

## BOOK REVIEWS

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## CHURCH HISTORY

*The Herrnhuterian Pietism in the Baltic and Its Outreach Into America and Elsewhere in the World.* By Valdis Mezezers. North Quincy, MA: Christopher, 1975, 151 pp., \$6.95 (\$4.95 paper).

When the Russians occupied their homelands at the close of World War II, thousands of Baltic nationals from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania emigrated to the United States by way of displaced persons' camps in western Germany. This book describes the religious heritage of one of these nations, Latvia. It also provides revealing insights into the life and work of Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf, "a man of God and a genius" around whose Christocentric theology the eighteenth-century Herrnhuterian pietism developed.

The author is a retired Lutheran pastor. Educated and ordained in his Latvian homeland, Mezezers served parishes there and in Maryland, Pennsylvania and North Carolina where he now resides. Originally he wrote this book as a doctoral dissertation. He has had a varied career as dramatist, educator, editor and poet.

The book does not intend to provide detailed descriptions of Latvian history or the recent Latvian immigration, nor of the work of Count Zinzendorf. Those desiring further information along these lines should consult such works as J. T. Hamilton and K. G. Hamilton, *History of the Moravian Church* (Bethlehem, PA: Moravian Church in America, 1967). But Mezezers' book does afford a splendid introduction to its subject and an excellent orientation for those who simply wish to become better acquainted with the Latvians in America. The book describes their temperament and heritage as well as their religious outlook from pre-Christian times, including their primitive concepts of God, *Dievs* (a name derived from Sanskrit).

Another contemporary value of this work derives from the recent renewal of interest in Zinzendorf (cf. G. W. Forell's edition of *Nine Public Lectures on Important Subjects in Religion* by Zinzendorf, Iowa City, University of Iowa Press, 1973). Now that the Moravian Church has applied for membership in the Lutheran World Federation the relationship between these two churches needs to be clarified, particularly since Moravianism in America usually has identified itself with the Methodist family. Zinzendorf and the father of North American Lutheranism, H. M. Muhlenberg, were religious antagonists in the thirteen colonies in the middle of the eighteenth century. Zinzendorf himself, a lifelong evangelical Lutheran, was attracted to the Moravian Brotherhood by their deep piety centered on the concept of Christ as the Lamb. He wrote many hymns and prayers of unexcelled depth and beauty.

Along the way Mezezers reveals other interesting facts about the development of Lutheran pietism, a movement that profoundly influenced Muhlenberg. On p. 102 he writes that the father of Lutheran pietism, P. Spener (also a subject of recently renewed interest), was Zinzendorf's godfather.

The book curiously omits any reference to the Moravian origins in present-day Czechoslovakia or to the movement of J. Hus and his followers. The barest mention is made (on p. 61) of "the Hidden Seed," Moravian believers who slipped across the border into Saxony to find refuge and to revive their movement at Zinzendorf's estate, which they named *Herrnhut* (outside Görlitz at the southeastern corner of today's German Democratic Republic). The author has indicated in correspondence with this reviewer, however, that to trace the Hussite-Herrnhut-Latvian connection in depth would require another work beyond the scope of this one.

Future studies might explore the emerging Moravian-Lutheran relationship,

the gradual displacement of the Herrnhuterian strain of pietism in Latvia by the experience-centered religious outlook of men like Schleiermacher, and the secular orientation of many Latvians today in America as a possible reaction against the Herrnhuterian style of piety.

Another value of Mezezers' work is that he gives us considerable valuable material hitherto available only in German and Latvian. But his usually impeccable English style becomes broken English when he translates directly from the original (e. g., "Do they harm me go on trying," p. 31). Occasionally archaisms ("bridigam" for "bridegroom," p. 89) and typographical errors mar the book. The publisher, however, has assured correction of these errors in a forthcoming edition.

Such occasional unevenness will not keep anyone from enjoying the book, which is well researched and yet thoroughly readable. The author's eleventh chapter, "My Herrnhuterian Heritage," telling of his own upbringing and how his early home life and faith have sustained him through many difficult years, is worth the price of the entire book.

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*The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition: 1760-1810.* By Roger Anstey. Atlantic Highland, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975, xxiv + 456 pp.

It would be difficult to imagine a more valuable historical volume for evangelicals who are concerned about the relationship between a Biblical faith and social reform. Wilberforce and the Clapham sect in their involvement with the British abolition of the Atlantic slave trade have been stock elements in evangelical mythology, but until the appearance of this volume the story has never been told with philosophical awareness, theological understanding, spiritual sensitivity and expert knowledge of the British political scene in the era under discussion. Add to this the factual, interpretive and literary skills of an able historian and one has a volume for which, hopefully, we have all been waiting.

In the earlier part of this century there were the volumes by Coupland on *Wilberforce* and *The British Anti-Slavery Movement* which presented a most favorable picture of the Claphamites, but the distinct impression was that they were really only early examples of the host of nineteenth-century humanitarian and liberal reformers. But if they were evangelicals, one knew that the story must be more complex than this. J. W. Bready in *This Freedom Whence* and E. M. Howse in *Saints in Politics* then gave the impression that they were almost prototypes of the social gospel movement. While there is much of value in these volumes, particularly that of Howse, one was sure the whole story had not been told. Then there was the economic determinism of E. Williams in *Capitalism and Slavery*, which claimed that the British abolished the slave trade simply because the West Indian sugar enterprise was no longer a profitable venture, and Wilberforce and company were dismissed as meddlesome but ineffectual busybodies. Finally in 1962 F. K. Brown in *Fathers of the Victorians* presented a scathing picture of the evangelicals and abolition, in which they were seen as without a shred of reforming motivation. They were concerned only with the evangelicalization of the world, and since the gospel could never come effectively to the blacks of the sugar plantations as long as the whole institution of slavery was still in operation, the campaign for abolition was mounted.

With Anstey the wheel returns full circle in the sense of Wilberforce and

his colleagues being presented in a favorable light, but the depth of scholarship means that the whole subject is presented as never before. As far as the background of abolition is concerned, the social philosophy of the enlightenment is examined particularly as it came to light in Scottish common-sense realism. After so many volumes pointing out the disadvantageous rationalizing tendencies that this philosophy brought into evangelical theology, it is rather refreshing to see that it had a very positive effect on evangelical social reform. The concepts of happiness, benevolence and liberty are ably expounded, but although they led to frequent denunciations of slavery it is argued that they were insufficient by themselves to engender the kind of campaign that would end the trade. The evangelicals, however, while by no means succumbing to enlightenment blandishments, nonetheless believed that the common-sense philosophers had touched base on this issue and thus gladly incorporated this ideology into their social scheme on abolition.

Next we are introduced to moderate eighteenth-century Anglican latitudinarianism, against whose do-it-yourself soteriology and consequent lack of vital spiritual experience the evangelical Anglicanism represented by Wilberforce reacted so strongly. But the evangelicals received certain emphases from their ecclesiastical foes that were essential to their social policy. Fundamental was the eighteenth-century stress on providence. God had enunciated a providential order characterized by justice, which was binding both on individuals and nations. Those who oppressed would be judged, and those who brought relief would be blessed. For individuals the rewards and punishments might take place in the age to come, but for the nation they must occur in this age. The evangelicals imbibed this theme from their erstwhile opponents and made great use of it.

To these roots the evangelicals added their own unique contribution. Philosophical concepts were transposed: Happiness was a reality in relation to God, the spirit of benevolence was created by the Holy Spirit, and regeneration brought genuine liberty. But these were not left only in the "spiritual" realm. Their new dynamic reinforced the doctrine of providence and judgment. To bring blessing of every type to the nation, oppression must be removed. We must remember, of course, that for the evangelicals this had little to do with altering the basic class and constitutional structure. Theologically the Clapham sect attempted, not altogether successfully, to show that the Bible taught that slavery was wrong. This usually resulted in trying to pit the spirit of the Bible—the law of love—against the statements of the Bible. But of more significance was the stress on salvation as redemption and deliverance from thralldom. The evangelicals did not possess a wide-ranging theological interest, but here we are at the heart of their belief structure. This was their canon within the canon, actualized in the experience of conversion. Together the complex of redemption provided the indispensable dynamic and model for the crusade for the abolition of the slave trade.

Action is traced to the Quakers, and their original ideology, increasing evangelicalism and political agitation are spelled out. The addition of the invaluable non-evangelical Anglicans, G. Sharp and T. Clarkson, is discussed, and then Wilberforce is dealt with. His conversion and call to the ministry of abolition are sensitively handled, while the indispensability of his social status, political position, wealth, ability and charm are helpfully portrayed. Can Christians do much until there are converts with the proper pedigree?

Then the unprecedented development of a national political reform movement is outlined. Here was something new in British history: a national organization

with a London committee and provincial auxiliaries, virtually the pattern that would be adopted by the missionary societies that would begin to be formed in the 1790s as well as the evangelical "benevolent empire" with its host of philanthropic organizations throughout the nineteenth century. Political lobbying was engaged in; pamphlets, books and songs were disseminated; petitions were circulated and forwarded to Parliament; and through the twenty years from 1787 to 1807 Wilberforce and his evangelical coadjutors became consummate political tacticians.

Fear of the revolutionary movements in France stampeded England into a conservatism that opposed almost any kind of reform, but Wilberforce and his associates kept doggedly at the job. Finally J. Stephen hit upon the brilliant tactic of arguing that the slave trade was actually supporting the colonies of Britain's enemies more than those of Britain and that self-interest demanded abolition. As a result the evangelicals, in a remarkable act of political sophistication, appeared as sheep in wolves' clothing and in 1806 secured a large measure of abolition as a wartime regulatory measure rather than as a matter of principle. Within a year, which saw a number of favorable political developments, the evangelicals, with cabinet support, were able successfully to bring forward a motion for abolition on the grounds of justice and mercy.

Anstey has done a magnificent job—filling in the ideology, giving many politicians their due, and still emerging with Wilberforce and the Clapham sect as the heroes. There are just a couple of questions that come to mind. Has Anstey really felt the force of Brown's argument? And should he not have given some attention to the breathtaking world vision of the evangelicals, who saw evangelism, missions, moral reform and social reform such as abolition as all part of the evangelicalization of the world? Although the latter query is outside the purview of this book, it would be helpful to know whether Wilberforce and company were supported by the main body of evangelicals. There seems to be evidence that they were not. Is this evidence of the incorrigibility of the evangelical community, or does God give different callings?

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*Respectable Folly: Millenarians and the French Revolution in France and England.* By Clarke Garrett. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1975, 237 pp., \$10.00. *Disaster and the Millennium.* By Michael Barkun. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974, 246 pp., \$10.00.

During the past few years millennialism has attracted the attention of the scholarly community. Books such as *The Pursuit of the Millennium* by N. Cohn and *Millennial Dreams in Action* edited by S. Thrupp have created interest in the idea of a kingdom of God on earth. The two volumes under consideration in the present review add significantly to the growing volume of millennial studies.

Garrett's work focuses on the reaction of French and English millenarians to the French Revolution. These individuals interpreted texts from Daniel and the Revelation, often with the aid of popular religious literature, to indicate that the revolution would inaugurate the millennial era. Politics was thus charged with apocalyptic significance, and the problems of the age were interpreted as punishments that a sinful world was forced to endure before the second coming of Christ. The better-known advocates of this view include S. Labrousse,

C. Theot, J. Priestley and R. Brothers. Their ideas are explained by Garrett with sympathy and understanding so that readers do not dismiss them as fanatics. It is interesting to note that in each case these millennialists had already come to apocalyptic conclusions before the revolutionary period began and that the events of the troubled era merely confirmed their opinions. It would seem that a millennial outlook ought to be included along with Enlightenment social views as an intellectual cause of the French Revolution.

Two sections of Garrett's book are especially valuable. One of these, the opening chapter entitled "Historians and the Millennium," gives an able discussion of the varieties of contemporary opinions about millennialists. After discussing the Marxian and social psychological views he concentrates on a methodology which demonstrates the development of millenarian ideas from specific contexts that include a religious tradition, a political situation and social tensions. Another worthwhile part of his study, consisting of chapters six through nine, discusses the eschatology of the English dissenters. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries English Biblical scholars and preachers produced a voluminous literature on the theme of the second coming. Among the writers involved in the discussion of prophecy were such famous individuals as J. Mede, I. Newton, W. Whiston and Priestley. The literature produced by these writers fostered the acceptance of millennialism among the educated classes. Consequently when the French Revolution occurred in the late eighteenth century, Englishmen were prepared to believe that the end of the age was upon them. After Napoleon rose to power it became obvious they had misunderstood the divine plan, and many turned to other interpretations. Garrett believes that the combination of revolutionary political action and prophetic belief was transitory and destined to die a slow death along with other features of the early modern era.

The second volume under consideration, written by political scientist Barkun, is much different in style and purpose from *Respectable Folly*. *Disaster and the Millennium* is not as concerned with religious ideas but rather with how ideologies operate in a social situation. He defines millennialism or chiliasm as a social movement that expects "immediate, collective, total, this-worldly salvation" (p. 18). The book analyzes several of these movements including the Vailala Madness in Melanesia, the Taiping Rebellion in China, the Ghost Dance among the Sioux Indians, and the Taborites in medieval Europe. As he compares and contrasts these groups and tries to account for their interest in the search for a new age, he develops the idea that millennialism results from local disasters. Damage that may be physical, social or psychological removes the familiar environment by which individuals evaluate statements and ideas, making it possible for novel prophetic messages to flourish. The population is "brainwashed" by these disasters, so that views that might ordinarily be dismissed as ridiculous receive a sympathetic consideration. Barkun's analysis describes the characteristics of disaster situations, examines the psychological effect of rapid change and tries to account for why people become millenarian. There is much in his book that will disturb evangelicals but also a great deal that should provoke Christian scholars to do their own thinking on the subject.

An example of the valuable information he shares with his readers is his discussion about conversion. "What does it mean to say that someone has undergone a conversion?" he asks. "Stripped of the theological vocabulary, conversion suggests a form of rapid attitude change that may occur in either a secular or religious context. . . . There seems to be no essential difference between the conversion experience of conventional religion and those of a 'political religion'.

such as communism" (p. 98). Because of the possibility of conversion to a secular ideology that involves a utopian quest, he feels that millennialism will continue into the modern world. Although previously the product of rural areas and small towns, chiliasm in a more secular garb can continue as a vital force in urban industrialized life. In the process, however, it has increasingly become the instrument of those who seek power. The idea of the millennium, which has often been useful to the outcast and the downtrodden, is now used by communists or fascists to keep people under the control of a small but powerful group.

Both of the volumes considered in this review are worth studying. Theologians and Bible scholars who often teach millennialism as an abstract doctrine apart from its social impact would do well to confront the social consequences of eschatology as illustrated by the careful scholarship of Barkun and Garrett.

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### THEOLOGY

*The Legacy of Reinhold Niebuhr.* Edited by Nathan A. Scott, Jr. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975, XXIV + 124 pp., \$6.95.

This remarkable symposium comprises several reassessments of the thought of the great theologian and ethicist (d. 1971) which had already been published in *JR* 54/5 (October, 1974), issued by the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. To that issue it adds a dedication to Niebuhr's wife Ursula, an introduction by the editor (pp. IX-XXIV), a short selected bibliography (pp. 111-112) and a useful index of names and subjects (pp. 115-124).

Scott devotes his introductory pages to outlining Niebuhr's life and thought. Surveying his major works, he indicates the stages of his pilgrimage from liberalism through socialism to Christian realism and underlines his long and deep fastening upon the American scene. Scott's hope is that these essays may contribute to the "current reappropriation of one of the most impressive intellectual careers of this century" (p. XXIV) after the "frivolous experimentalism of American theology in the 1960s" (p. XXII).

The contribution of R. M. Brown, professor of religious studies at Stanford University, is a moving personal memoir that conveys a sense of the greatness of his former professor at Union Theological Seminary, of the modesty and generousness and charm that marked Niebuhr's personality. In fact, Brown indicates Niebuhr's greatest gift was his ability to combine the role of social critic with that of pastor, "so that biblical insights could be related to the common market, and highly technical political analysis could be informed in midstream" (p. 6).

Very stimulating is M. E. Marty's essay, tending to demonstrate that Niebuhr joined in his person the two main approaches to public religion in American tradition: on one side, that of religious leaders like Edwards, Bushnell and Rauschenbusch, "typically using the covenanted religious community as a base for public action"; and on the other, that of essentially public political figures like Franklin, Lincoln and Wilson, seeing "a kind of ecclesiastical dimension in national life" (p. 30). Indeed, if Niebuhr's early works saw the churches as the repository of religious conviction and practice in America, he progressively

turned to the need for seeing the nation itself in this role, though without denying the special custodial responsibilities of the Christian churches. For this reason, affirms Marty, Niebuhr will be remembered more for his grasp of the irony of pious and secular American history than for any contributions to the sociology of religion and more as a keen observer of American religious social behavior than as theologian. Marty criticizes the interpreters who usually have done a "formal analysis of his theological and philosophical ideas on an almost entirely literary base of reference," neglecting the fundamental fact that Niebuhr's thought was grounded on his observation of reality and rumination about American praxis. They were thrown off the trail "not only because of the paucity of autobiographical references, but because some of his major works took on an apparently more abstract character" (p. 12).

Also L. Gilkey, investigating Niebuhr's theology of history, confirms this view. For when Niebuhr, for example, explicates the meaning of "transcendence and yet relatedness of God" with our creaturely being in creation (Niebuhr, *Faith and History: A Comparison of Christian and Modern Views of History*, New York: Scribner's, 1949, pp. 102-103), it is not "the ontological meaning of such a concept that concerns him, but the ethical and political meanings; i.e., a relation to transcendence answers the question of how a group can find meaning in its common life without making itself the center of history and so doing injustice to others" (p. 42 n. 14). Therefore man's ontological structure arises from phenomenological analysis of man's praxis and it supports a theology of history that is conceived to offer the creative framework for relative political judgments. As Gilkey puts it, Niebuhr's theology "sought to provide the most creative ground of political action possible. Even at its seemingly most impractical and theological, it was always a political theology, the theoretical ground for praxis" (p. 56). Or, rather, a theoretical reflection on praxis? In fact, Niebuhr himself has acknowledged that "the circular relation between the presuppositions of faith and the facts of experience" (Niebuhr, "Intellectual Autobiography," in *Reinhold Niebuhr: His Religious, Social, and Political Thought*, ed. C. W. Kegley and R. W. Bretall, New York: Macmillan, 1962, p. 9) was the essential structural movement in his thought.

In his outstanding analysis of Niebuhr's theology of history in relation to modern "theologies of liberation," however, Gilkey fails to recognize that "the facts of experience" were interpreted by Niebuhr through a more and more accurate political outlook, namely his defense of "Christian capitalism" (cf. W. A. Williams, *The Contours of American History*, Cleveland: World, 1961, pp. 456, 565-566), and that from this position all the historical Christian terms received a new content. As E. J. Carnell has clearly proved, Niebuhr's use of these terms (as mythical symbols) with a quite different meaning has only increased "misunderstanding and confusion" (Carnell, *The Theology of Reinhold Niebuhr*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, rev. ed., 1960, p. 180).

In a significant paper, F. I. Gamwell singles out an internal contradiction in Niebuhr's ethical thought—i. e., the transformation of the ultimate *telos* (non-historical and transcendent) into an ideal to be illustrated, because of his understanding of the meaning of "perfect harmony" as equivalent with "agape" or "sacrificial love." Through a careful examination of many passages from different works, Gamwell proves that from the premise that the kingdom of God (symbol of "perfect mutuality," "perfect brotherhood," "perfect harmony" and "the law of love") is the proper end, Niebuhr "improperly concludes that this Kingdom is normative for character" (p. 79).

R. L. Shinn, Reinhold Niebuhr professor of social ethics at Union Theological



Seminary and adjunct professor of religion at Columbia University, tries to exculpate Niebuhr from the accusation of inevitable conservatism implied by his pragmatism (see E. Heimann, "Niebuhr's Pragmatic Conservatism," in *USQR* 11/4 [May 1956]). First of all he maintains that Niebuhr's pragmatism—for its theological context—was "suffused with the doctrine of sin and tragedy" (p. 91) and secondly that eschatology—which, against L. Gilkey's interpretation, would play a very relevant role in Niebuhr's thought—turns his pragmatism into a political realism, more radical and profound than utopianism "because it subjects both the present order and the utopian hope to a criticism derived from faith" (p. 98).

In the final paper, K. W. Thompson only reiterates a *Leitmotiv* of Niebuhr's interpreters (since D. R. Davies' work, *Reinhold Niebuhr: Prophet from America* [London: James Clarke, 1945]), i. e. his twofold activity throughout: participation in practical politics and commitment to intellectual work.

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*Theologia Crucis: Studies in Honour of Hermann Sasse.* Edited by H. P. Hamann. Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1975, 136 pp., n. p.

This limited edition *Festschrift* is a tribute to "the Adelaide chapter" of Sasse's life, the work he has accomplished and the influence he has exerted in Australia since moving there in 1949. Presentation of this volume coincided with Sasse's eightieth birthday. Its eight essays have, with one exception, been written by men who worked closely with Sasse in Adelaide as co-faculty members of Luther Seminary; the exception was written by one of his former students.

I suppose that when one thinks of Sasse one's mind turns immediately to two foci in his mature teaching: the centrality of the "theology of the cross," and his belief that the only Christianity worthy of the name is confessional Christianity. "I believed strongly," he wrote, "that the future of Christianity depended in Germany and in the world on those churches which still dare to confess their dogma."

Inevitably the essays vary considerably in quality, but Sasse's foci never seem too far from the surface. And, understandably, Lutheranism is not lost to view for very long either. J. T. E. Renner, "The Shadow of the Cross in the Old Testament or Who Has Known the Mind of the Lord?" (pp. 19-31), focuses attention on parts of Genesis, Deuteronomy and Hosea where divine inscrutability is prominent and relates that transcendent inscrutability to Biblical themes of redemption. V. C. Pfitzner, "Continuity and Discontinuity: The Lucan View of History in Acts" (pp. 33-49), interacting with a large number of contemporary scholars (a few of whom he misinterprets), quite properly defends Luke as both historian and theologian. In "*De Scriptura Sacra*" (pp. 51-59), S. P. Hebart thinks through the relation between "God's original speaking in His multiform Word" and "His ongoing speaking in His Word of oral preaching and teaching." He concludes that the Scriptures constitute the necessary link, so that "we can now say that the written word of Holy Scripture is God's Word in all its parts as a whole." Following up on Sasse's work, P. D. Pahl traces "A Bodily Influence in the Sacrament—In the Fathers, in Luther, in Modern Lutheranism" (pp. 61-69). Developing the doctrine of "Two Kingdoms" H. P. Hamann, in "The Church's Responsibility for the World: A Study in Law and

Gospel" (pp. 71-87), insists that a proper distinction between law and gospel entails the conclusion that the Church *per se* should not be involved in social reform, in improving the world—however much individual Christians will in fact transform it, and ought to influence it, by virtue of their responsibility under God to the state. E. W. Janetzki, "The Place of the Historic Confessions in Christendom Today" (pp. 89-105), surveys some recent creedal developments and defends the importance of adhering to the confessions. These, he argues, "desire less praise and commendation and more study and use"; and he believes that the only alternative to confessionalism is "subjectivism, libertinism, and the eventual disintegration of the Christian Church." No doubt there is some truth in what he says regardless of one's ecclesiology, but he writes with the *Volkskirche* tradition uppermost in mind and does not interact with the "believers' church" tradition. M. E. Schild briefly and helpfully surveys "Luther's Interpretations of Daniel and Revelation" (pp. 107-118). In "Reconciliation: The Proclamation of the New Reality" (pp. 119-133), D. Ch. Overduin briefly touches on a number of Biblical and confessional treatments of reconciliation and notes some ethical implications.

The *Festschrift* includes a photograph of Sasse, a brief description of his work during his Australia years, a bibliography of his writings available in English, and indexes of Scripture references, authors and subjects.

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*Charism and Sacrament: A Theology of Christian Conversion.* By Donald L. Gelpi, S. J. New York: Paulist, 1976, x + 258 pp., \$5.95 paper.

This third book by Gelpi dealing with Pentecostalism (previously published: *Pentecostalism* and *Pentecostal Piety*) is described on the cover as "the attempt of a noted American Catholic theologian to synthesize the relationship between charismatic and sacramental worship," but it is much more. The book is really a rethinking of the sacramental theology of conversion and Christian life by employing insights from charismatic experience, modern philosophy and Vatican-II-era Catholic Biblical studies.

Gelpi is a bright, well-read, ecumenical Roman Catholic theologian, charismatically alive and well, and showing in this book a vigorous ferment that one could wish might be felt throughout Catholicism and other circles—including evangelicalism. If Gelpi be read, one could not say that Catholic Pentecostalism is simply classical Protestant Pentecostalism warmed over, nor could one accuse Catholic Pentecostalism of being blindly submissive to tradition or insensitive to issues other than personal piety.

Gelpi has things to say—interesting, sometimes difficult, but often provoking and exciting—about personal conversion, sanctification, church life, tongues-speaking, the eucharist, marriage and celibacy, baptism, ministry, papal infallibility, Christian social involvement and other issues. He incorporates insights from a diversity of writers and fields including Whitehead and J. Edwards, O. Bird and H. Küng, B. Lonergan and P. Ricoeur, to name a few. Yet there is clearly a *thinker* at work with all these, so that the result is not a patchwork but Gelpi's own new production.

This freshness of thought produces terms that are at times sparkling with appropriateness and clarity, e. g. "glossolophobia," "the neurotic fear of tongues ... akin to theophobia: the terror of facing God," or "primordial sacramentality," the notion that the outpoured Spirit makes the Church graced at its basic nature with the presence of Christ (see pp. 70-71 and 106-107 respectively).

In discussing the sacramental nature of marriage from a charismatic perspective, Gelpi suggests that if the local church has not exercised its responsibility of ratifying only those marriages adjudged to be "rooted in a gift of the Spirit," a given marriage *may not* be sacramentally indissoluble (pp. 175-176 and p. 185 n. 8). Accompanying this suggestion is a strong plea for the churches to rescue marriage from the "romantic individualism" of secular society by a renewal of "Christian betrothal," a period of "communal public discernment in which the spiritual maturity and personal call of the betrothed are prayerfully tested and confirmed by the community" (pp. 176-177).

On the presence of Christ at the eucharist Gelpi speaks of the communion elements being "changed" as to purpose or meaning, rejecting Aristotelian concepts connected with the "transubstantiation" formula and preferring terms like "transfinalization" and "transsignification" (p. 241).

His treatment of the "word of knowledge" and "word of wisdom" links them with the gift of teaching, against much popular Catholic and Protestant Pentecostals (but *with* the late British Pentecostal, D. Gee, whom Gelpi does not seem to know of, pp. 84-85). There is throughout a firm call to openness to the charismatic gifts, and there are descriptions of the "pathologies" of churches that remain insensitive to these spiritual manifestations (pp. 76-77, 97-109).

The book is not for as broad a group as the jacket blurb appeals to—"any Christian growing in a prayerful insight into the mind of Jesus." It is clearly a theologian's and well-read clergyman's book. Not only are there technical terms used without definition, e. g., "hylomorphic" (p. 238), but at times the prose is jargonese-opaque: "For the experienced openedness of one's personal conscious thrust toward self-transcendence combines with the highly abstractive character of evaluative, propositional feelings in order to prevent any single conceptual feeling from exhausting the possibilities for decision" (p. 52).

On one key point Gelpi seems to have missed the force of his own logic. He insists that baptism is truly efficacious only when the candidate and community are "properly disposed" in faith dependence (pp. 134-135) and that infant baptism is proper and efficacious only when the Christian parents and the church they belong to "show evidence of sufficient religious conversion" to provide "a faith environment informed by the gift of the Spirit to a degree that is sufficient to nurture the child's growth in Christ" (p. 140). And Gelpi is aware that the condition of "religious inauthenticity" characterizes many parishes. Yet he insists that the re-administration of baptism is never proper, "for it seems to call into question the ritual efficacy of one's initial sacramental covenant" (p. 153). It seems to this reviewer that Gelpi's own premises would dictate that baptisms performed under conditions of "religious inauthenticity" have no "ritual efficacy" to call into question.

On the whole, however, the book is a praiseworthy attempt by a theologian to address his Church on important issues and displays commendable qualities of vigor, submissiveness, creativity and reverence. This reviewer agrees

with Gelpi that "neither Catholic nor Protestant piety in many of their present popular forms is completely acceptable" and hopes that this book may stimulate the mutual development and sharing for which Gelpi calls (pp. 254-255).

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