrine community found themselves under the threat of such harm. The problem had to have been significant enough to warrant an entire section of Peter's letter. Unlike traditional Roman women, Christian wives were not to despair. Peter is keen to encourage them to maintain a Christian witness in the face of possible mistreatment, knowing that their consistent Christian conduct will hopefully lead to their husbands being "won over" to the faith.

Having discussed the nature of Peter's household code, I will now examine his exhortation to wives. Oddly enough, Peter does not begin his advice by sympathizing with the wives' difficult circumstances. To the critic, Peter may not even care for the wellbeing of women, preferring instead to maintain the household hierarchy. These speculations are from true, for his words sound the note of hope in the face of suffering.

Exhortation to Wives (3:1–2)

Peter begins his exhortation by calling wives to "submit to their own husbands" (*ὑποτασσόμεναι τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν*, 3:1).[13] Peter's call to

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[12]Horrell, "Fear, Hope, and Doing Good": 3–4.

[13]In 3:1, *ὑποτασσόμεναι* derives its imperatival sense from the imperative *Ὑποτάγητε* in 2:13. The relationship between the two words is one of attendant circumstance. James Hope Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 4 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1976), 128–29, argues that *ὑποτασσόμενα* carries an independent imperatival sense. Similarly, Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 650–51. Neither argument changes the meaning of the text, since both views contend that *ὑποτασσόμεναι* carries an imperatival force: "submit" to your husbands.

Here, it is also important to note that the call to submit does not demand that women obey all husbands in general. Rather, it is an exhortation for wives to subject themselves to "their own" (*τοῖς ἰδίοις*) husbands. So Paul J. Achtemeier, *1 Peter,* Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996), 209.

submission does not suggest that wives are inferior to their husbands.[14] That a woman is inferior to a man would have been foreign to Peter's worldview, which was grounded in the creation account, affirming that both men and women are equally created in God's image (Gen 1:27). Thus, it is nonsense to think that the command to submit suggests the inferiority of women. If submission suggests inferiority, then Jesus' obedience to his earthly parents means that he was ontologically "lesser" than Mary and Joseph (Luke 2:51). Such logic is hogwash. The reason for Jesus's submission was his obedience to God's will (Exod 20). We can make a similar point in 1 Peter 3:1. Peter's call for a wife to submit to her husband does not mean that she is "lesser." Instead, she, like Jesus, submits voluntarily, in keeping with God's divine order.[15]

Peter's exhortation applies to all wives, whether their husbands are Christians or not (εἴ τινες ἀπειθοῦσιν τῷ λόγῳ, 3:1).[16] There is no room for disobeying, or even abandoning, unbelieving husbands. Peter desires for Christian wives to see that they have a great purpose (ἵνα) in their submission: that their husbands might be "won over without a

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[14]Plato, for example, says that women are inferior to men (*Laws* 781b). Aristotle argues that since men are superior to women, women should be ruled by men (*Politics* 1254b).

[15]James R. Slaughter, "Submission of Wives (1 Pet. 3:1a) in the Context of 1 Peter," *Bibliotheca Sacra* (January–March 1996): 70. See Ps 36:7 and 2 Macc. 13:23 for similar uses of "submission."

[16]Being disobedient "to the word" (τῷ λόγῳ) occurs in both 2:7 and 3:1. Both note being disobedient to the gospel because of unbelief. Simon J. Kistemaker, *1 y 2 Pedro, Judas*, Comentario al Nuevo Testamento (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 142; Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 210; Ernest Best, *1 Peter*, New Century Bible Commentary, ed. Matthew Black (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 124; Edward Gordon Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter*, Thornapple Commentaries (London: Macmillan, 1946; Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), 183.

word" (ἄνευ λόγου κερδηθήσονται, 3:1). The verb κερδαίνω occurs most frequently in 1 Corinthians 9:19–21, where Paul uses it in the context of "winning someone to Christ."[17] Peter uses it similarly, in that he calls wives to live out their obedience to Christ before their husbands' eyes, in hopes that their husbands might be "won over" to the savior. While Christian wives may be tempted to disrespect their unregenerate husbands—especially if they are unappreciative and inconsiderate—such behavior only reveals that they are actually disobeying Christ, and potentially nullifying their gospel witness. In Peter's eyes, submission has redeeming qualities not found in obstinacy and disobedience.

Peter also says that husbands may be converted "without verbal nagging" (ἄνευ λόγου, 3:1).[18] The wives of the Petrine communities likely struggled with nagging or coercing their spouses about the truth of the gospel.[19] They may have even done so with very good intentions, not realizing that they were bludgeoning their spouses with the words of life. Though likely well-intentioned, a wife's verbal pressure would have had the adverse effect of driving her husband away from the savior. Peter suggests that wives resist this urge and take a more

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[17]J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude*, Black's New Testament Commentary (Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 128; James R. Slaughter, "Winning Unbelieving Husbands to Christ (1 Pet. 3:1b-4)," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 153 (April–June 1996): 204.

[18]While λόγος often carries the sense of "word," the context of 1 Pet 3:1-6 suggests that it denotes "oral persuasion, verbal nagging, or coercion." Jeannine K. Brown, "Silent Wives, Verbal Believers: Ethical and Hermeneutical Considerations in 1 Peter 3:1–6 and Its Context," *Word and World* 24.4 (Fall 2004): 400; Bo Reicke, *The Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude*, Anchor Bible (Garden City: Double Day, 1982), 101. Contra Selwyn, *First Epistle of St. Peter*, 183, who argues that λόγος is a reference to the gospel.

[19]Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 150.

redemptive approach: live a godly lifestyle before unregenerate husbands (ἐποπτεύσαντες τὴν . . . ἀναστροφὴν ὑμῶν, 3:2).[20] This has more redeeming qualities than verbal nagging.

Rather perplexingly, the wife is to live her household life "in fear" (ἐν φόβῳ, 3:2). Does Peter suggest that wives are to fear their husbands? This would seem to contradict passages such as Psalm 118:6: "The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" A better proposal is that wives are to live in fear of God (cf. Eccl 12:13). Peter directs "fear" (φόβος) to God on three other occasions (1 Pet 1:17; 2:17; 2:18), his point being that wives are to live their holy lives before their husbands with a sense of reverence toward God.[21] Hence, the wife does not submit to her husband out of a desire to please him, satisfy his wishes, meet cultural expectations, or even to dissuade his anger. Her motivation for submission is in keeping with her reverence for God. While husbands should be nice and considerate, Peter does not make these conditions for submission.[22] His argument is clear: Christian wives are to live submissive holy lives before their husbands, doing so out of reverence for God.

At this point, it is important to ask: Does Peter call the wives of his communities to submit to their husbands in all things? Or does he suggest that there are limits to their submission? Perhaps a concrete example is in order. What if an unbelieving husband requests that

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[20]Peter commonly uses ἀναστροφή with the sense of "godly lifestyle" or "conduct" (1:15; 3:16).

[21]Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 150; Michaels, *1 Peter*, 158; Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 210; Peter H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 117. Reicke, *The Epistles of Peter*, 101, wrongly contends that wives should fear their husbands.

[22]Michaels, *1 Peter*, 117.

his wife participate in the worship of the household gods, such as Zeus or Hestia? Does Peter's call to submission include complying with such demands? Before answering the question, it is important to understand that in the first-century Mediterranean world the wife was expected to adopt the religion of her husband.[23] Plutarch argues: "A wife ought not to make friends of her own, but to enjoy her husband's friends in common with him. The gods are the first and most important friends. Wherefore it is becoming for a wife to worship and to know only the gods her husband believes in."[24] I contend that Peter's call to submission does not include the worship of false gods, for this practice is forbidden in Scripture (Exod 20; Deut 6). Nor does he call wives to yield to any sinful practice.[25] In principal, he expects that wives will submit to their husbands so long as their obedience does not contradict the teachings of the Christian faith.[26] In

[23]Barth L. Campbell, *Honor, Shame, and the Rhetoric of 1 Peter*, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 160 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1998), 147; Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 210; Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 152–153; Kistemaker, *1 y 2 Pedro*, 142; David A. deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000), 185.

[24]Plutarch, *Mor.* 19, trans. Frank Babbitt, Loeb Classical Library 222 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1928), 311. Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Greco-Roman Religions*, trans. Brian McNeil (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 55–68, provides an excellent discussion of the expected religious customs of the first century Greco-Roman household. Among these practices was the worship of the household gods, common among them being Zeus, "father of the gods and men, and Hestia, goddess of domesticity and family concord" (ibid., 59). Each home would normally set up alters to the household gods. Domestic rituals for the gods would consist of leaving a small portion of one's meal, making drink offerings, and even performing ritual sacrifices. Occasionally, persons from outside of the home were invited to partake in worship. As a member of the household, the wife was expected to participate in all religious activities.

[25]Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 153; Michaels, *1 Peter*, 158.

[26]See also Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 211; Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 153.

this regard, Peter's instructions are countercultural, for he expects that a wife will disobey the *paterfamilias* when his request is contrary to Christ, her final authority. Such resistance would have certainly drawn the ire of husbands, who would have felt dishonored by their wife's actions.

In spite of possible repercussions, the Christian wife's life style is to be "pure" (*ἁγνή*). While some regard this purity is only sexual (e.g., 2 Cor 11:2), it actually encompasses the entirety of her Christian character toward her husband.[27] The broad range of qualities is "spelt out further in vv. 3-4 and exemplified in vv. 5-6: subordination, modesty, meekness and silence."[28] I will now examine each of these qualities in turn.

Qualities of a Pure Lifestyle (3:3–4)

Peter elaborates on the "pure and holy" way of life in a negative-positive pattern: that is, "not this, but that."[29] The focus of the negative depiction is the "external adornment" (ὁ ἔξωθεν . . . *κόσμος*, 3:3).[30] Three types of external adornment that were common to first century women were the "braiding of hair" (ἐμπλοκῆς τριχῶν), the "wearing of gold" (περιθέσεως χρυσίων), and the "wearing of clothes"

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[27]Davids, *1 Peter*, 116; F. Hauck, "*ἁγνή*," *TDNT*, 1:112. See also Phil 4:8; 1 Tim 5:2; Jas 3:17.

[28]Horrell, "Fear, Hope, and Doing Good": 5.

[29]Horrell, "Fear, Hope, and Doing Good": 6.

[30]The article ὁ modifies the distant noun *κόσμος*. The separation of the article and the substantive is common in 1 Peter (1 Pet 1:17, 2:15, 3:2, 3:4). See A. T. Robertson, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament in Light of Historical Research* (Reprint, Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1947), 779. The noun *κόσμος* commonly carries the sense of "world" (BDAG, 561). Peter, though, uses it in reference to "women's attire/adornment."

(ἐνδύσεως ἱματίων, 3:3).[31] This thought follows closely with Paul's in 1 Tim 2:9: "Likewise, the women are to dress in suitable apparel, with modesty and self-control. Their adornment must not be with braided hair and gold or pearls or expensive clothing."[32] On the surface, it appears that Peter, like Paul, is saying that women must not braid their hair or wear gold. This argument is misguided, because the same reasoning might be used to say that they should not put on clothes.[33] Peter, instead, desires for women to remain modest in their dress, for external adornment is not the main source of beauty and attractive ness.

The call to female modesty was a common admonition in the Greco-Roman world. Xenophon explains to women: "It is not through outward comeliness that the sum of things good and beautiful is increased . . . but by the daily practice of the virtues."[34] He also notes that the use of cosmetics was an attempt to deceive.[35] Plutarch says: "For, as Crates used to say, adornment is that which adorns, and that adorns or decorates a woman which makes her more decorous. It is not gold or precious stones or scarlet that makes her such, but whatever invests her with that something that betokens dignity, good behavior

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[31]The genitives *ἐμπλοκῆς τριχῶν*, *περιθέσεως χρυσίων*, and *ἐνδύσεως ἱματίων* are epexegetical, naming specific examples that fall within the category of external *κόσμος*. Robertson, *Greek Grammar*, 498–99, also identifies the genitives as epexegetical.

[32]NET translation.

[33]Grudem, *1 Peter*, 140; D. Edmond Hiebert, *First Peter* (Chicago: Moody, 1984), 187.

[34]Xenophon, *Oec.* 7.43, trans. E. C. Marchant, Loeb Classical Library 168 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 429.

[35]Karen Jobes, *1 Peter*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 204–5, cites Xenophon, *Oec.* 10.2.

and modesty."[36] Peter's exhortation to female modesty is therefore in accord with Greco-Roman values. Early Christian women were not to be known for the flash or seduction of their dress, but in virtues not readily seen.

In contrast to externals (ἀλλ'),[37] Peter calls women to adorn "the inward person of the heart" (ὁ κρυπτὸς τῆς καρδίας ἄνθρωπος, 3:4), that is to say, the "inner self." [38] Though not apparent at first glance, the inward qualities of a woman are revealed through "words and actions that reflect inward attitudes."[39] The contrast between internal and external attributes is common in Scripture. Peter's first century counterpart, Paul, shows clear awareness of the inner (Rom 7:22; Eph 3:16) and outer selves (2 Cor 4:16). During the period of the Israelite monarchy, the author of 1 Samuel 16:7 contrasts these aspects: "God does not view things the way men do. People look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."[40] Peter's perspective on beauty is therefore not uncommon among biblical authors. For that matter, it is also not out of step with

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[36]Plutarch, *Mor.* 26, Loeb Classical Library 222 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1936), 317–18.

[37]In 3:3–4, the οὐχ . . . ἀλλ' construction forms a disjunctive proposition which presents external adornment in a negative light and the inward person of the heart in a positive light. The point is that the woman should not be focused on externals but internals. Maximillian Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, trans. Joseph Smith, 4th ed. (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963; Reprint, 2005), 150, has good discussion on disjunctive propositions.

[38]BDAG., 570; John H. Elliot, *1 Peter*, Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 565; Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 154; Best, *1 Peter*, 125. The genitive καρδίας refers to the "center and source of human life" (BDAG, 508), functioning epexegetically, clarifying that the inward person is the "center and source" of a woman's existence.

[39]Grudem, *1 Peter*, 140.

[40]NET translation.

Greco-Roman values expressed in authors such as Xenophon and Plutarch.

Furthermore, the internal is expressed "in imperishable qualities" (ἐν τῷ ἀφθάρτῳ, 3:4). Peter commonly contrasts the perishable and the imperishable (1:4, 18, 23). This is also the case with Greco-Roman authors such as Herodotus and Thucydides.[41] More to the point, since outward adornments are perishable, wives are to express themselves in the imperishable characteristics "of a gentle and quiet disposition" (τοῦ πραέως καὶ ἡσυχίου πνεύματος, 3:4).[42] As opposed to being loud and boisterous, meekness and quietness are the imperishable qualities that are to be exemplified in a wife's disposition (cf. 1 Tim 2:11). These are the less than flashy attributes after which wives are to strive. Peter's exhortation to meekness and quietness of spirit would have resonated with the first century Greco-Roman world, which expected wives to exhibit these characteristics of modesty.[43] Such modesty would have been pleasing to the husband. The attributes of a meekness and quietness are therefore more likely to attract unbelieving husbands to the faith, as opposed to a nagging verbal witness, which may have the unproductive effect of producing irritation rather than conversion.[44]

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[41]So Freidrich Blass and Alfred Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and ed. Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1961), 138.

[42]Ernest Best, *1 Peter*, 126, argues that *πνεύμα* refers to the Holy Spirit. While often the case, here it is best to see that it refers to the wife's disposition. See BDAG, 833; Selwyn, *1 Peter*, 184; Hiebert, *1 Peter*, 188.

[43]David Balch, *Let Wives Be Submissive*, Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series 26 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1981), 102–103.

[44]Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 154.

Most importantly, a gentle and quiet disposition is "precious before God" (ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ πολυτελές, 3:4).[45] Peter underscores that a gentle and quiet spirit is what God values, not clothing or ornamentation.[46] The wives in Peter's communities to acquire the things that are highly valued in the eyes of God.[47]

Example of the Holy Wives, 3:5–6

Peter now grounds (*γάρ*) his focus on internal adornment on the example of the "holy wives" (*αἱ ἅγιαι γυναῖκες*) of the past (3:5). The reference to *αἱ ἅγιαι γυναῖκες* is unique in the NT and is an allusion to the holy women of the Old Covenant.[48] Most likely, Peter refers to "the four matriarchs of the Jewish tradition: Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah (the wives of Abraham and Isaac, and the two wives of Jacob)."[49] Their holiness was not a result of their membership in the nation of Israel, but because of their pleasing character in the eyes of God.[50]

These women lived in sometimes terrifying circumstances. Abraham, for example, placed Sarah in danger in Egypt, in an effort to "save his own skin" (Gen 12). Sarah's hope for deliverance was not in

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[45]The noun πολυτελές carries the sense of something that is "of great value or worth" (BDAG, 850).

[46]Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 155; Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 214; Davids, *1 Peter*, 119; Hiebert, *1 Peter*, 188–89.

[47]Horrell, "Fear, Hope, and Doing Good": 8, cites the examples of Sophocles, *Ajax* 293; Sir 26:14; and 1 Clem 21:7.

[48]James R. Slaughter, "Sarah as a Model for Christian Wives (1 Pet. 3:5–6)," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 153 (July–September 1996): 357; Grudem, *1 Peter*, 141.

[49]Best, *1 Peter*, 126.

[50]Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 155; Grudem, *1 Peter*, 141.

her husband. She, like other holy women, "hoped in God" (*ἐλπίζουσαι εἰς θεὸν*, 3:5). Some scholars wrongly argue that their expectation was more focused on one of their sons being the Messiah.[51] More in line with the immediate context, their hope was based on their belief that God would ultimately deliver them from their difficult situations.[52] This is consistent with the theme of "hope in 1 Peter as eschatological, which brings consolation in persecution (1:3–9)."[53] This is the kind of hope that freed the holy women of the OT to continue living under sometimes difficult circumstances. Peter draws on the example of courage displayed in ancient Hebrew women to encourage wives to endure hard, if not dangerous, conditions, knowing God will one day come to their rescue, even if it will be in the eschaton.

As well, Peter notes that the holy women adorned themselves "by being subject to their own husbands" (*ὑποτασσόμεναι τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν*, 3:5).[54] The focus continues on internals, suggesting that the holy women's adornment was not based on flashy external jewelry or clothing but on submitting to their husbands, which was exemplified in the qualities of meekness and quietness.[55] A prime example is Sarah, who subjected herself to Abraham (*ὑπήκουσεν τῷ Ἀβραάμ*, 3:6).[56] Although Peter does not use the verb *ὑποτάσσω*, *ὑπακούω* also carries a

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[51]Selwyn, *First Epistle of Peter*, 185.

[52]Kistemaker, *1 y 2 Pedro*, 146–47.

[53]Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 155.

[54]The participle *ὑποτασσόμεναι* functions as an adverbial participle of means.

[55]Slaughter, "Sarah as a Model," 359.

[56]Grudem, *1 Peter*, 141; Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 215; Jacques Schlosser, "1 Pierre 3, 5b –6," *Biblica* 64 (1983): 409.

sense of "submissiveness" (cf. Eph 6:1; Col 3:20; Eph 6:5; Col 3:22).[57] Peter's use of the former is most likely a stylistic variation. So Sarah's submission to her husband is still in view.[58]

Sarah displayed her obedience to Abraham "by calling him Lord" (*κύριον αὐτὸν καλοῦσα*, 3:6). There is an allusion here to Genesis 18:12, in which Sarah laughs "to herself, saying, 'After I am worn out, and my lord (*κυριός* LXX) is old, shall I have pleasure?'"[59] Peter uses this text not to depict Sarah's sense of amusement or doubt, but to focus on her use of the word *κυριός* in reference to Abraham,[60] which carries the sense of "one who is in a position of authority."[61] What is significant about Sarah's use of this word in Genesis 18:12 is that she still attributes a rightful title of respect and dignity to her husband,[62]

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[57]BDAG, 1028.

[58]Slaughter, "Sarah as a Model," 359–60; Michaels, *1 Peter*, 164; Campbell, *Honor, Shame, and the Rhetoric of 1 Peter*, 159.

[59]ESV translation.

[60]Michaels, *1 Peter*, 164. D. A. Carson, "1 Peter," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 136, notes some have suggested that either Gen 12 or Gen 20 are in view, since these passages depict Sarah's submission to Abraham regardless of the precarious positions in which she is placed. This therefore puts the female readers of 1 Peter in a difficult position: "They should submit to the unjust demands of their husbands." Is submission to morally questionable demands in view in 1 Pet 3:6? This is unlikely. What can be ascertained is that Peter is alluding to Sarah's use of the title *κυριός* in Gen 18:12 (LXX). Jobes, *1 Peter*, 205, argues, "Peter is most likely simply drawing on Jewish interpretation and would not have intended a choice of any one passage from Genesis or any other text. . . . In Jewish tradition Sarah is a virtuous woman, and virtuous women are understood to be obedient to their husbands." Jobes makes a good point. However, we do not have to throw out the baby with the bath water. Peter may have had Jewish tradition in his purview, while drawing specifically on Gen 18:12.

[61]Foerster, "*κυριός*," *TDNT* 7:1081–82.

[62]Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 156; Slaughter, "Sarah as a Model," 361; Davids, *1 Peter*, 121.

instead of mocking him for being an old man.[63] Peter transfers the sense of *κυριός* from the Genesis narrative into the context of 1 Peter 3:6, recognizing that Sarah's act of obedience to Abraham rightfully ascribes to him a title of respect and honor, in spite of the difficult circumstances that surrounded her.

Some argue that Peter misapplies the text of Genesis 18:12, because the verse is not set in the context of "differential wifely behavior."[64] There is no need to argue that Peter misapplies this verse. He simply takes the example of Sarah's respectful attitude toward Abraham in Genesis 18:12, and uses it as a model of obedience in 1 Peter 3:6. The contexts of both passages do not have to be identical for Peter to employ an OT example—for it is the principle of obedience that is pertinent to the women he addresses in 1 Peter 3:1–6.

The Petrine wives "have become Sarah's children" (*ἧς ἐγενήθητε τέκνα*, 3:6). The aorist verb *ἐγενήθητε* is ingressive, suggesting that the women of 1 Peter have already become Sarah's offspring, entering this state upon their conversion.[65] The OT depicts Abraham and Sarah as the parents of the righteousness (Isa 51:1–2). In the NT, Paul notes that all Christians are the children of Abraham (Rom 4:1–12; Gal 3:6–29) and Sarah (Gal 4:22–31). Both testaments, then, identify believers as the sons and daughters of Abraham and Sarah. So, it seems that Peter's purpose for identifying the wives as Sarah's children is twofold: (1) to remind them they have become believers; and (2) to foster in them the

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[63] Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 156.

[64] Campbell, *Honor, Shame, and the Rhetoric of 1 Peter*, 159.

[65] So Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 157; Elliot, *1 Peter*, 573. Michaels, *1 Peter*, 166. Hiebert, *1 Peter*, 190, and Davids, *1 Peter*, 121, argue that both conversion and baptism are implied. Conversion is evidently in view, but baptism is less likely (Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 157).

attitude of submissiveness associated with Sarah.[66]

Remaining Sarah's daughters depends on the wives "doing good" (*ἀγαθοποιοῦσαι*) and "not fearing anything fearful" (*μὴ φοβούμεναι μηδεμίαν πτόησιν*, 3:6).[67] Peter is following the NT ideal that "perseverance is necessary to obtain eternal life."[68] This perseverance is exemplified in carrying out the proper behavior required of all Christians (ἀγαθοποιοῦσαι), a common theme throughout 1 Peter (2:14, 15, 20; 3:10–12, 17), and not fearing the harsh treatment of one's husband (μὴ φοβούμεναι μηδεμίαν πτόησιν). The wives of unbelieving husbands in Peter's communities would have been prone to abusive treatment, such as physical and emotional intimidation, because of their Christian faith and their lack of conformance to the household religion. Peter, however, encourages them to fear God, not other humans (1:17; 2:17–18; 3:2). This admonition would have been especially difficult for

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[66]Michaels, *1 Peter*, 166. See discussion in F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary, ed. I. Howard Marshall and W. Ward Gasque (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982; Reprint, 2002), 214–27.

[67]The participles *ἀγαθοποιοῦσαι* and *φοβούμεναι* underscore that salvation is dependent on whether wives persist in "doing good" and "not fearing any fear." Some interpreters have difficultly seeing these participles as conditional, contending that nowhere else in 1 Peter is conversion dependent on anything but the work of God (Michaels, *1 Peter*, 166; Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 216). Consequently, some have proposed up to three syntactical alternatives for the participles: (1) means, "by means of doing good and not fearing" (Charles Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* [Reprint, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1978], 15–54); (2) temporal, "when you do good and do not fear" (Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 216.); and (3) imperatival, "Do good and do not fear" (Michaels, *1 Peter*, 166; Best, *1 Peter*, 191). In view of the options, the participles are best construed as conditional. A conditional sense does not sit awkwardly with the idea of past conversion, for there are "many statements in the New Testament where a past conversion is noted and then a conditional statement follows (e.g., Rom 11:21–22; Col 1:21–23; Heb 3:14)" (Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 158.).

[68]Schreiner, *1 Peter*, 158.

women who would have been inclined to worship the gods of their husbands out of fear of retribution. While Peter is certainly aware of this situation, he still affirms that Christian women have become children of Sarah (i.e., believers). To remain in this state, they must continue in proper Christian behavior and not fear the reprisal of their spouses. In other words, they must persevere in the Christian faith, in spite of potential persecution and hostility.[69]

Peter likely understands that early Christian women suffer under the threat of abuse in their households. As I have already noted, this is perhaps Peter's motivation for dedicating a substantial portion of his letter to wives. His advice, then, is meant to encourage the wives in his early ecclesial communities to continue living out their Christian lives in the face of possible suffering, hoping that their witness might lead to the salvation of their husbands.

Conclusion

Peter's instructions provide wives in the dispersed early Christian communities of Asia Minor with a redemptive perspective on their "mixed marriages." Beyond these communities, his instructions may supply insight into what could have been the reality for Christian wives throughout the Roman Empire. That is, they lived under the real possibility that they could be subjected to abuse at the hands of their unbelieving husbands.

[69]Importantly, Peter is not arguing that wives should remain in an abusive household. He is simply providing redemptive instructions to wives who found themselves in potentially abusive marriages from which there was little hope of escape. By implication, I do not condone that women should remain with abusive spouses. A victim of abuse should seek help from the church and/or authorities. Thus, a wife should only seek to be redemptive influence in the household so long as she is not the victim of abuse.

In the face of such danger, Peter does not call wives to abandon their non-Christian spouses. Instead, he calls them to the role of a missionary in the household. In their submission and the way they exemplify their Christian character, their husbands may be won over to Christ. Yet, they are to be tempered in their desire to convert their husbands, seeing to it that they do not verbally badger their husbands with the gospel. While a wife may mean well, nagging her husband with the truth may have the opposite effect: turning him away from the saviour. The way she lives out her Christian life is a more effective missional witness.

As well, the Petrine wives are to remember that submission to their husbands is not a blanket call to obey in all things, such as partaking in a false religion. The exhortation is particular: obey in so far as your husband is not leading you to sin. In refusing to conform to sinful practices, a wife shows her loyalty to Christ, silently beckoning her husband to repent and follow the savior. An unrepentant husband, though, may not take such noble disobedience lightly, striking fear into the heart of his wife. In the face of possible verbal and physical attacks, Peter encourages wives to stand fast in Christ, not succumbing to sinful demands. Refusing to follow their husbands' sinful practices proves that they are the beautifully adorned daughters of Sarah, awaiting the arrival of Jesus Christ.

Within Peter's cognitive worldview was likely the cosmic reversal of roles that will occur in the eschaton.[70] At this time, Christ will dress wives in "fine linen" and seat them at his banquet table, caring for

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[70]Perhaps we can call this Peter's "cognitive peripheral vision," that is to say, Peter is aware of more than he directly communicates in his letter. See G. K. Beale and Benjamin L. Gladd, *Hidden but Now Revealed: A Biblical Theology of Mystery* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2014), 340–64, where they discuss the cognitive peripheral vision of biblical authors.

them as the greatest of all husbands (19:6– 9). Abusive husbands will not be so fortunate. Christ will judge them according to their deeds, striking fear into *their* hearts (Rev 20). To put it bluntly, at his coming Christ will make things right: oppressive husbands will be crushed, while oppressed wives will be delivered from their sufferings.

In view of what is to come, Peter would rather see unbelieving husbands converted, not condemned. For Peter, the missional witness of wives in the household will hopefully prompt their husbands to follow Jesus, so that husbands might await, and not dread, his return. But in the event that they are abused or mistreated, the wives in Peter's early Christian communities have the hope that Christ will deliver them from their circumstance and crush their oppressors.

Cogitatio: Ignatius of Antioch

"Attuned to the Bishop as Strings to a Lyre": Imitation and Virtue Formation in the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch

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Introduction

In his *A Small Treatise on the Great Virtues*, André Comte-Sponville explains the virtue of "good faith" as "the agreement of our acts and words with our inner life." It is an "alethic virtue, it has truth itself as its object."[1] Good faith, therefore, includes true actions that reveal true self. As Comte-Sponville maintains, faith has truth as its object and right action as its consequence. In Christian perspective, this truth which produces faith and leads to right action is the gospel. Christian faith has the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as its object. It is this object which informs the virtue of faith and the subsequent virtuous actions which form in agreement with that inner life.

John McGuckin notes the origins of virtue language and philosophy from pre-Christian Hellenistic traditions, particularly from

[1]André Comte-Sponville, *A Small Treatise on the Great Virtues: The Uses of Philosophy in Everyday Life*, trans. Catherine Temerson (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2001), 195.

Aristotle and Stoic philosophies. Virtue it seems, for Christians, stems from this background yet "it is constituted by biblical structures . . . the apocalyptic judgment of God, and the specific dictates of Christ's teachings and those of the apostles."[2] The tradition of early Christian virtue language, especially the twofold path—or two ways—is evident in early writers such as Paul, the writer of the Didache, and the Clementine letters. Missing from this assessment is Ignatius and his letters.

Ignatius, writing to various churches throughout Asia minor in the early second century, presents a vision for church unity and flourishing. In many ways, this vision is not unique, reflecting numerous Pauline parallels for church order and moral witness. In other ways, it is quite unique, demonstrating a contextually based theological vision from a writer one generation removed from the apostolic ministry. For this reason, Ignatius continues to be a figure of interest for those wishing to build a bridge between New Testament Christian practice and that of the subsequent generations.

Much has been written on this martyr bishop from the second century. Some have spent considerable time focusing on Ignatius's ecclesiological assertions.[3] Others have attempted to discern the

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[2]John Anthony McGuckin, "Virtue" in *The SCM Press A–Z of Patristic Theology* (London, UK: SCM Press, 2005), 353.

[3]Ignatius has been mined for various theological concerns. One recent work on Ignatius and ecclesiology is Allen Brent, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Martyr Bishop and the Origin of Episcopacy* (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2007). Here Brent argues for Ignatius as the progenitor of the the three-fold ecclesiological office. A more recent text, though broadly assessing early Christian episcopacy is Alistair C. Stewart, T*he Original Bishops: Office and Order in the First Christian Communities* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014).

sacramental theology contained within his letters.[4] Still others have focused on Ignatius's view of early Christianity's relationship to Judaism.[5] In need of further exploration within Ignatian studies is the martyr bishop's understanding of moral formation within the Christian community. Specifically, how did Ignatius envision the Christian life as growth in virtue? Based on the incarnation of Christ and the establishment of his church, what is the best way to live according to Ignatius? This is a moral question. The aspect of virtue formation has received little attention among Ignatian scholarship, yet insights from ancient virtue language can shed light onto various concerns from this second century martyr bishop.

Life of Ignatius

This second century martyr appears to us as somewhat of a mystery. Like a "meteor" which has traveled through space for eons, only to briefly blaze across our sky, he expires in a "shower of fire."[6] The only glimpse we receive of him comes from his seven epistles written to various churches *en route* to martyrdom in Rome. He wrote no dialogues nor expounded on any facet of Christian theology at length, but Ignatius has become for us a window into the world of the post-Apostolic church and a "focus in scholarly discussion of Christian origins," as Michael Holmes insists.[7] Ignatius is the one figure we know

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[4]F. C. Klawiter, "The Eucharist and Sacramental Realism in the Thought of St. Ignatius of Antioch," *Studia Liturgica* 37.2 (2007): 129–63.

[5]Thomas A. Robinson, *Ignatius of Antioch and the Parting of the Ways: Early Jewish-Christian Relations* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2009).

[6]Michael W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 166.

[7]Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 166.

most about in early second century Christianity. By his own affirmation, he was discipled by men of apostolic generation.

In his letters, Ignatius presents a model of three-tiered church leadership, that is, churches led by a single bishop with a council of elders and deacons. This apparently disparate ecclesiology, disparate because it appears to be a dramatic shift from New Testament leadership structures, has led some to call for a late second century date for Ignatius writing.[8] Based on the context of his writing, this doesn't seem to be the case, and early Christian sources attest otherwise. Scholars date Ignatius's journey and writings in the early second century, perhaps around AD 107, during the reign of emperor Trajan.

Ignatius was bishop in Antioch, perhaps appointed by Peter himself, but no such evidence for this exists besides an assertion by a (much later) fifth century father by the name of Theodoret of Cyrus. History does not record the events leading to his arrest, but presumably an outbreak of local persecution arose, and as the leader of the community, Ignatius was singled out for execution. His seven epistles to the various churches demonstrates a concern for unity in the face of persecution, heresy, and potential inner strife. He writes as a concerned pastor rather than a controlling force. Any agenda that Ignatius might have had is best discerned as a shepherd concerned with the health of the church that he loves in order to promote the gospel for which he is giving his life. Not only the example of Ignatius's testimony, but also the concepts for which he so passionately contends, are worthy of investigation towards Christian character formation.

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[8]Timothy D. Barnes, "The Date of Ignatius," *Expository Times* 120.3 (2008): 119–30.

The Origin and Goal of Virtue in Ignatius

In his letters, Ignatius is primarily concerned with the unity of the church and the holiness of each local congregation. These two facets are intimately connected in the mind of Ignatius. The holiness of the body, both corporately and the individual members therein, serve to uphold the unity necessary to further promote such unity. Ignatius, using rich musical metaphors, describes this concept as the harmony of the church. Believers are to be united in order to "run together in harmony with the mind of God." (Ign.*Eph.* 3.2). This harmony with God is displayed in the each local church's mutual submission to their God-appointed leadership. Since the Jesus Christ is in the mind of the Father, and the bishops are in the mind of Christ, it is only natural for believers "to run together in harmony with the mind of the bishop." (Ign.*Eph.* 4.1). This harmony with the bishop, as well as the presbyters who are "attuned to the bishop as strings to a lyre, leads to a "unanimity and harmonius love" in which "Jesus Christ is sung." (Ign.*Eph.* 4.1). This theme is repeated throughout his letters, as Ignatius implores his hearers, "Be eager to do everything in godly harmony." (Ign.*Magn.* 6.1).

Ignatius further implores his hearers to this harmony and states:

> You must join this chorus, every one of your, so that by being harmonious in unanimity and by taking your pitch from God you may sing in unison with one voice through Jesus Christ to the Father, in order that he may both hear you and, on the basis of what you do well, acknowledge that you members of his Son. It is, therefore, advantageous for you to be in perfect unity, in order that you may always have a share in God. (Ign.*Eph.* 4.2).

Godliness for Ignatius includes harmonious living in the church. Only when in harmony with the church leaders and fellow believers can Christians truly experience growth. Those who do anything apart from church leadership "[do] not have a clean conscience." (Ign.*Trall.* 7.2). The ideal of harmony comes both from the Trinitarian economy of God, as Ignatius notes in his letter to the Ephesians, as well as a following the commands of God. Regarding the bishop in Philadelphia, "[He] is attuned to the commandments as a harp to its strings." (Ign.*Phil.* 1.1). The sheep, according to Ignatius, should follow their shepherd.

Ignatius has a unifying purpose even if he addresses specific issues and people. Throughout the extent of his letters, Ignatius implores believers to a Christo-centric life in a unified community. Schoedel notes unity as the "central concern" for Ignatius.[9] To this end, he implores readers to godly virtue, pointing to church leaders as models to imitate. To the Magnesians he writes, "Let all of you run together as to the one temple of God, as to one altar, to one Jesus Christ, who came forth from one father and remained with the One and returned to the One" (Ign.*Magn*. 7.2). Underneath this basic paradigm is the witness of the apostles and reality of Christ's incarnation. The incarnation of Christ, and the Trinitarian economy of God, provide the foundation for Ignatius's moral exhortation. Virtue apart from this foundation, for Ignatius, is sham virtue. Any supposed display of godliness apart from the unified body of Christ, led by three-fold offices of church leadership, are illegitimate, divisive, and immoral.

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[9]William R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1985), 21.

Ignatius repeatedly calls his readers to imitation as a means to growth in godliness. A good argument can be made for a distinctly Pauline theme in Ignatius’s imitation motif. To the Ephesians, Ignatius recognizes their act of love as a result of their imitation of Christ. The Ephesians being imitators (μιμηταὶ ὄντες θεοῦ), completed a task that was natural for them, according to Ignatius (Ign.*Eph.* 1.2). The act of love following the example of Christ thus becomes a naturally expressed virtue. This has parallels to Paul's exhortation to the Ephesian church a generation before from Eph 5:1-2. This expression of corporate love comes primarily through the person of the ephesian bishop, Onesimus. This leader of the group, showing “inexpressible love” lives “in accordance with the standard set by Jesus Christ" and is therefore worthy of imitation (Ign.*Eph.* 1.3). The imitative relationship here is cyclical. The corporate body, imitating Christ, has expressed their love to Ignatius chiefly through sending their bishop, who himself is following the standard of Christ and should be imitated. Ignatius observes something similar in the Trallians, who are “imitators of God” and, when they demonstrate that they are subject to the bishop, are “living not in accordance with human standards but in accordance with Jesus Christ.” (Ign.*Trall.* 1.2-2.1). Thus, it seems as though the relationship of imitation includes both God and those whom God has appointed who serves as “[models] of the Father.” (Ign.*Trall.* 3.1).

Ignatius, likewise, praises his hearers for not imitating those who speak untruthfully about Jesus Christ. These are the “mad dogs that bite by stealth” whose “bite is hard to heal.” (Ign.*Eph.* 7.1). Those who came through “with evil doctrine” were not allowed a hearing. (Ign.*Eph.* 9.1). These ones “adulterously corrupt households” who have

polluted themselves and “will go to the unquenchable fire”–and so do those who follow them (Ign.*Eph.* 16.1–2). Likewise, the Ephesians should "not be eager to imitate" the deeds of unbelievers, but rather “be eager to be imitators of the Lord” (Ign.*Eph.* 10.2–3). This imitation of the Lord, which bears wrong-doing and rejection, culminates in a call to live with “complete purity and self-control...[and abiding] in Christ Jesus physically and spiritually” (Ign.*Eph.* 10.3). Ignatius relates the goodness of Christ as the model of imitation. He relates, “For if he were to imitate the way we act, we are lost” (Ign.*Magn.* 10.1).

Much of Ignatius's language of imitation centers on the role of the bishop and other church leaders. To the Trallians, they should follow the presbyters as if they were the apostles of Jesus Christ (Ign.*Trall.* 2.2). Ignatius praises the bishop of the Philadelphian church for his “godly mind” which is “virtuous and perfect” and as one who has “steadfast character” (Ign.*Phil.* 1.2). The implication here is that this bishop is worthy of imitation. Likewise, to the Smyrnaeans, the calls for obedience to the bishop in a way that imitate’s the Son’s submission to the Father (Ign.*Smyrn.* 8.1). This guarantees against evil division, which is contrary to the nature of God and thus the goal of the church.

Parenesis* and *Protrepsis

Additional considerations help readers understand the nature of moral formation in the letters of Ignatius. The literary notions of protrepsis and parenesis. The concepts of protrepsis and parenesis draw attention to the manner in which a writer conveys moral direction. Protreptic literature “[urges] the reader to convert to a way of life, join a school, or accept a set of teachings as normative for the reader’s life.”[10]

[10]Stanley K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, Library of Early Christianity (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1986), 92, 113.

Parenesis, from the Greek *παραινέω*, is a "[technical] term describing a literary style that offers a moral and ethical exhortation based on common religious or moral convictions."[11] Such terms, originating in Greco-Roman moral literature, yet ultimately appropriated in Jewish and early Christian literature, greatly aid in our understanding of Ignatius's ethical exhortation. Throughout his letters, Ignatius offers a parenesis to his readers, imploring them to greater acts of virtue. To the Ephesians, he encourages them to continue praying for the salvation of humankind. Prayer should be coupled with action, instruction by means of their deeds (Ign.*Eph.* 10.1). Each evil act should be met with an equally virtuous act, that is, gentleness for anger, humility for pride, prayers for slander, and civilized action for cruelty (Ign.*Eph.* 10.2).

Paranetic language often centers on unification and obedience to church leadership, as previously observed. To the Magnesians, Ignatius encourages them to "be firmly grounded in the precepts of the Lord and the apostles" along with the bishop, council of presbyters and the "godly deacons" (Ign.*Magn.* 13.1). Following this Ignatius implores to subject themselves to the bishop "and to one another" just as Christ was subject to the Father and the apostles to Christ (Ign.*Magn.* 13.1). Similarly, to the Trallians, he urges his hearers to "do nothing without the bishop" and to "be subject also to the council of presbyters as to the apostles of Jesus Christ" (Ign.*Trall.* 2.2).

The protreptic nature of Ignatius's letters often come in his negative pronouncements regarding alternate ways of life. These are the false teachers regarding the person and work of Christ and the ethical consequences of disbelief. These teachers "have no concern for

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[11]"Parenesis" in *Lexham Bible Dictionary*. See also BDAG, "παραινέω," 148.

love, none for the widow, none for the orphan, none for the oppressed, none for the prisoner or the one released, none for the hungry or thirsty" (Ign.*Smyrn.* 6.2). These are the ethical consequences for disbelieving the incarnation—a denial of care for those in the flesh. These flesh-deniers will ultimately "perish in their contentiousness" though Ignatius extends a word of hope that even these too would learn to love and experience resurrection of life (Ign.*Smyrn.* 7.1). Regarding these ones, Ignatius implores his hearers to hold fast to the gospel, which includes the confession of the suffering and risen Christ, not allowing false teachers a public or private hearing (Ign.*Smyrn.* 7.2). Similaraly, he implores Polycarp to stand firm "like an anvil" against those who "teach strange doctrines" (ἑτεροδιδασκαλοῦντες).

The Will and Human Action

It is worth mentioning something of the will and human action in Ignatian perspective. Traditional virtue formation posits numerous components leading to action. In one respect for Ignatius, the will and human action is directly related to endurance. In this regard, the goal is to reach God and Christians are called to "patiently endure all the abuse of the ruler of this age and escape" (Ign.*Magn.* 1.2). With the prophets as an example, Christians "patiently endure, in order that [they] may be found to be disciples of Jesus Christ" (Ign.*Magn*. 9.1). To Polycarp he calls his bishop friend to "patiently bear all things. . . . [be] more diligent that you are. . . . [and wait] expectantly for the one who is above time" (Ign.*Poly.* 3.1-2). This action is founded upon the belief of the incarnate Christ who suffered and endured on his behalf.

Ignatius everywhere recognizes the relationship between action and virtue. For Ignatius, righteous deeds are voluntary actions, yet not actions disassociated from Christo--centric motivation. Echoing Jesus's

words in Matt 12:33-35, Ignatius maintains, “The tree is known by its fruit; thus those who profess to be Christ's will be recognized by their actions. For the work is a matter not of what one promises now, but of persevering to the end in the power of faith” (Ign.*Eph.* 14.2). Ignatius entreats Polycarp not only to “[flee] from wicked practices” but to preach a sermon imploring his hearers to do the same (Ign.*Poly.* 5.1). Such a sermon should call hearers to marital faithfulness, chastity, humility, and a God-honoring life (Ign.*Poly.* 5.1-2).

Ignatius engages the idea of the will in numerous places. Christians must choose to act like a Christian, “not just be called Christians” (Ign.*Magn.* 4.1). Additionally, the two ways language in his letter to the Magnesians appeals to man's will to act. Those who have been stamped with the image of “God the Father through Jesus Christ" must “voluntarily choose to die into his suffering” (Ign.*Magn.* 5.2). Voluntary language in this passage highlights the nature of the two ways motif. Walking down either path, the way of death or the way of life, is ultimately a voluntary action. In fact, the protreptic nature of much of his writing displays an understanding of voluntary action. Though founded upon the example of Christ, members of the body must choose to act in accordance with a Christ-like life. A Christo-centric life demands Christ-centric action.

Additional Considerations

Ignatius uses other language that is important for virtue. To the Magnesians, he praises their “well-ordered” love toward God (Ign.*Magn.* 1.1). The idea of “well-ordered” loves points to a later tradition of moral reflection, particularly Augustine and other fathers regarding the nature of human passions in light of the fall. This idea as

well as the Greek terminology here (πολυεύτακτος), deserves further exploration.

Ignatius also testifies to a prophetic utterance in the Spirit regarding imitation and virtue. The Spirit, accordance to this testimony, calls for unity among the body. To the Philadelphians, Ignatius reports not a human but the Spirit preaching when he says, "Do nothing without the bishop. Guard your bodies as the temple of God. Love unity. Flee from divisions. Become imitators of Jesus Christ, just as he is of his Father." (Ign.*Phil.* 7.2). This string of imperatives, supposedly prompted by the Spirit, raises some interesting questions. Does Ignatius believe that he is presenting a true prophetic utterance, or is this Ignatius's way to confirm his teaching? To what extent does the Spirit implore Christians to virtue? What role then, if any, does pneumatology play in Christian virtue formation? While Ignatius doesn't ultimately answer these questions, the presence of a potentially Spirit-informed call to virtuous living opens up considerations on how early Christians conceived of the role of the Spirit towards virtue formation.

Conclusion

Reading the letters of Ignatius through the lens of virtue formation provides a more robust reading and highlights some of the main concerns for this martyr bishop. Ignatius's preoccupation with the moral question, that is, how should Christians live, is one that I assert was of primary importance for this condemned bishop of Antioch. Concerns of ecclesiology, sacraments, Christology, trinitarianism, and more can best be understood through the filter of Christian moral reflection. In light of these things, then, how should Christians live? It is this question that helps readers understand the letters of Ignatius

most clearly, and reveals how this martyr bishop sought to use his last remaining days to encourage the church.

Cogitatio: Ignatius of Antioch

Ignatius's Trinitarian Foundation for Church Unity and Obeying Spiritual Leaders

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While on the road to stand trial and face martyrdom in Rome, Bishop Ignatius of Antioch (d. ca. 110) authored seven letters—five to Asian churches, one to Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna, and one to the church at Rome. Providing rich insight into the issues of the second-century church in Asia, the letters also reveal a good bit of Ignatius's theology, including his thoughts on ecclesiology, martyrdom, Judaism, heresy, and the Trinity. In this paper, I suggest that Ignatius' pleas for church unity and obedience to the bishop—arguably the strongest themes in his letters—were founded on his understanding of the Trinity and that his ecclesiology depended on this developing Trinitarian thought.

Preliminary Thoughts

Not a great deal is known about Ignatius until this final period of his life. Arguably his greatest claim to fame was setting into motion a monoepiscopal (single bishop) model of leadership in Antioch that was

replicated by other church communities around the ancient world.[1] Recently, Alistair Stewart has challenged this traditional view, suggesting that Ignatius may have simply been a bishop over a single house fellowship in Antioch or a federation of house churches in the city.[2] Though this debate continues, we know that Ignatius followed Clement of Rome (d. ca. 99) in advancing the bishop-presbyter-deacon model for church governance, which his Trinitarian thought shaped.[3]

Despite the challenge of dating Ignatius' letters and death, he was most likely writing during a limited window of time—perhaps just a few weeks—within the first quarter of the second century.[4] Following Michael Holmes' chronological ordering, I have read and analyzed Ignatius' letters in this order: (1) Smyrnaens (2) Polycarp (3) Ephesians (4) Magnesians (5) Philadelphians (6) Trallians and (7) Romans.[5] In terms of style and content, Clement, Hermas and Paul seemed to have influenced Ignatius' writing. In addition to Paul, Ignatius clearly had access to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke although he referred very little to the Old Testament.[6]

In examining the Ignatian corpus to grasp his Trinitarian thinking, I have generally followed Allen Coppedge's method for

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[1]See Ignatius, *Romans* 2.2, 9.1.

[2]See Alistair C. Stewart, *The Original Bishops: Office and Order in the First Christian Communities* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 260-268.

[3]See 1 Clement 42.4-5; 44.1-5; 57.1; also Foster, "The Epistles of Ignatius of Antioch (Part 2)," *The Expository Times* 118:1 (2006), 2-3.

[4]See Foster, "The Epistles of Ignatius of Antioch (Part 1)," *The Expository Times* 117:12 (2006), 491-492.

[5]See Michael W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers in English,* 3rd edition (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 94.

[6]See Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers,* 92-93; also Foster, "The Epistles (Part 2)," 8-10.

studying the godhead within Scripture. Coppedge evaluates the biblical data in four areas: references to the Father and Son, Son and Holy Spirit, Father and Holy Spirit, and references to all three. He asserts that many helpful insights can be gleaned from passages on just the Father and Son toward a complete biblical picture of the Trinity.[7] Ignatius mentions the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together only three times in his letters. In the remainder of his many references to the godhead, he refers only to the Father and Son. This is not surprising because Ignatius's primary theological concerns in his letters are Christological and he devotes much space to combatting Docetism and defending the humanity and divinity of Christ. Following Coppedge, I am persuaded that Ignatius's Father and Son references provide helpful insight into his Trinitarian thoughts.[8]

Trinitarian Salutations

Similar to Paul, Ignatius routinely greets his readers with a Trinitarian salutation, which set the tone for discussing unity in the church and obedience to leaders. He addresses the Smyrnaeans as the "church of God the Father and of the beloved Jesus Christ."[9] In his greeting to the church's leader, Polycarp, Ignatius describes him as the "bishop of the church of the Smyrnaeans . . . who has God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ as his bishop." Declaring the Magnesians "blessed through

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[7]See Allan Coppedge, *The God who is Triune: Revisioning the Christian Doctrine of God* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2007), 26-30.

[8]See Ign.*Eph.* 9.1; *Magn.* 13.1, 2; also J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2000), 92.

[9]All English translations of Ignatius' letters are from Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers in English.*

the grace of God the Father in Christ Jesus our Savior," Ignatius offers "greetings in God the Father and in Jesus Christ."

Extending the Ephesians "heartiest greetings in Jesus Christ our God," Ignatius reminds them that they enjoy the "fullness of God the Father." Declaring that they are "united and elect through genuine suffering by the will of the Father and of Jesus Christ our God," Ignatius reveals some initial economic Trinitarian perspectives. He also concludes the Ephesian letter by communicating "Farewell in God the Father and in Jesus Christ, our shared hope."[10] Similarly, he emphasizes the Father and Son's work in salvation in his salutation to the Trallians whom he described as "dearly love by God the Father of Jesus Christ, elect and worthy of God, at peace in flesh through the suffering of Jesus Christ."

In the opening of *Philadelphians*, Ignatius stresses a church unity founded on the godhead, which we will explore more below. He refers to them as "the church of God the Father and of Jesus Christ . . . established in godly harmony and unwaveringly rejoices in the suffering of our Lord, fully convinced of his resurrection in all mercy, which I greet in the blood of Jesus Christ, which is eternally and lasting joy." This continues in his salutation to the Romans whom he greets in the "majesty of the Father Most High and Jesus Christ his only son . . . bearing the name of the Father, which I also greet in the name of Jesus Christ, son of the Father, those who are united in flesh and spirit to every command of his."

[10]Ign.*Eph.* 21.2.

Ignatius cherished unity in the church and constantly appealed to his readers to pursue unity. In this first discussion, I will show that this unity was based on his understanding of the godhead, which we observe in at least six ways.

First, Ignatius asserted that a bishop himself was united with the godhead. Concluding his letter to Polycarp, he writes: "I bid you farewell always in our God Jesus Christ; may you remain in him; in the unity and care of God (ἐν ἑνότητι θεοῦ καὶ ἐπισκοπῇ)."[11] Here Ignatius declares that God cares for—literally "bishops"—Polycarp, which underscores Ignatius' point in the letter's salutation that God is this bishop's bishop. Referring to the unity of God, Ignatius uses the same term (ἑνότης) that Paul employs to describe the unity of the church, believers, and the Spirit.[12] For Ignatius, this unity with God generated from the unity with God and Christ. Similarly, in his letter to the Philadelphians, Ignatius indicates that their bishop received his ministry because of his worshipping devotion to the godhead: "I know that the bishop obtained a ministry . . . not by his own efforts or through people or out of vanity but in the love of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."[13]

Second, for Ignatius, Trinitarian unity promoted a collegiality among church leaders—bishops, presbyters, and deacons. In his letter to Polycarp, Ignatius greets "the bishop, so worthy of God, and the

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[11]Ign.*Pol.* 8.3.

[12]See Eph 4:3,13; Rom 15:6; Gal 3:28; Phil 2:2; Col 3:15. Cf. Moisés Silva, ed., *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 124–125.

[13]Ign. *Phil.* 1.1.

godly council of presbyters, and my fellow servants, the deacons, and all of you, individually and collectively, in the name of Jesus Christ."[14] One way that his unity was expressed was through the church and its leaders striving to encourage the bishop. In *Trallians,* Ignatius exhorts the church to: "Persevere in your unanimity (ὁμονοίᾳ) and in prayer with one another. For it is right for each one of you, especially the presbyters to encourage the bishop, to the honor of the Father and to the honor of Jesus Christ and of the apostles."[15] To make his case and expand this idea of unity, Ignatius employs a musical idea—"unanimity" or "harmony" (ὁμονοίᾳ)—a term found at points within the Psalms (LXX).[16] For Ignatius, unity among church leaders mirrored the sweet fellowship that existed between the Father, Son, and apostles. Stewart suggests that Ignatius especially valued unity and encouragement in the church and among leaders because of the conflict and division that he had probably experienced within the church at Antioch.[17]

Third, in Ignatius's letters, Trinitarian unity implied that the bishop was one with the church. Ignatius famously wrote to the Smyrneans: "Let no one do anything that has to do with the church without the bishop . . . wherever the bishop appears, there let the congregation be; just as wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the catholic church."[18] In one sense the bishop's unity with the church paralleled Christ's unity with his body. In another, the bishop's presence

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[14]Ign.*Pol.* 8.3.

[15]Ign.*Trall.* 12.2.

[16]See Pss. 54:15; 82:6.

[17]See Stewart, *Original Bishops,* 246-247.

[18]Ign.*Smyrn.* 8.2; cf. Stewart, *Original Bishops,* 210.

validated the community as an authentic church. Without a bishop, the church could not truly experience worship, particularly the Eucharist. Ignatius exhorts the Smyrnaeans: "Only that Eucharist which is under the authority of the bishop (or whomever he designates) is to be considered valid."[19]

Fourth, and quite related to the previous points, Ignatius called for the church to be united by imitating the Son's unity with the Father. In *Ephesians* he writes: "I congratulate you who are united with him [your bishop], as the church is with Jesus Christ and as Jesus Christ is with the Father, so that all things may be harmonious in unity (*ἵνα πάντα ἐν ἑνότητι σύμφωνα ᾖ*)."[20] In this letter, Ignatius employs yet another musical term, *σύμφωνα* ("harmonious") to describe this unity (*ἑνότης*).

Similarly, in his salutation to the Philadelphians, Ignatius uses the musical metaphor (*ὁμονοίᾳ*) once again, commending the church for being "established in godly harmony" because they "are at one with the presbyters and deacons who are with him [the bishop] who have been appointed by the mind of Jesus Christ, whom he [the Father], in accordance with his own will, securely established by the Holy Spirit." Alluding to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the same passage, Ignatius demonstrates that the unified thought and action of the godhead provide a model for the church and its leaders to emulate. Hensley and Vic helpfully note, "they have the consent and approval of God . . . because bishops are 'in the mind of Christ,' who is the mind of the

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[19]Ign.*Smyrn* 8.2; cf. Stewart, *Original Bishops,* 210; also Adam Hensley and Hamilton Vic, "Submission to Bishop, Presbytery, and Deacons in the Letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch," *Lutheran Theological Journal* 35, no. 2 (2001): 76, 82.

[20]Ign.*Eph.* 5.1; cf. Foster, "The Epistles (Part 2)," 3.

Father, to concur with the mind of the bishop is also to concur with God's mind, and therefore to know Christ as he truly is."[21]

As shown, Ignatius opened his letter to the Romans greeting them in the "majesty of the Father Most High and Jesus Christ his only son . . . bearing the name of the Father, which I also greet in the name of Jesus Christ, son of the Father, those who are united in flesh and spirit to every command of his." Praising the Father and Son for their unity, Ignatius also seems to be praying for this same unity for his readers.

Fifth, Ignatius reminds the churches that they are united in salvation—a redemption that is thoroughly Trinitarian. In just one of three passages that explicitly mention the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Ignatius declares that the Ephesians are "stones of a temple, prepared beforehand for the building of God the Father, hoisted up to the heights by the crane of Jesus Christ, which is the cross, using as a rope the Holy Spirit, and love is the way that leads back to God."[22] Employing rule of faith, creedal language, he adds in the same letter: "For our God, Jesus the Christ, was conceived by Mary according to God's plan, both from the seed of David and of the Holy Spirit. He was born and was baptized in order that by his suffering he might cleanse the water."[23] Throughout his letters, Ignatius particularly emphasizes that the Son's suffering accomplishes this salvation. As shown, he greets the Ephesians by declaring that they are "united and elect through genuine suffering by the will of the Father and of Jesus Christ our God."[24]

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[21]Hensley and Vic, "Submission to Bishop," 76.

[22]Ign.*Eph.* 9.1.

[23]Ign.*Eph.* 18.2.

[24]In addition to the Ephesians, see Ignatius' salutations to the *Trall.* and the *Phil.*

Finally, Ignatius argues that the church should be unified for the purpose of worship. In *Ephesians,* he writes: "So you are all participants in a shared worship, God-bearers and temple-bearers, Christ-bearers, bearers of holy things, adorned in every respect with the commandments of Christ."[25] Given this reality, Ignatius urges them to meet regularly and "make every effort to come together more frequently to give thanks and glory to God."[26] Emphasizing the central place of the Eucharist in worship assemblies in his day, Ignatius adds: "All of you, individually and collectively, gather together in grace, by name, in one faith and one Jesus Christ . . . breaking one bread, which is the medicine of immortality, the antidote we taken in order not to die but to live forever in Jesus Christ."[27] The Eucharist, of course, served as a visual reminder of the Son's passion and death and the Father's work to raise him to new life, purchasing salvation for those who believe. Highlighting this unity of the Father and Son and the consequent unity of the church, Hensley and Vic conclude: "the relationship between Christ and the Father continues incarnationally through the liturgical life of the church as people, bishop, and presbyterate gather for worship."[28]

Obedience to Church Leaders

Quite related to his appeal for unity in the church, Ignatius also urges them to obey their leaders, particularly bishops but also presbyters

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[25]Ign.*Eph.* 9.2.

[26]Ign.*Eph.* 13.1; see also *Eph.* 5.3 and *Poly.* 1.2.

[27]Ign.*Eph.* 20.2.

[28]Hensley and Vic, "Submission to Bishop," 79; cf. Foster, "The Epistles (Part 2)," 5.

and deacons. Ignatius' understanding of the Trinity also provides a foundation for this obedience in the church.

First, Ignatius commands the Asian believers to follow and obey their bishops just as Christ followed and made himself subservient to the Father. In *Smyrneans*, he writes: "You must all follow the bishop as Jesus Christ followed the Father."[29] To the Magnesians, he adds: "Be subject to the bishop and to one another, as Jesus Christ in the flesh was to the Father . . . that there might be unity, both physical and spiritual."[30] This admonition finds special application in the case of the younger bishop of Magnesia. Ignatius encourages the church to "respect him in accordance with the power of God the Father." Also, presbyters should go against the accepted social norms of assigning authority to older patrons and "defer to him as one who is wise in God; yet not really to him, but to the Father of Jesus Christ, the bishop of all."[31]

In a rare isolated reference to the Holy Spirit, Ignatius claims that the Spirit admonishes similar unity with and obedience to the bishop. In *Philadelphians*, he writes: "the Spirit is not deceived . . . the Spirit itself was preaching, saying these words: 'Do nothing without the bishop. Guard your bodies as the temple of God. Love unity. Flee from divisions. Become imitators of Jesus Christ, just as he is of his Father."[32]

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[29]Ign.*Smyrn.* 8.1-2.

[30]Ign.*Magn.* 13.2; cf. *Trall.* 2.2; 13.2; *Eph.* 5.3; also Hensley and Vic, "Submission to Bishop," 76, 82.

[31]Ign.*Magn.* 3.1-2; cf. Stewart, *Original Bishops,* 282-283.

[32]Ign.*Phil.* 7.1-2.

Second, continuing this line of logic, Ignatius urges the church also to obey the presbyters and deacons whom he likens to the apostles. He urges the Trallians:

> Let everyone respect the deacons as Jesus Christ, just as they should respect the bishop, who is a model of the Father, and the presbyters as God's council and as the band of the apostles. Without these no group can be called a church.[33]

Similarly, he admonishes the Smyrneans: "follow the council of presbyters as you would the apostles; respect the deacons as the commandment of God."[34]

Finally, Ignatius instructs the churches to pursue unity through obeying church leaders. He instructs the Ephesians: "in every way glorify Jesus Christ . . . so that you, joined together in a united obedience and subject to the bishop and the council of presbyters, may be sanctified in every respect."[35] Again employing the terms ὁμονοίᾳ ("unanimity" or "harmony") and *σύμφωνα* ("harmony"), Ignatius uses vivid musical imagery to make his case:

> Run together in harmony with the mind of the bishop . . . for your council of presbyters . . . is attuned to the bishop as strings to a lyre . . . in your unanimity and harmonious love (*ἐν τῇ ὁμονοίᾳ ὑμῶν καὶ συμφώνῳ ἀγάπῃ*) Jesus Christ is sung. You must join this chorus, everyone of you, so that being harmonious in unanimity (*σύμφωνοι ὄντες ἐν ὁμονοίᾳ*) and taking your pitch from God you may sing in unison with one voice through Jesus Christ to the

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[33]Ign.*Trall.* 3.1; cf. Stewart, *Original Bishops*, 110-111; also Hensley and Vic, "Submission to Bishop," 82.

[34]Ign.*Smyrn.* 8.1-2.

[35]Ign.*Eph.* 2.2; cf. Stewart, *Original Bishops*, 270-271.

> Father, in order that he may hear you and . . . acknowledge that you are members of his Son. It is therefore advantageous for you to be in perfect unity, in order that you may always have a share in God.[36]

Likening the church communities to the Levitical singers in the temple who sing to God, Ignatius exhorts them to "sing Christ" through obeying spiritual leaders. Again, as the church emulates the godhead by being united, this bears fruit in worship.[37]

Ignatius's admonitions beg the question: why was there such an emphasis on obeying spiritual leaders. First, as discussed, it appears likely that the churches in Antioch and Asia experienced considerable dissension. Foster hypothesizes that Ignatius lead the church in such a hierarchical manner and that his style contributed to the conflict. Ignatius' natural response to this crisis was insisting that churches obey their bishops.[38]

Second, and more explicit in his letters, Ignatius urges obedience to church leaders because bishops functioned as guardians of sound doctrine. Likening aberrant teaching to "evil plants," Ignatius commands the Philadelphians:

> Stray away from evil plants, which are not cultivated by Jesus Christ, because they are not the Father's planting . . . For all those who belong to God and Jesus Christ are with the bishop, and all those who repent and enter into the unity of the church will

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[36]Ign.*Eph.* 4.1-2; cf. *Eph.* 20.2; *Magn.* 6.1-2.

[37]Cf. Hensley and Vic, "Submission to Bishop," 80-81.

[38]Cf. Foster, "The Epistles (Part 2)," 3-4.

belong to God, so that they may be living in accordance with Jesus Christ.[39]

Stewart helpfully asserts, “unity under an *episkopos* is the means by which heresy is kept out of the churches.”[40] As bishops like Ignatius shepherded the flock and protected it from false teaching, the stature and authority of the bishop only increased toward a monoepiscopal model in the second century.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have discussed Ignatius’s concerns for church unity and obeying leaders and have endeavored to show that Ignatius’ understanding of the godhead, especially the relationship between the Father and the Son, supported his thoughts. He believed that the church should be one because the Father and Son are one. He was also convinced that the church should obey its leaders, especially bishops, because the Son willfully submitted to the Father. Obeying the bishop—the appointed shepherd and guardian of sound teaching—would also keep the church free of heresy.

As shown, Ignatius employed rich and colorful language to communicate a picture of church unity. He used the familiar Pauline term “unity” (ἑνότης), which showed the apostle’s linguistic and theological influence on Ignatius. His use of the musical terms “harmony” or “unanimity” (ὁμονοίᾳ) and “harmonious” (σύμφωνα) point to Old Testament influences, specifically the Psalms and the

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[39]Ign.*Phil.* 3.1-2; see also Ign.*Magn.* 7.1-2; *Trall.* 7.1-2.

[40]Stewart, *Original Bishops*, 269; cf. Hensley and Vic, “Submission to Bishop,” 77.

Levitical singers, that also shaped his vocabulary and thinking on unity. Though Ignatius did not cite or allude to Old Testament passages in his letters, this musical vocabulary seems to be the exception.

Finally, though Ignatius's early second-century Trinitarian thoughts are based largely on reflections about the Father and Son, these reflections do provide a basis for his admonitions toward church unity and to obeying spiritual leaders. In this sense he anticipates the mid-third century thoughts of Cyprian of Carthage (195-258) on the Trinity and church unity:

> The Lord says, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30); and again it is written of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, "And these three are one" (1 John 5:7). And does any one believe that this unity which thus comes from the divine strength and coheres in celestial sacraments, can be divided in the church, and can be separated by the parting asunder of opposing wills?[41]

[41]Cyprian, *Unity of the Church* 6.

Interview:
Peter Sanlon on Scholarship in Service to the Church

Revd. Dr. Peter Sanlon holds theology degrees from Cambridge and Oxford University. His doctoral research has been published as *Augustine's Theology of Preaching* (Fortress Press, 2014). He is also author of *Simply God: Recovering the Classical Trinity* (IVP, 2014) and contributed to 'Adam, the Fall & Original Sin' (Baker, 2014). With his wife and two children he lives in Tunbridge Wells, where he is vicar of St. Mark's Church.

CACS Editors: Peter, thanks for sitting down with us to talk about your life and academic activity. First, we'd love to know what led you in the direction of classical studies, and more specifically, Augustine's sermons and pastoral ministry?

PS: When I first encountered expository preaching at the age of 16, I was convinced that God speaks to us through the systematic orderly preaching of scripture. After a number of years of seeking to grow in my understanding of scripture and of preaching, I became convinced that an aspect of faithful preaching was integrating understanding of the text with emotional and affectionate appreciation of the passage. I came to suspect that the church often was tempted to deprecate or dislocate emotional engagement with scripture and I saw that

Augustine was a key figure who argued for the need to engage emotionally with scripture. For the sake of my own spiritual health, I sought to apprentice myself to his writings.

CACS Editors: What would you consider to be your main academic influences? What other significant influences would you count as formative for your thinking?

PS: As an undergraduate I was very impressed by the humble and gracious scholarship of Tom Weinandy he had an infectious knowledge of the Fathers and scripture. For a number of years I made it my habit to annually read through the works of Luther and Calvin to me the represent the model of reformed scholarship that gives due regard to the great tradition. When in due course I came to doctoral research on Augustine, I obviously gave extensive time to his corpus of literature. One of the benefits of being tutored by David Ford was that he encouraged me to become familiar with continental scholars and Yale theologians such as David Kelsey. All that served to situate my theology. While that all doubtless influenced my theology, I am on reflection little more than a pastor-teacher who has benefited from the great tradition that lies behind the patristic and reformational church.

CACS Editors: Completing your doctoral work under David Ford at Cambridge University, what particularly "stuck" with you regarding your relationship with your doctoral supervisor? In other words, what were some of the lasting impressions that were made upon your life?

PS: I was struck by David Ford's humility and generous open hearted approach to life. In the higher levels of academic scholarship there can often be a spirit of competitiveness or "oneupmanship." Such attitudes were to the best of my awareness entirely absent from David Ford. He

sought to encourage and equip his students, and I was aware that the self-sacrificing way he did that could only be energised by the love of Christ the Teacher we all must learn from.

CACS Editors: What drew you to Augustine as a figure for study? With so much academic output on Augustine, how do you navigate the literature in a manageable way?

PS: With the greatest of difficulty! One cannot claim to have mastered the original sources never mind the secondary literature! All I can do is say that I have been influenced by Augustine's core concerns. When I felt frustrated at the possibility of missing out on an article or book I took encouragement from the observation that a PhD is merely a snapshot of research at a point in time. I can no more master all secondary literature than any creature can master the limitations of time. We do what we can but in the end we submit to the frailties of creatureliness.

CACS Editors: In your recent text, *The Theology of Augustine's Preaching*, you describe the notions of "interiority" and "temporality" as vital to understanding Augustine's preaching act. Could you explain how these concepts functioned in Augustine's sermons?

PS: The suggestion is that Augustine was always concerned both for interiority that is the impacting of the human heart; and also for temporality that is salvation history and the movement of time. For Augustine's sermons his twin concerns meant that he always had a big picture framing his preaching the need to draw human hearts into love of the grand themes of salvation history. His preaching therefore had an affectionate ethos and a concern for the grand themes of scripture.

CACS Editors: What future projects would you like to see young scholars pursue? In other words, what kind of work would you love to see produced that you yourself wouldn't have time to accomplish?

PS: I was aware as I worked on my PhD that I was challenging scholars to give more attention to Augustine as a preacher and pastor. I believe that already the lack of attention to Augustine as a preacher has begun to be addressed, however I would still like to see a wider embedding of scholarly love of the scriptures into not only college but also church life.

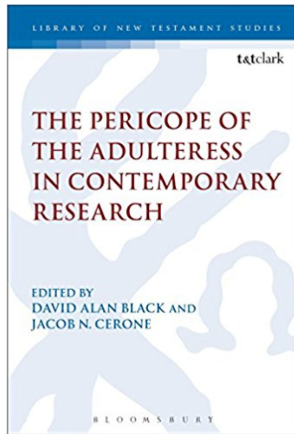
CACS Editors: How has your involvement in ministry shaped your scholarship, if at all?

PS: I have taught systematic theology and church history at seminary level I am now a local church minister in the Church of England. Alongside that I have published some work *Simply God* (IVP) and various academic articles. I preach every week through the scriptures. I do all this with an awareness that my menial efforts are running with the grain of that which greater scholars and preachers such as Augustine hewed. My own writing and preaching is done in the midst of pressures on time, pastoral visits, weddings, funerals and speaking up in the political sphere. I often struggle to know what to do or say next but as I do so I know that great ministers such as Augustine did just the same. They struggled and God blessed their efforts. The human heart is a mystery. Grace unfolds it.

CACS Editors: What projects are you currently working on? What future projects do you anticipate?

PS: My main labour and my life goal is to preach through the Bible a number of times in the context of a normal pastoral ministry. Alongside that I am happy to offer the occasional external speaking engagement and writing project. I recently finished preaching through Ecclesiastes and then Daniel both made a deep impression on me. The brevity of live. The need to stand up publicly for the cause of Christ as the Western World slips into Exile the scriptures speak. I am editing a six volume popula systematic theology series it aims to expose the doctrinal links that inform the grand themes of scripture for a church congregation level audience.

CACS Editors: Peter, thanks again for your time and for sharing your thoughts about Augustine, academic, and spiritual life with our readers.



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This book is a collection of essays originally presented at a conference on the *pericope adulterae* (John 7:53–8:11; henceforth, *PA*) held in April 2014 at the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, NC. The contributors either defend the *PA* as an original part of John's Gospel (John David Punch and Maurice A. Robinson) or reject the authenticity of the *PA* on the grounds that it is a later interpolation (Tommy Wasserman, Jennifer Knust, and Chris Keith). Larry Hurtado, who agrees with the majority position advocated by Wasserman, Knust and Keith, provides some final observations and suggestions for future research.

Punch opens the main part of the book with a defense of the *PA* as Johannine. First, Punch responds to objections on the grounds that the *PA* "breaks the flow of the Tabernacles Discourse" in John 7–8 (pp. 8–9). Then, he argues that grammatical or syntactical objections are not sufficient to reject the *PA* as inauthentic. After a brief discussion of the early manuscript evidence of the *PA*, Punch turns to the patristic

period to demonstrate that early Christian attitudes toward sexual sin could explain the removal of the *PA* from the Gospel of John (p. 27).

Wasserman's chapter first gives a detailed analysis of the mistakes, corrections and unique readings in the earliest extant copies of John's Gospel. He shows that generally, early scribes endeavored to produce accurate copies of their exemplars. However, Wasserman also presents a number of additional details about Jesus that were added into the manuscript tradition. Wasserman concludes with an estimation that the *PA* was added to John's Gospel "between 150–250 CE" (p. 63), but that he does consider the *PA* "an authentic Jesus tradition" (p. 63).

Knust begins by discussing early accusations of tampering with the New Testament text, most explicitly with respect to Marcion's truncated version of Luke's Gospel. She turns to Origen, assessing how his editorial approach to the Old Testament—an approach he adopted from contemporary Alexandrian literary scholars—could inform judgments on the addition or exclusion of the *PA* from the New Testament. Knust also demonstrates from Origen's other writings that early Christians were not averse to discussing adultery, but rather, "expressed emphatic disapproval of sexual sin, in part, by telling stories about adulteresses, prostitutes, and sinning women who, after an encounter with Christ, went on to 'sin no more'" (p. 88).

Keith follows with a summary and brief expansion on his well-known position that the *PA* was inserted into John's Gospel in order to assert that Jesus was able to write.[42] Keith uses the Longer Ending of Mark, Septuagintalisms, and Luke 22:43–44 to demonstrate that early scribes and editors were capable of composing texts in another's style,

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[42] See, for example, Chris Keith, *The Pericope Adulterae, the Gospel of John, and the Literacy of Jesus*, New Testament Tools, Studies and Documents 38 (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

and that in some cases, these scribal compositions became added to pre-existing canonical texts. Consequently, arguments that the *PA* is consistent with Johannine style are not sufficient on their own to prove its authenticity.

Robinson's chapter in defense of the Johannine authorship of the *PA* begins with some observations on the external evidence for/against the *PA* from his yet-to-be-published work over the last two decades collating every available manuscript containing any text of John 7:51b–8:13a. Robinson also challenges the stylistic objections to Johannine authorship of the *PA*, but he makes a positive case for the authenticity of the *PA* by examining a number of "interrelated links—verbal, syntactic, synonymous, thematic, phonetic, and otherwise" that connect the *PA* to its literary context within John's Gospel (pp. 135–141).

One strength of this book is that it has managed to shed new light on a textual variant that has been discussed by scholars for centuries. For such a large block of text, many discussions of the authenticity of the *PA* drift toward stylistic matters and internal evidence, but Wasserman is able to turn the conversation back to the manuscripts themselves by appropriating research specific to the early copies of John's Gospel. Similarly, Knust's contribution is a significant improvement over the standard fare; instead of speculating how or why the *PA* would be added or removed from early manuscripts, she looks at ancient editorial practices to show what actually was done in similar situations. For a reader who is not familiar with Chris Keith's work on the socio-historical context of the *PA*, Keith's chapter contains a brief but helpful introduction to his position. Finally, Hurtado is a clear and helpful guide, providing both an informed summary of the preceding chapters as well as a few unique contributions to the

discussion of his own. One could wish that every multi-author book had such a useful conclusion.

One mixed aspect of the book is Maurice Robinson's defense of the *PA*. On one hand, it is a strength; Robinson is the most qualified defender of the *PA*. Having spent decades advocating Byzantine Priority, Robinson has established himself as an able and respected text critic, even by those who do not share his minority position. Robinson's collation of John 7:51b–8:13a in all available manuscripts is a remarkable accomplishment. Still, not all readers will be convinced by his complex argument for Johannine authorship of the *PA* based on linguistic parallels. For example, Robinson compares thematic links between the *PA* and John 18 on p. 139, but many themes (such as "scribes and Pharisees," "teaching," "people," or "questioning [Jesus]") could merely be coincidental, rather than intentional linguistic creativity on the part of the author. Granted, Robinson's case does not rest on a few individual links but on the total number of linguistic links as a whole, but possible contamination—for lack of a better word—in the data does obscure a view of what he argues is evidence of intentionality.

Punch's handling of the manuscript and patristic evidence (pp. 21–30) is one of the weaker aspects of the book. Some of the statements Punch makes in favor of the *PA* work against his position as other contributors contradict him. For example, he writes that the *PA* is found in "nearly 1,500 MSS of Greek and other languages" (p. 21), but Maurice Robinson has collated the *PA* in 1990 *Greek* manuscripts (p. 118), not counting manuscripts in other languages. Likewise, Punch lists "the ten earliest Greek MSS" (p. 21), which include only two papyri (P^{66} and P^{75}), but extend to the sixth-century parchment codex, N[022]; Wasserman, on the other hand, mentions that "seventeen

second- and third-century papyri with portions of the Gospel of John have been found" (p. 37). Perhaps Punch intended to refer to the ten earliest manuscripts sufficiently substantial to reveal whether or not they contained the *PA*, but even that statement would be inaccurate. As he admits, A[02] and C[04] are lacunose where the *PA* should go, but so is P^{45}, which he fails to mention. Punch goes on to make a number of other problematic statements as well. Three examples include appealing to the controversial marginal distigmai in Vaticanus (pp. 21–22), suggesting that P^{66}, P^{75}, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus constitute a textual family (p. 22), or invoking a sixteenth- or seventeenth-century note in Codex Bezae and that the lack of similar marginalia or corrections at the *PA* to argue that the scribes and later editors understood the *PA* as Johannine (pp. 23–24, esp. p. 24n53).

In spite of a few weaknesses, this book is an excellent resource on one of the most well known textual variants in the New Testament. The contributors should be praised for their ability to shed new light on a long-disputed passage. Those who study the textual history of the Gospels will no doubt find this book to be necessary reading for years to come, and the discussions of linguistic probability, manuscript evidence, and patristic thought make the book valuable to New Testament scholars, textual critics, and early church historians.

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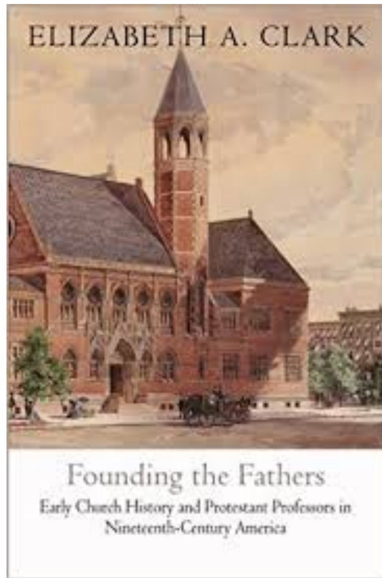

Elizabeth A. Clark
Founding the Fathers: Early Church History and Protestant Professors in Nineteenth-Century America

Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011
Pp. x + 561. ISBN: 978-0-8122-4319-2. $69.95.00 [Hardback].

Shawn J. Wilhite
California Baptist University

I've longed to read a volume that traces the historical enterprise of early Christianity and Patristic scholarship. With the voluminous output in Hebrew Bible and New Testament scholarship on the modern history of the discipline, there still remains something of a missing hole in documenting the narrative of Patristic critical scholarship as a discipline. Elizabeth Clark's *Founding the Fathers* offers a sweeping attempt to address the origins of Early Christian and Patristic scholarship in 19th century America.

The central aims and concerns of this book rest in Clark's assessment of 19th century American institutions and the rise of early Christianity as a discipline. Progressing in three distinct parts, Clark interweaves a variety of historical, personal, and theological contours of the 19th century landscape.

The three parts consist of the following: (1) The Setting: Contextualizing the Study of Early Christianity in America; (2) History and Historiography; and (3) Topics of Early Christian History in Nineteenth-Century Analysis. *Founding the Fathers* "explores how the study of early Christian history and theology became instantiated as a discipline" in the following four Protestant seminaries: Princeton Theological Seminary, Harvard Divinity School, Yale Divinity School, and Union Theological Seminary (p. 1). Furthermore, it builds upon the documentary records, published writings, and archived student's class notes of the following professors of church history: Samuel Miller, Henry Smith, Roswell Hitchcock, Philip Schaff, George Fisher, and Ephraim Emerton.

This book enlightens and illuminates the field of study in many ways. If anyone is already familiar with Clark's writing and research prowess, then this book will come as no surprise. Clark creatively connects the import of German New Testament scholarship into the American system of early Christianity. Each professor went to Germany for their training and, upon their return to America, grappled with the implications for historiography, the primacy of the New Testament, and how ecclesial interests affected the discipline's rise.

Next, the individual contributions of each professor were remarkable—especially Clark's portrayal of Philip Schaff. Clark presents Schaff as a deeply rigorous scholar and pietistic professor. Because the NPNF series is pivotal for the study of Patristics, Clark connected its production to the needs of available primary source material and the process of its production.

The last helpful feature speaks to the general whole of the Patristics discipline. It is helpful for students of any discipline to be conscious of the geographical and the developmental timeline of their

specialized discipline. For students of Patristic and early Christian scholarship, Clark's work helps do just that—narrates the pivotal authors, institutions, and contributions of 19th century Patristic historical scholarship.

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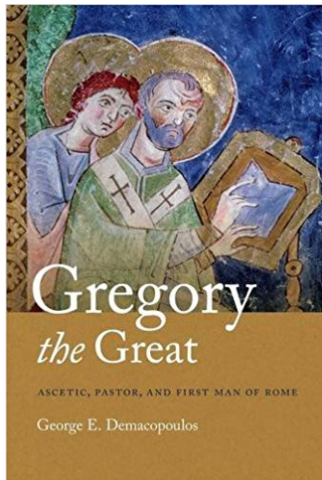

George E. Demacopoulos
Gregory the Great: Ascetic, Pastor, and First Man of Rome.

Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2015

Pp. viii + 236. ISBN: 9780268026219. $28 [paperback].

Edward L. Smither
Columbia International University

Gregory the Great: Ascetic, Pastor, and First Man of Rome is the most recent work from George Demacopoulos, professor of Orthodox Christian Studies at Fordham University. In terms of related works from other scholars, while the author has offered his own helpful literature review (pp. 4–9), this work particularly resembles Robert Markus's *Gregory the Great and His World* (1987), Carole Straw's *Gregory the Great: Perfection in Imperfection* (1988), and Conrad Leyers's *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great* (2000).

At the outset of the book, Democopoulos clearly states his thesis: "that Gregory's ascetic and pastoral theology both informed and structured his administration of the Roman Church" (p. 11) and the work is divided into three main sections. In the first part, Democopoulos aims to outline Gregory's ascetic theology in general. In the second part, he seeks to show how ascetic thinking shaped his pastoral theology. Finally, in the third section, he advances the

argument that Gregory's ascetic theology also influenced his leadership of the church at Rome. It is the third area that is arguably the most ground breaking because Gregory is generally remembered as a strong administrator whose style resembled that of a governor more than that of a monastic abbot. Through his argument, Democopoulos attempts to synthesize the "two Gregorys" that have been portrayed by other scholars. In his characteristic thoroughness, Democopoulos interacts with much of the Gregorian corpus to present his case.

There is much to appreciate about this study. In part one of the book (pp. 19–30), the author does a good job discussing the tension of the contemplative life and the active life that ministry-minded monks such as Basil, Augustine, and Gregory wrestled with and addressed. Democopoulos makes a good argument that Gregory probably had the most developed ideas about this among the fathers; that he had "an ascetic vision that emphasized service to others as the climax of the spiritual and ascetic life" (p. 26). That is, a monk should gladly have his contemplative experience of prayer, fasting, etc. interrupted in order to serve others. While I think Democopoulos has made a good point here, this advanced loving God/loving neighbor aspect of ascetic theology probably also informed Gregory's passion for cross-cultural mission to the Lombards and especially to the Anglo-Saxons. Though the author dedicates chapter 13 of the book to these mission efforts, a monastic theology of service expressed in mission was absent. I think further reflection in this area of Gregory's ministry would strengthen Demacopoulos's overall "service as the climax" argument.

I think Democopoulos also succeeds in part two of the book by showing Gregory's integrated ascetic and pastoral theology. In particular, he argues that a key component of being a pastor was being a spiritual director (cf. pp. 53–56), which was strengthened by ascetic

concerns. He builds his argument not only through a good treatment of Gregory's *Pastoral Rule* but also by exploring parts of the Gregorian corpus that are not as overtly pastoral in focus, including his commentaries on Job and Ezekiel and his homilies on the Gospels.

A final strength of the work is in part three—in which Democopoulos attempts to connect Gregory's asceticism with his practical leadership of the Roman church—as the author presents Gregory's regard for Peter. Unlike other Roman bishops, Gregory presents Peter as weak and fallible and it is this weakness that actually makes him a strong and model leader (pp. 153–55). While this character analysis of Peter toward the office of bishop certainly supports Democopolous's acetic theology connection to leadership, I found the remainder of part three of the book a bit less convincing in making the connection between Gregory the monk and Gregory the strong, prefect-like leader of the church at Rome.

In short, this is a profitable and useful study of the famous Roman bishop through the lenses of ascetic theology. While graduate students and scholars and students of early Christianity would benefit most from this book, it is written at such an accessible level that interested undergraduates and possibly pastors would profit from it as well.

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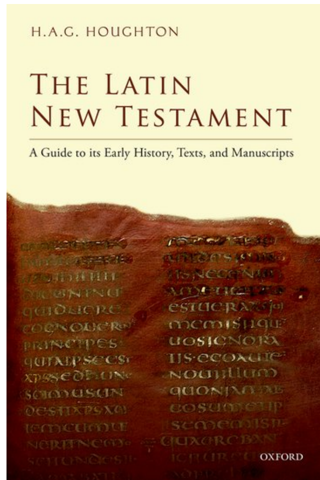

H. A. G. Houghton
The Latin New Testament: A Guide to its Early History, Texts, and Manuscripts.

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016

Pp. xix + 366 pp. $39.95 [Hardback].

Jeff Cate
California Baptist University

Hugh Houghton is Reader in New Testament Textual Scholarship at the University of Birmingham (UK). Besides a sizeable list of publications in the interrelated fields of patristics and manuscripts (especially, Greek and Latin), Houghton is extensively involved in the development and implementation of computerized collations, transcriptions, and analyses of Greek and Latin manuscripts. He holds numerous positions with manuscript research groups such as the Institute for Textual Scholarship and Electronic Editing (ITSEE), the International Greek New Testament Project (IGNTP), Vetus Latina, and the COMPAUL project.

The Latin New Testament is Houghton's contribution to a coherent picture of the history of the New Testament in Latin. The book is heavy on details and will serve as a ready reference for information on the Latin text that is often found scattered in numerous other sources.

The book is divided into three main sections. Part I on "History" comprises five chapters, which narrate the history of the Latin text across the first ten centuries. Each chapter considers the available evidence from both manuscripts and patristic sources. The chapters survey all the major witnesses and situate each in its chronological, geographical, and textual context. The significant features and aspects of each Latin witness are highlighted that pertain to its use as a witness to the Latin tradition.

Part II on "Texts" provides three chapters of information regarding accessing and proper use of the Latin text. Chapter 6 is a helpful explanation of the different Latin editions such as Sabatier, Vetus Latina, Jülicher's *Itala*, and the various Vulgate texts (Stuttgart, Oxford, Clementine, *Nova Vulgata*, etc.). Chapter 7 summarizes the use of Latin as a witness to the Greek text regarding grammar, style, word order, transliteration, loan words, and other translational matters. Chapter 8 surveys the Latin witnesses for each section of the NT (Gospels, Acts, Catholics, Paulines, Revelation) since the breadth and depth of witnesses are not uniform across all NT books.

Part III is comprised of two chapters, the first being a description of Latin manuscript features such as materials, coloring, size, script, abbreviations, punctuation, contents, order, titles, and decoration. At 73 pages, chapter 10 is by far the longest in the book since it provides a catalogue for over 170 of the most important Latin NT manuscripts. The book concludes with three appendices of additional detailed information and a 48-page bibliography.

Houghton's book is a helpful blend of narrative telling the story of the Latin text and reference to be consulted for tedious and specific information. Because of this, Houghton's work will be useful to Latin specialists and non-specialists alike. His explanation of the texts and

editions will make these important resources more accessible for those exploring the variegated witnesses and nomenclature for these. This is especially important since unlike Greek NT manuscripts, no single authoritative comprehensive list of all Latin NT manuscripts has ever been produced—although Houghton himself is currently involved compiling such a database at the University of Birmingham.

In terms of theory, Houghton positions himself among a growing group of Latin scholars who think there was a single translation (with multiple subsequent revisions) behind the Latin NT. Based on statements from Jerome and Augustine, many have often thought otherwise. Bruce Metzger, for example, in his work *The Versions of the New Testament* (p.285-86) had stated with certainty that the Latin translation was not a uniform work, was produced a number of times, and was without a single translator behind it all. Houghton is not alone, however, in arguing the opposite throughout this book (e.g., pp.11–12, 155–56, 160, 167, etc.). Along the way, he cites the work of Latin scholars such as Philip Burton, Bonifatius Fischer, Jacobus Petzer, *et alii* who have argued the same. The main evidence for such a position is that the "overall shape [of the Latin text] remains remarkably consistent" from the earliest times across all parts of the Latin OT and NT. Considerable divergence, however, did occur leading up to our earliest surviving manuscripts from the fourth century, and then convergence can subsequently be observed in Jerome's revisions of the Latin Gospel text.

Houghton's work is filled with fascinating and entertaining facts. That unlike Greek and Coptic, Latin has the odd anomaly that no papyrus manuscript or fragment of the NT in Latin has ever turned up. That the earliest known reference to Jerome's text being called the "Vulgate" was not until the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century.

Or that often overlooked is the fact that Tertullian had written in both *Greek* and Latin, but only his Latin works are extant today.

Houghton must be commended for such a helpful guide to the Latin New Testament. The Latin text can be a difficult subject with so many complicating and overlapping factors such as transmission in a language other than the text's original, sporadic early witnesses, regional development in various locales, and the lack of comprehensive resources—or even uniform nomenclature—for accessing the Latin witnesses. Readers will benefit greatly from Houghton's painstaking efforts to organize and catalogue an overarching picture of the text that served the western church for centuries.

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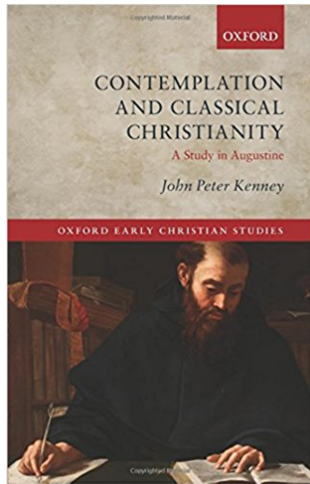

John Peter Kenney
Contemplation and Classical Christianity: A Study in Augustine. Oxford Early Christian Studies

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014

Pp. xi + 191. ISBN: 978-0-19-956370-8. $83.00 [Hardback].

Rev. D. Blair Smith
Durham University

> Something of extraordinary cultural significance occurred when Christianity succeeded (over a few centuries) in both preserving and overturning the religious logic of theophany, by offering humanity a vision of the face of God, but one visible only in the face of a crucified peasant, and thereby in the face of every neighbor who demands our love. I suppose one might call it a kind of *Aufhebung* (in the Hegelian sense): a dialectical moment of synthesis that both preserves and destroys what has gone before—or that preserves *by* destroying. Whatever one calls it, however, it constitutes one of those rare historical transitions that separate one epoch from another irrevocably, a shift in moral imagination that somehow remakes the world.[1]

[1]David Bentley Hart, "Seeing the God," *First Things,* February 2013, http://www.firstthings.com/article/2013/02/seeing-the-god (accessed December 20, 2015).

The Oxford Early Christian Studies series has produced a number of helpful volumes that illuminate the rich depository of available primary sources from the period of early Christianity. In *Contemplation and Classical Christianity: A Study in Augustine,* John Peter Kenney shines his light on the towering stack of writings left by Augustine, placing them at the center of this epochal shift to "Classical Christianity." He finds that through the lens of contemplation and the vision God we gain a dynamic picture of the dramatic shifts taking place in thought and practice in the culture of Late Antiquity.

A variety of ways of understanding contemplation and the vision of God were present in pagan thought leading up until the period of early Christianity, all in some way relating to a mode of knowing the divine or the ultimate. Kenney eschews exploring this broad background discussion (p. vii), even sidelining the background of Latin Christianity, in order to briskly examine development within Augustine himself. He takes the reader from Augustine's pre-baptismal conversion period through his classic depiction in the *Confessions* in order to grasp his understanding on the knowledge of God obtained through contemplation. Kenney adeptly places such development within the dynamic tensions of Augustine's relationship with Platonism, where the great bishop from Hippo both "preserves and destroys" in order to create something distinctive and fresh as the Church moved into the fifth century.

Before Kenney engages Augustine's early writings, he provides a masterful exposition of contemplation and pagan monotheism in chapter one. The brilliance of the author's first book, *Mystical Monotheism: A Study in Ancient Platonic Theology*, shines in the background here. By the time of Augustine, Kenney characterizes Platonism as "the systematic theology of paganism" that had

succeeded in articulating "the old religion in a new transcendental key" (p. 6). Platonist teachers shifted focus in pagan thought from the surface of multiplicity to the divine One—the source of all reality who "cannot be assimilated to the cosmos" (p. 14). The transcendence of this first principle above the material world is only accessible to the mind. By focusing in contemplation on what is separate, and superior, from the world, the soul can become immortal and, thus, achieve 'salvation' from the confused multiplicity of materiality. The great Neo-Platonist Plotinus (revealed in the Roman school) moved transcendence up another register, as it were, so that 'the One' is separated from all ineligibles, "removed from any finite predication" (p. 16). The result is theological knowledge proceeds by way of negation. This apophaticism means 'ascent' for the soul so that its higher elements contact the One, but this never involves prayer (p. 20). The "pilgrim self" (p. 26) who possesses "spiritual mobility" (p. 27) can internally contemplate its source and, in that connection, discover its authenticity. However, it will never experience a personal relation nourished by communication.

Kenney does not want to fuss over an elaborate picture of the sources of Augustine's initial blush with Platonism, confident it can be focused within the Roman school of Plotinus (pp. 40–42, passim.). In chapter two we see how Augustine's early Christian thought revealed in his pre-baptismal work, *Soliloquia,* creatively adapts many of these Platonian themes. First and foremost, "Platonism was the bearer of transcendence to Augustine" (p. 36). It expunged any last trace of Manichaean materialism and even moved Augustine to contemplate virtue. But it never was for him a system; he was never its disciple; and it certainly did not provide a means for salvation. Kenney presents an Augustine who at the very beginning of his conversion was inverting

the thought forms bequeathed to him by Plotinian Platonism. While transcendence in terms of a theistic distinction from the world was fundamental, 'ascent' was transmuted as dependent on divine 'descent'. That is to say, *Soliloquia* reveals our souls as too fallen, blind, and stained to reach up to God. Rather, "the most high God exercises compassion and submits the divine intellect to the human body in order to effect human restoration" (p. 44). This subversion holds transcendence and incarnation together, producing a "permeable transcendence" (p. 47) where a merciful God personally initiates believers' return to him as they know his presence through his word.

The exposition of Augustine's early thought provided by Kenney in chapter two provides the frameworks and trajectories for what follows. In chapter three he continues examination of Augustine's early works during his time at Cassiciacum. Two emphases emerge: the strong personal relation of mutual love experienced in a contemplative vision of God, and the dead weight existing in the soul by its naturally sinful condition. Chapter four reads the development of these emphases through Augustine's "early catholic treatises", which were written first in Italy after his baptism, then in North Africa while living the monastic life, and finally while an ordained ecclesiastical leader. The resulting picture is of a growing ambivalence to contemplation, because, while it reveals to the soul God's transcendence, it also starkly communicates the desperate condition of the soul that holds down its attempts at divine knowledge.

Chapter five brings the reader to a consideration of Augustine's mature reflections on contemplation revealed in the *Confessions,* specifically in the ascension narratives found in Books VII and IX, and his sermons. Kenney notes the primacy of the Word drawing the naturally incapable soul into an internal contemplative vision. The

model presented by Augustine is his mother, Monica, who lacked a philosophical education; what she possessed was divine grace resulting in a "life of Christian devotion rooted in divine revelation" (p. 153). Her inner purity clarified her vision of God depicted at Ostia because she had become more like the one she sought. The promise of contemplation is the experience of "a new life in a new time" (p. 161). However, fallen time is the reality of the present, in which the soul's moral struggle severely handicaps its consistent contemplation. Therefore, while contemplation reveals God's transcendence – thus 'preserving' a fundamental element of Platonism – it also, for Augustine, strengthened his emphasis on the power of original sin in the soul. This produced a growing sense of utter dependency upon divine grace—thus 'destroying' pagan pride that would reach toward the divine through harnessing native powers.

In this focused study, Kenney has developed a sharp picture of a wider transformation that Christianity brought to pagan thought forms. The result of this transformation was something possessing its own integrity. It was creatively adaptive according to its intellectual and spiritual milieu even while ultimately ordered under the primacy of divine revelation. We call this "Classical Christianity". And Augustine, along with other powerful Christian thinkers, had no small hand in shaping it.

The confidence of Kenney's excellent study is betrayed in scant interaction with contemporary sources. While this book has a thorough bibliography (and index), the text of the monograph is largely absent of discussion of scholarship. This gives it an assured elegance, as Kenney's judgments and eloquence more than carry the day, but an understanding of how Kenney's conclusions situate in the wider texture of Augustinian studies is lost. What is more, through a

precise focus on Plotinian Platonism, other possible sources of Augustine's understanding of contemplation – especially in the Latin tradition—are not explored. Finally, within the Augustinian corpus itself, I would have appreciated an examination into the role of Trinitarian theology in Augustine's understanding of contemplation, especially his elaboration on the *verbum interior* in *De trinitate* 9.6.9-12.18.

These *desiderata* aside, this is a most commendable volume for scholars with interest in philosophy and theology in early Christian studies, the interaction of pagan and Christian thought, Christian mysticism, and, of course, Augustinian studies.

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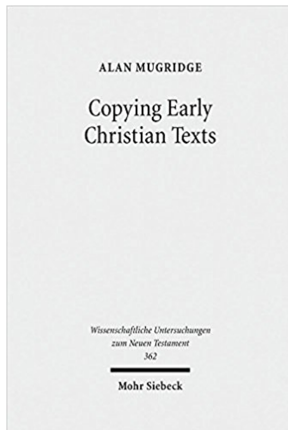

Alan Mugridge
Copying Early Christian Texts: A Study of Scribal Practice. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuem Testament 362.

Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016

Pp. 558. ISBN: 978-3-16-154688-4. €150.00 [Hardback].

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Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung

Mugridge offers an in-depth examination of early Christian papyri in order to discover how these documents might shed light on the people who copied them. The author states that, often assumed, early Christians had their texts reproduced primarily by those within their own ranks, i.e. by non-professional Christians, rather than employing the services of secular, trained scribes. Mugridge's study investigates whether Christian texts in the earliest centuries were in fact the work of non-professional scribes and if there is any evidence that these scribes were Christian.

To answer these queries, he gathers all Christian literary evidence (this excludes documentary evidence and letters authored by Christians) from the first four centuries AD, equaling roughly 500 individual manuscripts. He identifies three major skill levels evident in the handwriting of the scribes and attempts to determine if other

manuscript features (paleographic, paratextual, or codicological) are restricted to a certain skill level. His study concludes, "Christians employed the services of trained scribes to have the majority of their texts copied, and there is no evidence that the copyists were all Christians" (p. 153).

In the first chapter, Mugridge organizes his selection of manuscripts into 13 groups, coded with his own numbering. Group A is comprised of Old Testament texts, numbers *1–149*; Group B is New Testament texts, numbers *150–263*; Group C "Apocryphal" texts, numbers *264–299*; etc. He refers to the manuscripts almost exclusively by his own numbers throughout the study, which makes his "Concordance" appendix essential to cross-reference his number with a manuscript's commonly known name. Mugridge's numbering system is not intuitive at first (e.g., P^6 is *196*; P^7 is *484*; P^8 is *207*) and results in frequent flipping to and from his "Concordance." Also, some manuscripts are noted by more than one number if its contents fall into different categories. For example, Codex Sinaiticus is identified as *12*, *150*, and *302* since it contains the Old Testament, New Testament, and Patristic texts (Epistle of Barnabas and Shepherd of Hermas).

The second chapter analyzes four features of the manuscripts (content, material, form, size) to determine if there is any correspondence between them and the level of handwriting skill. . . ." (p. 26). Mugridge argues that when learning exercises are present in a manuscript, and sometimes when a manuscript is reused (turning it into a palimpsest), a low standard of handwriting is also found. But, when more than one script is used or more than one language is used, a high standard of writing is found.

The third chapter probes the relationship between page layout of manuscripts and skill levels of scribes. Mugridge argues that trained,

or highly skilled hands are found with the presence of wide margins, straight margins, or more than one column per page, while narrow margins, however, are not necessarily an indication of an unskilled scribe. As for the physical size of the manuscript, Mugridge is unclear about how this indicates skill level, but he concludes that the different sizes encountered in his selection of manuscripts is concomitant with non-Christian documents in that historical context.

The fourth chapter addresses reading aids in manuscripts. After a thorough analysis of pagination, titles and headings, section markers, sense lines and stichometry, punctuation, and pronunciation aids (i.e. diaresis, apostrophe, breathing marks), found in the manuscripts, Mugridge concludes that due to their "intermittent and inconsistent use. . . ." these features cannot not be compared to the skill level of scribes (p. 91).

The fifth chapter analyzes such features as lengths of lines and columns, corrections, marginal notations, illustrations, and abbreviations, which can reveal how texts were written. Mugridge also includes a discussion of *nomina sacra,* concluding that due to the general lack of consistency in their use and form, the presence of *nomina sacra* "cannot be used to indicate the hand of a trained scribe" (p. 135). Mugridge briefly ponders whether the use of *nomina sacra* could indicate the scribe was of Christian conviction, but ultimately determines there is insufficient evidence to make such a claim, since we do not know if *nomina sacra* existed on the exemplar they were copying from.

Mugridge's final chapter concludes, "It seems to be clear that the vast majority of the Christian papyri were copied by trained scribes" (p. 147). Thus, his findings not only call into question the view that Christian manuscripts were copied during the early centuries by

untrained copyists, but also imply "that we need to re-examine any implications drawn from this view that the transmission of Christian texts was quite inaccurate" (p. 148). In this chapter, Mugridge also attempts to ascertain whether the scribes in his study were in fact Christian or not. He states, "The most probable suggestion with regard to the religious conviction of the writer of Christian papyri from II-IV AD is that there was a mixture of copyists – those who *were* Christian by conviction and those who *were not*" (p. 152). Unfortunately, a lack of concrete evidence regarding the religious persuasions of the copyists in Mugridge's corpus of manuscripts leaves this research question largely indeterminable.

One of the study's most useful contributions to the field of textual scholarship is the author's "Catalogue of Papyri". It contains a wealth of information for the hundreds of manuscripts in his study, including provenance, *editio princeps*, literary contents, current location, its name from other catalogues (e.g., Gregory-Aland number), a bibliography of significant research on the manuscript, where images can be found in print and/or online, a one-sentence description of the manuscript, and Mugridge's description of the hand.

This work is most useful for specialized studies of literary texts from the first four centuries AD. It can be recommended for students and researchers of the text of the New Testament, paleography, and codicology and would be a valuable addition to research libraries.

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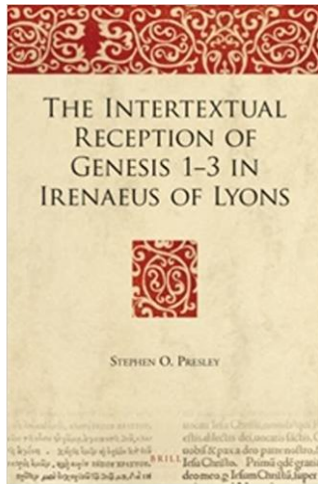

Stephen O. Presley
The Intertextual Reception of Genesis 1–3 in Irenaeus of Lyons. The Bible in Ancient Christianity 8.

Leiden: Brill, 2015

Pp. 300. ISBN: 978-9004289901. $163.00 (Hardback).

Matthew Y. Emerson
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Stephen Presley, argues, ". . . the reception of any particular passage of scripture in Irenaeus necessarily includes the reception of theologically and hermeneutically interrelated passages." In other words, "Irenaeus receives and interprets texts *in relationship*" (p. 3). Presley's particular focus in this regard, as the title indicates, is Genesis 1–3. He demonstrates throughout the volume how these passages, so integral to the biblical narrative and subsequent biblical texts, are fundamental to Irenaeus's thought, and assimilated into his larger hermeneutical and theological approach.

Presley's work can be divided into two parts. After an introduction, Presley in chapters two and three explicates Irenaeus's use of Gen 1–3 as it relates to refuting Gnostic teaching in *Haer.* 1–2. Chapter two is particularly important as Presley argues that the difference between Irenaeus's readings and Gnostic readings is not in interpretive tools – both Ireaneus and Gnostics use similar strategies,

like intertextuality and prosopological interpretation – but in their theological method. Here, and then throughout the work, Presley shows that Irenaeus's reading of Gen 1–3 is governed by his understanding of Scripture as an integrated, narrative whole, and of the constraining place of the *regula fidei*. Regarding the former, while the Gnostics connect different parts of Scripture, they do so in a way that fits their own philosophical and theological presuppositions. In contrast, Irenaeus reads those same texts as connected via the narrative of Scripture, and particularly its culmination in the person and work of Christ. Irenaeus also reads in light of the *regula fidei*, and with respect to Gen 1–3, the important piece is the Creator/creature distinction.

The second half of the book, chapters four through six, details Irenaeus's use of Genesis 1–3 in *Haer.* 3–5. Here Presley argues that Irenaeus's use of Genesis 1–3 moves largely from polemic to theological construction. These chapters again demonstrate Irenaeus's varied tools in interpreting Genesis 1–3, including narrative, close literary, intertextual, canonical, prosopological, and typological readings. The important point that Presley makes throughout, though, is that these strategies serve the larger purpose of textually proving Irenaeus's theological commitments, namely God's creation of all things, Christ's holistic redemption of humanity and human nature in his incarnation, and the divinity of the Son and Spirit. The former two are most important in *Haer.* given that they directly confront Gnostic assumptions about creation and redemption.

It is important to note here that it would be wrong to say that Presley is arguing that Irenaeus is just importing another arbitrary set of theological assumptions through which he reads biblical texts; rather, he demonstrates that Irenaeus is involved in the doctrinal

spiral, proving theological assumptions from biblical texts and exegeting biblical texts to gain theological assumptions. Key in this regard is Rom 5:12–21; it, chief among a few others, provides the hermeneutical hinge that allows Irenaeus to read Genesis 1–3 as intricately connected to the person and work of Christ. This in turns drives Irenaeus's reading of Gen 1–3 as eschatological, intertextually connected to the rest of Scripture, narratively foundational for the economic shape of the Bible, and typologically linked to the Gospel narratives. Presley concludes the book by summarizing this theological method and the hermeneutical tools used in light of that method.

Presley has made a significant contribution to the fields of Irenaean studies and hermeneutics. Regarding the former, Presley has filled a lacuna in the field, as he details in his introduction. Perhaps the more important contribution, though, is the latter; Presley not only defends Irenaeus's hermeneutical coherence (against modern detractors), but also in doing so implicitly presents a robust theological and hermeneutical method. For those interested in the recovery of a more theologically informed method of biblical interpretation, Presley's explication of Irenaeus's method provides a model. *The Intertextual Reception* is therefore recommended not only for those in the study of ancient Christianity and Irenaeus, but also for those hoping to recover a more theologically robust method of biblical reading.

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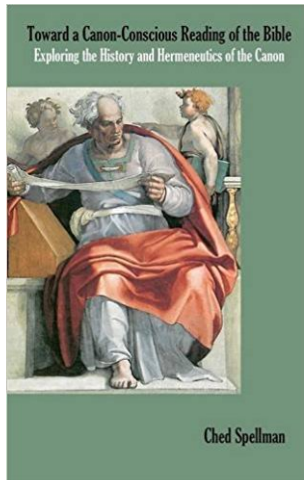

Ched Spellman

Toward a Canon-Conscious Reading of the Bible: Exploring the History of Hermeneutics and the Canon. New Testament Monographs 34.

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In this revised version of his dissertation, Ched Spellman ". . . seeks to demonstrate that contemporary interpreters have legitimate grounds for utilizing the concept of canon as a control on the interpretive task" (p. 3). Spellman notes that, while much of the discussion surrounding canon focuses on either its historical or theological elements—and usually in a mutually exclusive manner—there is a lacuna in biblical scholarship in examining the hermeneutical aspect of canon formation and its interpretation. By investigating the hermeneutical elements involved in and internal evidence for the canon's formation, such as canon-consciousness ("an awareness of a pre-existing body of authoritative literature," p. 6) and intertextuality, Spellman hopes also to provide hermeneutical warrant for readers to interpret biblical passages in light of the entire canon.

Any discussion of "canon" and related issues requires some "throat clearing." Spellman sets this stage in chapter one, "Defining

the Canon (Debate)." Here he offers definitions of "canon," "Scripture," and "minimalist" v. "maximalist" approaches, as well as an assessment of the place of presuppositions in understanding the history of canonical development. Much of this definitional work takes place alongside of and in light of an historical overview of the canon debate. Spellman concludes that, "Canon formation is seen as a process of recognition, where canonization happens *because* of the authority and mutual interdependence of the biblical material" (p. 37). In other words, Spellman takes into account both the historical development of canon formation and the theological rationale for that development, namely the inherent, divine authority of the documents that make up the canon. He concludes the chapter with a brief overview of the relevant data pertaining to canon formation in both testaments, data to which he will return in subsequent chapters.

Given these definitional foundations, Spellman in the remainder of the work argues for "canon-consciousness," both in terms of the recognition by biblical authors that they were contributing to a larger body of authoritative literature and the biblical reader's acknowledgment that the canon affects their reading of individual passages. He focuses on both of these sides of "canon-consciousness," author and reader (chs. 2–4).

Chapter two articulates the concept of and demonstrates canon-consciousness in biblical authors, and calls for readers to be canon-conscious when they approach the biblical text. Chapters three and four note two main ways canon-consciousness occurs in both the author and reader. Contextuality, or the fact that order makes a difference in how one interprets, is discussed in chapter three, while intertextuality, or discernable connections between texts within the canon, is discussed in chapter four. In both of these chapters Spellman

makes the case that there is internal evidence that the authors of the biblical material used these tools in such a way as to produce a certain canonical shape. He is not overly dogmatic on these points, but simply suggests that a minimal response of paying attention to canonical shape and intertextual connections is warranted given the evidence he cites. Finally, in chapter five, Spellman makes a case for the "implied reader" of the Bible being a canon-conscious reader. He also demonstrates what this kind of ideal reading looks like with respect to the book of Revelation.

Toward a Canon-Conscious Reading is a needed addition to the field of canonical studies. Spellman is exactly right when he notes the lacuna of canon scholarship in terms of the internal, hermeneutical evidence that must be and has not been considered, in large part, when dealing with issues of canon. The intertextual and contextual evidence that he cites is, on the whole, at the least minimally convincing of a canon-consciousness in the biblical authors and therefore of the reader's responsibility to read in a canonically-conscious manner. For me, the evidence is also maximally convincing, i.e. I find conclusive not only the thesis statement about canon-consciousness but also the particular canonical shape that Spellman argues for when he gives evidence of con- and intertextuality. Nevertheless, even if the reader remains unconvinced in this maximal sense, they will be hard pressed to ignore or refute the minimal claim of canon-consciousness given the hermeneutical evidence cited by Spellman.

While I would have liked to see more discussion on the ecclesial and communal aspects of canonization, given that Spellman's focus is on the hermeneutical evidence, I cannot fault him too much for that omission. *Toward a Canon-Conscious Reading* is thus a must read for anyone studying the biblical canon in its various dimensions, and, I

think, will convince canonical scholars that there is hermeneutical warrant and internal evidence for the claim that the biblical authors were canonically-conscious as they wrote. It will, therefore, in turn, assist us all in reading in a canonically-conscious manner as well.

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