

BOOK REVIEWS

The Trinity, by Karl Rahner. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970.) 120 pp.; \$4.95. Translated by Joseph Donceel.

In this small work of scarcely more than 100 pages, the most learned and esteemed Catholic theologian of our day, Karl Rahner, seeks to explain for modern man the ancient dogma of the Trinity. Rahner begins his discussion by posing the problem of the unrelatedness of the formal doctrine of the Trinity to the personal life of the church. In his judgment this dichotomy between faith and life results from the tendency within the western church to begin its talk about God with abstract philosophical discussions of the doctrine of the one God.

From the very first this places God whom we discuss in the classroom at an unbridgeable distance from the real God who is active in human life. It would be far better, he argues, to begin with the revelational order. He then lays down the general maxim that we must begin with the economic Trinity that is actually revealed to us. We must start with God as He is for us *in His revelation of salvation*. In this way we come to know God as Father, then in the incarnation we know God as Son, and finally in the life of the church we know God as the Holy Spirit.

The next step in Rahner's presentation of the doctrine is to lay down the further maxim: The "economic" Trinity is the "immanent" Trinity and the "immanent" Trinity is the "economic" Trinity.

In accordance with this "order of revelation" Rahner makes the point that outside of Christendom and in the O.T. there are no analogies or "preparations" looking towards such a doctrine. Our only source of any information concerning the three-ness of God is his special revelation within the history of God's bringing his salvation to men. The doctrine of the Trinity must grow out of the doctrine of salvation, moreover, or it will never overcome its handicap of abstractness and unrelatedness to the life of men. This is proved by the history of the western thinking about the doctrine of the Trinity.

God, in his special revelation, is *in reality* what he reveals himself to be *for us*. Therefore we can proceed from our knowledge of the economic trinity to a knowledge of the ontological trinity. Following out his revelational methodology, Rahner notes first the revelation of God as Father to be observed from the Old Testament. At this point the reviewer poses a question of his own. Is it not quite debatable whether or not the

O.T. revelation is exclusively a revelation of the Father? Is it not rather a revelation of the triune God known in his oneness rather than in his three-ness? Is not the *whole* of the Trinity revealed in the O.T. even though that triune God may not be *known* as triune?

The revelation of God coming to us in the incarnation of the Son is the next step in the revelatory process. Rahner argues that only the Son, the second person of the triune God, could become incarnate. His defense of this seems to slip a bit in its logic, however. He defends his own position by trying to refute the arguments adduced in support of the alternative position that any one of the three persons in the Godhead could have become incarnate. The fact that the Son actually became incarnate and that incarnation, therefore, is possible for the *Son* as a divine person, does not prove, so Rahner counters, that it is possible for *any* person in the Godhead to become incarnate. So far he is on solid ground; but he has only showed that the evidence to prove the first and third person could have become incarnate is lacking; he has not proved that it is actually impossible for them to become incarnate; and thus he has not proved that *only* the second person could have become incarnate.

The fact is that we know by revelation only that the *Son* did become incarnate and, therefore, *He* most assuredly could become incarnate. It may be interesting to speculate whether the Father or the Holy Spirit could become incarnate (and we may even have decided opinions upon this matter); but there is nothing explicitly in revelation to answer Rahner's question one way or the other. Where revelation is silent, let us be silent when it comes to talking about what is or is not possible with God.

The whole point would hardly be worth mentioning if Rahner did not conclude (illogically) that the *essential* difference between the Father and the Son is the incarnational ability of the Son as over against the Father and Holy Spirit. Fortunately, as Rahner continues, he bases nothing special on this conclusion except that the Son is, as a matter of fact, the "person" who is distinguished by being the revealing one. He is the one who has actually taken the role of revealer. We may not agree with the logic by which Rahner arrived at his conclusion, but we cannot deny the conclusion itself (i.e. that the Son is in some unique way God the revealer) for this is clearly the teaching of the propositional revelation set forth by the Bible.

By an argument that betrays the influence of Barth's *Church Dogmatics* Rahner then argues that humanity is not something extraneous to the "logos" but is precisely what the "logos" must be when the "logos" seeks to reveal himself. Only thus, so he avers, can we safeguard the incarnation from being something external to God as a sort of alien role to deity "...in which something foreign (human nature) has been joined to him in a merely additive way." By contrast, Rahner affirms that the "logos" becomes this other (human) reality "as his way of positing and

expressing himself." Otherwise, he concludes, "We would simply have a case where two realities are thought of as juxtaposed."

In another place he adds: "The human personal object is the addressee who is, of his very nature, demanded by the divine self-communication which created him as the condition of its own possibility."

Certainly we would sympathize with the motivation behind Rahner's argumentation. He is fighting against the position that the incarnation has an accidental character about it. He is especially opposing a Nestorian view of the person of Christ and arguing for a far more fundamental understanding of the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ.

There are, however, other more Biblical ways of accomplishing Rahner's purpose without the necessity of arguing for an incarnation flowing by necessity out of the very nature of the logos. The pantheistic implications of this must certainly be avoided.

The fact is Rahner should have read more of Anselm and less of Barth. Or better yet, he should have read more of the N.T. Man by creation is made like God. He is by his original creation the kind of being who is not alien from God but one in whom God could become incarnate. The incarnation, moreover, is not at all primarily for the purpose of *revealing* God. God could have revealed himself to man without the incarnation (although perhaps not to the degree that he did in the incarnation). The real importance of the incarnation in the N.T. is not to reveal, but to redeem—to identify with man so that he might, as man's representative and substitute, die in behalf of and instead of guilty man (see Romans 5). The humanity that the Son took upon himself was already an existing humanity but a humanity that needed redeeming, and the purpose of the incarnation was that God the Son might come to seek out and save lost men by dying for them. Rahner's rather lame rebuttal of the possibility of any incarnation of the Son in angels only emphasizes the lack of cogency in his argument (there is a much stronger and more obvious argument than the one he employs).

Next Rahner makes the valid point that too often the exposition of the doctrine of the Trinity begins with an idea of "person" derived from the world of experience and then forces this word on the Biblical revelation of the Trinity. By contrast the proper way is to begin with the revelation of God as he reveals himself *for us*. This poses the problem, so Rahner argues, that we have to remove from the ordinary idea of person precisely what constitutes a person to be a person before we dare apply the term to God. The legitimate question then is why should we name these aspects of God by the term "person."

As Rahner continues to outline his view of the three-ness of God, his disaffection with the traditional vocabulary becomes more and more evident. He writes: "When nowadays we learn of three persons, we connect almost necessarily with this expression the idea of three centers

of self-consciousness—an activity which leads us to a radical misunderstanding of the dogma.” As Rahner sees the matter, there is in the triune God only one (numerical oneness) self-consciousness. Each of the “persons” knows the other, he admits; but it (Rahner’s choice of pronoun) knows the self-consciousness of the other as numerically one with its own self-consciousness. Hence within the trinity there is no reciprocal “thou.” Consistently he adds: “And there is properly no *mutual* love between Father and Son.”

The best way to express the three-ness of God, so Rahner asserts, is to state that the “one God subsists in three distinct manners of subsisting.” The superiority of this term to the traditional term (“person”) lies in the fact that “subsistence” does not imply the individuality and the multiple personality that adhere to the older term.

On more solid grounds, Rahner states: “God as subsisting in a determined manner of self-subsisting (such as the Father) is ‘somebody else’ (*ein anderer*) than God subsisting in another manner of subsisting, but he is not ‘something else’ (*etwas anderes*).” The point, of course, is that there are three “somebodies” in God but there are not three “things” or “beings” in God.

From the Biblical perspective this latter suggestion is precisely what the word subsistence does *not* convey and, therefore, the point in which the word subsistence is inadequate. The term “subsistence” indicates that there is a way in which God exists for which he may properly be viewed as three. But precisely what it is that represents the three-ness is not suggested by this term.

For the same reason, Biblical revelation pushes one solidly in the direction of just such three personal selves or centers of God as Rahner wishes to reject. Granted that the “person” of God is not identical in *every* aspect with the human “person.” The univocal element that gives validity to the analogical term “person,” however is precisely the personal self-relationships within the Godhead. It is almost inconceivable, but nonetheless true, that Rahner provides no discussion of the personal relationships between Christ and His Heavenly Father. Apparently he reckons them as wholly to be accounted for by the human createdness of the humanity of the incarnate Jesus. This will not do, however. The gospel records of the revelation of Christ are very abundantly clear. The single self of Jesus is not the same self-center as the self-center of the Father but stands in relationship to the Father as an “I” to a “thou.”

As a final word, Rahner encourages us (for reasons that are, perhaps, evident though not stated in the volume) “Not to give up the use of the concept of person.” He only wishes, so he says, to spare us from the false opinions that may be conjoined to the word “person” by those who use the word in the traditional way of the Roman church and western Christendom. He warns that whoever starts with this false view of “person” may verbally protest that he is carefully safeguarding himself

and may seek to emphasize the mysterious character of the Trinity and the different way it employs the term "person" by contrast with the ordinary way we use the term in referring to human individuals, and may betray an acute awareness of the logical difficulties in reconciling the three persons in the Godhead; but he will never be able to rid himself of a truly hidden, but nonetheless real, tri-theism.

In reality Rahner is moving in the direction of a broadstream of western thought regarding the Trinity. In spite of his loyalty to Biblical revelation and to Catholic dogma, he has arrived at the same conclusion as did Karl Barth—God really does not exist in three persons in any way in which we can use the word "person" significantly of the threeness of the Trinity.

For the sake of consistency and clarity Rahner ought to admit that he does not believe in the traditional church doctrine of the Trinity and that he rejects the triunitarian interpretation of those Biblical texts on which the orthodox have built their doctrine of the triune God. For the Christian doctrine of the trinity he would substitute the view that God is only one person with three eternal "modes" or "ways of subsistence" which are distinct from each other not in a personal sense but in ways that are less than "personal" and which do not permit an I-thou relation between the Son and the Father.

Sola Scriptura: Problems and Principles in Preaching Historical Texts, by Sidney Greidanus. (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1970.)

My general impression of Greidanus' entire thesis is that, in common with so many dissertations, he engages in a monumental demonstration of the obvious. The argument between the "exemplary" and the "redemptive-historical" factions in the Dutch Reformed Church is a pitiful example of the way in which Protestants can manage to create difficulties for themselves comparable to the medieval scholastic arguments on how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. *Of course* Scripture can be employed in an exemplary way; *of course* Scripture must be studied in a redemptive-historical fashion. Greidanus' observation that both of these approaches are necessary is utterly tautologous. His conclusion, in my opinion, adds no new knowledge whatever to the history of homiletics—except, perhaps, a reminder that Christian theologians, if not watched carefully, will manage to waste precious years of the church's time on trivia instead of devoting themselves to the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Specific criticism needs to be leveled at Greidanus' "Proposition XI" (i.e., that "Biographical Sermons are unscriptural"). There is nothing the matter with biographical sermons *per se*, since Hebrews 11 quite clearly acts as a precedent. However, it is perfectly possible for biographical sermons—as well as for historical sermons and all other kinds—to be

misused. This happens when the subject for sermonic presentation is not treated in terms of the "analogy of faith," that is to say, when the subject matter is not related to Christ and His saving work. Greidanus is dimly attempting to prevent preachers and homileticians from atomizing Scripture through preaching on its biographical and historical texts in isolation from the total Biblical message. True, evangelicals have been especially prone to "confuse Law and Gospel" by isolating Old Testament and other texts from the general plan of salvation in the Bible; but one does not rectify this problem by throwing out the baby with the bath water (in this case, throwing out biographical sermons in order to eliminate their misuse). What Greidanus should have done was to encourage homileticians to preach sermons on Biblical persons as exemplifications of the way God deals with men everywhere—always by the same Gospel of free grace. Bible characters must not be used in a moralistic way, as examples of how we can win favor with God; they must be studied and preached on in light of Jesus' fundamental message that He comes to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

If Greidanus tends to throw out baby with bath water in depreciating biographical preaching, he most certainly commits this error in his discussion of the inspiration and inerrancy of Holy Writ (pp. 200 ff.). His weak view of inerrancy, characteristic unfortunately of Free University of Amsterdam theology in general, can only weaken the entire homiletic operation. One never (*pace* modern theology) increases the "relevance" of preaching by reducing the historical and *de facto* veracity of the Biblical text; preaching becomes relevant in exact proportion to the factual reliability of the text which the preacher expositis. An unreliable Bible means an unreliable proclamation. Of all people, the homiletician had better maintain the highest possible view of the Scripture; his very life depends on it!

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The Gospel According to John, by Leon Morris. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Edited by F. F. Bruce. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971.) 936 pages. \$12.50. Reviewed by Cyril J. Barber, Head Librarian, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

The name of Leon Morris has become synonymous with the finest conservative scholarship. Following the publication of *Studies in the Fourth Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), evangelicals have eagerly awaited the appearance of his exposition of John's Gospel. Now that it has been published, we can say that it fully measures up to our expectations.

In *Studies in the Fourth Gospel*, Morris retrieves John's Gospel from

the limbo to which modern Continental scholarship has relegated it. With perception and skill he defends the accuracy and reliability of the Apostle's account of Christ's life (73 pp.), writes persuasively to vindicate the Johannine authorship, and provides an excellent chapter on the historicity and theology of the Gospel (75 pp.). In many respects this work forms a fitting and indispensable introduction to the present volume where the introductory material is limited to 57 pages.

Having graduated from Cambridge University with a Ph.D. degree in New Testament, Morris follows the exegetical tradition of the triumvirate of Lightfoot, Westcott and Hort. He structures his approach to the Gospel around the discourses and signs of Christ and, while drawing heavily upon writers of the past, does not hesitate to disagree with them (cf. pp. 719-20n).

Preachers will find Morris' exegetical hints helpful inasmuch as they will lead to greater accuracy in expounding the text. For example, in 1:7 Morris notes that *eis marturian* lays the stress on the activity rather than the man. While commenting on 5:42, Morris reminds us that *ten agapen tou Theou*, emphasizes God's self-giving love for the unworthy. The same kind of careful attention to detail is found in his treatment of 8:58 which contains a good discussion of the difference between *ginomai* and *eimi*. Morris also notes that *sothesetai* (11:12) grows out of Christ's disciples misunderstanding the intent of His words. This provides Morris with the opportunity of clarifying the text for his readers and of stressing certain points which are lost in an English translation. His comments on 12:50, where there is a change from *psuchen* to *zoen*—a change from "one's present earthly existence" to the "life proper of the age to come"—highlight the precision with which he expounds the text.

In commenting on Christ's discourse in John 3 and the statement "He that cometh from above..." the learned Anglican writer furnishes a pleasing corrective to Matthew Black who looks upon the passage as a translation of sayings which come originally from an Aramaic poem. One might expect that as an Anglican, Morris would advocate a sacramental interpretation of Christ's statement about being born "of water and the Spirit." Morris, however, lists the different views held by other writers and then states his preference for interpreting "water" as a reference to natural birth (p. 218). He is not devious in his treatment of problem texts, and, even though he is an Amillennialist he does not use passages like 5:28-29 as a springboard to support this system of interpretation.

Exegetes will find that Morris offers little help on the problem of *ereunate tas graphas* (5:39-40), except to say that he prefers to take the indicative reading. However he goes on to cite Hoskyns who says: "And yet, when this is said, an imperative lurks behind the indicative, for the Saying encourages the steady investigation of the Scriptures" (p. 330).

Additional notes are interspersed throughout the work. These in-

clude a lengthy discussion of the *Logos*, the world, the Son of Man, Truth, Believing, the Paraclete, an excellent section on miracles, the Last Supper and the Passover, the right of the Jews to inflict the death penalty, and a discussion of the pericope on the women taken in adultery.

Morris makes frequent reference to the papyri, the earliest MSS of the Bible, the Talmud, Midrash, Mishnah, the writings of Josephus and Philo, Lightfoot's *Apostolic Fathers*, the Pseudepigrapha, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Nag Hammadi texts, and an abundance of other primary source material. His footnotes give evidence of his breadth of scholarship and are a Bible student's delight.

Historical references are used to highlight the text and include a treatment of cases of Jewish lynch law and the offenses which led up to the execution of the offenders (cf. note on 10:31). His historical material includes a discerning evaluation of the Qumran community, the Essenes, and the relationship of the Dead Sea Scrolls to John's Gospel (cf. 13:17; 15:18; etc.).

While students of this Gospel have previously turned to the writings of men like Barrett, Bernard, Godet, Hendricksen, Hoskyns, Temple, and Westcott, they will now find themselves referring with increasing regularity to this monumental work by Leon Morris.

In attempting a final analysis of the value of this expository treatment, the reviewer concludes that the text of this exposition can be read with great profit by the average layman. The scholarship of the author lies behind every line and is unparalleled in a modern commentary on the same subject. Technical matters are limited to the footnotes, and here students of the Word will find the most amazing and delightful array of material.

It is a pleasure to recommend this perceptive and valuable treatment of the fourth Gospel to the members of the Evangelical Theological Society!

Introduction to the Bible. By Donald J. Selby and James King West. (New York: Macmillan Company, 1971.) 1074 pp. plus xxiv. Purchaseable separately as James King West, *Introduction to the Old Testament: Hear O Israel* and Donald J. Selby, *Introduction to the New Testament: The Word Became Flesh*.

This volume is not a technical introduction in the critical sense. It is rather a survey of Old and New Testament literature. It includes, however a survey of the history of O.T. and N.T. criticism together with a fine summary of the divergent current liberal views as to the origin dates and makeup of the books of the Bible. The bulk of the book is composed of a discussion of the content of each piece of literature with guides to help the student interpret the Scripture for himself. The viewpoint

throughout reflects a rather typical middle-of-the-road liberal vantage point.

The value of such a book for an introductory survey of the Biblical literature is questionable. Teachers of survey will vary as to how best students can be introduced to the Biblical literature, but many will plumb for more reading of the literature itself than lengthy introductions which tell about the Biblical literature.

For the evangelical the chief value of this volume lies in its clear summaries of the history and current views of Biblical criticism. For a course in the survey of the Bible taught by an evangelical, this volume could serve as a useful assignment to acquaint students with the liberal approaches to Old and New Testament criticism.

The chief regret of the evangelical, as he surveys this volume, is the illiberal stance presented throughout the book. There is almost a complete absence of any reference to conservative works. Two volumes by F. F. Bruce and one by R. K. Harrison, are referred to, but none of these really represent their works dealing with controversial issues of the day. The bibliographies are carefully purged of any conservative works in the area of exegesis, commentaries, introductions, historical backgrounds, and dictionaries. (One reference to E. J. Young's work on the study of O.T. literature in theology today is included but why it is selected instead of other more substantive works by the same author is a mystery.) In the discussion of the volume there is a complete ignoring of all conservative arguments and points of view. From the reading of this introduction, one could never suspect that there exists on planet earth today anyone who really believes in the full divine authority of the Bible, in the unity of the Pentateuch—its Mosaic authorship or even an early date for the Mosaic materials. No one would ever suspect that there are people who believe in the unity of Isaiah, in an early date for Daniel, that the O.T. was largely completed around 400 B.C., that John was really written by an apostle, that Paul wrote the pastorals, that Peter had something to do with Second Peter, etc. This is a thoroughly *illiberal* book.

Will Man Survive? By J. Dwight Pentecost. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971.) 208 pages. \$4.95. Reviewed by Cyril J. Barber, Head Librarian, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

Someone has said that our "modern life has become like a crowded highway along which we race, tense and tired, seeing nothing in the blurred landscape that flashes past as we rush along to our unknown destination."

Pentecost has the answer to this all-too-familiar state of affairs. Firstly, he finds that the study of Biblical prophecy adds perspective to man's modern dilemmas. He no longer rushes along a highway at break-

neck speed. He realizes that God is in control of the situation and is ordering events and circumstances for His own glory and the accomplishment of His predetermined purpose. Secondly, the believer has a known destination so that life is no longer a meaningless enigma. His future is to be with Jesus Christ forever, and with his destination assured he has a whole new purpose for living.

As the pastor of the Grace Bible Church, Dallas, Texas, Pentecost is used to speaking to layman in terms they can understand. Looked upon as one of the outstanding Bible conference preachers of the present day, Pentecost expounds the Scriptures in a relevant, meaningful way. Under his careful analysis each of the nineteen passages of Scripture used as a basis for the messages of this book is made to yield up its truths, and as one chapter follows the other the amazing consistency of the prophetic Word is revealed. Pentecost deals with such aspects as the "Panorama of Prophecy," the "Rapture of the Church and the Rebuilding of the Temple," "Lawlessness and the End Times," "How Long Will Israel Hold Jerusalem?" "The Role of the Kings of the East," "God's Plan for World Evangelization," "The Great Society—God's or Man's?", "What Will We Do in Heaven?" and "What Will Heaven Be Like?"

Timely and relevant these messages can be read with profit by all who eagerly await the return of Jesus Christ.

A Theology of the Holy Spirit, by Frederick Dale Bruner. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publisher, 1970.) 390 pp. \$8.95.

In three hundred ninety pages, Frederick Dale Bruner, professor of Systematic Theology at Union Seminary of the Philippines, provides us with a definitive critique of the modern Pentecostal Movement. Expressing his appreciation to Dr. Henrietta Meers of Hollywood First Presbyterian Church, Bruner develops in his volume an historical analysis as well as a Biblical critique of the Pentecostal position from a generally Barthian viewpoint. The volume grew out of his doctoral dissertation at Hamburg University and betrays its origin. The works abounds with an immense display of bibliographical data. Few works essential to the understanding of the Pentecostal position escape his sharp notice, and the standard literature is thoroughly mastered.

In sketching the historical roots of contemporary Pentecostalism Bruner traces its origin to the holiness literature of the last century, proving the dependence of the Pentecostal teaching on that movement even where it has not directly accepted in full the theology of entire sanctification.

The choicest parts of the volume are the exegetical studies of the book of Acts and the contrast of these Biblical passages with the teaching of Pentecostal writers in our day. Then follows an exegesis of relevant passages in the Corinthian correspondence. Again and again he makes

the telling point that New Testament Christianity is a religion of faith and not works. According to the teaching of both Acts and the Pauline epistle we are not only saved by faith alone, we are also brought to the full resources of Christ not by a second work but by that same faith.

In the mind of this reviewer, Bruner would greatly have strengthened his case if he had dealt more fully with the Corinthian teaching that the purpose of tongues is to create a sign for the unbeliever. It is amazing that he does not include even a single reference to the crucial passage in Hebrews 2:3 and 4.

Bruner's discussion of the role of water baptism leaves much to be desired in view of the importance which he himself places upon it as the initiating rite of the kingdom of Christ. In spite of some obvious defects, including its Barthian view of Scripture, this volume will stand as a monumental work to which our Pentecostal brethren must address themselves if they would be heard by serious students of Holy Scripture.

The bibliography is worth the price of the book.

Karl Barth and the Problem of War, by John H. Yoder. (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1970.) 137 pp. \$2.95 (paperback).

Karl Barth and the Problem of War is just the sort of fair-minded, hard-thinking piece of scholarly polemic one would expect from the pen of President John Yoder. The volume not only provides an interesting presentation of an important aspect of the thought of the world famous Barth, but it also supplies a closely reasoned running commentary on Barth which manages to set forth in rather brilliant fashion the viewpoint of evangelical pacifism by one of its most erudite contemporary defenders. For all who are interested in knowing more about Barth or who are concerned over the issue of war and pacifism in a world that could well blow itself to pieces by another war, this book should prove a fascinating and very rewarding study.

Having said so much, I must now admit that I disagree thoroughly with the thesis of Dr. Yoder. I find myself in the awkward and (for me) very unusual role of defending Karl Barth (in the refutation of whose writings I have spent a good share of my life) as over against both the thought of one who is a fellow evangelical and a very good personal friend.

Dr. Yoder writes: "What we question is the quasi-mathematical logic which moves from 'do not kill' to 'respect life' to 'do kill out of respect for life' on the quasi-mathematical axiom that quantities equal to a third quantity are equal to each other." Contrary to President Yoder's contention, however, Barth relieves himself from inconsistency by a better translation of the commandment: "Do not murder." From this it is legitimate to move to "Respect life" and again to the position: "In some re-

stricted instances it may be necessary to kill (not the same as murder) in order adequately to preserve life."

The reader, of course, must pursue the intricate arguments for himself. Barth is nothing if not complicated, and on this debatable question of pacifism it seems to this reviewer that Barth's very guarded allowance of the taking of life in war is a more Biblical, even if also a more complex, approach to the problem than are the over-simplified solutions of blind obedience to a national call to arms or of Christian pacifism.

Successful Church Libraries, by Elmer L. Towns and Cyril J. Barber. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1971.) 103 pp. \$1.95 (paperback).

This volume is intended for the church library committee or for a church librarian who has no professional training in library science but desires to set up an effective library of books and other educational aids for the support of its membership.

It is very practical. Some members of the Evangelical Theological Society could profit from its pages in setting up their own personal libraries.

The Failure of Theology in Modern Literature, by John Killinger. (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1963.) 232 pp. \$5.00.

This volume is made to order for the busy evangelical pastor or teacher who knows next to nothing about modern literature, but who regrets his illiteracy and is determined to repair the damage. Killinger not only tells us what values are to be found in modern literature but explains why it is worth our while to glean from this broad field.

"The" failure of theology in modern literature is the lack of any coherent Christian structure to serve as the matrix for aesthetic portrayal. Basically this stems from the acceptance of the doctrine of naturalism or of God's absence from the universe. In this the literati are reflecting the culture of our day which has rejected the one way by which God makes himself known—the incarnation.

Without the incarnate God, they are without God, and thus without meaning, without providence, and without reason. Brilliant facets may seem to reflect indirectly the divine presence shining through the world portrayed in contemporary literature. God, because He is God, cannot be completely hidden. But, "Its real shortcoming is that it fails to reflect fully, if at all, the mighty facts that are central to the Christian faith—the incarnation of God and the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

The doctrine of man reflected in contemporary writing flows logic-

ally enough, so Killinger points out, from its doctrine of the absence of God. In a world without God, man's chief end is to glorify man and enjoy him as long as he can. Nontheism is even essential to a proper view of man's dignity and freedom—God would only circumscribe human existence. Imbedded in this essentially anti-Christian view of man are, of course, many nuggets of Christian truth.

Man without God finds no meaning in the universe around himself and, therefore, turns within himself to create for himself his own meaning. The Christian doctrine of the church as a redeemed community of love is lost sight of; and, instead, the church, is viewed in modern literature almost exclusively in negative terms as irrelevant and hypocritical—one of the many evils of society which must be exposed. Responsibility for this isolation of man, Killinger argues, must be traced in part to Søren Kierkegaard. In his battle against an unregenerate state church to which all belonged and which tended to identify itself with its culture, the Danish philosopher argued for a radical isolationism that failed to give due place to "the collective experience of grace."

In chapters five and six, Killinger confesses that he finds a more vitally Christian emphasis upon the sacraments and priesthood in writers from the Roman Church than in Protestant writers. Even a recrudescence of "pre-church" sacramentalism which he finds in such writers as Melville and Hemingway is more evident in writers from the Roman Church than in any contemporary protestant writers, the latter of which are uniformly "tame and unimaginative" by comparison with their Roman counterparts. In his judgment this stems from the fact that twentieth-century protestantism has fallen away from the high view of the sacraments exhibited in original and authentic protestantism.

Killinger's analysis of the role of the ministry in modern literature will put chills in the spine of every evangelical and, perhaps, suggest some neglected reading that would accomplish much good if read properly. Critical readers can sift truth from falsity and, hopefully, profit from the bits of truth which will be their reward.

Life itself, as seen by Killinger in modern literature, is distinctly Hellenistic rather than Biblical in its basic philosophy. The essential idea is not to make the best of time but to escape from this world of time to another world beyond. There is one notable exception—Charles Williams.

As an *excursus*, Killinger reminds us that art is not Christianity and cites the famous words of Lyman Beecher: "No man ever yet thought whether he was preaching well without weakening his sermon." To confuse truth, especially Christian truth, with beauty is "rank heresy."

Contemporary literature is inept because it does not see Christ, the Savior; and it does not see the radical evil in the world—though, goodness knows, it sees enough of pain and horror and smut.

The fundamental Christian note that is "...missing from the writings of Faulkner and (contemporary) authors...is that of great joy. It is possible only in a universe that does distinguish good and evil and... (gives) preference to the good." And this leads immediately to the Christian concept of atonement—Christ's work of perfect forgiveness and restoration. "It is for this reason," Dr. Killinger concludes, "that no genuinely Christian tragedy can possibly exist."

In the final chapter of his work Killinger raises the issue which haunts his book throughout, "Are Christianity and art really compatible?" The better artists, he writes, "are more concerned with 'religion' than with Christ." Symbolism tends to become more important than the life it symbolizes. Churches with the greatest zeal have never spent time in building magnificent cathedrals. Art, nevertheless, does serve the church because it speaks not merely to "verbal" man but to the whole man. We must look to an *entente* between Christian faith and art. This can only be done as Christianity first makes the man and then the man makes the artist.

To this reviewer, a Biblical unfolding of the idea of "gifts" and calling would greatly have helped the author in his development of his Christian philosophy of the art and the Christian content. Be that as it may, this is a thoughtful book, well worth the reading by anyone who wishes to understand modern literature and its relationship to Christian faith. It will serve also as a practical reading guide to the Christian leader who cannot read everything but who knows that he must read some things if he is to be a whole man ministering to educated people in the twentieth century.

Body and Soul, by James Lynwood Walker. (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1971.) 175 pp. \$4.95.

In *Body and Soul: Gestalt Therapy and Religious Experience*, James Lynwood Walker indicates by his subtitle the real scope of his work. Evangelicals who pick up this book expecting it to provide an analysis of the Christian view of body and soul will be disappointed. Rather, the author is endeavoring to apply the insights of contemporary gestalt psychology to the interpretation of religious and Christian experience. Especially he insists that we must not only view man as a whole; but we who do the viewing must do our viewing as a whole person if we are to view rightly the reality to be perceived. Anything less breaks down the wholeness of our own human personality.

With most modern "wholists" Walker rejects a body/soul dichotomy as a falsification of our understanding of man. He quotes approvingly the statement from A. S. Peake (*People and the Book*), "For the Hebrew, man is a unity and that unity is the body as a complex of parts, draw-

ing their life and activity from a breath-soul, which has no existence apart from the body."

Evangelicals will be still more deeply disappointed by his reference to the Genesis accounts of human creation as myth, by the "explicit and implicit ambiguities and distortion in the thinking of Paul" as contrasted with the thinking of Jesus, by the definition of demon possession as "to have lost a clear sense of who one is," by the suggestion that sin is a "state of alienation from oneself, and by a generally sub-evangelical approach to Holy Scripture." It must be acknowledged, on the other hand, that the book provides many splendid insights into the nature of man. It leaves with this reviewer, however, the wistful hope that someone will apply what seems to be a genuinely scriptural method of approaching the unity of human experience together with an adequate assimilation of the data of Biblical revelation to an understanding of man, his psychic health, and his interpersonal relationships with others.

The Reformed Pastor, by Richard Baxter. (Manhollton, Dela.: The National Foundation for Christian Education.) 100 pp. \$2.50 (paperback).

This classical gem of advice to ministers by one of the greatest ministers of all time is another book for impoverished young pastors (or any Christian workers) who both love books and also seek God's best for their ministry.

The drastic editing which cut the wordy original of 700 pages to 100 pages sometimes creates lucunae in the flow of thought, but on the whole comes off successfully with a readable volume of compacted insight into the life of the minister.

This will not replace contemporary studies of the ministry, but it certainly adds a dimension often lacking in current discussion and much needed by the devout and obedient student of Holy Scripture who seeks to minister to the hearts of men today or in any day.

The Saviour and the Scriptures, by Robert P. Lightner. (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1970). 170 pp. plus v and index. \$2.50.

This reprint of an earlier hardback sells for \$2.50 and is a fine summary of the case for verbal and plenary inspiration based on the testimony of our Lord. It does not supersede such classic statements of this case as are to be found in Wenham, *Our Lord's View of the Old Testament*, in Warfield, "The Real Problem of Inspiration" in *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, or in M'Intosh, *Is Christ Infallible and the Bible True?* The Volume presents a very convincing case, however, and provides an effective apologetic tool for the student or pastor.