EDITORIAL STAFF

Mark E. Biddle, BTSR . . . . . Editor
Nancy deClaissé-Walford, McAfee . . . . . Editor
Joel Drinkard, SBTS Tradition . . . . . Business Manager
Robert Ellis, Logsdon . . . . . Book Review Editor
Gerald Keown, M. Christopher White . . . . Recording Secretary

EDITORIAL BOARD

LeAnn Flesher . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . American Baptist Seminary of the West
Cameron Jorgenson . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Campbell University Divinity School
Derek Hogan . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Campbell University Divinity School
David M. May . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Central Baptist Theological Seminary
Mark Medley . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Baptist Seminary of Kentucky
Wade Rowatt . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . SBTS Tradition
Tom Slater . . . . . . . . . McAfee School of Theology, Mercer University
Scott Spencer . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond

E. Glenn Hinson, SBTS Tradition . . . . . Editor Emeritus
Race: Foundations and Reflections
Emmanuel McCall, Issue Editor

Published by Review & Expositor, Inc.
Founded and originally published by
The Faculty of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

SPONSOR INSTITUTIONS
McAfee School of Theology of Mercer University
Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond
Campbell University Divinity School

PATRON INSTITUTIONS
American Baptist Seminary of the West
Baptist Seminary of Kentucky
Central Baptist Theological Seminary
M. Christopher White School of Divinity of Gardner-Webb University
Logsdon School of Theology of Hardin-Simmons University

Louisville, Kentucky
The Review and Expositor is a quarterly Baptist theological journal dedicated to free and open inquiry of issues related to the Church’s mission in the contemporary world. The journal’s breadth of theological reflection and analysis is designed to inform, stimulate, and challenge readers to excellence in their service to the Church. Baptist in its heritage, ecumenical in its outlook, and global in its vision, the Review and Expositor balances scholarly analysis with practical application.

The Review and Expositor welcomes responsible scholarly expression of diverse views regarding matters of interest and concern to the Christian community. The publication of research, interpretation, comment, opinion or advertising in the journal does not necessarily suggest agreement or endorsement by the editors, by the editorial board or by the consortium institutions.

Copyright, Review and Expositor, 2011.

Publication Office: P.O. Box 6681, Louisville, KY 40206-0681.
Web Address: www.RandE.org

Correspondence: Concerning articles and editorial matters, address the Managing Editor; concerning books and reviews, the Book Review Editor; concerning advertisements and business matters, the Business Manager; concerning subscriptions, the Circulation Secretary, Geneva Drinkard.

Indexed in: ATLA Religion Database® and included in ATLASerials® (ATLAS®), an online collection of major religion and theology journals, published by the American Theological Library Association, 300 S. Wacker Dr., Suite 2100, Chicago, IL 60606, E-mail: atla@atla.com, WWW: http://www.atla.com/. Available online through BRS (Bibliographic Retrieval Services), Latham, New York, and DIALOG, Palo Alto, California. Also indexed in the Southern Baptist Periodical Index, published by the Estep Library of Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, MO 65613.

Abstracted: in Internationale Zeitschriftenschatz für Bibelwissenschaft und Grenzgebiete, Dr. Bernhard Lang, Universitat, Fb. 1, Warburger Str. 100, D-1790 Paderborn, W. Germany.

Subscription Rate: US Individuals, $35.00 per year in advance Single Copy, $12.00. Foreign/Canadian Subscriptions: Individuals, $50.00 per year; Single Copy, $20.00. Library/Institutional Subscriptions: US Libraries/Institutions $95.00 per year, Foreign Libraries/Institutions $110.00 per year, Single Copy, $ 30.00.

Design and Composition: JD Graphics & Design

Printed by: Sheridan Press.

Published quarterly by Review, and Expositor, Inc. P.O. Box 6681, Louisville, KY 40206-0681. Telephone number is (502) 327-8347. Periodicals Postage paid at Louisville, Kentucky, and additional mailing office at Hanover, Pennsylvania 17331 (USPS 463-640). (ISSN-0034-6373).

Change of Address and Forms 3579 should be sent to Review and Expositor, P.O. Box 6681, Louisville, KY 40206-0681.
Contents
Vol. 108, No. 4                      Fall 2011

Race: Foundations and Reflections

First Words

487  First Words . . . Editorial Introduction  
By Emmanuel McCall, Adjunct Professor of Urban Ministries at the McAfee School of Theology, Mercer University. Atlanta, Georgia.

491  A Word From . . .  
By Bill J. Leonard, Professor of Church History, School of Divinity, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

501  A Word About . . . Racism and the Church  
By Gerald L. Keown, Professor of Old Testament Interpretation, M. Christoper White School of Divinity, Gardner-Webb University, Boiling Springs, North Carolina, and a member of the Review & Expositor Editorial Board.

505  A Word About . . . Finding Beauty When We Look Beyond the Surface  
By Sara Powell, a member of the board of directors of the Baptist Center for Ethics, a freelance writer, and former moderator of Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia.

Thematic Words

509  A Theology of Power, or a Lack Thereof  
By William M. Tillman, Jr., T. B. Maston Professor of Christian Ethics, Logsdon School of Theology, Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>519</td>
<td>A Biblical Approach to Hospitality</td>
<td>Matthew Carroll, a student at McAfee School of Theology, Mercer University, Atlanta, Georgia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>527</td>
<td>The Ethics of Tourism</td>
<td>Deonie Duncan, a pastor in Jamaica.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>537</td>
<td>Excitement in Nova Scotia: Beyond Racism and White Privilege</td>
<td>Harry Gardner, President, Acadia Divinity College, Dean of Theology, Acadia University, Nova Scotia; and Lois Mitchell, Director of Public Witness, Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches, Nova Scotia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>545</td>
<td>When Two Churches Became One</td>
<td>Lincoln Bingham, Senior Pastor, St. Paul Baptist Church@Shively Heights, Louisville, Kentucky.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expository Words**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>559</td>
<td>Achieving Racial Reconciliation in the Twenty-First Century: The Real Test for the Christian Church</td>
<td>Gerald Thomas, Pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church in Plainfield, New Jersey.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
585  Neither Gerizim Nor Zion: Worship Beyond Race (John 4:1-42)
    By Emmanuel McCall, Adjunct Professor of Urban Ministries at the
    McAfee School of Theology, Mercer University, Atlanta, Georgia.

593  Select Bibliography on Race and Documentaries

Words About Recent Books

605  Edited by Robert R. Ellis, Associate Dean and Phillips Professor of
    Hebrew and Old Testament, Logsdon School of Theology, Hardin-
    Simmons University, Abilene, Texas.

Indexes

619  Books Received
    Books Reviewed
    Annual Index
First Words . . .
In conjunction with R&E’s cooperative endeavor with Smyth & Helwys to promote an annual Bible Study program, we are offering 2 new products: a CD with the 3 previous R&E issues on the Letter of James . . .

James CD $10.00*

and a DVD with all previous R&E Bible Study issues. Both are offered at special prices for our readers. They may be ordered online at our web site: www.rande.org/BibleStudy.htm or mail the form below to:

Review & Expositor
P.O. Box 6681
Louisville, KY 40206-0681

Bible Study DVD $39.95*

*Both prices include US postage; foreign addresses add $10.00 for postage.

Please send me the following:

_____ (quantity) CD’s of the Letter of James @ $10.00 $______ (amount)

_____ (quantity DVD’s of Bible Studies @ $39.95 $______ (amount)

$______ (foreign postage)

$______ (total enclosed)

Name: ____________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________

City ___________________________________________ State ______ Zip _______
“THE NAME OF THE GAME IS SIN, NOT SKIN.” This cliché was often heard in Racial Reconciliation conferences and seminars of the 1960s and 70s. It was an affirmation that racism is sin. As such, it affects the whole of humanity. Some may see it as a localized expression, but it is localized universally. In gatherings of the Baptist World Alliance, people from every nation express concern for some type of racism being practiced in their locales. Even countries that once boasted of accepting everyone now admit to various forms of racial discrimination.

Matters of race have been and remain front and center in the United States of America. Much has been done by way of analysis and prescription. Much more needs to be done. Much progress is being made, however, in overcoming previous racial barriers. Some of that progress is known. More needs to be celebrated. It is this writer’s opinion that more could be done if appropriate models were available.

The purpose of this and the following issue of R & E. (Winter 2012) is to present examples of racial and cultural progress that could serve as models for individuals, congregations, partnerships, institutions, communities, and even denominations.

When given the assignment of developing an issue on “race” in June of 2010, I thought of convening a group that was both experienced and reflective. The approaching meeting of the Baptist World Congress gave an excellent opportunity to assemble such a group. I owe a debt of gratitude to General Secretary, Dr. Neville Callum, for allowing us to meet and providing a room for our meeting. A diverse group of women and men representing various ethnicities in North America were invited. Those who attended are listed later in this Forward. For more than two hours we wrestled with the question
“WHAT COULD BE SAID ABOUT RACE THAT WOULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN OUR TIME?”

The answers to that question are reflected in the articles in these two volumes. They include biblical approaches to understanding and correcting our human problems; to understanding the psychological and cultural maladjustments that give presence to racial attitudes; and to providing examples of persons, churches, and organizations that are overcoming racial/cultural barriers in the name of Christ.

The amount of material that we came up with was more than any one issue could hold. The R & E Board was kind in allowing an additional volume. Fortunately, another organizational partner, The Baptist Center For Ethics has produced three DVD’s that may be used as companions to the reading and study of these volumes. They are introduced at the end of each volume, along with a bibliography.

The names of those who participated in the reflection session at the BWA are: Veryl and Cheryl Henderson (Hawaii), Edward Wheeler (Indiana), William Brackney (Canada), Robert Parham (Tennessee), Warren Stewart (Arizona), Harry Gardner (Canada), Suzzie Paynter (Texas), David Kerrigan (Australia), Bill Tillman (Texas), Gary Nelson (Canada), Forrest Harris (Tennessee), Randall Everett (Texas), and myself, Emmanuel McCall (Georgia).

The Content, Volume I

Bill Tillman presents a fascinating study of how power is used or abused in projecting racial attitudes. Matthew Carroll, a student in my Urban Ministries class at McAfee, wrote an excellent term paper on a theology of hospitality. He reshaped his paper for this issue. Deonie Duncan delivered a very powerful paper during a BWA session on the ethics of tourism. She shows how our leisure causes both racial and cultural deprivation, based on her experiences as a pastor in Jamaica.

The first volume begins to prepare us for the positive models that are success stories. Drs. Harry Gardner and Lois Mitchell tell of how five racially diverse Baptist groups in Nova Scotia came together for Kingdom advancement and to correct injustices in their area. Dr. Lincoln Bingham of Louisville, Kentucky has a long history of interracial reconciliation work. One of his crowning achievements was leading his congregation to merge with a predominantly Anglo church, forming one new congregation.
The remainder of the first volume is devoted to several biblical/theological reflections on the theme. Because “Race” is a sin problem, the authority of Scripture is looked to for our panacea. Gerald Thomas begins with an exposition of Galatians 3:23-29. Warren Stewart follows with insights on Luke 14:15-24. David Goatley chose Acts 11:1-18. Emmanuel McCall concludes this section with an interpretation of John 4:1-42. One looking for sermon or teaching material will find a ready resource on these pages.

“Race” is a sin problem. Jesus Christ came to eradicate sin. By his grace, he allows us to help. The contents of these volumes is designed to equip each of us to be at work with Christ.
An Audacious Identity: Those Scandalous Baptists*

In 1646, Anglican preacher Daniel Featley wrote of the “Dippers” rampant in England:

They preach, and print, and practice their heretical impieties openly; they hold their conventicles weekly in our chief Cities, and Suburbs thereof, and there prophesy by turns; and . . . they build one another in the faith of their sect, to the ruin of their souls; they flock in great multitudes to their Jordans, and both sexes enter into the River, and are dipt after their manner with a kind of spell containing . . . their erroneous tenets. . . . And as they defile our Rivers with their impure washings, and our pulpits with their false prophecies and fanatical enthusiasms, so the presses sweat and grown under the load of their blasphemies.1

That’s us. Indeed, for some people then and now, Baptists will never be more than a bunch of fanatical, soul-ruining, river-defiling dippers! These days, many Baptists across the theological spectrum are questioning whether they want to use the “B word” to describe their Christianity at all. Some think it’s passé, a brand name Christianity that appeals to fewer people every year; others think it is a humiliating title given the terrible ways Baptists

1 Bill J. Leonard is Professor of Church History at The School of Divinity of Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. This article was delivered for The Daniel McGee Lecture on October 12, 2011 at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.
have acted out their convictions and dysfunctions in the public Square! Let’s ask it right here with “every head bowed, every eye closed, no one looking around.” How many of you would identify yourself as a Baptist in some form or another? Raise your hands, be courageous. Now, of that number how many have ever felt at least a little embarrassed to call yourself a Baptist? To those who lifted your hands, thanks for your honesty. The rest of you are lying!

Now get over it. Like the earliest Christians, Baptists had an audacious identity from the start. In fact, from the first century, Christians have had a rather questionable reputation. The book of First John, written in the early second century, audaciously declares of the early church: “We are the children of God.” Then adds abruptly: “but the world does not recognize us” (1 John 3:1). And why should it? Salvation through a crucified, underclass, Palestinian Jew whose only recorded writing was in the dirt?—Children of God, indeed! The church grew, but the critics remained. So the third-century Roman philosopher Celsus assessed the Christians of his day accordingly:

The following are the rules laid down by them: Let no one come to us who has been instructed or who is wise or prudent (for such are deemed evil by us), but if there be any ignorant or unintelligent or uninstructed or foolish persons, let them come with confidence. By which words (acknowledging that such persons are worthy [children] of their God) they are able to gain only the silly, the mean and the stupid, with women and children.2

Contemporary critic Christopher Hitchens echoes Celsus in his recent assertion that the Protestant reformer John Calvin “may seem like a far-off figure to us, but those who used to grab and use power in his name are still among us and go by the softer names of Presbyterians and Baptists.”3 Faith-tinged identities consume and corrupt, empower and embarrass all at once, don’t they? For many persons inside and outside the church Christians in general and Baptists in particular often look less like “children of God,” than childishly “silly, mean, and stupid.” And we sometimes act the part, don’t we?

In the United States, when a Virginia congressman calls Americans to tighten immigration laws in order to keep out Muslims who MIGHT be elected to high office and MIGHT take the oath of office on the Koran, didn’t he just have to be a Baptist?4 When members of a stem family church in Kansas show up at the funerals of soldiers killed in Iraq, and shout that such deaths are the result of God’s judgment on the nation, don’t they just have to be Baptists?5
Which brings us back to the early Baptists: They are not idyllic models to which we should return, but spiritual guides who illustrate ways to understand ourselves and our witness in the world. English Puritans in exile, huddled in a “bakeshop” in Amsterdam, constituted their new community around believers’ baptism in 1609. Two years later, on their way back home they united around these haunting words:

That the church of Christ is a company of faithful people separated from the world by the word & spirit of God, being knit unto the Lord, & one another, by Baptism upon their own confession of the faith and sins.6

In that single sentence those exiles, not yet practicing immersion, not yet named Baptists, said what it meant to be children of God. At their best, four hundred years later, that is still who Baptists are.

They began with an audacious faith. Membership in the church, they said, is grounded in an experience of grace, not geography. Baptism should be administered on the basis of one’s own “confession of faith and sins,” not enforced by the state-based or culture-privileged religious establishment of a so-called Christian nation! Do you understand how radical that idea was in seventeenth-century Europe, where citizenship and church membership were linked inseparably? These Baptists gazed at their world and saw what many of their contemporaries overlooked: a Believers’ Church, where no one could claim membership save those who could profess faith for themselves, uncoerced by state or religious establishments. This understanding of faith set Baptists at odds with both the church and the culture of their day. In many places it still does.

How might their audacious identity impact us? First, Baptists welcome everyone who comes to their churches, whatever their faith or lack thereof, but ask all who would claim membership to profess their faith in Jesus Christ. With those early Baptists we too must make our “own confession of faith and sins.” In short, you can’t confess your faith, if you won’t confess your sins. Contrary to much popular preaching in our religious culture, grace is not an entitlement; it is a gift by which we cast ourselves on Christ, and acknowledge our brokenness in the audacity that the Kingdom of God is indeed within our reach.

Second, Baptists cannot take it for granted that people in postmodern America, even those who show up in church, have the slightest idea of what
we are talking about. So we have to keep retelling
the “old, old story,” explaining through traditions
old and new why we think faith and baptism are
wonderfully important in a human life. What is that
story? I find it eloquently tucked away in the book
of Acts and Peter’s sermon:

The word which God sent unto the children of
Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ. . . . How God anointed Jesus
of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about
doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the devil; for
God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did
both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and
hanged on a tree; Him God raised up the third day. (Acts 10: 36-40)

Some folks retell the story with such traditional practices as gospel
tracts—brief statements on how to come to faith through a simple plan. My
favorite is the three-word warning: “Turn or Burn.” That says it all, doesn’t
it? Lately, in North Carolina, I’ve noticed more gospel tracts in the restrooms
at McDonald’s than at Burger King, Wendy’s, or even Chick-fil-A. Apparently,
more sinners in North Carolina frequent McDonald’s than the other fast food
places. I’ve never seen one in the restroom at Whole Foods—perhaps there’s
no hope for folks who go there. Some sing the story in traditional hymns,
praise choruses, contemporary Christian music, and even in something called
Christian Heavy Metal. And, in fascinating ways, the methods we use to
retell the Jesus story often shape the meaning of the story in ways we may
not even realize.

Third, let’s be less concerned for a single plan of salvation that completes
a required transaction than for a lifelong process of conversion that transforms
human beings day by day. On a trip with students to Bucharest, Romania, I
was privileged to be present when Dr. Oti Bunaciu, pastor of the Providence
Baptist Church there, baptized a group of Roma/Gypsy men and women in
a baptistry that soars above the pulpit. As they entered the water Dr. Bunaciu
inquired of each candidate: “Are you willing to be a follower of Jesus Christ?”
When he asked a young Roma woman, probably sixteen or seventeen, she
blurted out with tears: “Oh yes, every day for the rest of my life.” Faith in
Christ is our common confession, day by day, even if the process varies.

While Baptists call persons to an experience of grace, they are increasingly
aware that persons come to faith in multiple ways. Some of us “got saved
hard,” sweating our way to salvation as if we’d been to hell one afternoon
and had come back to tell about it; others were guided (often from childhood)
by spiritual mentors who nurtured Jesus into us along the way; still others broke through to grace after incessant struggles with life’s outer or inner horrors; and others of us don’t know exactly how Jesus ever found us, we just know he did. And, if Baptists are going to take the responsibility of baptizing children, then we have to take the responsibility of “confirming” their faith when the hard moral dilemmas—when their sins—find them out in adolescence and beyond. Faith and baptism is not the end of the journey but the beginning.

Believers’ baptism itself is a powerful, death-defying moment that unites us to Christ and his Church. For seventeenth-century Baptists it was the ultimate public act of dissent against the state-privileged, entitlement-based status quo church of the day, a declaration of faith, an affirmation of gospel egalitarianism, and a political affirmation of conscience. Today we dip the whole body into fiberglass baptisteries full of warm water, no muss no fuss, with a limited sense of the radical nature of the action. But occasionally the danger of baptism comes back to us.

Years ago I was interim pastor of a church in Louisville, Kentucky, when a young man professed faith in Christ. We talked at length of what that meant—life and death, faith and journey, but not until the moment he entered the baptistery with me on a bright Sunday morning did I realize that Bob was over six feet tall and weighed over 200 pounds. And I knew I was in big trouble when I looked out into the congregation and saw my wife put her head in her hands. But down he went with the name of God spoken over him, and down I went too struggling under his weight with water pouring into the hip boots you wear under the baptismal robe. Finally, by grace, luck and adrenalin, we got back up, all to a congregation that broke into spontaneous applause in celebration and relief. They thought they had lost both of us. Perhaps we should always clap at baptisms or shout like our frontier Baptist forbears, or do something a little frivolous. The angels do, Jesus said, rejoice over one measly soul that once lost is found again.

You see, audacious faith demands an audacious witness. Nineteenth-century British historian Edward Underhill insisted that “a distinguishing . . . trait” of the early Baptists was their claim, “for the church and for the conscience, of freedom from all human control.” He wrote that the Baptist insistence that “faith is the gift of God” “brought them into collision with every form of human invention in the worship of God.” “For this,” Underhill suggested, “the Baptists bore cheerfully, cruel mocking, and scourging; yea, moreover bonds and imprisonments, and death.”
The demand for religious liberty and its resulting religious pluralism was perhaps the Baptists’ first great witness in the world. They force us to ask: Can we give a witness? What compels our individual or collective consciences here and now? Christian witness lies at the heart of who we are, how we act, and what we do when the times get out of hand. These days we are living through the death rattle of Protestant privilege in America, especially in the South and Southwest. The real issue then is whether we can retain a witness without the implicit help of the culture?

The late Edwin S. Gaustad, superb historian of American religion, offered an assessment of the Protestant response to the loss of cultural privilege that remains perceptive. As early as the 1980s he wrote that for Christians on the right, “the American past is idealized into a Christian hegemony that never was; the American future is envisioned in terms of a Christian establishment that cannot constitutionally be.” Yet he also concluded that “no longer calling the tune and no longer bolstered by abundant coffers and crowded pews,” the Protestantism of the left “retreats from the larger and costlier commitments.” Thus, for liberals, “Keeping the ecclesiastical ship afloat is the issue; taking it out of the harbor into deeper waters is not.” Gaustad challenged all Protestants to rediscover “a vigorous institutional life,” that was “not laid back, not defeatist, not dug in behind stout theological and sociological walls, not mindless or heartless—but open, active, committed, enthusiastic, compelled.”

A church without a witness is a church without an identity, whatever name it may call itself. Worship is witness sure enough. Worship links “ordinary time” and “sacred time” day to day, week to week. Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are witnesses, the word of God without words, enacting the promise of God’s presence in our midst. Feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, binding up the broken and calling persons to faith is at the heart of the church’s continuing witness, beyond a doubt.

But where does witness and conscience intersect or collide? In the past, in the South, we white Baptists sinned against our consciences, trashed our witness with our support of slavery and Jim Crow. What piece of the Gospel are we trashing now? Beyond worship wars, culture wars and church growth strategies, what is our witness to the highest mandates and deepest passions of the Jesus Way? Let’s ask it another way: What are Baptists and American Christians doing, sanctioning right now that they will be apologizing for in 50-100 years?
Two congregations illustrate such witness for me these days. For the last five years, Highland Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky, a predominately Caucasian congregation has responded to drive-by shootings in their city through an alliance with African American churches that sends clergy and laity to the murder sites for public prayer vigils and then plants crosses in their church yards with the names of the victims. Will those actions help stop the shootings? They hope so, but even if murders continue, a witness has been given by churches black and white, compelled by conscience to confront the madness. What a witness!

Four years ago some folks from Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, decided to ordain Andrew Daugherty and send him out to Rock Wall, Texas, to plant a new congregation called Christchurch, as a witness for those who are outside of or washed out of traditional Texas churches. They had a good run in two successive public gathering places, touching the lives of a variety of persons who discovered, rediscovered or jump-started their faith. Next Sunday Christchurch, Baptist, will end its ministry with a consensus that they have run their course, lived out the fullness of the Gospel in one community as best they could. Was that fledgling church a failure? No, it was a witness, reminding us what the early Baptists surely knew: not every calling has to last forever. When we start or finish something for Jesus we have to follow our consciences at the beginning and the end.

Don’t start with the question of whether your church is thriving or declining, growing or dying. Begin by asking whether you have a witness in the world, a call to conscience that is worth pursuing whether the initial endeavor lives or dies. William Sloan Coffin was right, let’s risk something big for something good, wherever it takes us. We are after all an audacious community, we Baptists, with a checkered past and an uncertain future, “knit together,” as our forebears said it. People never really joined us easily, it seems.

These days I think often about Ann Hasseltine, who as a student at New England’s Branford Academy in the early 1800s read Jonathan Edwards’ monumental work *The History of the Work of Redemption* and decided she had to be a missionary. But she was a woman and they weren’t sending out women on those global endeavors, so she looked around for a husband who’d help her get there. She found Adoniram Judson, a recent graduate of Williams College. They married in 1812 and immediately set out for India as Congregational missionaries. On the boat they studied the Greek New Testament together and became Baptists, an act so scandalous that Ann hurriedly wrote to a Congregational friend, “Can you, my dear Nancy, still
love me, still desire to hear from me, when I tell you I have become a Baptist?” Of their method, she said: “We procured the best authors on both sides, compared them with the Scriptures, examined and reexamined the sentiments of Baptists and Pedobaptists, and were finally compelled from a conviction of truth, to embrace the former. Thus, my dear Nancy, we are confirmed Baptists, not because we wished to be, but because truth compelled us to be. We have endeavored to count the cost, and be prepared for the many severe trials resulting from this change of sentiment.”

And was there a cost. The Judsons went to Burma and began a new mission there, ever in need of funds, friends, and protection from hostile governments. He was arrested and imprisoned; she bribed the guards to get him food and medicine. He was released; she died in childbirth in 1826 at the age of thirty-seven. Five years ago this summer I had dinner at the Baptist World Congress with the president of the Baptist Union of Burma/Myanmar who described himself as the spiritual great-great-great-grandson of the Judsons. Not all of Ann’s children were stillborn.

Twenty-first-century children of God get it too, thank God. Several summers ago I was preaching at First Baptist Church, Asheville, North Carolina, with a text that had to do with eschatology. I’d been reading about various theories of the second coming, and brazenly declared that should the “rapture” occur while I’m still in the world, I’m not going. Rather, I decided to stay right here with Jesus who told that wonderful story about the shepherd who would not give up until the last, lost one got home. After the service, I stood around and shook hands with folks, some of whom took me to task for trashing Premillennial theology. It was a great discussion. At the end of the line, however, was this gangly teenager who was probably sixteen or seventeen. He shook my hand, looked me straight in the eye and declared: “I liked your sermon, and if it’s okay, I’d like to stay here with Jesus too.” I thought about those words all the way back to Winston-Salem, and cried, at least till I got to Statesville! “My God,” I thought (speaking theologically, of course), “I should have kept my mouth shut! Now I guess I’ve GOT to stay behind with that kid!” He and his conscience carried me beyond my rhetoric to the reality of action.

If conscience dictates I suppose we can rip the word Baptist out of our literature, paint over it on our church signs, or delete it from the our webpage, facebook, twitter, and podcasts. But before we do, let’s admit that there is no generic Christianity, divorced from a community or an identity that centers us in the world or the Kingdom of God. As Baptists, we are knit together
with the Amsterdam exiles, the Gypsy teenager in the Bucharest baptistery, and the black and white Baptists who pray together in the killing-fields of Louisville; knit together with an audacious young missionary compelled by conscience to become a Baptist even when she didn’t want to, a gangly teenager who will stay behind, and with a congregation in Rock Wall, Texas, as they sang their last hymn together. We are all knit into that “body of broken bones,” as Thomas Merton called the church.11 St. Paul said it best when he wrote to the Corinthians, a church we know was Baptist because they were obsessed with preaching, food, and sex:

We recommend ourselves by the innocence of our behavior, our grasp of truth, our patience and kindliness; by gifts of the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, by declaring the truth, by the power of God. We wield the weapons of righteousness in right hand and left. Honor and dishonor, praise and blame, are alike our lot: we are the impostors who speak the truth, the unknown ones whom everyone knows; dying we still live on; disciplined by suffering, we are not done to death; in our sorrows we have always cause for joy; poor ourselves, we bring wealth to many; penniless, we own the world. (2 Cor 6:4-10, NEB)

Today perhaps we Baptists should stop worrying about our name and start reclaiming our witness; quit fretting over the loss of culture dominance and turn loose our consciences. Let’s go out as children of God, born again, and again, and again in one of the church’s clearly dysfunctional, but grace-filled families; children of God in the Water and at the Table, in the Word and in the world, children of God, KNIT together, knit together, knit together—by grace. Amen.

---

1 Daniel Featley, The Dippers Dipt, or, the Anabaptists Duck’d and Plung’d over head and Eares, at a Disputation at Southwark (London: Nicholas Bourne and Richard Royston, 1646), n.p.

3 Christopher Hitchens, *God is not Great* (New York: Twelve, 2007), 233-34.


5 See GodhatesAmerica.com. The Westboro Baptist church in Kansas, with Fred Phelps as pastor, has led a movement to demonstrate at funerals of persons with AIDS, soldiers killed in Iraq, and lectures of persons they determine to be “pro-homosexual.”


8 Ibid., 163.

9 Ibid., 171.


A Word About ... Racism and the Church

By Gerald L. Keown *

My teenage years coincided with a time of rapid change in the social fabric of the country, especially in the South. My high school years were the years of the great civil rights struggle. The actions of Bull Conner in Birmingham, Alabama were local news. I witnessed first-hand the rigid segregation that was the norm in the southern part of the state of Alabama. I routinely overheard casual racist remarks of white teenagers. In 1964, the high school from which I graduated was totally segregated. The little town in which I lived had a “separate, but equal” educational system. The races only interacted when African-Americans would be employed to provide menial service jobs for the white gentry. Looking back today, the “norm” of those years seems to be part of another world, thankfully so. Most problematic, however, was the fact that the church not only was no different from the rest of the social structure, but was perhaps the most formidable bulwark in support of racist attitudes and actions.

I am familiar with some of the amazing stories of courageous ministers, and some courageous churches, who challenged the racist patterns of the communities where they were located, often at great cost. The reality was that such were notable because they represented rare exceptions to the normative attitudes and actions of the churches of the south.

The church was the most segregated part of society. Unfortunately, that was not only true in the 1960s, it remains true today. For a variety of reasons, the church has seemed unable or unwilling to move aggressively to bridge the divide of race even as we move well into the twenty-first century.

There are far more exceptions today, and for that we can give thanks, but the inaction of the people of God from both the white and black churches

* Gerald L. Keown is Professor of Old Testament Interpretation at M. Christopher White School of Divinity at Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, North Carolina, and a member of the Review & Expositor Editorial Board.
remains troubling. The visionary actions of some key Baptist leaders, led by former President Jimmy Carter, have begun to offer hope for change.

I attended the initial installment of the New Baptist Covenant in Atlanta, January 30-February 2, 2008. I led a group of seminary students who participated with other seminarians from many different schools as a sub-group of the larger gathering. The students themselves represented significant diversity of background and ethnicity. Participating in the worship experiences of the New Baptist Covenant was one of the most satisfying and exciting times of my life as a Baptist. There seemed something so “right” about the rich racial diversity gathered in the convention center, something so “right” about the identification of crucial issues which were critical to all participants and which offered the opportunity for marshaling the energies and resources of all to achieve some common goals for the common good. The seminarians were very engaged and were perhaps more open and optimistic than those of us who carry a history which makes us somewhat jaded.

The refrain that echoed throughout the few days of the gathering was the importance of doing more than holding a meeting, a meeting that could end with everyone feeling good, but with no lasting changes in the lives of those who participated and with a larger landscape that remained as it has always been.

Over the past three and a half years, the ideas that were set in motion at the initial New Baptist Covenant have continued to be addressed in smaller gatherings across the country. Now, a second installment of the larger gathering is planned for November, 2011. Creative ways of including more and diverse communities in this event offer the potential for even broader impact.

It seems obvious that positive new developments in racial understanding that involve the church will not often occur by the blending of communities within congregations. That does happen more today and is to be celebrated when it does happen. More important is the joining of persons of all races and ethnicities to address the critical needs of the larger world. There are models of that which already are occurring. Some of the most effective ministries are occurring when African-American and mostly white congregations combine their human and financial resources to address key needs in the larger community. When such combined ministries are undertaken, both congregations gain understanding of one another and the people of God become healthier as a whole.

Former President Carter and those who have joined him in the planning and activation of the New Baptist Covenant are encouraging these kinds of
joint efforts. One of the major strengths of the original gathering was the open dialogue in search of good ideas from all possible sources. As the November gathering approaches, my prayer is that this and other efforts will finally turn the tide and introduce to the world an image of the church, not as a bulwark sustaining and supporting old racial attitudes and actions, but as the church of Jesus Christ breaking down such barriers as it truly makes a difference in a troubled world.
Finding Beauty When We Look Beyond the Surface
By Sara Powell

Probably nothing evokes our area of the country more than a magnolia blossom. Although the trees themselves are impressive with their shape, height and waxed leaves, when the blooms emerge, they almost speak, saying “Deep South.” These trees and their blossoms grace many homes where we live, and we take great pleasure in them. They are admired as they grow in carefully groomed landscapes, and the blossoms and leaves are often cut and used to decorate tables or in other arrangements.

One morning a friend brought a perfect magnolia blossom into our Y. Everyone gathered around to admire its loveliness and inhale its fragrance. It was a particularly flawless example with its creamy color. While most of us were content just to look at the bloom, my husband and another friend, both excellent photographers, went to get their cameras. They took turns photographing the blossom in various settings, with different light, changing angles and asking other friends to pose with it. When we left for the day, the bloom remained for others to enjoy.

As we entered the Y the next day, we saw that the magnolia blossom was wilted and brown around the edges. Almost all of us saw only the fact that the blossom was past its prime, and we shook our heads at the flower’s fleeting beauty, especially when cut from the tree. My husband, however, saw something else. As he peered at the bloom, he was able to appreciate both the structure and photographic possibilities of the carpel and wilted petals.

The first day we had been so caught up in surface beauty that we had not even noticed the rest of the bloom. We brought the blossom home, Bill set up

*Sara Powell is on the board of directors of the Baptist Center for Ethics, a freelance writer and former moderator of Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia. She and her husband, Bill, live in Hartwell, Georgia. This article first appeared in the August 4, 2011, Ethics Daily: http://www.ethicsdaily.com/finding-beauty-when-we-look-beyond-the-surface-cms-18309.
his tripod, selected the correct lens and shot away. The resulting photograph was outstanding, beautiful.

People whose paths cross ours every day are less than perfect. None is as perfect as that magnolia blossom was on the first day we saw it. Unfortunately, as we interact with others, many of us have difficulty looking beyond the surface to see what lies beneath. Often we make judgments about others based on how they are dressed, the color of their skin, their religion or lack thereof. Sometimes we criticize another’s grammar, political orientation, education or other choices. Perhaps our interests don’t mesh. There might be a language barrier, or a perception based on our age might stand in the way. But the flawed people who are part of our lives still offer beauty — perhaps in a smile or an eye twinkle or an affectionate touch.

Another person may have a flair for dressing just so or have the gift of including someone in a conversation. Still others can reach out with kindness and thoughtfulness to touch someone who is hurting. Each of God’s children has a beauty that may be easy to overlook if all we’re looking for is an ideal beauty. When we look as carefully as my husband did at the wilted magnolia blossom, our lives will be enriched and deepened by the attractiveness around us.
Thematic Words
Soren Kierkegaard had an insightful way of catching the cultural expressions of his time that fits ever so well with our time. In his book *The Present Age*, he relates:

I was once the witness of a street fight in which three men most shamefully set upon a fourth . . . several of the onlookers set on one of the three assailants and knocked him down and beat him. The avengers had, in fact, applied precisely the same rules as the offenders . . . I went up to one of the avengers and tried by argument to explain to him how illogical his behavior was; but it seemed quite impossible for him to discuss the question: he could only repeat that such a rascal richly deserved to have three people against him . . . it was humorous because of the contradiction which it involved. . . .¹

This ironical gloss allows our culture to move with an essential ignorance of theological rationale concerning power. Christians engage life—whether in a congregational business meeting, at their workplace, in their family context, or moving in the social systems networks—pretty much like anyone else, with the exception that Christians may use theological jargon/clichés to authenticate their actions. We think we have a theology of power, but we act more upon the impulses informed and formed by the cultural context into which we have been born, reared, live, and work.²

¹ William M. Tillman, Jr. is T. B. Maston Professor of Christian Ethics at Logsdon School of Theology of Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas.
A primary objective of this article is to form a bridge for Christians to cross over the abyss of ignorance about power, to give them permission to talk about power, and to discuss where God is in the power conversation for each and all of us. This article is not a declaration of “the” theology of power or the provision of the definitive statement regarding power from a Christian theological perspective. Rather, it is a suggestion for thinking toward building a Christian theological reflection and ethical application regarding power.

The kind of power that will be discussed in this article relates particularly to race relations. A broader intent is afoot, however. That is, Christians need a continuing analysis and exploration of power as a basic principle in all the spheres of life, whether it relates to race relations, economics, politics, family life, or issues of life and death.

**Getting a Hold on Power**

The glaring deficiency of conversation about, much more attention to, and application of, a theology of power is due in part to attitudes and perspectives already held by Christians, particularly those in western cultures. Many folk would likely ask: “Theology? Power? What do those have to do with one another?” In my growing up years, discussions of power were limited to the singing of “There is Power in the Blood,” or a far off, it’s-beyond-my-control observation. Further resistance to talking about power came through self-righteous statements like “Power is ugly, evil, and always sinful. Just look at how politics operates!”

We have to recognize that “power,” like any word, is not univocal, but multifaceted. Any conversation or action in which we may engage can have a number of expressions of power as a part of the context. Synonyms for the word “power” include: influence, movement, potency, energy, dominance, authority, weight, control, prestige, sway, jurisdiction, license, commission, domain, realm, rule, scope, enable, empower, warrant, permit, delegate, deputize, prevail, boss, tyrannize, persuade, invigorate, effect, strengthen. All phases of life, in fact, can be considered carrying some dimension of power.
Coming to Terms with Power

John Kenneth Galbraith, an influential economist, offered, in *Anatomy of Power*, three expressions of power that operate within our culture: condign, compensatory, and conditioned.6

Condign—This expression of power attempts to win submission to its point of view by inflicting or threatening adverse consequences. Raw, brute force is the idea with condign power. Galbraith’s more analytical definition can be supplemented with an illustration from the movie *Conan the Barbarian*. Conan became a gladiator, surviving by his enormous physical prowess. His owner, identified as a Mongol general, asked of him, to define for a visitor what is best in life? Conan replied: “To crush your enemies, see them driven before you, and to hear the lamentation of their women.” The Mongol general responded: “That is good! That is good.”7

Madonna Kolbenschlag considers this condign expression to be reflective of social castes. In some cultural contexts, even the clergy reflect these characteristics—think Ku Klux Klan and the Inquisition, for example. Kolbenschlag opines: “. . . conformity. . . cronyism. . . cloning. . . exclusivity . . . fear of the unpredictable. . . exhibit low tolerance for ambiguity, dialectic and dialogue.”8 We see this implementation of power all the time, catch it from local to world news. The basics of life—someone wins—and by definition has conquered; someone loses. The best is the one who wins.

Compensatory—Such expression of power relies on bringing one over with the promise of a reward. Certainly, we can recognize the influence of the extension of financial returns with an expected response. A caricature of this position is that of the organization person who dissolves into the corporate image.9 All of us who sell our time and service for a wage can identify with this form to some degree. Interestingly, compensatory power shares some of the dehumanization characteristics of condign power—more implicitly than explicitly perhaps, but dehumanizing nonetheless.10

Conditioned—Power expressed in this way does not reflect coercion as do the former two modes. The “winning over” comes from suggestions from someone in some sort of a consultative position. Phrases like “Let me offer this for your thinking” are common in this expression of power. Deference to others and encouraging them toward a healthier, freer, more autonomous existence, and interchanging with others mark this conditioned power.11
One articulating power in a conditioned fashion will appeal to consensus, the stuff of the formation of community. The marks of this form reflect: finding common purpose, goals, and collaborating so there is synergy. Robert Greenleaf delineated what has become somewhat faddishly projected, servant leadership. Most of Greenleaf’s examples come from cultural narratives, but he more than infers theological bases in his portrayal of servant leadership.

Some Perspective—Condign and compensatory have marked American modes of power in the western hemisphere since the first Europeans arrived. When the Native Americans would not barter, the new immigrants forced them from the land they desired for themselves. Then, the light-skinned new arrivals arranged the system so that each new wave of immigrants, even if light skinned, found themselves at the lowest rung of the economic ladder. Those of darker complexion, who were forced to come the new world, still find themselves often at the bottom of the compensatory power ladder. The xenophobic dynamic extends beyond complexion, however, now finding extension into gender, age, other ethnic groups, and other world religions for its attacks.

Violence, an abuse of power, extends through human society, sometimes cloaked in theological jargon. Physical attacks, in the name of religion, have driven wars for centuries. More subtle, though perhaps more insidious, covert violence occurs in the forms of racism, ageism, sexism, and so forth.

Theology and Power

Most Christians understand God as “powerful” in some way or another. Beliefs about how God implements that power influences people’s understanding of how God seeks good and resists evil. Those beliefs can be informed and formed by understanding contexts in Scripture where God’s people engaged the power of the Creator, Redeemer, and Judge. Moses’ miracles, the Exodus, and the relationships attempted in the Early Church over against the dominant culture are good beginning places for such study.

Two terms in the Old Testament that give insight into the power of God are justice/mishpat and righteousness/tsedeq. The word mishpat conveys the idea of the constant, self-emptying, graciously efficacious working of the passionate God, demonstrated in the unconditional fidelity the prophets proclaimed, and in the cross of the New Testament: that compassionate, free
A paradox lies behind biblical power.

Compensatory power finds expression especially in the Old Testament. The establishing of a covenant relationship between God and humans is a kind of bartering, contractual, arrangement marked by “I will…” if “you will…”

God the Father—The narratives displaying God’s condign power draw many contemporary Christians’ attention. Imprecatory Psalms such as 68, 83, or 109 call for God’s condign power to intervene on behalf of God’s people; but, the biblical text does not tell us whether such condign power is ever carried out by God at humanity’s request.

God the Son—The Old Testament, particularly Isa 9:6-7, provides the images of power associated with Jesus, the Christ. In Luke 4 Jesus read from the book of Isaiah, linking himself to the Old Testament concept of Jubilee. In addition, Jesus’ actions imitated the images cast by Isaiah of the suffering servant (Isa 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12). Core values of the Gospel include Jesus’ teachings regarding self-denial, turning the other cheek, and going the extra mile. Not the least of these paradoxical images is that of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem on a donkey, not a war horse. Paul, interpreting the Christ-like life, promoted servanthood images with his popularly labeled “one-anothering” themes: encourage one another, submit yourselves to one another, and so forth.

God the Spirit—The Spirit’s creative power is depicted in Gen 1:2. The metaphor of wind or breath gives life to the dry bones in Ezekiel’s valley, inspiration to the prophets, and vitality to the faithful of God (Ezek 37:1-14), and in the book of Joel, a promise that the breath of God would come upon all the faithful (Joel 2:28-32; cf. Acts 2:17-21). No other word but 

A paradox lies behind biblical power.

Compensatory power finds expression especially in the Old Testament. The establishing of a covenant relationship between God and humans is a kind of bartering, contractual, arrangement marked by “I will…” if “you will…”

God the Father—The narratives displaying God’s condign power draw many contemporary Christians’ attention. Imprecatory Psalms such as 68, 83, or 109 call for God’s condign power to intervene on behalf of God’s people; but, the biblical text does not tell us whether such condign power is ever carried out by God at humanity’s request.

God the Son—The Old Testament, particularly Isa 9:6-7, provides the images of power associated with Jesus, the Christ. In Luke 4 Jesus read from the book of Isaiah, linking himself to the Old Testament concept of Jubilee. In addition, Jesus’ actions imitated the images cast by Isaiah of the suffering servant (Isa 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12). Core values of the Gospel include Jesus’ teachings regarding self-denial, turning the other cheek, and going the extra mile. Not the least of these paradoxical images is that of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem on a donkey, not a war horse. Paul, interpreting the Christ-like life, promoted servanthood images with his popularly labeled “one-anothering” themes: encourage one another, submit yourselves to one another, and so forth.

God the Spirit—The Spirit’s creative power is depicted in Gen 1:2. The metaphor of wind or breath gives life to the dry bones in Ezekiel’s valley, inspiration to the prophets, and vitality to the faithful of God (Ezek 37:1-14), and in the book of Joel, a promise that the breath of God would come upon all the faithful (Joel 2:28-32; cf. Acts 2:17-21). No other word but 

A paradox lies behind biblical power.

Compensatory power finds expression especially in the Old Testament. The establishing of a covenant relationship between God and humans is a kind of bartering, contractual, arrangement marked by “I will…” if “you will…”

God the Father—The narratives displaying God’s condign power draw many contemporary Christians’ attention. Imprecatory Psalms such as 68, 83, or 109 call for God’s condign power to intervene on behalf of God’s people; but, the biblical text does not tell us whether such condign power is ever carried out by God at humanity’s request.

God the Son—The Old Testament, particularly Isa 9:6-7, provides the images of power associated with Jesus, the Christ. In Luke 4 Jesus read from the book of Isaiah, linking himself to the Old Testament concept of Jubilee. In addition, Jesus’ actions imitated the images cast by Isaiah of the suffering servant (Isa 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12). Core values of the Gospel include Jesus’ teachings regarding self-denial, turning the other cheek, and going the extra mile. Not the least of these paradoxical images is that of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem on a donkey, not a war horse. Paul, interpreting the Christ-like life, promoted servanthood images with his popularly labeled “one-anothering” themes: encourage one another, submit yourselves to one another, and so forth.

God the Spirit—The Spirit’s creative power is depicted in Gen 1:2. The metaphor of wind or breath gives life to the dry bones in Ezekiel’s valley, inspiration to the prophets, and vitality to the faithful of God (Ezek 37:1-14), and in the book of Joel, a promise that the breath of God would come upon all the faithful (Joel 2:28-32; cf. Acts 2:17-21). No other word but 

choice of powerlessness that broke the stranglehold of the principalities and powers, and empowered us to love and to bear one another’s burdens.16

The word tsedeq conveys, the sense of “going beyond one’s own concerns in caring for the other.” One who has been touched by God’s tsedeq will relate to others with integrity. The extension of such character testifies of God’s power to transform the unrighteous qualities of humanity, whether expressed in individuals or across society. Thus, tsedeq and mishpat address the point of needfulness we have outside the power of God. A paradox lies behind biblical power.
book of Acts the description of Jesus that the wind blows where it will (John 3:8).

Some perspective—Condign, compensatory, and conditioned modes of power appear throughout Scripture. As we understand, and experience, Christological expressions of power, we must conclude that Christians should be implementers of conditioned power as much and often as possible.

**Power and Personhood**

An understanding of anthropology is necessary for exploring a theology of power. By virtue of being created in the image of God, all persons are gifted with power.20 In Gen 1:26-30 God calls humanity to be co-creative partners in maintaining creation through influence, management, and organization.

Pulling together an examination of cultural expressions of power, as outlined by Galbraith, and those discovered in Scripture, we may be permitted to conclude that the highest order of power expressions by humanity toward humanity are the conditioned and servanthood modes. The ultimate example of servanthood for Christians is, of course, Jesus Christ: e.g., washing the disciples’ feet (John 13:1-17) and the hymn recounted in Phil 2:1-11.

So many of us have heard these passages again and again, but have failed to absorb their true meaning. Thus, they remain interesting but harmless, too idealistic for the life that we have to live. Why? One reason is our culturally shaped sense of what it means to be a servant. Too many white, American males, for example, consider that any real male is not anybody’s servant. “No Herman Milquetoast resides in this he-man body of flesh and blood,” goes the thinking.21

We have succumbed to the cultural myth that a servant is a doormat. And thus, our perception of servanthood has become a reality for our behavior. One simple solution for such a skewed perception is to understand the difference between servanthood and servitude. Servitude has become the operative term when it is not even the appropriate word. Servanthood is not a rare commodity. For those with ears to hear and eyes to see, servanthood is close by all the time. When we do hear it and see it we are experiencing...
something of the Christ-centered mode of power being implemented—and then we are coming closer to a true theology of power.

**Conclusion**

The biblical-theological vision of power is a paradoxical one. The Bible does speak of power. Rather than being constantly in control, carrying the big stick, and getting everyone to move out of our way, however, we must, in trust and obedience to a higher vision of power, be willing to live in insecurity and needfulness. Jesus’ principles—to live is to die, to lose is to gain—are to override our culturally formed images of power.

---


3 This article follows the pattern that H. Richard Niebuhr described as Christ above Culture in Synthesis. The Synthesis model is a helpful one for engagement of our cultural context with the Good News. We can begin with cultural expressions, scenarios, metaphors, and relationships to transcendent principles and values. Jesus illustrated this approach, for example, with his parables.

4 Caleb Rosado in “The Undergirding Factor is POWER: Toward an Understanding of Prejudice and Racism,” http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/papers/caleb/racism.html, offers a strenuous plea for this power and race investigation: “As the dawn of the 21st century nears, racism is the most important and persistent social problem in America and in the world today and is on the rise in increasing ways. Whether we are talking about ethnic cleansings, group hatred or retraction of equity laws under the guise that these are unfair, the underlying issue is the same. One group, threatened by the perceived loss of power, exercises social, economic and political muscle against the other to retain privilege.
by restructuring for social advantage.” In the US the myth of
the Lost Cause motivates a large part of civil religion and its
rituals, so-called intellectual elements, theological glosses, and
supports the ideology particularly expressed by the
Confederacy in the American Civil War. David W. Blight, Race
and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory (Cambridge,

See the comments of Nigel G. Wright, in his New Baptists,
New Agenda (Carlisle, Cumbria, England: Paternoster Press,
2002), 97, toward Baptists addressing emergence and convergence of social issues.
Responses have to address shifting paradigms of society: “My concern. . . is to shift
paradigms, that is, to explore what it might mean to acknowledge that we are now a minority
in somebody else’s world.” Tony Campolo, through Red Letter Christians: A Citizen’s Guide
to Faith & Politics (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2008), 216, notes the breadth of power related issues:
“As my politically conservative church friends ranted and raged against Martin Luther
King, Jr. my students challenged me to face up to the teachings of Scripture, which call for
an obliteration of all barriers to social equality. I could no longer deny that, in accord with
Gal 3:28, we are called to affirm a new humanity in which people of different races, genders
and social classes are made one.”

4-5.


Madonna Kolbenschlag, Lost in the Land of Oz (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988),
111-12.

Wayne Oates, The Struggle to Be Free: My Story and Your Story (Philadelphia: The
Westminster Press, 1983), 150-52. Oates considers the institutional side of our lives projects
the center concept. Government, educational institutions, even churches qualify under
the definition. Power of the center can potentially disburse power for the common good.
Oates cautions, though, power can have a negative, collective face: “Power becomes
demonic. . . when it is used to posture, pose, or set oneself apart from and over others; to
embellish a public image; to form an imperial coterie of one’s ‘palace guards.’”

A resurgence of interest in Ayn Rand’s Atlas Shrugged (New York: Signet, 1957)
should give pause to those who recognize unrestrained capitalism as an assassin of
community. A helpful counter comes in Susan R. Holman, ed., Wealth and Poverty in Early
Church and Society (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008).

See the continuing conversation from Richard J. Mouw begun in his Uncommon
Decency: Christian Civility in an Uncivil World (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992),
28, where he said, “Civility has its own value. . . . To become a gentler and more reverent
person is itself a way of being more like what God intended us to be.”

Robert Greenleaf, Servant Leadership: A Journey Into the Nature of Legitimate Power and

14 Robert McAfee Brown, *Religion and Violence* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1973). Brown’s categories move through: overt, personal assault illustrated by physical attacks one on another; covert, personal assault reflected in bullying (cyber and other kinds), stalking, or emotional abuse; overt, institutional assault as seen in war between opposing groups; and, covert, institutional assault perceived through systemic boundaries set up such as the outlawed practice of “redlining.”


20 J. Daniel Hays, *From every People and Nation: A biblical theology of race* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 48-49, refers to the image of God as mental, spiritual faculties that people share with their creator, appointment of humankind as God’s representatives on earth and the capacity to relate to God.

21 Leonard Pitts in his “It’s not easy being a white male,” *Miami Herald*, March 12, 2011 contends, “The Census Bureau says that within 40 years, there will no longer be such a thing as a racial majority. All of us will be minorities. While such fundamental change will challenge every American, it seems to have already panicked some of those Americans
for whom being a minority will be a new experience.” From Jose de la Isla, “In America, a plural society is better than a majority-minority.” http://www.scrippsnews.com/content/delaisla-america-plural-society-better-majority-minority: “Each decade, the release of new census figures provides a brief moment of reflection on the nation as a society. The meditation turns into one about what groups are jockeying for political representation. . . . Increasingly the “race issue” is less and less that of black-white dichotomies, rather increasingly becoming more complex. . . . Many in the media have used the cliché ‘majority-minority.’ It’s an oxymoron if there ever was one. In reality when no one population category forms a majority, the largest group is the plurality. The Founding Fathers understood. This is why they put E pluribus unum, ‘Out of the many, one,’ on the Seal of the United States. Let’s just hope the ‘majority-minority’ notion now goes away for keeps. It fills no useful purpose. Let it drown from the vapors of its own miasma. The notion of a more plural society, validated by census numbers, is a much more liberating mindset.”
A Biblical Approach to Hospitality
By Matthew Carroll*

ABSTRACT

This article speaks as an introduction to the theology and practice of hospitality. Throughout scripture, we read an understanding and calling to hospitality both as custom and more importantly as mandate for followers of Christ. First, the challenges of meeting this mandate are laid out primarily through identifying the fear many have of the unknown. Second, the definitions of stranger and neighbor have been influenced by popular culture today and are seen by some as total opposites. This article aims to help differentiate the two terms through the lens of scripture. Finally, a celebration of difference is emphasized as a primary means to welcome all to the table of hospitality.

Introduction

We are living in a time of hyper-technological advancement. We have the Internet in our pockets and our libraries on an e-reader. Especially in the last twenty years, there has been exponential growth of the World Wide Web and cellular telephones. These technological advancements have made the need for real, in person, face-to-face interaction almost obsolete. Fortunately, we still witness the need of people to gather together. We see this in our family get-togethers, our busy restaurants, and parties. There is still something in us that craves the fellowship of another individual. As Christians, we believe that we are created and called to live in community,

* Matthew Carroll is a student at McAfee School of Theology of Mercer University in Atlanta, Georgia.
As Christians, we believe that we are created and called to live in community, both with God and others. Hospitality is our response to this community call. In scripture, we read about Jesus sharing meals with the least of society. He teaches us to love our neighbors and then puts his own teaching into action as our example.

Hospitality provides the opportunity to get to know the strangers in our neighborhood. It gives us the chance to extend the love of Christ to those who may have never experienced it before. The world is full of people seeking connection with another, and the church has the opportunity, as well as the mandate, to spread love and justice through the practice of hospitality.

We, the church, have an excellent opportunity to make a lasting impact on our neighbors. In a world of hurt and sorrow, we can be a presence that brings healing and comfort. To meet that goal, we need to rethink how we envision and engage others different from us and address the fact that we do not like what is different. Since September 11, 2001, many actually live with fear of those of other religions or nationalities. Unfortunately, we can be quick to judge that which we do not know or understand. Many Americans had a hard time processing what happened on that terrible day, and instead of encouraging dialogue across religions, we were advised to continue shopping. Out of the church, there were a few extremists condemning all people of the Muslim faith. Many of the teachings from our pulpits were not of forgiveness and grace, but of emphasizing the difference between Christians and Muslims. We are living in a pluralistic society, with people from very different backgrounds. The church needs to understand how to dialogue with our changing neighborhoods if we are to have an impact on the future of our country. Hospitality must become a priority for all Christian peoples as we reach out into our neighborhoods.

**Challenges to Hospitality**

The basic factor of fear is difference. We are attracted to others that look like us, have common interests, or have similar religious views. We like things or people that are familiar to us. Expectations are established and we feel we can be open with them. Strangers are different. We are not used to them. The unknown makes us question, births discomfort, and eventually leads to fear.
The problem is that we do little to undo the feelings of fear. Many are content with simply being judgmental and distant instead of engaging in relationships. The differences in all of us are to be celebrated, not feared. As Christians, we believe each human being is created in the image of God, and as such, we should embrace the uniqueness of every individual.

The modern idea of individualism has also hindered our welcoming of the stranger. From an early age, we are taught to rely only on ourselves, to take pride in what we earn. There is nothing wrong in having confidence in our abilities to make a living and provide for a family. The danger, however, is when our understanding of independence equates receiving assistance with weakness. We work hard to make sure we do not become susceptible to asking for help. We insist we can do it on our own. We believe we should not burden others and we certainly should not rely on the government. We can then project some form of this attitude toward the poor and needy among us, saying they do not have much because they are lazy. A major side effect of this is our need to gain possessions and claim exclusive ownership of what we believe is rightfully ours. Our ‘stuff’ begins to define us and reveal where our priorities lie. Individualism fosters a mentality in which everything becomes about us.

Individualism fosters a mentality in which everything becomes about us.

It is also no secret that people have become more privatized. For the middle class, one can own their own house, with a garage full of their own cars and their own tools, or live in an apartment with their own washer and dryer and TV. Most do not have to rely on others, nor share with others. We can purchase most anything we need for ourselves. Our economy runs on that philosophy, which has hindered our spirit of hospitality. Increasing individualism, coupled with a fearful disposition of strangers, has fostered a lifestyle that can be selfish and unjust. Technology and social websites can make us feel more connected with the world, yet we have trouble relating to the people in front of us. Hospitality engages our neighbors. Hospitality can transform relationships and is a means to true discipleship.

**Defining Neighbor**

As we read in the Gospel of Luke, Jesus is asked the question concerning who is our neighbor (10:29-37). Jesus takes his answer one step beyond what was asked and explains how to be a neighbor. Jesus tells the story of the
Good Samaritan, ruffling feathers by elevating the Samaritan above the priest and Levite because he showed mercy to the victim. Jesus bridged the division between the Jews and Samaritans, insisting that we are to be neighbors even to the ones we despise. Jesus also slyly makes the man doing the questioning answer who was being a neighbor and instructs him to do likewise. He transforms the traditional definition of neighbor to someone in need, rather than someone who is part of a specific group. Jesus taught that it does not matter whom we define as neighbor; we must simply to be a neighbor to all. Our cultural understanding has mostly fulfilled the role of defining a neighbor.

Taken literally, a neighbor is someone living within a very small radius of our homes. We probably know our neighbors living next door, as we should. We may even host our neighbors for dinner or exchange greetings from time to time. The fact is we behave neighborly to those we know. Casual conversations can diminish the strangeness between an individual and us. Perhaps a better understanding of the stranger’s position can help resolve some of the fear we may have and encourage an attitude of sacred humanness.

**Defining Stranger**

Everyone may have a definition of “stranger” simply from personal experience. There are those situations where we have to meet and interact with people we do not know, whether it be starting a new job or shopping at a department store. Demonstrating hospitality toward the stranger is an intentional act and breaks through difference. It is a demonstration of acceptance through the recognition of common humanity. It makes the unknown known. Welcoming the stranger into community is what our goal should be. Christine Pohl defines strangers as “those who are disconnected from basic relationships that give persons a secure place in the world. The most vulnerable strangers are detached from family, community, church, work, and polity.” These are the people whom Jesus calls the “least of these.” An aspect of hospitality is meeting the physical needs of strangers, but more importantly is the relationship that can blossom out of humble interaction. Many times Jesus emphasized ways to build deeper relationships with those in need. He did not mean to limit Christian responsibility to service but to model a life of service that leads to healing relationships.
The strangers we meet in and around our neighborhoods are opportunities to practice hospitality. Most of us probably imagine hospitality as simply offering a meal or a place to stay for a night. Even in these instances, we may reserve this hospitality for those we know. Through sharing meals and meaningful conversation, some of us have enhanced our relationships with family and friends. We get to know them better and they get to know us. We enter into their stories and let others enter ours. If we practice hospitality to strangers with intentional care as we do with family and friends, they will no longer be strangers.

Walter Brueggemann describes strangers simply as “people without a place.”3 In a larger context, strangers could be those who are disconnected from common social institutions. They not only lack personal interaction with individuals, but they are detached from connections that can promote positive self-worth. They can get lost in the growth and change of society around them. Strangers can lack the voice needed to fight for the respect of their humanness. In a society run by the powerful, strangers without a place gets overlooked. They lack a respectable position to be taken seriously and, therefore, to be of concern when injustice is the by-product of our cultural lifestyle. For example, the effects on the lower class are taken into consideration very little when economic laws are being made. We can see this by the ever-increasing gap between the rich and poor in America today. These strangers have become victims and they deserve a voice. The church should echo the voices of strangers.

Recognition is an important aspect of hospitality that must be emphasized. When we open up our lives to others and welcome them as equals, we are recognizing them as valued individuals regardless of their social or economic class. To love in this way, we are making an important step toward connecting with people we wish to help. We are also making a stand against what is popular in society today. We are told the powerful, smart, and athletic are to be highly valued and admired. When the poor and needy have the focus of the church, they receive recognition, which can bring a voice to ignored members of society. Hospitality can initiate that process.4 God recognizes strangers and is concerned for their situation. They deserve our recognition and concern as well.
Biblical Grounding for Hospitality

How we interpret biblical stories shapes our attitudes toward strangers. Former faculty member at Yale Divinity School, Letty Russell, sees the story of the tower of Babel and Pentecost as two great biblical examples of how we can embrace difference as a gift from God.5

In Gen 11:1-9, the people began building a tower to reach the heavens. The tower of Babel was a symbol of strength of the people as they thought they could reach God by their own work. The people united in consolidating their power to build a structure that would signify their dominance. They tried to be like God in order to dominate other people groups. God responded by confusing their language. The gift of difference, as Russell calls it, is to be celebrated and remembered as God disciplining those who seek power over people.6 This story has been preached to explain when God introduced different people groups, people of different colors and the speaking of different languages. It has also been preached as a warning when we try to be like God. In this way, the confusing of languages is a punishment rather than God responding to our sin in love. We should celebrate the gift of difference.

Russell says we see this gift come full circle during Pentecost. The people are filled with the Holy Spirit and they can understand each other (Acts 2:1-11). They are confused by this phenomenon. People from different nations were able to understand each other in their own language. Russell believes this is important to emphasize when teaching about unity under Christ. She argues that Pentecost is not just a call to unity in the body, but also a call to understand everyone of difference. People did not forget their cultural heritage or customs, yet they were able to understand each other through the communication of the Holy Spirit.7 We learn that we have not lost our nationalities or social locations because we follow Christ. Our uniqueness is preserved. Still, our differences are not a barrier to conformity, but a blessing for unity. We have the gift to accept and befriend people in spite of language barriers. Jesus is our common identity. Our differences protect us from domination and promote unity without conformity.

Hospitality is emphasized throughout scripture. In the Hebrew Bible, we catch a glimpse of the importance of hospitality as we encounter the story of Lot and his strangers (Gen 19). Lot seemed to be following customs of the day when he hosted these strangers he did not know. Nonetheless, the city was destroyed because of a lack of justice toward strangers (Ezek 16:49-50).
Justice and hospitality seem to work together. Jesus teaches that by helping strangers in need, we are serving him (Matt 25: 44-45). We are brought back to the emphasis of sacred humanness in all people. The listeners would have known the creation story, about God creating humankind in his own image. Jesus was saying that his image was found in everyone, which brings providing for the stranger to a personal level. Paul echoes the importance of hospitality in the book of Romans by commanding the people to “share with people who are in need. Practice hospitality” (Rom 12:13). In other instances, there seems to be an understanding that hospitality characterizes someone who follows Jesus’ teachings. For example, according to Matthew people who do not accept the disciples will be judged harsher than the people of Sodom (10:14-15). Hospitality is a serious practice and is expected of Jesus’ followers.

Conclusion

The stranger is our neighbor, and all of our neighbors deserve our hospitality. Letty Russell understands hospitality as “the practice of God’s welcome, embodied in our actions as we reach across difference to participate with God in bringing justice and healing in our world in crisis.” When we transform our views of the stranger and celebrate our differences, our churches become a place to experience God’s welcome. We can play host in our homes, but if we lack true equality with the stranger we contribute to the dominating forces in place. It is important to learn how to respect people where they are. Conformity is not a tool for salvation. When we acknowledge the other as a person of God, valued on the simple basis of being human, we respect their rights and their self-worth. Amazing things happen when we practice this art of hospitality. It involves the colliding of private and public lives. As we are meeting strangers living out our lives in the world, opportunities for hospitality present themselves, and hospitality takes place in these intimate settings. We can choose to see mere strangers, but when we are engaged with them, acknowledging their humanness, we are practicing hospitality.

As we confront cultural demands that emphasize individualism and selfish ambitions, the church needs to counter with a message of community
and justice for all. Our first step is to acknowledge what we value in other people and our attitude toward the stranger, comparing each to the teachings of scripture. As we have all felt the experience of being a stranger, we must be sensitive to those “without a place.” Hospitality can bring people of different traditions together and help us learn from each other while fulfilling our need for community. Sometimes we seek to make changes only on a large scale. We think we need a big event to invite people to, or to push for a just economic policy, or maybe build a house for someone. While large-scale changes are good and necessary, what we need not forgot is the one-on-one opportunities we have every day. We must not forget to love the person in front of us. Hospitality is not only mandated in scripture, but is the doorway to the very workings of the kingdom. Let us celebrate our differences and welcome all to the table.


4 Pohl, Making Room, 62.


6 Ibid., 55.

7 Ibid., 60.

8 Ibid., 2.

9 Richard, Living Hospitality, 2.
The Ethics of Tourism

By Deonie Duncan*

* Deonie Duncan is a pastor in Jamaica.

ABSTRACT

Tourism makes an important contribution to the economy of many nations. What estimate may Christians offer of the real value of tourism to national development? This paper explores the relation of tourism and environmental degradation, unfair employment practices, and the preservation of host cultures?

Introduction

In July 2004, upon graduating from seminary as a Baptist pastor, I began my probation in the Ocho Rios Circuit of Baptist Churches. Ocho Rios, one of the major tourist resorts in Jamaica, was just a few decades ago a quiet fishing village with some private holiday homes on its fringes.1 With the shift in development, many persons in the Ocho Rios Area are employed either directly or indirectly in the tourism industry.2 It follows then that many of the members of my churches are employed in the industry and its subsidiaries. Therefore, tourism is an integral variable in the lives of the
people of this circuit. In my role as pastor, I had the opportunity to interact with a cross section of persons who work in tourism related services.

Tourism is often highlighted and promoted as economically beneficial; in fact, it is considered to be the major foreign currency earner for the country. Employment opportunities in the industry have enriched the lives of persons both culturally and financially. Those among whom I served spoke of how the industry creates opportunities for networking among service providers and as such guarantees future business opportunities for subsidiaries. Workers in the industry report increased earning power, especially through foreign exchange gained from the tips received and gratuity based on occupancy levels. These are additional income received in addition to basic salary.

Their employment in the industry, however, comes with a cost. While the tourism industry provides economic benefits and in many instances job satisfaction, there is evidence that the persons who are directly involved in the industry or its subsidiaries face serious moral, social, and ethical challenges. While the benefits of tourism to the development of the resort areas and the country in general is not to be undervalued, it cannot be ignored that the benefits are not underpinned by the principles of equity, equality, and sustainability for all parties involved in the viability of the industry.

Unfair Employment Practices

I observed that the persons employed in the industry are required to work long and irregular hours. This was collaborated in discussions with persons among whom there was the common cry regarding the extended and haphazard hours of work. They are required to work on weekends, public holidays, and Sundays. These long extended hours are not necessarily remunerated with additional compensation. There was the recurring lament that extended work hours and flexi-hours severely impinge on quality time.
with family, spiritual life, and other necessary social relationships. This causes mental, physical, and psychological stress. To be asked to get work done at any cost, and without overtime payment, could be regarded as exploitation of staff, but the employer is protected by the “any other duty can be assigned” clause in job descriptions.

In addition to the long and irregular work hours, the employee is expected to accept transfer assignments to other properties in a group—at short notice and without consultation as to whether it is convenient to the worker—as long as the administration thinks it necessary. There are times also when employers will require employees to work for special functions at short notice. The employers constantly remind the employees that many others are waiting to fill vacancies. As such, employees will comply with requests, even when they think they are unreasonable.\(^4\)

What makes this even more tragic is that this kind of work arrangement is both unregulated and lacking in commensurate compensation.

I also observed that the fickleness of the industry does not provide much job security and stability. This leads to a sense of unsettledness in the lives of some persons. Employees may be made redundant or become unemployed because of reorganization of departments, change of hotel management, or because of hotel renovation. When a hotel changes management some members are out of jobs and unable to find other jobs because the training they had and the experience garnered were specifically geared toward the hospitality industry. Re-employment options sometimes require accepting lower paying jobs. They also have to compete with trainees and youths who provide cheaper labor. Persons employed as trainees will work for their entire probation period without proper supervision and with a full workload. They are not entitled, however, to a full compensation package and no guarantees that they will be employed fulltime at the end of the probation period. Very often, they are replaced with another set of trainees at the end of the probation period and the cycle starts again.

The workers speak of discrimination experienced in various ways in the industry. Trade Unions are blocked from providing protection for workers in the industry, so that only a few hotel workers are unionized. There is discrimination against workers who take issues to their Trade Union. Such persons are given less working hours or shifts that are difficult. Sabotage was mentioned as one of the means of discrimination in the industry.
Promotion may be withheld if one raises questions along ethical lines. In fact, it is believed that the discrimination cultivates a culture of silence. In relation to this Cicely Athis said, “The worker who shows any sign of individuality or who asks questions about working conditions will soon be unemployed.”

Workers also mention subtle and explicit sexual harassment from managerial/supervisory staff members. Some persons feel that promotion is denied when sexual favours are not granted.

The extent and gravity of these challenges raise an important question: How is it that workers in the industry maintain such a positive view of the industry when they face such insurmountable challenges? The answer lies in the fact that they seem to value the material benefits of the industry more than they value themselves. At least, obtaining material benefit is more important to their value of themselves than the violation of their personhood and rights, which they experience almost daily. What is worst is the fact that the industry thrives on precisely this kind of mindset.

**Preservation of Host Cultures**

In addition to the economic benefits, the persons seemed appreciative of the opportunity that the industry offers to interact with persons of other cultures. It provides an informal education through the gleaning of insights about places they have not visited. Through interaction and observation, they learn the significance of dress and food in such cultures. They also mentioned that when guests are satisfied they make expressions in tangible ways so that some have benefitted from travel opportunities. Though we know that tourists love and embrace local culture, the people did not speak of the ways in which they are able to influence the visitors with the local culture but instead about how the outside cultures influence them.

With the infiltration of values and practices other than those of the host country, there is a greater demand for narcotic pain killers, which are sold as over the counter drugs in some developed countries. There is also the demand for some prescribed drugs and the dosage indicates misconduct and impropriety. The improper use of some prescribed drugs results from the loose sexual behaviour associated with the tourism trade.
behavior associated with the tourism trade. Regardless of the benefits of the cultural exchange, some persons express their discomfort with the acceptance of looseness, promiscuity, and prostitution that accompany the tourism industry. The general feeling is that Jamaica is advertised as a sex spot over and against a beauty spot and, thus, the guests come more for sex and the freedom to express sexual preferences and taste. Nudity and blatant practices of alternative lifestyles are evident on some properties.

Caribbean writers are aware and have written of these challenges. For example, Annette Brown argues that while tourism increases the understanding of different cultures, the visitors’ cultures seem superior because they are linked with big money. As a result, it encourages local people to abandon their own lifestyles to ‘copy-cat’ the visitors. “The increase in the use of hard drugs, reports about sexual deviation and abuse, (including prostitution), wide-scale bribery and corruption, dishonesty, lack of courtesy and discipline and the use of coarse, vulgar and obscene language in public places, as well as partial and total nudity, are indicative of this copying.”

Cicely Athill and Kortright Davis have made related observations. While there is celebration of local culture and appreciation for local cuisine, local crafts and art forms, the all-inclusive concept of the hotels creates a paradox with the exclusivity that they offer. The tourists in the super inclusive hotels do not necessarily get to experience local culture in its unadulterated form by interacting with the way of life of the people. The experience of the tourist is limited to the entertainment, and the sun, sea and sand that is available and offered within the hotel. The dominant culture within these super hotels is not that of the host country, since the hotels are owned by foreigners and seek to satisfy the taste of the tourists. For example, the specialty restaurants in the all inclusive hotels are usually mostly European or Oriental in taste. This dominance of foreign culture has a negative impact on the way locals view themselves and their culture. Consequently, they seek to copy the behavior of the visitors instead of seeking to preserve their cultural heritage. From this standpoint, one may raise the question, “does tourism really contribute to national development if it serves to erode the culture of host countries?”

Environmental Degradation

While there is much landscaping and presumed development of a resort town, it is accompanied by ecological damage. The construction of super
The construction of super hotels and beaches puts the natural ecology of the coastline at risk. The extent of ecological damage may not be easily quantified in the short term; however, it is evident in the over-mining of sand for construction of resorts and, recently, in the moving of sand illegally to create beaches for the tourists. In addition, beaches are being destroyed by overuse and pollution. Tourists have also put enormous pressure on the existing eco-system and infrastructure through their inordinate consumption of water, electricity, and seafood—over consumption that can cause shortages, price increases, and/or, in the case of seafood, depletion of local supplies. The construction of hotels attracts many low skilled persons to the resort town. While some may see this as sustainable employment in one of the subsidiaries of the tourism industry, that is, the construction sector, when construction ends some of the workers cannot be employed in the industry. They continue to live in unplanned informal settlements that also house those who are directly employed in the low paying jobs within the industry. The creation of these communities may be accompanied by the destruction of the watershed along with poor sewage treatment and solid waste management, all of which contribute to reduced water quality from the impact of increased pollution in the coastal waters. The proper waste management by hotels in the resort areas also remains questionable. While tourism is promoted as economic development for the country and the resort town, it is creating enormous damage to some of our non-renewable resources. Therefore, one has to ask if this offers sustainable development for the nation.

What estimate may Christians offer of the real value of tourism to national development?

Arising from these issues, some of what is highlighted as benefits of the industry if examined through new lens could well be seen as exploitative and discriminatory. Some of these challenges are not unique to persons employed in the tourism industry. Nonetheless, they are experienced by persons who work in the industry. Furthermore, it cannot be denied that
some of the challenges encountered in the tourist industry may be peculiar, since the development of the industry causes rapid changes in traditional societies. The nature of the industry also engenders some of the challenges encountered.

It must be noted that the benefits of which the people spoke have a heavy weighting on extrinsic motivation and tangible rewards. Traditional evaluation of the industry tends to rob this money-orientated evaluation of its benefits. This is supported by Annette Brown, in her article “Tourism and Mission,” which postulates that the tourism industry is considered as the “Saviour” and “Deliverer” that offers quick relief from the economic ills of poor countries desperate for foreign capital, for jobs, and for a new stimulus for their dependent economies. Consequently, the industry is romanticized. She further argues that tourism is widely believed to be one of the best assets of so-called underdeveloped countries. She too falls prey, however, to the traditional assessment of the value of tourism when she identifies the benefits of the industry to the host country in purely economic terms.9 This Messiah concept of tourism expressed by Brown is also echoed by Kortright Davis, in the book Emancipation Still Comin’ when he states that “tourism offered an instant revolution in the concept of quick returns on investments, both in capital and labour”10 as an alternative to industrial development.

Operating within dependent economies predisposes persons to idolize industries such as tourism. They do not see and cannot imagine another way out and therefore develop a dependent and defensive mindset about the industry. This is dangerous because it means that they may subject themselves to oppressive conditions or even be oblivious to their oppression. It also means that the purveyors and power brokers in the industry have space to exploit them.

In response to this circumstance, the following affirmations may present a framework for Christians when they seek to make an estimate of the real value of tourism to national development.

1. As Christians we affirm that all human beings are created in the image of God and as such our value as human beings ought to be measured by the unique relationship we have with God. Every effort should be made by those who promote tourism as being beneficial to national development to insure that such promotion does not undermine the personhood of those in the industry. . . .
personhood of those in the industry to the extent that their value is measured in a way that elevates material wealth over a wider sense of wellbeing, but instead in a way that promotes their full value as people created in God’s image.

2. As Christians, we affirm the differentness of each other and seek to appreciate the uniqueness of each culture as divine gift. While we remain open to such differentness, we need to ensure that appreciation and acceptance of other cultural experiences are not accompanied by oppression and domination that give way to the creation of the unjust juxtaposition of superior and inferior culture.

3. As Christians we affirm that the environment is the gift of God for which we are stewards. We affirm that the environment can be shared and enjoyed creatively to facilitate the tourism industry through development and accessibility but should also be protected to ensure ecological wellbeing and sustainability through proper stewardship.


2 Cicely Athill states that “tourism offers … a new industry which appears relatively labour intensive. Not only does it directly create a number of new employment prospects, it also increases the number of subsidiary employment prospects. Cicely Athill, “Tourism and Caribbean Development,” in *The Church In Development*, Essays by Members of the 1982 graduating Class, ed. Joseph E. Nicholas (Jamaica: UTCWI, 1982), 119.

3 Among those who were interviewed it was noted that, there is just one day off each week with the exception of one hotel which gives two days off. Incidentally this is the only hotel where employees are unionized.

4 Athill shows knowledge of this jeopardy when she observes that “the unskilled workers know that there are hundreds who are queuing up for jobs; they are therefore under constant pressure to conform. The management also knows this, and in many cases exploits the workers, demanding long hours, total dedication, ‘kick-backs’ and social favours.” Athill, “Tourism,” 120.

5 Ibid.

7 “[T]he introduction of ... the topless bathing and now of nudist camps, the increase of drug abuse... are all undisputedly associated with the growth of the tourist industry.” Athill, “Tourism,” 121.

8 In addition, Kortright Davis also posits that the tourists bring with them their own styles and tastes which are emulated by host communities. Kortright Davis, *Emancipation Still Comin’ – Explorations in Caribbean Emancipatory Theology* (New York: Orbis Book, 1990), 20.

9 “... it brings foreign exchange into the country which can be channelled into other industries; it provides employment to the local people; it helps to promote the country’s image abroad; it helps to create international understanding; it gives work to local artists and craftsmen, thus helping to preserve traditional centres; it directs development away from industrial centres and the prosperity to all geographical areas of the country; and for the tourist, tourism can be an exodus from routine, liberation of the human spirit, and a new field of experience.” Brown, “Tourism and Mission,” 38-39.

Excitement in Nova Scotia: Beyond Racism and White Privilege

By Harry Gardner and Lois Mitchell*

“We confess that we have developed structures which have concentrated power and prestige in the hands of members of the dominant culture, and have been silent when, at specific points in our history, we have watched you [members of the African United Baptist Association] and others being victimized and unjustly treated. . . .

Dear God, we earnestly seek to be a people committed to building your kingdom. We pray that you would heal our brokenness and empower us to work for healing in our relationships. Grant us the courage to put our faith into practice to take the steps necessary for authentic reconciliation”

(2007 Joint Assembly, Confessional Liturgy and Covenant)

On August 22, 2007, nearly 1700 people gathered in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, for an historic joint Assembly of the Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches (CABC), the largest in its 161 year history. Under the theme of “Unity in Diversity: Celebrating our Oneness in Christ,” the African United Baptist Association (AUBA), the Atlantic Baptist Youth (ABY), the Atlantic Baptist Women (ABW), and the Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches (CABC) united for this Assembly, prompted by the leadership of the CABC’s Racism Working Group.

CABC had accepted the challenge from the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) to address racism and promote racial justice in the first decade of the twenty-first century. As a result, the Racism Working Group (RGW) was established in 2001, including representation from the African United Baptist Association (AUBA), to provide leadership for this task.

---

* Dr. Harry Gardner is President of Acadia Divinity College and Dean of Theology at Acadia University in Nova Scotia; Dr. Lois Mitchell is Director of Public Witness of the Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches in Nova Scotia.
The Reality of Racism and White Privilege in the CABC

Many attempts have been made to define *racism* and yet it remains a term that defies any simple or concise explanation. Rather than offer a definition of the term, we have found it helpful to describe racism in terms of its characteristics and impacts. It can be devastating psychologically, socially, and spiritually.

- **Psychologically:**
  - Racism perceives some persons to be inherently inferior to others simply because of their race.
  - Racism devalues persons in terms of their dignity and contribution to society.

- **Socially:**
  - Racism is prejudice combined with power; it uses the power structures of society to provide privilege for some and disadvantage for others.
  - Racism affects individuals and their families and communities, often through the social structures that define daily life.
  - Racism has become embedded in the structures of society—including denominational structures.

- **Spiritually:**
  - Racism denies persons their true identity as children of God and diminishes the CABC’s effectiveness in mission and ministry.

Understanding White Privilege

*White privilege* has been described as “an invisible package of unearned assets.” While it is not uncommon to hear about *racism* in popular—and even church—culture, *white privilege* is a concept that is often not mentioned. In order to deal effectively with racism and its impacts, *white privilege* must first be acknowledged and understood. White privilege allows people of the dominant culture to live in a society that has institutionalized various racist attitudes and practices, and yet be oblivious to the ways these attitudes and practices affect those who are not “white” or not of the dominant group.
For the dominant group, the privileges that they enjoy are not the subject of public policy or social activism—they simply are the way life is. For the most part, no one who has this invisible package of unearned assets has any reason to question how the absence of those very assets affects people who do not have them.

**Racism (and White Privilege) in CABC History**

As the Racism Working Group began to meet, it soon became apparent that the “history” of the Convention—as recorded in historical texts and as understood through oral accounts—was not a complete history, nor an accurate one. We discovered that names, dates, and places that have long been celebrated for their historical significance to the denomination simply do not tell the whole story, and the story they do tell is therefore a distorted version of reality.

An example of a racist blind spot relates to the role played by Rev. David George. George was the first black pastor in Canada, arriving in Nova Scotia in 1782. He planted Baptist churches in the United States, Canada, and Sierra Leone; however, his legacy has rarely been recognized or celebrated among Atlantic Baptists, and few know his name and work. In contrast, most Atlantic Baptists would recognize the name Henry Alline. Alline (1748-1784) was an evangelist and a contemporary of David George. He was not a Baptist and yet history credits him with being a major influence in the establishment of what was to become a Baptist work in the Maritime Provinces. The point is not that Alline should not receive this notoriety, but that the omission of David George’s legacy reflects a white-predominant culture bias. Harry Renfree, in his book *Heritage and Horizon: The Baptist Story in Canada* does discuss David George. This reference includes a disturbing account of what appears to be blatant racism. George founded a church in Birchtown, Shelburne County, which was burned to the ground by white soldiers who were incensed because George had baptized a white couple.2

Racism in nineteenth-century Nova Scotia was not uncommon and the effects of segregation and marginalization were manifested in the church as well as in the broader community.
manifested in the church as well as in the broader community. The 1833 “Meetinghouse Covenant” of the Baptists in Digby and Clements included this note: “That there shall be a place reserved for the colored people in the gallery on the north side of the house and at the west end and that no pew holder may sell his pew to colored people.”

The final report of the Racism Working Group to the Council of the CABC (June 2010) summarizes the experience of many black Baptists in Atlantic Canada and the connection between socio-political practices and the segregation of worship:

Three factors—all directly tied to racism—can be identified as contributing to the rise of segregated worship in Atlantic Canada. First, black people in isolated communities like North and East Preston had little choice but to start their own churches. It is important to recognize that settling of black people far away from mainstream society, was a forced measure to keep them on the outskirts of society, far away from white settlements and their houses of worship. . . . Two other scenarios can be identified. On the one hand, there were white churches with clear rules prohibiting full inclusion of black worshippers. . . . On the other hand, in some instances the desire for autonomy was a driving force for the establishment of black churches.

Many of the details of these events are not well known among white Baptists and are often missing from the official historical account. Several black churches in Nova Scotia pre-date the formation of the Maritime Baptist Convention in 1846. The African Baptist Association was formed as an entity distinct from the Maritime Baptist Convention in 1854, but joined the Convention family in the 1880s and was renamed the African United Baptist Association (AUBA). Today, the AUBA is one of twenty-one Associations that voluntarily come together under the banner: Stronger. Together. And yet, the AUBA has its own identity and functions more like a sister Convention than like the other Associations.

Despite the racism that is a very real and painful part of its history, the AUBA has reason to be proud of its heritage and accomplishments. Harry Renfree writes:

The work among blacks in the Maritimes was undertaken mostly by blacks, and their churches were established from within. Their continued growth in the face of extreme poverty, daunting obstacles and narrow prejudice doubtless resulted from their fine independence.
of spirit, convincing courage and deep dedication to the God who had led the exodus of an earlier people. No other minority group in North America has borne such fruit.5

The Racism Working Group: A Journey of Reconciliation

The mandate of the Racism Working Group—to help the Convention address the sin of racism and promote racial justice—was perhaps naively ambitious. And yet, for ten years this group doggedly pursued the vision of the beloved community, where racism and white privilege do not dictate, define, or determine CABC’s future. When initially convened in 2001, the group was very diverse according to gender, race, theological position, age, personality, and social history. Over the course of ten years—after spending many, many hours together and hearing one another’s stories—the group came to love and respect one another. Love and respect not so much in spite of their differences, but perhaps because of them. They came—bit by bit, slowly—to experience and embody unity in diversity, the very theme of the 2007 Assembly. In their final report they wrote:

The experience, however, has been a mixed blessing: on the one hand, we are deeply appreciative of the opportunity we have had to be part of this journey, but on the other hand, we recognize that transformation does not come quickly or easily. We are very conscious of the fact that our own transformation has been slow and at times painful. This has tempered our frustration with the reality that many within the CABC family still do not fully understand the impact that racism has had, and continues to have, on our ministry and in mission. Although there is much work to be done, we are encouraged by clear evidence that the Holy Spirit is working.6

The group recognized early that there would be several persistent challenges to positive change. The first challenge in addressing racism is white privilege. The attitude of white privilege will mask the pain and lingering effects of overt and covert expressions of racism thereby inhibiting awareness and acceptance by the churches and individuals within the Convention. For some of the constituency—especially for the members of the AUBA—the effects of racism and white privilege are deeply and
personally felt, in society and within the Convention family. For many others—the majority, in fact—racism and white privilege are invisible and intangible concepts. Some express skepticism concerning the reality of racism in Atlantic Canada today. Some are shocked by any suggestion that systemic racism also affects the Convention.

A second challenge to addressing racism is to accept that racism has become embedded in the structures of society, including denominational structures, and will be difficult to dismantle. An appropriate response to racism and its effect on the fellowship and witness of the CABC must be developed in light of a clear biblical and theological understanding of what it means to be both human and Christian. Positive steps were taken in nominating processes to ensure participation from the African United Baptist Churches in the membership of all major Boards and Committees of the Convention. Racism Sensitivity Training Workshops were held with the CABC staff, Council, and some of their affiliated agencies, as well as a number of other workshops were held at CABC events to highlight the issue and to promote equality and unity.

**Unity in Diversity: Celebrating CABC Oneness In Christ**

Dr. Brad Braxton was the theme speaker for Assembly 2007. His messages were powerful and poignant, yet very simple. They were organized around three themes:

1. The problem of white privilege is bone deep.
2. If we begin to address racism, we must go all the way or we will be worse off at the end than we were in the beginning.
3. God is able!

These messages, along with worship, Bible study, and a drama depicting key events in the history of the AUBA, culminated on Sunday afternoon with a Confessional Liturgy and Covenant through which representatives of the CABC and the AUBA acknowledged the general effects that the sin of racism has had on the Convention. The Convention President confessed on behalf of the CABC to a number of ways that racism and white privilege have been expressed through history. The AUBA Moderator offered forgiveness on behalf of the AUBA for each confessed attitude or action,
acknowledging also that they have sometimes permitted a bitter and unforgiving spirit towards those who have caused them pain. And then, the entire assembled body joined voices and covenanted together:

- to commit ourselves to greater sensitivity in the future to the impact of our language, attitudes, and actions
- to actively and intentionally work for the elimination of racial discrimination and the promotion of racial justice, first within each of us, then within our Baptist family and then, within our broader society, in keeping with the Great Commandment
- to ensure that the principles of equality, equity for all races, languages and cultures are reflected in the policies, procedures, structures and relations within Canadian Baptist Ministries (CBM), our Convention, Associations, and affiliated agencies and boards
- to confront racism within our Baptist Family, so that we may with integrity and authority speak God’s message of reconciliation into our culture and to other people groups around the world
- SO HELP US GOD, AMEN.

Framed copies of the signed Official Covenant Scroll now hang in the offices of the CABC and the AUBA as a reminder of this historic covenant commitment. Some might say that it took over a century and a half to get the words up on the wall for all to see and the challenge now is to get the words off the wall and into the hearts and actions of all of the constituency. God is indeed at work, and the Racism Working Group is excited to be part of this movement towards full inclusion, partnership, and participation of God’s people in the Convention.

**Conclusion**

A new Ethnic Ministries Working Group has taken the baton from the Racism Working Group and has been commissioned to “address issues of social justice and to propose policies, programs and ministries that will lead to the full participation and partnership of all ethnic communities in the life of our Convention, its Agencies and Boards and our Churches.” The CABC...
R&E
A BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

is currently engaged in a comprehensive review of
the overall staff structure, and a proposal will be
debated at Oasis 2011 that would see the addition
of a quarter-time staff position in the area of Ethnic
Ministries.

The beloved community — where all are equally
welcome to worship and to offer their gifts of service
regardless of race
or cultural heritage — is still more aspiration
than reality, but the Convention is moving
in the right direction. The Holy Spirit is at
work, in and through their efforts, as
members of the AUBA are increasingly
involved in all aspects of the Convention life.
There is also greater participation of “white
Baptists” at AUBA events. We have a long way to go, but CABC can celebrate
each milestone on the march to end
racism and white privilege in the Atlantic
Baptist communities. To God be the glory!

1 Free Indeed: Of white privileges and how we play the game (Mennonite Central Committee
(MCC), 1995 dvd). Available through MCC at https://resources.mcc.org/content/free-indeed-
dvd.

2 Harry A. Renfree, Heritage and Horizon: The Baptist Story in Canada (Toronto: Canadian
Baptist Federation, 1988), 33.

3 Philip G. A. Griffin-Allwood, Reason to Be: The African Baptist Association as a Response
to Systemic Racism, 3. A paper presented at the 2007 CABC Assembly. This paper can be

4 Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches (CABC), Racism Working Group, Final Report:
Living out the Vision — Becoming the Beloved Community (June 2010), 11. This report can be

5 Renfree, Heritage and Horizon, 152.

6 Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches (CABC), Racism Working Group. Final
Report: Living out the Vision — Becoming the Beloved Community (June 2010), 7.

7 The full text of this liturgy can be seen at http://www.baptist-atlantic.ca/departments/
 witness/racism-working-group (Download Unity in Diversity in the documents list).

8 Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches (CABC), Racism Working Group, Final Report,
24-25.
When Two Churches Became One
By Lincoln Bingham*

ABSTRACT

On August 23, 2009, the predominately white Shively Heights Baptist Church and the predominately African American St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church merged to form St. Paul Baptist Church @ Shively Heights. The merger of the two Louisville, Kentucky, congregations garnered much local and national media attention. “Why?”, “How?”, and “Will it work?” were oft-asked questions. In this article, an attempt to answer these questions is made.

One of my favorite and oft-used invitational hymns is “I Surrender All” written by Judson W. Van Deventer in the early 1900s. The hymn is based on the words of Jesus’ disciples as recorded in Luke’s Gospel: “We have left all we had to follow you” (Luke 18:28, NIV).

I made such a surrender at age twenty-six without a clue as to where it would lead. As I look back over these fifty-plus years, I see that following Jesus has progressively led me along the path of being a minister of racial reconciliation. I certainly had no clue that the culmination of my ministry would be the merger of the predominately African American congregation of which I was pastor with a predominately Anglo congregation in August 2009.¹

This is that story.

¹ Lincoln Bingham is Senior Pastor of St. Paul Baptist Church @ Shively Heights in Louisville, Kentucky.
The Preparation

I am convinced that God had been putting the pieces together for the merger for about twenty-six years, for it was in the 1980s when I spoke in a Southern Baptist-sponsored World Missions Conference in Ohio County, Kentucky, that I first met Brother Mark Payton who was pastor of Concord Baptist Church in that county. At the time, I was the pastor of a black Baptist church in Louisville as well as the Cooperative Ministries Consultant with the Kentucky Baptist Convention. After hearing me present a mission challenge, Mark asked me to come to his church to preach the spring revival. I agreed, with much delight, but with equal doubts because I knew there were no black people in the church and very few black people in the entire area. Plus, Mark told me I would be staying in his home with his wife, Tammie, and their four-year-old son, Joseph.

When I arrived that next spring, Mark did everything possible to assure me that I was welcomed and wanted. He and Tammie were wonderful hosts. To this day I remember how Joseph kept staring at me. Eventually I asked, “Joseph, you’ve never seen a black person before, have you?” Tammie was unnecessarily embarrassed, but Mark knew quite well how to fix things—and he did.

While the services went well and the people were cordial, it was evident that not everyone was comfortable and some even expressed disapproval. Still, that week was the beginning of a friendship and mutual love between Mark and me that has grown strong through the years. From that time on, when we saw each other at denominational meetings, we always had lunch and shared our hopes and dreams. And he invited me to preach revivals at each church of which he subsequently was pastor. Now as I look back, I see that God was laying the foundation for what would occur in 2009.

Why Merge?

In early January 2009, Mark, who was now pastor of Shively Heights Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky, called to ask if we could meet to talk. I had no idea what was on Mark’s mind. When we met, he began by asking me what I knew about another black pastor.

I immediately sensed that something else was behind Mark’s questions so I asked him, “What’s going on?” It was then that Mark told me the pastor had approached him about merging his congregation with Mark’s. Mark told me that he didn’t feel right in his spirit about the man and wanted my opinion.
And then Mark tossed out the big question that was on his mind. He asked if my church might be open to merging with his! That day, as we met, he shared that he felt God had given him a way for both our congregations to reach new members and join resources. He told me about the decline in membership of the Shively Heights church, the expense of maintaining their large facility, the aging of the congregation’s members, and the demographic changes in the immediate community around the church which until 2000 had been predominately Anglo and now, nine years later, was 45% African American.

Our discussion then turned to what for me was the most moving part of our conversation: the desire of members of the Shively Heights congregation not to sell their building or to move the congregation to a predominately white neighborhood, but to stay in the community with the expressed purpose of reaching the people of the community. While I was not surprised that Brother Mark had that attitude, I was surprised when he said that many if not most of the members felt as he did.

All that sounded good, but I was not ready to tackle a merger, and I told Mark so. I was seventy-seven years old, was approaching retirement, was having health issues, and was not sure I would be able to tackle such a significant task. Plus, I was keenly aware of others who had failed at merger attempts and that fed my reluctance.

But God did not let me rest. Not long after that conversation, things began to click in my mind as I began to think about the future of my church, St. Paul Missionary Baptist. For a long time, I had been aware that our facilities limited the extent of our ministries in the community as well as the numerical growth of the church. Our building was filled to capacity on most Sundays with about 250 in attendance.

Not only was the Shively Heights facility larger than the St. Paul facility, but it also had elevators, a large kitchen, a coffee bar, and a gymnasium. I began to see that with a merger, the new facility would be more adequate for every member of our congregation, from preschooler to senior adult. The gym was a particular draw since St. Paul had significantly more young members than Shively Heights.

Plus, St. Paul had intentionally paid off its mortgage a few years earlier with the intent of having more money to invest in ministry and missions. And since the Shively Heights church was only seven miles away from St. Paul and since many of St. Paul’s members lived in the Shively Heights community, the move would not be an inconvenience to most of our members.
Most importantly, as I reflected, it occurred to me that this was exactly the thing I had been working toward all my life. I thought over my journey prospectively and realized that this would have great potential for bringing honor to God. Very illuminating and encouraging thoughts started to surface.

Have I not worked for, longed for, prayed for, and waited for even greater indications and demonstrations of Christian reconciliation than I have experienced in my many years of ministry? Had I not preached, taught, and tried to live by the message of 2 Cor 5:17-20? Had not Brother Mark and I not only discussed but also demonstrated the same in our relationship over the last twenty-six years?

And retrospectively, I realized that over the years in every situation in my ministry, everything had been a challenge that only God could meet. I knew this would be no greater challenge than anything I had experienced in any church or ministry in which I had been involved.

As I continued to pray, it became clear to me that merging the two congregations could meet the needs of both churches and honor God. It made perfect sense: St. Paul needed a larger building and Shively Heights needed members and was committed to staying in the community.

All that was relatively easy. Next came the really challenging issues as “perfect sense” met reality. First came the philosophical questions:

Are our congregations really ready for this? Has either of our congregations reached the level of spiritual maturity required to form one congregation across racial and cultural divides?

Then came the down-to-earth reality questions. The two church buildings might only be seven miles apart, but there was a much wider racial and cultural divide. I wondered:

How many people in each congregation would accept the proposal if presented, and how many would oppose?

During the nineteen years of my ministry at St. Paul we had had some people who were uncomfortable with white people coming to our church.
What would they say now? And what about our different preaching styles? What about our different worship styles? What about people who might feel that the church was abandoning the Smoketown neighborhood where St. Paul had ministered for more than 120 years? What about those who were attached to the existing St. Paul building?

The list of concerns seemed endless.

By the time Mark and I met the next month at our state’s evangelism conference, God had settled all those issues for me.

For Mark and his people, the issues were about life or death of the congregation. For five years, Shively Heights had been struggling with survival as the older members continued to die. The attending membership had dwindled from 275 in its heyday to about 120. Seventy-five percent of those remaining were at least seventy-five years of age. The congregation also struggled under a million-dollar debt. The situation had become so dire that in 2008 Mark had talked with the church deacons and then had sent his résumé to churches across the country. But he had not heard from a single one. At the time, he had been pastor at Shively Heights for seven years. By 2009, he was beginning to see that God still had work for him to do at Shively Heights.

When Mark and I met in February, one question stood out more than any other for both of us:

Is this the will of God?

Neither of us wanted to proceed without a clear word from God. Because he and his congregation had spent most of the previous year struggling with the future of Shively Heights, that question was already settled for Mark. For me, I asked myself,

What would Jesus do?

And as I read John 17, I became convinced that God wanted us to move forward toward merger:

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe through their word: That they all may be one; as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast
sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me (John 17:20-23, KJV).

The ‘How’

After our February meeting, Mark and I began intentionally talking with church leaders and our congregations about merging. How things unfolded in each congregation from March, 2009 through the merger in August, 2009 is best told in both Mark’s and my voice.

March:

**St. Paul:** I took a group of St. Paul’s leaders to tour the Shively Heights facilities. I appointed a seven-member transition team to work with the Shively Heights leadership. I also met with the Shively Heights congregation for a Sunday night discussion at which time I took questions on any subject the members wanted me to address.—Lincoln

**Shively Heights:** On Wednesday evening March 18, the congregation voted thirty-six to fifteen to pursue the merger. (Note: This was not a vote to merge, but a vote to pursue the merger.) The opposition was very vocal. One man was very irate and turned the issue into opposition to my leadership style. Some said I was just trying to keep my job. When another man “went down” from stress and EMS had to be called, I assured him I would cast the votes of the man and his wife even though they opposed the merger. They were not malicious about the merger; they just did not want it. In fact, throughout the entire process only seven people were malicious.

That night, acting in accordance with the church by-laws, I appointed a five-member transition committee which the church approved to work with the leadership of St. Paul toward a smooth transition. The committee met with the St. Paul leadership three times between March and June. At the first meeting, both groups talked about the pros and cons of merger and shared their concerns openly and honestly. Both Lincoln and I met with the committee each time it convened.—Mark

On Sunday evening March 29, the week before Easter, the two congregations came together for a worship service and fellowship at Shively Heights. This was the only joint meeting before the merger.
April:

Shively Heights: Prior to the beginning of the merger talks, another black pastor had asked me if his church could use the Shively Heights sanctuary for their Easter Sunday service and I had agreed. We had two services that day—one for the visiting congregation and one for Shively Heights—with a combined attendance of approximately 700. As it turned out, the worship style of that congregation was so radically different from that of the Shively Heights congregation that it scared many of our people. Looking back, if I had to do it over, I would have cancelled the agreement with that congregation and not allowed them to use the building. The worship experience that Easter played into the opposition to merge with St. Paul that surfaced over the next two months.—Mark

March-June:

Shively Heights: I was very direct in my sermons during the time between the vote to pursue the merger and the vote to merge. I hit the issues directly both in my sermons and in meetings. My approach was this: Ninety percent of our members had been members of Shively Heights for forty years or more. Many had been part of the church when it had fled downtown Louisville fifty years before. Now, they had said they wanted the church to stay in the community. So my challenge was this: “You moved from downtown fifty years ago and we all know why. When are you going to quit running and start reaching?”

The result was simply that the more meetings we had, the more we felt this was what God wanted. It meant that folks could keep their building and still reach their community with the help of a black congregation.—Mark

St. Paul: Our prep work for a merger with a white congregation had been going on for a few years, even though we did not know that was what we were preparing for. While there had always been some vocal opposition to our church accepting white members, by now we had moved to the place that we had ordained a white deacon and for a time had employed a white associate pastor. We also had baptized several white people. Granted, there had been tensions over these things, but with God’s help we had worked through them.—Lincoln
June:

St. Paul: Opposition to merge was strong but very minimal. Thirty-seven out of 275 members voted against it. For some, it was nostalgia attached to the facility. There was some justification for that since our building was very nice. Much of the facility had been built between 1993 and 1996, and our sanctuary was only about thirty-five years old. But we were landlocked and maxed out in the 240-seat sanctuary. Some felt we should at least leave a ministry in place at that facility. Some thought I should resign and turn the church over to another pastor. But the overwhelming majority was in favor of the merger and the move. Since the merger, the St. Paul building has been sold to another large black congregation located two blocks away and is being used for expanding their ministries. The money from the sale went into the cost of the merger and for debt reduction.—Lincoln

Shively Heights: On Sunday morning June 7, the congregation voted sixty-one yes to twenty-eight no to merge. The meeting was tense. One woman who had not been to church since the March meeting went to the pulpit, screaming and shouting against the merger. Another man who had been working behind the scenes to thwart the merger was extremely irate. Seven people showed up for the meeting who were ineligible to vote according to the church’s by-laws, but I had prepared the congregation for this possibility. I had said from the pulpit many times since the March meeting that “If you choose not to support the ministries of this church until we vote on the merger, you won’t get to vote. Don’t try to stack the meeting with family members.” Now, at the June vote, I called the names of the seven from the pulpit, telling them they could not note. Two went berserk at the meeting. Since the vote, all seven have left the church. Four of the seven had joined the church under my ministry. All of the seven were over seventy years of age.

One key leader voted against pursuing the merger and against the merger itself on what he considered to be ethical grounds. He thought St. Paul should buy the property, and he also did not like the way I had handled the whole matter. But after the merger, from day one he has been totally on board.

Without a doubt, the sticking points for the opposition boiled down to race. For example, after the merger, one woman who had voted against the merger called another woman who had voted for the merger and told her that she needed to “get another friend.” The two had been friends for forty years.—Mark
The Big Day

At 11 a.m. on August 23, 2009, just eight months after Mark and I first talked, we held our first worship service as a merged congregation. That day, more than 600 people gathered to launch the new St. Paul Baptist Church @ Shively Heights. There were at least ten print and television reports about the launch service. Local television and print media heralded the merger as “a match made in heaven” and “not something you see often.” National media also covered the event, with ABC featuring it that day on Good Morning America and on the evening news. CNN also covered the event.

The new congregation was formed with 281 members from St. Paul and 100 members from Shively Heights.

“Will It Work?”

The question “Will it work?” is best answered by asking and answering another question, “Has it worked?” The answer is a resounding “Yes!” In the first eighteen months, we have added sixty-seven members by baptism and sixty-five by letter and statement. To God be the glory!

“We have not had a single negative response since the merger,” Mark says. “We’ve had only one Shively Heights’ member leave since the merger. That person stayed for a year and then said it just didn’t work out.”

Issues which could have divided us simply have not. For example, merging worship styles has not been difficult. In point of practice, St. Paul was actually more traditional in its use of hymns and Shively Heights more blended in its use of worship choruses. Plus, St. Paul had a stronger music program than Shively Heights. “I’ve often heard Shively Heights members express their thanks that once again like in olden days, we are singing more hymns, the organ is once again being played, and once again there is a choir. We’ve been able to plug into shared memories,” says Mark.

Plus, the length of the morning service hasn’t changed much. It helped that Shively Heights already had an hour and a half service. And as far starting on time, I already had a reputation for always starting on time.

Theology was not an issue. Both our congregations were Southern Baptist by denominational affiliation and both held conservative theologies.

Church governance has not been an issue. Both churches were pastor-directed, not deacon or committee run. Both expected their pastors to exert strong leadership. At St. Paul, we had operated with a board of directors under the authority of the pastor. The new church also has a board of directors
that is now in the process of writing by-laws for the merged congregation. The new congregation is still pastor-directed, meaning the pastors set the direction for the church.

Merging Sunday school programs was easy, too. For example, combined the two churches had seven adult classes prior to the merger, Shively Heights had one teacher per adult class and St. Paul had two before the merger. Now, we have seven adult classes. Each is led by a team of two teachers, for a total of fourteen teachers representing both pre-merger congregations. Teachers rotate monthly. The culturally diverse curriculum they use is working well.4

As to paid staff, we have retained all the staff from each congregation. As to pastor, roles were decided based on seniority. I am senior pastor and Mark is lead pastor. For us, these titles denote neither power nor authority.

And as to membership, in the year and a half since the merger, we have added 132 members—sixty-five of them by baptism. It has been an almost equal member of blacks and whites, and most have been adults.

And were you to come to the church gymnasium on a Saturday morning, you would find between 250 and 300 people of both races enjoying sports together. Many of the black individuals who come to the gym were already using the gym before the merger, but they were not members of the church. Approximately ten of these individuals have joined the church since the merger. Attendance at Sunday morning worship now averages 280 and Sunday school runs about 170. As to future plans, soon we hope to begin a day care and food and clothing ministries to serve the community.

Why It Is Working

Both Mark and I are often asked why the merger is working. Here are some of the reasons:

1. Mark and I had built a relationship of trust over twenty-six years. We didn’t have to build trust; it was already there. We didn’t have to question each other’s competency in ministry; that was already established.

2. Mark and I did not view our ministries as competitive, but as complementary. We knew we would work well together.

3. Both our congregations were well organized, with trained lay leadership. We both had focused on education and discipleship.

4. Both our congregations had a membership committed to the work of the Kingdom. We both wanted to reach people regardless of the barriers and potential difficulties.
5. Our complementary worship styles made for an easy blending. There wasn’t a disturbing change for either congregation.

6. Both our congregations were committed to being *salt and light* in the community. We believe that being *salt and light* will change our community. We also believe our love will strengthen our Christian witness as we reflect the diverse body of Christ.

**Advice to Pastors Considering Merger**

Mark and I offer this advice:

1. Be sensitive to God’s leadership. Be sure you have answered the most important question: Is this what God wants?
2. Work hard at building relationships.
3. Approach a merger with the belief that it will work—if it is God’s will, not with an attitude of fear that it won’t work.
4. Discuss a potential merger only with people whom you know well and who know you well.
5. Consult others who have gone through a merger.
6. Take your cues from people who will give positive input, not those who give negative input.
7. Approach your lay leadership only after you yourself are convinced that merger is God’s will and only after your heart and soul are in it.
8. Take as much time as is necessary to allow both congregations to talk through the positives and negatives of a merger. While our merger required a relatively short time of eight months, other mergers may take much longer.
9. See our experience not as the ultimate model, but instead, let it be an encouragement toward working out your own model in the uniqueness of your own situation.

---

1 For more of Lincoln Bingham’s personal story see “‘Someday’ Finally Came,” *Review & Expositor* (Summer 2007): 517ff.

The church uses “You,” a culturally diverse curriculum from LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville, TN, that is designed for urban, multicultural churches.
Expository Words
New for 2012

The Annual Bible Study series is a valuable resource for teaching specific books of the Bible. Entire churches and many classes enjoy studying the Bible book-by-book. This popular approach helps us discuss the book’s basic themes, learn how to interpret that book, and then wrestle with its meaning in our lives.

The Teaching Guide includes suggested worship outlines for both traditional and contemporary worship services, approaches for leading group discussions, and teaching plans for children, youth and adults. The Study Guide helps learners understand the biblical background of James, how to interpret it, and it’s basic theological themes.

Hebrews-James
Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary
Edgar V. McKnight & Christopher Church

www.helwys.com/commentary

Reading Hebrews and James
A Literary and Theological Commentary
Marie E. Isaacs

www.helwys.com/rnt

Sessions with James
Michael D. McCullar
www.helwys.com/sessions

The Cecil Sherman Formations Commentary
Romans–Revelation
www.helwys.com/sherman

The Church as Pilgrim People
Hebrews-Revelation
www.helwys.com/abs

Hebrews and the General Epistles
Clarence Jordan’s Cotton Patch Gospel
www.helwys.com/cpg

1-800-747-3016 • www.helwys.com
Achieving Racial Reconciliation in the Twenty-first Century: The Real Test for the Christian Church

By Gerald L. Thomas

ABSTRACT

The issue of racial reconciliation has been a major concern for me since the days of my youth in Youngstown, Ohio. I was blessed to see the growth and development of African American people during the civil rights era. There were, however, racial tensions of a major magnitude during my days in junior high and high school. It was the first time we (students from Thorn Hill) had ever experienced racism because our elementary school was 99.8 percent black. I had to live in a whole new world when six primary grade schools were condensed into one junior high school. In high school, it became increasingly evident to me that there was a white world and a black world. Attending Howard University definitely heightened my anger and resentment towards white people. Howard was the Mecca of black power and intellectual thinking. By God’s grace, after eight years in corporate America, I accepted my call to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and realized that hatred had no place in the heart and mind of a servant of the Son of God. The seminary experience at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary was equally frustrating at times even though I had the blessings of the seminary’s leadership, thus becoming the first Martin Luther King, Jr. Fellow. Through twenty-five years of pastoring and thirty years of spreading the Gospel, I have gained additional insights into how we must eradicate racism in our society. Through my position in the Progressive National Baptist Convention as National Chairperson for “Social Action on Public Policy,” I realize how difficult is the task at hand. Research and writings on “Racial Reconciliation” are my own convictions and struggles to support the Church of God in becoming all that Jesus Christ had intended for it to be.

† Gerald L. Thomas, Ph.D., is Pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church in Plainfield, New Jersey.
Introduction

The topic of race relations in this country has been and always will be both a difficult and a delicate one for people who strive for that elusive "American Dream." Many ethnic groups have been plagued for centuries with the stigma of a particular race being superior, more deserving and legitimate heirs of the wealth, resources, and opportunities than other races, especially as it relates to blacks and whites. The election of President Barak Obama recreated a generation of repulsive individuals who have no desire to seek the biblical mandate “to love your neighbor as yourself.” The Council of Conservative Citizens (CofCC) represents a White Nationalist nonprofit group that opposes racial mixing, interracial marriage, non-European immigration, and hate crime legislation. In 2011, White Pride personalities include Neo-Confederates, Separatists, Constitutionalists, and Patriots. Gini Sikes writes, “they have widely varying agendas, but two things clearly unite the majority: unyielding loyalty to their race and a hatred for President Obama.”

The Past—Spiritual Isolation and Political Segregation

Racism is a constant mainstay within the DNA of the United States of America and has been since the beginning framework of religion and politics. In one of his classic sermonic presentations entitled, “Some Comments on Race Hate,” the eminent, former pastor, and denominational leader Gardner C. Taylor expresses the following realities:

Race hate is an old and persistent disease in the bloodstream of society. It has divided Jew and Samaritan, Greek and barbarian, black American and white American. Race hate is not a one-way street. It infects the hater and the hated, since the hated learns to hate the hater. The church’s supreme consideration must be that such hatred of people, for whatever reason, and most especially on the basis that they are physically different from us, offends heaven and shuts so many out from God. This is the ultimate danger in any sin and makes race hate eligible for consideration and concern by the church. It may, rather it does, shut men from God.
Also, since the political foundations of America, there has been an intransigent mindset to avoid the acceptance of people of color, especially blacks. For the first 330 years, the deck was officially and legally stacked on behalf of whites and males. A question concerning *Dred Scott* (1857) was asked by Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger Taney:

Can a negro, whose ancestors were imported into this country, and sold as slaves, become a member of the political community, formed and brought into existence by the Constitution of the United States, and as such become entitled to all rights, and privileges, and immunities guaranteed by that instrument to the citizen?

His unequivocal response was clearly defined when he stated, “‘We the people’ was never intended to include blacks, slave or free. Neither Dred Scott nor any other person of African descent had any citizenship rights which were binding on white American society.” Justice Taney cited by documented authority that “the Constitution, the Courts at every level, the federal government, and the states all routinely denied blacks equal access to rights of citizenship.

The institution of racism, historically, continued to be perpetrated by the white church through the misinformed beliefs and teachings of its religious leadership. The sanctity and security of such sacred spaces led to the conviction and expulsion of freedmen who had every right to worship publicly and express their faith. Kyle Haselden in, *The Racial Problem in Christian Perspective*, states “segregation in public facilities in this country goes back only to the 1870’s and in many places only to the early 1900’s even in the South.” This may have been the case for secular institutions; however, in 1795 the abrupt disrespect shown to Peter Williams at the John Street Church in New York City and to Richard Allen, who in 1787 was pulled from his knees while praying in old St. George’s Church in Philadelphia, led to the organizing of both the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Taylor concludes, “in reality the church set the pace, established the pattern, and provided for segregation in this country. For this the church must bow its head in shame.”

For most segregationists, “the purity of the white church must be guarded with the same vigilance given the protection of white feminine virtue.”
The maintenance of racial purity was inherent in the mission of the segregated church. States like Mississippi became infatuated with the preservation of social orthodoxy after the 1954 ruling that segregation in public schools was unconstitutional. Former Senator Trent Lott from Mississippi, heralded the retiring, centurion Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.) in 2002, who ran for President in 1948 as a self-described “Dixiecrat” on a segregationist platform. During his campaign, Thurmond declared that “all the laws of Washington and the bayonets of the Army cannot force the Negro into our homes, our schools, our churches.” Such odious campaign rhetoric still garnered Thurmond the thirty-nine electoral votes of South Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. As Andrew Hacker observes, “there are white Americans who continue [to be] convinced of their genetic superiority. . . [T]his bias [does not] linger only in the rural South; it is also not far from the surface in fashionable suburbs.”

Such fears of racial contamination were fostered through the ideologies of stellar Southern Baptist pastors like Douglas Hudgins, esteemed pastor of the First Baptist Church of Jackson, Mississippi, who rejected the Southern Baptist Convention report to support the 1954 Supreme Court’s Brown vs. Board of Education decision. The court’s decision came to public debate at the 1954 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in St. Louis shortly after the ruling. One W. M. Nevins, from Lexington, Kentucky, told the audience, “soon . . . some of you who sit in this audience today will have grandchildren with mixed blood.” Through the teachings and courses on race relations by courageous professors and clergymen like Charles Spurgeon Gardner, J. B. Weatherspoon, Clarence Jordan, T. B. Maston, Carlyle Marney, H. Hansel Stembridge, Jr., Henlee Barnett (my former Ethics Professor), and Will D. Campbell, a new voice for change had arisen against the old vanguard of a closed society, racial inequality and Jim Crow within the Southern Baptist Convention. Although progress is on the horizon, someone stated, “old dogs never die, they just roll over.”

How will racial reconciliation be realized and gender equality achieved in the twenty-first century is the true effort behind this article. I admit that salient documentation reveals that “conscious and unconscious race bias, even rank discrimination based on race remains alive in our land, impeding realization of our highest values and ideals.”

Hidden bigotry is now verbalized openly, and a racist is no longer the Archie Bunker on TV, but is now the father of your child’s soccer teammate.
A more sinister form of racism exists today that makes bizarre behavior seem closer to the normal, regular person.

Roy L. Brooks posits, “this type of racism operates unintentionally. It functions unconsciously or subconsciously within individuals and systemically within institutions.”

It is viewed as a RINO Hunt—“Republican in Name Only”; instead of acts of violence and terrorism, now it is a call to procreate: an advocacy designed to win recruits, eventually resulting in electoral success and how to successfully sabotage the Tea Party movement. Brooks goes on to say:

The issue, in other words, is the power, wealth, and privilege—a sense of position—many whites instinctively assert or attempt to maintain over blacks. It is about racism that is cognitive rather than motivational; it is about how whites perceive blacks; it is about the use of race as a proxy for “evidence” of criminal behavior in racial profiling, not only by the police, but also by sales clerks in department stores; it is about high schools in the South that permit white students to display the confederate flag on their clothing, book covers, lunch boxes and cars and see nothing wrong with that; it is about negative stereotyping of blacks; it is about the little white freckled-face girl who tells an ABC news reporter that the only thing blacks do better than whites is their hair; and finally it is about the fact that whites still have difficulty seeing blacks in positions of power, authority, or responsibility, outside of a few exceptional cases like Colin Powell.

The author of Wingnuts, Avlon, warns, “We are giving cover, sometimes a sense of purpose, to the crazy among us: Michele Bachmann—America is turning into “a nation of slaves”; Sarah Palin—Don’t retreat... reload!”

This group strives to keep blacks from receiving trillions in wealth transfers and have no desire to support Mexican immigration. The caution flag before the church gives notice that “to ignore them or their agenda is risky and may allow local racism to metastasize into more perilous, widespread disease.”

African Americans endured 250 years of slavery, a century of Jim Crow, decades of racial injustice and bigotry and in 2008—forty plus years later, millions of Black, Latino, Indian, Asian, and White collaborated to vote an African American (true to his name) as President of the United States of
America. We cannot return to the hatred of the past, since we all must concur that America must push forward.

**The Present—Social Integration and Economic Revitalization**

I propose for sincere Christians in the twenty-first century to develop an agenda to incorporate the best of both social integration and economic revitalization. Some such as Roy L. Brooks believes that the past is the future—today. He writes, “forgiveness is black America’s side of racial reconciliation. Atonement is served on the victim as a kind of civic subpoena. Acceptance is required to seal the deal, to make racial reconciliation possible. Atonement (apology plus reparations) and forgiveness are the key ingredients of racial reconciliation.”¹⁸ According to the analysis in *White-Washing Race*, many state that “we are in a new era, and we face new challenges if the ugly stain of racism is to be removed from American life. Former advocates of racial equality proclaim the civil rights movement is over and declare victory. Racism has been defeated.”¹⁹ Is the main problem for an oppressed people just the need to change their behavior pattern in order to take responsibility for their personal livelihood? The co-authors of this book go on to write, “in the twenty-first century, racism in the United States continues to be defined by a dichotomy not between black and white, but between black and nonblack.”²⁰

There has been a recent tenet within the conversation of racial inequality that America is rapidly becoming a color-blind society. To eradicate the relevancy of what W.E.B. DuBois termed “the problem of the color line,” Jim Sleeper claims:

> The nation’s future lies in a color-blind society and it is America’s destiny to show the world how to eliminate racial differences—culturally, morally and even physically—as factors in human striving. If Americans remain racially divided, it is because we have abandoned the great achievement of the civil rights era—the hopeful consensus that formed in the 1960s around King’s visions of a single, shared community.²¹

While the thought of reaching racial reconciliation through moral reflection rather than political confrontation may have its advantages, those
who reside with the “racial realists” continue to think and believe otherwise. Stephen and Abigail Thernstrom, Dinesh D’Souza, Shelby Steele, and Tamar Jacoby, along with Sleeper, confirm the racial realist rhetorical views that foster their three related programs:

First, they say that America has made great progress in rectifying racial injustice in the past thirty-five years. One reason race has remained so politically and socially divisive, racial realists often say, is that ill-conceived and unnecessary race-conscious policies such as affirmative action have been adopted. The racial realists’ second claim is that persistent racial inequalities in income, employment, residence and political representation cannot be explained by white racism. For racial realist, color-blindness means, among other things, recognizing black failure. The racial realists’ final assertion is that the civil rights movement’s political failures are caused by the manipulative, expedient behavior of black nationalists and the civil rights establishment.22

Their main assertion seeks to create a new social order where color consciousness and racial identity are no longer relevant. They know racism still exists, however “they believe a color-blind society can uncouple individual behavior from group identification, allowing genuine inclusion of all people.”23 This new conservative brand of American politics codifies the real issue of how any race recognizes, identifies, and views itself. According to the “State of the Dream 2011” report by United for a Fair Economy, “the official unemployment rate is 15.8 percent among Blacks, and 13 percent among Latinos; Blacks earn only 57 cents for each dollar of White family income, Latinos earn 59 cents; and Blacks have only 10 cents of net wealth while Latinos have 12 cents to every dollar of new wealth that Whites have.”24 With the Great Recession reducing any attempts to correct racial economic inequalities, regardless of how any race views itself, reality always will have the final word. Blacks and Latinos have been marginalized. Brooks concludes by stating that “atonement can be a vehicle for civic republicanism. Healing old wounds and providing genuine racial opportunities are essential ingredients for social integration.” For thirty-three percent of the American population, now is the time for political leadership to translate personal interest or ideas into universal principles of inclusion.
The long standing belief that integration is the hope of a multicultural society has gained new momentum in recent years. Elizabeth Anderson reports that “integration of racial, ethnic, and other groups that mark significant lines of social inequality is a vital ideal for a democratic society, necessary for its basic institutions to function successfully.”25 Her arguments center upon the belief that if segregation caused social inequality and undemocratic opportunities then integration is the cure to provide greater equality and democracy because it is an imperative of justice. (This is a major thesis for the human rights of God’s people, but at another time.) No one can doubt the fact that racism is an injustice resulting in a form of prejudice. Paul Sniderman and Thomas Piazza define racism “as consistent readiness to respond negatively to a member of a group by virtue of his or her membership in that group, with the proof of prejudice being thus the repetitiveness with which a person endorses negative characterization.”26 Using race as a social marker transforms its public face into a chameleon-like form, an ever changing disguise that obscures its power.

To improve race relations in America, the normative model for the common good is the contemporary phrase racial comity. The word “comity” describes courtesy, civility; kindly and considerate behavior towards others. In their book, The Black Image in the White Mind: Media and Race in America, Robert M Entman and Andrew Rojecki explain:

Comity would allow Whites and Blacks to see common interest and values more readily and thus cooperate in good faith to achieve mutually beneficial objectives. Furthermore, comity is self-reinforcing: the more trustful the interaction, the more good results and the higher the incentives for even more cooperation and trust. A context of comity can nurture a virtuous circle of respect, empathy and generosity to replace the vicious circle of suspicion, separation, and stinginess. Although racial comity means something more than mere tolerance, only that they act kindly and empathetically enough to see beyond skin color to their own shared interests in a more effective and harmonious society.27

This type of change requires going against the grain of old school, traditional values in order to speak truth to power. Yet, the difficulty lies in any attempt to live in a color blind society where race has been and still is a
dominant theme. We must, however, move beyond the “blame game” tactics of cultural and behavioral deficits and ideologies of segregation and color-blind racism. So what kind of new strategies that make sense are required? The authors of *White-Washing Race* propose the following:

1. Racism is a permanent feature of American society and cannot be eradicated. It must be challenged. It cannot be ignored. Class-specific policies do not benefit all racial groups equally. The civil rights revolution has not delivered on its promise.

2. The second strategy addresses racial inequality by attacking class inequality. African Americans need to realize that black poverty is mainly caused by “nonracial economic forces”—wage stagnation among workers, collapsing demand for unskilled labor and widening wealth inequality.

3. A third strategy calls for transforming American culture and identity. Proponents of this approach argue that white identity must be abolished or rearticulated as a positive identity.

4. We propose policies that confront the legacy of disaccumulation in black and Latino communities; such would benefit a wide cross section of Americans.

5. The second set of policies is aimed at diminishing current discrimination, both direct and indirect, intentional and unintentional, and encourages diversity in educational institutions. Remedies for racial inequality require redistribution of *resources* and *rules* capable of regulating the practices that generate racial inequality.28

Once America renews its commitment to racial equality, where skin color matters less than character content, when it acknowledges the role of race in society by facing up to the consequences, and when it progresses with a new focused determination to address both the historical and contemporary sources or racial indifference, then we will understand and appreciate the biblical mandate of racial reconciliation.
The Promise—Biblical Reconciliation and Moral Application. (Title of Sermon Outline)

I now turn to the text in Gal 3:23-26 to conclude my effort on this most critical and relevant need within the twenty-first-century Christian experience. Paul writes:

Vv. 23-24. Before this Faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until Faith should be revealed. So the law was our tutor until Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (The Past)

Vv. 25-27. Now that Faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law (tutor). You are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ, have clothed yourself with Christ. (The Present)

Vv. 28-29. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. (The Promise)

The Apostle Paul addresses the Gentile believers in Galatia who are being terrorized by the Judaizers (Jewish Christians) who insist upon commitment to the Old Testament teachings of circumcision and the law. Paul is amazed how quickly the new converts are prepared to revert to their old practices. His treatise is in defense of the Gospel truth that one is saved by faith and faith alone.

In the past—vv. 23-24—before Jesus came to show humanity a more excellent way through the will of God, the law served its purpose as God’s covenant promise to the children of Israel. J. Christiaan Beker suggests that there was “the universal curse of the law and the ‘no exist’ status for all ‘before faith came’.” Segregation, much like the law, was an instrument of condemnation and held the black race captive (locked up—prisoners in their own country) until the era of civil rights. The law, according to Dale Moody, “is then reduced to the role of a paidagogos, a custodian (slave) who has charge of a child until he comes of age. The law is related to both transgression and sin, for it is through the law that sin becomes known as transgression.” In Christ Jesus, God revealed His mystery (Gal 4:4) to restore fellowship to a sinful world. “Until Christ” (eis Christon) came, this revealing faith was the only way to be saved. Jesus, being the object of one’s faith, justifies this new
age of believing. The testimony of Paul, according to Moody, “states the true meaning of justification through faith and what a covenant relationship with Christ really means—the experience of the Holy Spirit, received by faith and not the works of the law.”

In the present—vv. 25-27—Paul acknowledges that faith (the Son of God) has arrived through the resurrected body of Jesus Christ. In the realm of faith, God changed the curve of salvation-history. George Eldon Ladd comments:

When Paul speaks of the “coming of faith” v. 25, he does not mean that no one had previously ever exercised saving faith. On the contrary, for Paul faith appeared with Abraham; but faith could be frustrated when the Law was made a basis of human righteousness and boasting. The Law was added not to save men from their sins but to show them what sin was. By declaring the will of God, by showing what God forbids, the Law shows what sin is.

Paul declares to his Gentile church a universal “adoption” into the family of God through faith in Christ. The door is open for multiculturalism, diversity, pluralism, and acceptance.

In the New Testament, according to Ladd, “this concept is filled with deeper significance as Christians are described in terms of sonship to God, whether by birth or by adoption.” This hindsight of faith perceives that even the twofold tyranny of sin and the law must yield to God’s saving purpose. Faith is determined by its object (Christ) and not celebrated for its own sake. Being baptized into Christ forms a new solidarity, what some might view as “the New Israel.” This act of faith becomes a designated portrait of salvation. Ladd further states:

So faith in Christ means personal identification with him. It means the response of the whole man to the revelation that has been given in Christ. It involves much more than trust in Jesus or confidence in him; it is an acceptance of Jesus and of what he claims to be and a dedication of one’s life to him. To believe means to receive him, to receive the testimony, to receive Jesus’ words.

Being immersed in Christ also has the implication of putting on Christ as a robe. In Roman society, once a young man became an adult, he was
given a toga as a symbol of having full rights of the family affairs. The Galatian believers were to lay aside the old garment of the law and put on the new garment of righteousness in Christ thus creating a new age where there is no difference in race/ethnicity, social status/call, or gender/sex.

In the promise—vv. 27-29—the human distinctions of the Old Testament that once held privilege are finally abolished “in Christ.” All have been emancipated by claiming oneness in the resurrected Jesus. Being “one in Christ” translates into being his body, his church (the new Israel), and his beloved community (the people of God). What does this mean for the Church of the living God? Frank Stagg writes, “he came, paradoxically to be both an individual person and a ’community.’ In him was created ’one new man’ (Eph 2:15); the true Israel of God (Gal 6:16; Rom 9:6); the seed of Abraham (Gal 3:29); an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of God’s possession (1 Pet 2:9).”36 Paul describes the final promise to the new converts by telling them “if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Believers have gained an additional status as an offspring of Abraham. Those who were alienated and ostracized now have equal rights and privileges to the blessings of God. Moody writes that “when the new man is put on, the Gentile and the Israelite become one.”37

Paul asserts that Abraham’s seed is not the Jews but those who are a connected to the body of Christ, his church—those who belong to him—the church by divine right become the true Israel. The difficulty in separating the call of the church from the charge to any given society dilutes the authenticity of the church being the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world.” We who have been called out of the dark ages of racial hatred and spiritual segregation must now be bold witnesses in the world, in society, in our communities to inform every individual of the freedom and equality available in Christ Jesus. What will it take to bring about this new spiritual formation into the twenty-first century? Eduardo Bonilla-Silva gives us our marching orders in his acclaimed work, *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States:*
Activists and researchers alike need to realize the basic truth in Frederick Douglass’s words, “If there is no struggle, there is no progress... Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.” Change is made, not theorized, written about, or orchestrated by policy makers or researchers. Only by demanding what seems impossible today (equality of results, reparations, and the end of all forms of racial discrimination), we will be able to achieve genuine racial equality in the future.38

The objective and subjective goals for all Americans and every ethnicity in the twenty-first century are readily available if we just seek God’s grace and mercy “to do unto others as you would have them to do unto you.”

1 Gini Sikes, “The Hate that Hate Produced,” Essence Magazine, November 2010, 146.
5 Ibid., 27.
6 Vincent Harding, There is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 201.
7 Thomas, African American Preaching, 165.
8 Ibid.
“Whole Lott of Trouble,” abcNews.com (Washington, December 11, 2002). The outspoken Trent Lott informed the birthday guest that his state Mississippi valiantly supported Thurmond in his presidential bid. He further stated, “If the rest of the country followed our lead we wouldn't have had all these problems.”


Marsh, God’s Long Summer, 99. I recall hearing a sermon that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. preached at Southern Seminary’s chapel in 1961 titled, “The Church on the Frontier of Racial Tension.” He prodigiously informed the predominately white audience that he sincerely believed God wanted him to be their brother and not their brother-in-law.


Ibid., 40.

Sikes, “The Hate that Hate Produced,” 149.

Ibid., 150.


Brown, Carnoy, Currie, Duster, Oppenheimer, Shultz and Wellman, White-Washing Race, vii.

Ibid., xi.


Brown, Carnoy, Currie, Duster, Oppenheimer, Shultz and Wellman, White-Washing Race, 6-7.

Ibid., 7.


31 Ibid., 326.


33 Ibid., 160.

34 Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, 244.


The Problem with Privilege on a Planet Prone to Prejudice: An Exposition of Luke 14:15-24

By Warren H. Stewart, Sr.

There are a couple or so questions that I plan to ask God when I get to heaven. One of them will be, “Why did people of lighter skin color almost always seem to be the ones in power over nearly everyone else who was of darker hue?” Other than in most of Africa, that is a fact of life with which people of color have had to deal for centuries, if not millennia. In my travels globally, it has been obvious that people of white or lighter skin pigmentation exercised privileges that less lighter complexioned people did not experience—whether in Israel, Egypt, Mexico, India, the Caribbean, Europe or “the good ole USA.” That’s just plain unfair and unacceptable, so God and I are going to have a nice long talk about that when I get inside those pearly gates (and for that matter, why do heaven’s gates have to be pearly?). With that serving as an introduction, I will proceed with the matter of race and the Church.

My assignment is to provide a “Biblical Model for Racial Reconciliation,” according to Emmanuel McCall, well-respected Baptist trailblazer in race relations nationally and internationally. Luke 14:15-24 is the passage of Scripture upon which I am expounding. The New Revised Standard Version identifies these ten verses as “The Parable of the Great Dinner.” Jesus Christ tells this parable while a dinner guest in a leading Pharisee’s home on the Sabbath. That right there offers a glimpse of the powerfully prophetic ministry of our Lord in the flesh—He met frequently with those whom He knew opposed his message and ministry, even further knowing that they were watching His every move and listening to His every word in order to discredit and/or destroy Him.

From verse 1 through verse 14, Luke records the conversation taking place around the hosting Pharisee’s dinner table, with Jesus Christ being the center of the discussion. The first six verses document Jesus healing a man...
with dropsy on the Sabbath, to which our Lord answered the Pharisees' silent disapproval by suggesting that any one of them would pull a child or a cow out of well into which it had fallen on the Sabbath day.

The next five verses picture the guests in the distinguished Pharisaic leader’s home jockeying for choice places of honor around the dinner table. Since Jesus was the guest of honor who had been invited there to be dishonored, several of the less than genuine men present competed for the “best seats in the house.” No doubt, even among themselves, they were differentiating one over the other as privileged, more privileged and/or less privileged based on their respective seating assignments. That pride-prodded activity prompted Jesus to tell a story about not going directly to the front or best seats at a wedding banquet, but to wait until one is asked to come to the choice seats to prevent the embarrassing situation of being asked down if someone more important shows up.

Luke 14:12-14 deals with Jesus telling the dinner host who had invited Him that he had his invitation list all backwards. Again, our Servant Savior reverses the norm from inviting friends, siblings, other relatives and rich neighbors to inviting “the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.” That surely challenged the host because he considered himself as well as those he had invited to be privileged. Our Lord then casts the end of this parable into the shadows of the messianic banquet that would take place “when we all get to heaven.” He prophesied the words of verse 14, “And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.” Now, on to the Luke 14:15-24 passage.

The Problem of Privilege—Luke 14:15-17. Verse 15 begins with the one of the dinner guests who had been privileged to be invited to the dinner where Jesus was “smoked over.” Moreover, what Jesus had just said about the underprivileged being the ones who ought to have been invited to the banquet in the parable, moved the privileged fellow to offer some rather effusive remarks, “Blessed is the one who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!” He was referring to himself. After all, he was a Jew, a member of the chosen race. For centuries, the Holy Writ repeatedly identified him and his people as God’s special people out of all of the peoples of the world. Not only was he invited to the dinner, but he had expected to be invited to that dinner and equally expected to be invited to the messianic dinner that would take place in the Eschaton. This brother was privileged.

The problem of race in America and around the world is interlocked with the problem of privilege. That one race generally believes and acts as if it is the norm for all others is a problem of privilege. All of those around that
The Problem with Privilege on a Planet Prone to Prejudice

RACE:
FOUNDATIONS AND REFLECTIONS
FALL 2011

The dinner table reported by Luke in the fourteenth chapter of his Gospel represent all of us who think and act as privileged people as a result of our race. Not only are the needs of those with less or no privilege often neglected, but they are hardly on the minds of those who reap the benefits of racial privilege.

The Problem of Prejudice—Luke 14:18-20. Excuses, excuses, excuses! That was the pathetic response of the privileged who had been invited to the “Great Dinner.” For all practical purposes, the invitees knew that they were on the dinner host’s invitation list. This was no last minute get together. Nevertheless, all of the invitees made excuses for declining the privileged invitation. One invitee had a financial excuse that dealt with his recent real estate purchase. Surely, he had evaluated the property before he bought it, so his excuse was worthless. Another had a business excuse related to “five yoke of oxen” which would have been a major business transaction. With that many beasts of burden, this invitee almost certainly had a work force to assist him in managing his agricultural business. The third declining invitee had a family excuse that almost seemed legitimate—he had just gotten married and had to spend time with his new bride. Whatever the case, he took a rain check on the invitation to the dinner. Prejudice—perhaps all three of them prejudged the significance of the dinner to which they were invited. As privileged invitees, they felt that what they had to do in reference to their respective excuses was more important than the privileged invitation.

Race and the problem of prejudice cannot be disconnected. Racial prejudice always prioritizes one’s own people over others. It almost always declines any invitation to sit at the table with others who may not look, talk, act, and think the same. Being prejudiced due to race keeps the privileged and the underprivileged separated from one another even though they may occupy the same space. It polarizes and generalizes entire groups of people for no rational reason. The problem of prejudice is still an ever-present evil existing in our daily lives that offers countless excuses for accepting the invitation to sup with one another.

The Problem of Poverty—Luke 14:21-23. Once the report returned to the dinner host that those whom he had invited offered excuses, he became angry. His anger must have had its genesis in being rejected by privileged persons like himself. Then, in his anger, he re-issues his invitation list, but this time not to the privileged. He had had enough problems with them. He sends his servant into the streets and alleys in town with invitations to “the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.” In one way or another, all of these second-tier invitees are poor. Thus, the problem of the poor is identified in “The Parable of the Great Dinner” told by Jesus Christ. The poor’s problems are lodged in
the fact that they are missing something of value that is needed to be valued—lack of resources, lack of mobility, lack of vision, lack of functionality. When there is more room for the new invitees, the invitation is extended to more poor folk, which implies that there may be more in poverty than in privilege. But, other problems raise two prophetic questions for me: (1) Why weren’t the problematic poor asked on the first invitation list? (2) Why were the problematic poor asked out of the anger of the inviter who had been rejected by the invited guests?

As one who has been poor, the problem of poverty is real and wrecking. Too many privileged people, especially privileged Christians, misuse and abuse the words of Jesus Christ in John 12:8, “You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.” The problem of poverty is legion—who they are, why they are, when they are, how they are, how long they are, and whose problems they are. The awful truth that the impoverished are most often the afterthought of the privileged is a massive problem. The terrible truth that the poor are often addressed out of the anger of the privileged is painfully problematic. The traumatic truth is that race and poverty are interlocked due to oppressive, systemic racism wherever it exists.

The Prophetic Problem-Solver—Jesus Christ—Luke 14:24. “For I tell you, none of those who were invited will taste my dinner.” Jesus stops telling the parable and begins to speak prophetically to those attending the dinner in the Pharisee’s house. He points them to the messianic meal in the Eschaton when He will be the Inviter. He indicates that those who had been invited by His Father—the privileged Jews—will not sit at His banquet table because they missed their opportunity to recognize and solve the problems of privilege, prejudice, and poverty. He acts as the Prophetic Problem-Solver by announcing and establishing a powerful paradigm shift that provides a directive that the poor must become the priority of those who follow Him in this life and will follow Him in the life to come. In addition, the poor and underprivileged will be His invited guests in the “sweet by and by.”

In conclusion, matters of race and poverty must become “front and center” for the Church in the United States and elsewhere as we address the problem of privilege on a planet prone to prejudice. The Church can never be the Church established by Jesus Christ on Himself as the foundation and empowered by the Holy Spirit in the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-racial, and multinational context at its birth on the day of Pentecost until it confronts and engages in the ministry of reconciliation across racial boundaries. That is the only way that Christians will be invited to the “Great Dinner” up yonder. And, who knows, I may not have to ask God my personal question of the privilege of being of a lighter hue down here when I get to heaven!
Coloring Outside the Lines: Acts 11:1-18

By David E. Goatley*

Children and Coloring Books

Watching young children color in coloring books can be an exciting experience. They often use colors that adults would never choose to use. They may color a horse green and the sun purple and the grass orange and the sea yellow. They may begin coloring on one page and choose to leave it unfinished because their interest has moved to another page. Why do you suppose young children use colors that differ from the choices of adults?

In addition to young children choosing to color pictures in ways that adults would never think of, they also often color outside the lines. Not only do they sometimes color outside the lines, they sometimes color off the page and onto the desk or the wall or the floor.

I once heard an educator claim that one of the benefits of coloring books is to teach children to “color inside the lines.” Do you think that the educational benefit of coloring books is one reason that adults often tell young children who are coloring all over a page to “color inside the lines”?

While it may be the case that the hand-eye coordination and the motor skills for young children are still developing, I suspect something else is also going on. The lines in a coloring book cannot contain the imagination and creativity of young children. These children are not yet constrained by the visions of others. They are not yet conformed to the visions of adults. They are not yet conditioned to see the world through the eyes of the book publisher (whose principle purpose is to sell as many books as possible to make as much money as possible). Making a profit by publishing books is not

* David E. Goatley is Executive Director of the Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention in Washington, DC.
necessarily a bad thing. However, the book publisher is not committed to stimulating the imagination and stirring the creativity of your young child. The coloring book publisher sells books that earn money and help to teach children to conform to the lines that others have drawn for them. Those who have the power to produce the coloring books do not design them with your particular child in mind. They produce someone else’s lines with someone else’s purpose in mind.

Reasonable people are not opposed to children learning boundaries and learning to understand the world views of the adult publishers of coloring books. But might we let them be creative just a little while longer? There will be time for young children to learn to conform to the boundaries and the limitations of creative in the adult world. Might we also teach them the value of imagination as well as teaching them to conform?

**Disciples of Jesus Taking a Cue from Children**

What happens when disciples of Jesus function like children with coloring books? What happens when we accept the lines that are drawn by people who have the power to draw the lines but not the passion for God’s will for the world? People that have the power to draw lines rarely draw them to include and empower “others.” They too often establish boundaries that protect their privilege or secure their advantage. People with the power to draw the lines for others do not normally draw lines to enable more people to live more abundantly. Those with the power to draw the lines in this world usually are keeping many out rather than drawing several in. This is not the way of God.

God’s will is not to restrict access to life that is full and whole and meaningful. God’s will is to invite all people to come and sit at a table of welcome and be at home and at peace with God and God’s creation. Hear the grand invitation:

```
Come, all you who are thirsty, 
come to the waters; 
and you who have no money, 
come, buy and eat! 
Come, buy wine and milk 
without money and without cost. 
(Isa 55:1, NIV)
```
The will of God for the world cannot be contained by the limited visions of people who try to define God’s love, constrict God’s mercy, and limit God’s joy. We cannot contain God within the lines of our human limitations. We cannot enclose God within our boundaries. We cannot make God conform to our will. And just as people cannot limit God, God’s people are not to be restrained by the limited aspirations and expectations of this world. For those of us who decide to follow Jesus, we are called to offer our bodies “as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God.” And we are instructed: “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will” (Rom 12:1-2, NIV).

While it is noble and right to resist coloring within the lines drawn by the leaders of our cultures and the rulers of this world, it is not an easy task. When the powers of our cultures and the rulers of this world manipulate the political, educational, economic, and communication systems to impose their worldviews as normative for all of us, it is sometimes difficult to color outside their lines. When the Spirit of God inspires you to color outside the lines of cultural norms and societal expectations, you face resistance, criticism, and isolation from those who have an interest in your conformity and even from your friends, family, and fellow believers who have allowed themselves to be shaped by the limitations of this world. It takes courage to color outside the lines. And God gives courage to do God’s will.

**Peter Crossing the Color Line**

In Acts 11:1-18, Peter is called to color outside the lines of his cultural norms. Peter was a Jew. His culture and religion taught him that Jews did not relate on an equal footing to people who were not Jews. He was taught that people who were Jews were better than people who were not Jews. His culture, tradition, and religious practice taught him that some people were less important than his people based on their ethnicity.

God revealed to Peter, however, that all people have value. All people have worth. All people are important because all people are made by God. Cultures give people labels based on their ethnicity or wealth or other categories. People with the power to draw lines make categories that protect their privilege and designate everyone else as “others.” People with the power to draw lines invent labels to define the “other” as “different.” Then, rather than see differences as descriptive, they place value on differences so that...
whoever is different than “us” is of less value. God had to instruct Peter through a vision, “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean” (Acts 11:9).

Peter went to the house of Cornelius because his encounter with the living God changed his thinking about ethnicity determining the value of people. Peter told Cornelius “You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him, but God has shown me that I should not call any one impure or unclean. So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection” (Acts 10:28-29). God called Peter to “color outside the lines.”

Because of Peter’s courageous response to “color outside the lines,” to visit Cornelius, and to share the good news of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit came upon all who heard the message. The Gentiles received the same pouring out of the Spirit as did the disciples of Jesus on the day of Pentecost, and they were baptized. Ethnicity did not determine whom the Holy Spirit embraced.

One would think that the church establishment at Jerusalem would have rejoiced to learn that these Gentiles received the Holy Spirit just as the disciples who had gathered in the aftermath of the death and the resurrection of Jesus. But sometimes the people with power in the church are just as limited in their vision as people with power in the world.

Once these church leaders heard about the Gentiles receiving the word of God, they criticized Peter for going into the house of “the others” and eating with them. The church leaders of that time were committed to a closed system that only welcomed people like them—people who adjusted themselves to the cultural expectations that the leaders had come to know and trust and value. They were unwilling to embrace fully other ethnic groups. Jesus had told them prior to his ascension into heaven that “you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Still, however, they were committed to lines that their culture had drawn, and they intended to color inside those lines and force everyone else to do the same. They chastised Peter for “coloring outside the lines”—for crossing racial or ethnic boundaries. But they were about to be encountered by the power of God that had changed Peter and empowered him to cross their boundaries.

Peter testified:

As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. Then I remembered what the Lord had said:
‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God? When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, ‘So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life. (Acts 11:15-18)

So, as a result of Peter “coloring outside the lines,” Cornelius and all who heard the Gospel were filled with the Holy Spirit and even the church establishment was changed. Peter was changed. Cornelius and his household were changed. The church leaders were changed. This is what happens when you get a glimpse of the expansive vision of God for the salvation of the world. God’s revelation of salvation for all will change your life. It will change the life of those who do not yet know God. It will change the life of the church. It will change the world in which we live.

**Coloring Outside the Lines in the Twenty-first Century**

When the founders of the United States of America were charting the path of this grand experiment of self-government and democracy, they struggled with the incongruity of establishing a new nation that valued freedom and the enslavement of Africans to fuel the economic expansion of much of the new nation. The founders did not resolve the matter in the eighteenth century. A result was the U.S. Civil War that began in April 1861. The fundamental issue was the enslavement of Africans and their descendants born in the U.S. Should slavery be contained where it presently existed or should it be allowed to expand as the nation expanded? Enslaved Africans were not considered to be fully human. They were considered property for the sake of economics and considered three-fifths human for the sake of politics. They were “bred” to supply adequate “stock.” They were physically abused. Women were sexually abused. Children were sold away from parents. Life was horrible for the enslaved and the system corrupted those who benefitted from slavery. Rev. Lott Carey, who was born enslaved in 1780, purchased his freedom in 1813, and was the leader of the first Baptist missionaries (former slaves) to Africa from the United States in 1821, claimed:

I am an African, and in this country, however meritorious my conduct, and respectable my character, I cannot receive the credit due to either. I wish to go to a country where I shall be estimated by my merits, not by my complexion; and I feel bound to labor for my suffering race.
Following the abolition of slavery, discrimination against people of African heritage in the United States was legally protected and socially accepted. The people who “drew the lines,” made the rules, and created the laws determined that “white” people had opportunities for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness while “black” people were denied opportunities to achieve their fullest potential. Slavery, segregation, and discrimination have all contributed to the lines drawn concerning racial separation in the United States. Much violence, hurt, and suspicion have been part of the fabric of race relations in the United States born from the “peculiar institution” and what some refer to as the “original sin” of our country.

The United States has seen other expressions of racial discrimination, suspicion, and violence. From slavery through the horrors of Japanese Americans forced into internment camps during World War II through the hostility toward Latina/o documented or undocumented immigrant populations in the late twentieth century through the assumed terrorist temperament of Arab and Arab-Americans in the post 9/11 attacks, our culture imposes lines to distinguish racial and ethnic difference and imply degrees of trustworthiness and corruption. The challenge for disciples of Jesus is whether we will conform to the assumptions of those who draw the cultural and political lines or whether we will “color outside the lines.” If we glimpse the vision that Peter saw, we should be able to cross the ethnic and racial boundaries drawn to keep some in and some out to declare “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean” (Acts 11:9).

1 J. B. Taylor, Biography of Elder Lott Carey, Late Missionary to Africa (Baltimore: Armstrong & Berry, 1837) (http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/taylor/menu.html).
Neither Gerizim Nor Zion: Worship Beyond Race (John 4:1-42)

By Emmanuel McCall*

ABSTRACT

Luke 4:18-19 is often referred to as the inaugural address of Jesus and the beginning of his public ministry. These verses are quoted from Isa 61:1-2. “Freedom” is a poignant theme in the passage and indeed the total ministry of Jesus. He came to “set the captives free.” The experience mentioned in John 4 is illustrative of our emancipation. Jesus set this woman free from the bondage to sin, from the intimidation of a manipulative society, from the imposition of sexism, from social control, from religious bigotry and from a confused understanding and relationship with God. She was set free to be herself and to rise to full freedom in Christ.

The Background

After the reign of King Solomon, the Kingdom of Israel was divided north and south. The descendants of the two tribes of Benjamin and Judah were in the south, as well as the sacred religious center, Jerusalem. The other ten tribes formed the Northern Kingdom. Samaria became its center.

In 722 BCE, Assyria conquered the Northern Kingdom. It was resettled with people from five nations (2 Kgs 17:24-25). The newcomers retained their own forms of worship and broke covenant with Jerusalem. They co-mingled and/or replaced the worship of God. Polytheism replaced monotheism. The books of First and Second Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, the Wisdom Literature, the

---

*Emmanuel McCall is Adjunct Professor of Urban Ministries at the McAfee School of Theology of Mercer University in Atlanta, Georgia.
the Prophets and anything affirming King David’s reign in Jerusalem were ignored. The Pentateuch (the first five books of the Hebrew Bible) became the authoritative Samaritan scriptures. Mt. Gerizim (Samaria) replaced Mt. Zion (Jerusalem) as their center of worship. When the Babylonian Exile, that sent the Southern Kingdom into bondage was over, the Samaritans refused to help in rebuilding Jerusalem, the Temple and its environs (Ezra 4:23). Alexander the Great of Greece later established a base in Samaria, further polluting its people and worship of God.

The response of the Southern Kingdom was to despise the Northern Kingdom and its capital, Samaria. It was considered pagan, heathen and idolatrous. The intermarrying with non-Jews was seen as defilement, despicable and impure. King Herod’s attempt to ease the hostility by marrying Malthace, a Samaritan, only escalated the tensions. In time, the Samaritan territory represented the descendants of Manasseh and Ephraim. It was an area between Galilee (north) and Judea (south). Strict Jews needing to go north beyond Samaria avoided going through it by crossing the Jordan River, going north around the hills of Judea and Samaria. When they reached Mt. Gilboa they turned westward into the territory of Galilee. Not only did they avoid going through Samaria, but the Samaritans were spared the inconvenience of hostile visitors.

Surprise! Surprise! Surprise!

It is understandable, then, why the disciples were surprised that Jesus was going through, not around, Samaria. The trip was risky for Jesus’ ministry. Public reaction from Jews outside of Samaria could discredit Jesus and his ministry. Personal harm was possible, but even as he later “set his face” toward Jerusalem, he now sets himself and the disciples to go through Samaria.

A Barrier-Crossing Christ

Jesus readily crossed barriers that world systems had erected. Being God, he was not bound by human depravity. There was no “homogeneous unit principle” in his agenda. Christ is the Universal Saviour who willingly shared his universality with those who follow him. He led by example. He did not talk negatively about Samaria or its people. He did not theorize a strategy for someday reaching them. Jesus practiced “direct evangelism.” He led his disciples right into forbidden territory.
Well! Well! Well!

As Jesus and his team came into the vicinity of Sychar (Shechem), they came to what was called “Jacob’s Well.” There is no indication that Jacob had anything to do with the well. It is suggested that the name resulted from Jacob, having given Shechem to his son Joseph, who gave the territory to his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. The city and region of Shechem had no rivers or streams. The only way to water was through the dug well. Wells were often located on a main road outside of the city to benefit travelers. Each well had a curb around its mouth to prevent accidents and to aid those drawing water. A lengthy rope allowed the container (a leather pouch) and the water to meet. This well was at least 100 feet deep.

Jesus decided to rest at the covered shade of the well while the disciples went into Sychar to buy provisions. One aspect of Jesus’ evangelistic strategy was to be available. One never knows when opportunities will present themselves. Jesus was sensitive to this possibility. A lone woman came to draw water in the middle of the day. This was highly unusual. Women came in groups both morning and evening, never alone. The need for assistance, protection and social cohesion caused togetherness. A lone woman indicated some kind of problem. If there were other water sources she would have used them, but she came to what was available, in the heat of the day.

Jesus understood her lonely trip. The ensuing conversation indicated the reason for her despair. She was a social outcast. The scripture does not say this, but she was probably an attractive woman. She was at least capable of attracting five husbands. This was two more than the law allowed women to have. She was seen as a “serial fornicator,” and perhaps, the secret envy of other women. She was also a source of their consternation if they were afraid of their marriages. We can be sure the tongues did wag. Fantasies took an imaginary reality during the well conversations.

Crossing Barriers

What humans put up as lines of demarcation is alien to the mind and spirit of Jesus. In this one experience he crossed several barriers. He bids us follow him.

1. I have already indicated the historic situation that put enmity between the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. Time did not erase that enmity. Some 931 years later the Jews of the South still hated the descendants
Marginal frontiers become walled fortresses.

2. Jesus crossed the racial divide by speaking to a woman, in a public place, as a trusted equal. He not only addressed her as a person, but trusted her to provide an internal substance which he needed, water. People have been known to poison internal substances. Jesus trusted her to give him pure water. To trust this woman as an equal respected her personhood. The racial divide was crossed. Now Jesus was ready to build the relationship. RELATIONAL EVANGELISM RESPECTS THE PERSONHOOD OF OTHERS.

3. Jesus crossed a class barrier. He talked openly with a woman in a public place. Rabbinic law said “Let no man talk with a woman in the street, no not with his own wife.” He was not disturbed about how the public might view his actions. Probably no one had had an in-depth conversation with this woman, especially about spiritual matters. Jesus was making a friend. Making friends is very risky, especially outside of local social norms.

4. The substance of Jesus’ conversation was theological and spiritual. Men were not to talk theology with women. This was another barrier to cross. Jesus opened the conversation by trusting her to meet his need, a drink of water. Fellow Jews would have considered her water pot unclean. She knew this. Her surprise at his request gave him the opportunity to talk about what he had that she needed, “Living Water.” The transition from the physical to the spiritual application helps us to see her desperation. If she had an endless supply of living water, she would never again be humiliated by coming to the well.

Jesus moved the conversation to a different level. He indicated his perfect knowledge of who she was and how she had lived. This really caused her to take notice. Even the Samaritans believed that the expected Messiah had perfect knowledge. The woman was convinced she was in the presence of the Messiah. Only he could recall her past, reveal her present, and give an option for her future.
Jesus opened the discussion on her personal life. When she confessed, Jesus did not resort to berating, humiliating or exploiting her. He radiated forgiving, confident hope. Had this woman the power to change her circumstances, she would have. Jesus gave her the initiative and the power to alter her circumstances. He not only revealed her past, described her present, but like a teacher at a marking board, he wiped the surface clean. What Jesus cleans is always sanitized. Carrie Ten Boom, a missionary to China, is reported to have said that Jesus takes our sins to the deepest part of the Sea of Forgetfulness, anchors them to the bottom, and places a “No Trespassing” sign on the surface.

Now she wanted to talk. She had so many questions, fears, doubts and confusions, but no one to talk with about them. She started at a most appropriate place, her relationship with God. She wanted to know God in a more personal way, but how could she go about it? Her folks said, “Go to Mt. Gerizim.” The Jews said, “Come to Mt. Zion.” Who was right?

In answering her Jesus crossed the barrier of theological absurdity. Were God a localized deity her question would have been valid, but Jesus declared God is Spirit, meaning that God is universal. No race, clan or religious system can contain God. God is expressed to whomever God pleases, however and whenever. So the answer to her dilemma was neither Mt. Gerizim nor Mt. Zion. All who worship God are united by the common denominators, Spirit and Truth.

For the first time in her life this woman experienced “Living Water.” The new birth awakened her sensibilities; removed residual embarrassments, doubts and fears; and sent her running into town to evangelize. In the middle of the day, the sun shining heatedly bright, she stirred the town by her excited news, “The Messiah has come.” She was probably perceived as deranged. Certainly, not to be taken seriously, after all, “look at who she is.” The collective resentment towards her did not inhibit her freedom of expression, “Come! See a man who could tell me all of my past.” That must have excited those who expected tantalizing details of her exploits. She, who was once obscure became visible. The lonely, isolated woman attracted a crowd, not for herself, but people whom she could lead to Jesus. The crowd listened to Jesus and believed. Salvation came to the Samaritans that day. John quotes them as saying, “Now we believe, not just because of what you have told us, but because we have heard him ourselves. Now we know that he is indeed the Saviour of the world.”

6
The Ultimate Purpose of True Worship

In John 4:34-38 Jesus lasers our attention to the ultimate purpose of true worship. It is to lead people to God. It is to join God in loving this world back to God. Upon their return to the well from the shopping trip, the disciples were concerned to find Jesus in personal conversation with the woman. It is not far-fetched to assume they may have surmised seduction going on. They had probably drawn their own conclusions about the mid-day visit. The woman’s sudden and joyful departure into town really piqued their curiosity, but they were too respectful to ask Jesus a direct question. Instead, they began passing food. Jesus declined their food and responded with a confusing statement, “I have a kind of food you know nothing about.” He went on to explain that when we are doing God’s will, God responds with spiritual blessings that far surpass our temporal concerns. Jesus used a rural expression to excite their sedated consciousness.

But I say, wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest. The harvesters are paid good wages, and the fruit they harvest is people brought to eternal life. What joy awaits both the planter and the harvester alike! You know the saying, “One plants and another harvests.” And it’s true. I sent you to harvest where you didn’t plant; others had already done the work, and now you will get to gather the harvest.

Bringing It Closer Home

The world’s Northern Hemisphere is experiencing an interesting religious phenomena. Those of the Southern Hemisphere are having a religious excitement that is shaking up Christian sensitivity. The people of Africa, South America, the Caribbean and Asia are interpreting and applying the gospel in expressions different from North America and Europe. Among them is a disregard for religious thought and practice that lacks the harvest they are experiencing. No longer will Northern Hemisphere Christians be the only theologians, missionaries and directors of religious activities. Those from the South who have immigrated North are carrying their religious enthusiasm with them. They are inviting North America and Europe to drink from the wells of “Living Water” they are discovering. “Net buckets” are being created to reach the deep wells of faith. The theological shrines from which we drunk (the Gerizims and Zions), our spiritual waters may be
challenged by the universality of the Spirit set free. We may discover the meaning of Acts 2 when the mighty windstorms of God’s Spirit touches us with “cloven tongues” of divine fire. Then we, like the woman, will have a story to tell. Unlike those of Judah who went around Samaria, we will be like Jesus seeking Samarias to go through.

1 Andreas J. Kostenberger, Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary, vol. II (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 46.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
6 John 4:42. All scripture citations are from The New Living Bible Translation.
7 John 4:32
8 John 4:35-38
In recent years R&E has produced issues focusing on issues of special interest to the broader Baptist community including:
  - Baptist World Alliance
  - Changing Face of Baptists
  - Christian Reconciliation Ministries
  - Church and Politics
  - Jewish-Christian Dialogue
  - Muslim-Christian Relations
  - Next Christianity
  - Theologizing in a Global Context
  - Women's Leadership in the Church.

Now we offer a CD with all those issues and much more: all the last fifteen years of R&E back issues. It is offered at a special price for our readers. It may be ordered online at our web site: www.rande.org/15YearCD.htm

or mail the form below to:

Review & Expositor
P.O. Box 6681
Louisville, KY 40206-0681

R&E CD $34.95*

*Price include US postage; foreign addresses add $10.00 for postage.

Please send me the following:

_____(quantity) CDs 15 Years R&E Back Issues @ $34.95 $_______ (amount)

$_______ (foreign postage)

$_______ (total enclosed)

Name: ____________________________________________
Address: _________________________________________
City __________________________ State _____ Zip ________
Select Bibliography on Race


The following are publications of Mercer University Press, 1400 Coleman Avenue, Macon, Georgia, 31207.


“Beneath the Skin: Baptists and Racism”

“Beneath the Skin” considers past mistakes and future challenges regarding racial unity and social justice. From the trans-Atlantic slave trade to the current immigration debate, “Beneath the Skin” peels back prejudices and confronts them with biblical mandates. Interviewees come from nearly a dozen states and represent the best in Baptist life, including: preacher and activist Will Campbell, Aidsand Wright-Riggins of American Baptist Churches USA, and Javier Elizondo of Baptist University of the Americas.

Winner of the best documentary award at the International Black Film Festival of Nashville in October 2008 and nominated for the best documentary award at the Texas Black Film Festival in February 2009, “Beneath the Skin” has been screened at national Baptist meetings and widely used in churches. It comes with an online discussion guide.

On a single DVD, the documentary appears in two versions: (1) the short version for public screenings runs 35 minutes; and (2) the long version for Sunday school classes runs 47 minutes and is divided into session chapters.

The price is $25 for a personal or church copy. The price is $100 for a library copy.
From Boston to the Bible Belt and from Beaumont to the nation’s beltway, Baptists and Muslims are changing history with the way they change each other. Tired of being defined by extremists, some Baptists and Muslims in the United States have sought and found common ground: the common word in both traditions to love God and love neighbor. The courageous Baptists and Muslims in “Different Books, Common Word” will surprise you.

The hour-long documentary follows five stories of interfaith dialogue and action among Baptists and Muslims in the United States.


The price is $25 for a personal or church copy. The price is $100 for a library copy.
“Immigration”

Immigration is the focus of the newest documentary from EthicsDaily.com. Scheduled for release at the end of August 2011, the still untitled documentary explores how goodwill Christians welcome undocumented immigrants, the misperceptions about the issue, and the challenges that undocumented Christians face.

The documentary interviews Baptist, Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian faith leaders in Arizona, Arkansas, Alabama, North Carolina and Iowa.

On a single DVD, the documentary appears in two versions: (1) the short version for public screenings runs 31 minutes; and (2) the long version for Sunday school classes runs 54 minutes and is divided into session chapters.

These three documentaries are available to order from: www.ethicsdaily.com
Words about Recent Books
RECENT BOOKS from EERDMANS

KEY EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS
A Collaborative Exploration of Context and Coherence
Edited by Darrell L. Bock and Robert L. Webb
Written by a team of internationally respected evangelical scholars, this book uses a carefully defined approach to historical Jesus studies and historical method to examine twelve key episodes in the life of Jesus.

ISBN 978-0-8028-6613-4 • 949 pages • paperback • $70.00

THE FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS
The Pillar New Testament Commentary
Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner
“Two experts on 1 Corinthians provide detailed yet lucid exegesis of one of Paul’s more difficult letters. I particularly appreciate the very full introduction, which covers many more topics than the usual introductions to a Pauline letter.”

— Richard Bauckham

ISBN 978-0-8028-3732-5 • 984 pages • hardcover • $65.00

THE LETTER OF JAMES
The New International Commentary on the New Testament
Scot McKnight
“Scot McKnight has produced a readable and carefully organized commentary packed full of concrete insights. He brilliantly blends the best thoughts of earlier scholarship with innovative thinking, and remains sensitive throughout to both ancient context and his modern audience.”

— Craig S. Keener

ISBN 978-0-8028-2627-5 • 527 pages • hardcover • $55.00

JESUS AND HIS OWN
A Commentary on John 13–17
Daniel B. Stevick
“Contemporary listeners, numbed by long-standing casual familiarity with John’s Gospel, will hear the words of Jesus in fresh ways, will see the situation of the first-century church with new eyes, and will engage with the radical gospel for our time.”

— Roger Van Harn

ISBN 978-0-8028-4865-9 • 410 pages • paperback • $38.00

At your bookstore,
or call 800-253-7521
www.eerdmans.com

In this work, Phillips intends to introduce certain details of Paul's life that intersect the undisputed letters of Paul and the Acts of the Apostles and also to discuss some of the more stimulating arguments related to this issue (p. xi). He states, “Accordingly, the research agenda of this volume is to examine the Paul of Acts and the Paul of the undisputed letters and to provide a disciplined approach for their comparison and their employment in Pauline studies” (p. 29).

He begins in the first chapter by addressing two scholarly tendencies in relating Paul and the book of Acts: (1) those who allow Acts to fill in elements from Paul's life (e.g., Chilton); and (2) those who refuse to use information from Acts unless Paul's letters confirm it (e.g., Crossan and Reed). For scholars like Chilton, the Paul of Acts closely resembles the Paul of the letters, while for Crossan, Reed and others, the Paul in Acts has no resemblance to the Paul of the letters.

He discusses four principles for using the undisputed letters of Paul and Acts together in the second chapter: (1) an independent examination of both Paul and Acts; (2) separation of Paul's life and thought; (3) focus on smaller details; and (4) placing smaller details in wider contexts. Each chapter begins by examining data from Paul and then Acts. Next, Phillips compares the two by fitting details from the letters into the wider contexts of Acts. The first principle is developed in dialogue with the work of F. C. Baur, who was skeptical of the historical reliability of Acts. Phillips argues that this principle “offers the best protection against unconscious blending of the Paul of the letters and the Paul of Acts” (p. 47). The second principle, developed in dialogue with the Knox/Vielhauer tradition, intentionally focuses attention on Paul's life in distinction from Paul's theology, because symmetry between Acts and the letters in one area does not equal symmetry in another. This effort generates two sets of data:
material from Acts and material from the letters. The third principle examines data “that most likely allow for meaningful comparison without resorting to speculation from silence” (p. 49). The fourth principle does not attempt to provide an exhaustive portrait of Paul. Rather, it focuses attention “where the most disciplined and meaningful examination” of the letters and Acts will prove most fruitful (p. 49).

Phillips argues that how one reads Acts 15 and Galatians 2 is crucial to how one draws conclusions concerning Acts and the letters. He concludes that critical scholarship has tended to distinguish the Paul in the letters from the Paul in Acts. Second, he concludes that the consensus of scholarship is that Acts attempted to rehabilitate Paul within eastern Mediterranean Christianity where the influence of the Jerusalem church was quite strong. Thus, the Paul of Acts differs significantly from the Paul in the letters. This was a major reason for the writing of Acts, according to Phillips (see pp. 190-97).

This book is well written and well researched. It provides a generally accurate presentation of the major sides of the principal discussions. The conclusions are prudent and balanced. The comparative methodology is helpful in this endeavor, since it presents the data for the reader to consider and come to his/her own conclusions. A weakness of the study is that it tends to minimize differences between Paul and Acts by inserting data from the letters into the broader contexts of Acts. If Acts attempts to rehabilitate Paul, as Phillips argues, should we not expect Acts to be slanted in a way that lessen its historical reliability?

In spite of these concerns, however, this is a very helpful introduction to key issues in the relationship between Acts and the undisputed letters of Paul. It should prove helpful to seminarians, pastors and academicians with an interest in this topic. Phillips is a lively, engaging and clear communicator.

Thomas B. Slater
McAfee School of Theology
Atlanta, GA


Spinks offers this examination of “meaning” as a contribution to the
resurgence of explicitly theological interpretation of Scripture. In it he outlines and critiques two contrasting approaches. A pragmatic approach, exemplified in the work of Stephen Fowl, sees the theological dimension of biblical texts as a function of the reading community’s interests. A neo-traditional approach, represented by the work of Kevin Vanhoozer, distrusts the postmodernist emphasis on the readerly construal of meaning. Instead, it prioritizes authorial intention, understood not in terms of the author’s admittedly unrecoverable thought, but as communicative intent. Fowl’s pragmatic approach, Spinks argues, is open to charges that such construals of meaning by readers and reading communities will likely produce interpretations in the image of the reader or readers and that they do not leave room for the text to offer prophetic insights. Vanhoozer’s alternative, meant in part as a corrective to relativistic approaches, however, overlooks “the interplay of intentions and interests that takes play when people read most texts, especially those texts they deem sacred” (pp. 111-12).

Spinks proposes to transcend the strict demarcation between reader/reading community and author/text as the loci of meaning through attention to speech-act theory and the verbal character of the concept of meaning (i.e., “meaning” is not an objective reality, a thing; rather, texts “mean”). Borrowing especially from the work of James McClendon and James Smith, Spinks develops an understanding of “meaning” informed by the concept of a “happy” speech act. In order for a speech act to be “happy,” it must meet a number of conditions. The speaker must intend to issue and succeed in issuing a sentence competently formulated in the common language. That is, the sentence must be formulated in such a way that it has the potential to communicate. Unless, however, the recipient of the communication actually and competently recognizes the communication and its intent, no communication has actually occurred. Then the speech act is “unhappy.” In order for a text to “mean,” in the terminology Spinks prefers, this triad—author, text, reader/reading community—must function competently. They must interrelate. Spinks proposes “that we speak less of discovering what is hidden or creating what is not, and more of participating in something that manifests itself in the interplay between author, text and reader, in the total speech situation, in the mediation of God’s truth” (p. 155).

This study is a dense treatment of the concept of “meaning,” popularly assumed to be simple and uncomplicated. One means what one says. In an era when evidence suggests that even believers find
Scripture less and less meaningful, renewed attention to how Scripture means is requisite if its voice is to be kept alive. Unfortunately, the publisher has set a price point that will put this insightful, rewarding work out of the reach of even those willing to grapple with its complexity.

Mark E. Biddle
Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond
Richmond, VA


Van Seters brings a lifetime of scholarship and study into his book on David (1 Sam 16 to 1 Kgs 6, minus 2 Sam 21–24). He says his approach is a balance between a historical-critical method and holistic, final-form studies (p. xiii); but perhaps it is best described as a literary-critical study. After an introduction, which includes a history of scholarship on the David narratives, Van Seters has two chapters on the social and historical setting of the David saga and then four chapters on passages dealing with David’s life. These last four chapters are the heart of the study and focus on difficulties of the text. Chapters four and five focus on David and Saul, while chapters six and seven look at passages associated with David as king.

Van Seters admits his approach to the Davidic narratives is counter to Rost, von Rad, Noth, and others. His basic premise is that the Davidic court narratives reflect a much later time and are a later addition to the Deuteronomistic History. He suggests a late Persian Period date for these additions (p. xii). Also, he believes that the David corpus has two distinct and competing narratives, one presenting an idealized David, while the other presents a typical oriental despot (p. 1). He looks at obvious problems within the text, such as the three introductions of David (p. 121).

The book has several strengths. Van Seters has vast knowledge of scholarship on Davidic studies and demonstrates this throughout the book but especially in chapter four. He clearly articulates his own positions on the text, using first person pronouns that make the reader feel as if he/she is having a conversation with the author. His passion for the study shows in his writing, as easily seen when one reads his section on mercenaries (pp. 99–118). Also, he makes excellent use of extra-biblical resources such as archaeological findings and ancient-
Near-Eastern documents in supporting his arguments. However, one problem some readers will have with Van Seter’s approach is that he takes a minimalist view of a historical David as described in the biblical text. He attributes very little material to actual events of a tenth-century BCE man named David, but rather much of it to later traditions and customs (mainly Persian Period). Overall, I found the book very readable. Van Seters has great discussions on the literary difficulties of the text and many scholars will find his arguments very helpful. *The Biblical Saga of King David* is definitely written for scholars and graduate students in biblical studies, both of whom will find it stimulating and intriguing, even if they do not agree with Van Seter’s position.

Terry W. Eddinger  
Carolina Evangelical Divinity School  
Greensboro, NC

Pam Durso, Executive Director of Baptist Women in Ministry, once related that she wished more biographical treatments were done of Baptist figures. She grieved, though, that especially those in theological education do not turn to biographies. This lack of interest or attention to cultural paradigms that impact the future of the Baptist movement, as well as the vocational futures of scholars, is near pandemic proportions. Loving beyond Your Theology is McSwain’s latest entry in alleviating the information and inspiration gap regarding Baptists. With this book, which I hope not his last one of this genre, McSwain unfolds the life and ministry of Jimmy Allen.

Details of Allen’s life are pulled together here, using personal interviews with Allen, interviews of those close to him in the contexts addressed, news stories, and personal papers. Certainly this is not a dry, stringing together of ideas that one would find in an encyclopedia article. Rather, McSwain demonstrates the methodology recommended by James McClendon’s book Biography as Theology: look for the informative and formative shapers and influences in a person’s life.

First, read chapter one, “The Story of a Prophetic Priest,” and then chapter eleven, “New Geography, New Ministries, New Leadership.” I could wish McSwain had developed more paragraphs and pages covering Allen’s involvements in the latter years of his narrative. At the least, the reader can understand Allen, though past 80, is still engaging the world for the cause of Christ, as a Baptist, in extraordinarily productive ways. I have to admit Allen reminds me a bit of Caleb, who said, “Give me the hill country!”

The reader gets an opportunity to explore this life of a denominational worker, pastor, and always prophetic figure with chapters delineating Allen’s rearing, education, and the
important figures who influenced him. One finds here a man always leaning into life, exhibiting a level of courage obtained by few. The reader will recognize the influence of T. B. Maston, to whom Allen gives credit for helping him integrate his evangelistic fervor and pastoral care dynamics with Christian social ethics.

McSwain’s book demonstrates that one’s Christian practice should be ever evolving, growing, deepening and seeking the Kingdom, or following, in Allen’s terms, “the Father’s will.” Such exploration does not excuse one from difficult circumstances, nor the struggle of finding God’s will in those difficulties. These themes form the core of chapter 10, “Loving Past Your Theology: The Pain of a Prophetic Priest.” An article McSwain previously wrote for the Whitsett Journal finds fuller fruition in this chapter and serves as the spawning point of the whole book. Through these difficulties, Allen’s life demonstrates that we should be growing in God to the degree that we find ourselves loving beyond the theology we grew up with, a theology that we were told is orthodox, but which can oft times limit the movement of God among us.

Friends of Jimmy Allen will enjoy this book as they remember themselves in and around some of the contexts which McSwain covers. Those who have never heard of Jimmy Allen will find themselves discovering some good things that went on among Baptists in the last several decades. Allen would be delighted to know some of the latter group of readers would pick up at points where he has left off or join him in the enterprises on behalf of the Baptist movement in which he has been involved.

William M. Tillman, Jr.
Logsdon School of Theology
Hardin-Simmons University
Abilene, TX


This brief book is a compendium of what has been simmering on the theological and pastoral backburner of the Church’s stove for several
decades. These questions about the basics of belief are perennial and profound, but not much that is asked or answered is surprising.

What is surprising is that someone had the courage to raise publicly these controversial, relevant issues and themes and provide some sensitive theological counsel. Of course, most progressive pastors and theologians would agree with Thielen “take” on the issues; so nothing is strikingly new there. But what is quite helpful is that he has brought these troublesome, divisive questions together in one volume, introducing them and responding to them, as well as lacing them with stories from his pastoral experience and referencing other helpful resources in the form of related books and movies.

The author divides his presentation into two major sections—first, what Christians don’t have to believe (ten in number), and second, what Christians do have to believe (eleven in number). In summary, and to paraphrase, what Christians don’t have to believe is that God causes catastrophes; that doubt erodes/erases faith; that religious people cannot accept evolution; that women are subordinate and cannot be preachers; that environmentalism is foreign to God’s will for the world; that the rapture will leave some/many behind; that all non-Christians will go to hell; that the Bible is literally true; that God hates homosexuals; and that Christians are intended and entitled to be holier-than-thou.

According to the author, what Christians do have to believe, in general, is in Jesus. More particularly, Christians have to believe that Jesus was/is the Son of God and is the center of Christianity; that a loving relationship with God and with other persons is what matters most; that God in/through Jesus graciously and unconditionally accepts us as we are; that God accomplishes God’s will in the world by primarily working through human beings; that fulfillment comes from generous service to others; that God does not cause/prevent suffering, but enters into it and through God’s presence works to redeem it; that hope is a good thing and no good thing ever dies; that the Church, despite its flaws, remains the primary vehicle for God to accomplish God’s work in the world; that the Holy Spirit is God’s empowering presence in human life, in the Church, and in the world; that God’s kingdom is God’s dream for the world and we are called to join with God to realize that dream; and that mainline churches believe in salvation, though coming in multiple forms and different expressions.

By the author’s admission, this book is not a “heavy” theological textbook. Instead, it is a suggestively-presented compilation of what people both inside and outside the Church ask about, are curious about, and are troubled about, followed by
some thoughts, suggestions, and stories to stimulate reflection, response, and conversation. Therefore, it functions appropriately as a discussion-starter regarding the core elements of the Christian faith, and, as such, should be considered as “Theology Lite.”

This book would serve best as a relevant springboard and introductory guidebook for personal devotions, church groups on Sundays or on a weekday evening, or as a study for the entire congregation. It could also be used for the same purposes in campus ministry on a college or university campus.

Clifford Cain
Westminster College
Fulton, MO
III. Ministerial Studies


Greg Hunt, an effective parish minister had a problem: “I particularly longed for vocational guidance from God. What I got was . . . neither God’s guidance nor God’s presence” (p. xiii). Many believers have times of doubting, searching, and testing their faith. But this was something different—a shattering, threatening crisis for a long term minister who had fought those earlier battles, and what’s more had a Ph.D. in systematic theology.

He asked what was wrong and considered several explanations—descriptions: Faltering faith? Some moral obstacle? Dark night of the soul? Faith development? Projection of the imagination (pp. xx-xxii)? Upon reflection he gravitated toward the language of “dark night of the soul” and “wilderness.”

Eventually, he wrote, “I settled on the only strategy I could think of for making contact with God [if God would not speak with him]” (p. xxii). He would turn to the record of God’s revelation, the Bible. Specifically, he would examine the words of Jesus, sometimes highlighted in red letters, concentrating on Matthew. And he would continue his practice of journaling on what he read. Though aware that this was an uncertain experiment, he approached these sayings with a “suspension of disbelief” (p. 45). Further, he engaged Jesus’ words with a “second naiveté” (Ricoeur’s term) (p. 77). As he read a passage he would select the point of view of some person in the event (or at times several of them), reading as Ignatius of Loyola’s Spiritual Exercises suggest—with all five senses alert to all that is happening.

Thus, he began and read each saying of Jesus as recorded in Matthew in turn, starting with the words before he was baptized and ending with his great commission. At times he questioned, challenged, or rejected what Jesus said. Sometimes, he was profoundly moved by his encounter with the text, even while
the specter of disbelief/atheism lurked in the background. He persisted in an eight month excursion through each saying in Matthew, recording more than 200 journal entries. Gradually, occasionally, this discipline provided moments of “light in the dark night” (p. 126). He kept at this effort through the “downward spiral” of Jesus’ call to cross bearing, suffering, agony in Gethsemane, and to being betrayed, tried, and crucified. On this, he reflects, “I look back at my dark night of the soul and can see the necessary dying that was going on then . . .” (p. 194)

He stayed with this practice through Jesus’ resurrection appearances and Great Commission and recalled that this triumphant love of God “took the anger right out of me. I experienced the self-giving love of God with renewed effect and remembered that God was for me, not against me” (pp. 244-245). Eventually, the vocational clarity for which he so urgently longed came as well.

Realizing that his experiment might be helpful to others, he selected forty of the sayings of Jesus and excerpts of his journal responses along with further comment and reflection. The book that came from this is both the author’s story and an invitation to others to do similar explorations, perhaps guided by his methods, perhaps on their own. The book is a combination of things: memoir; testimony of faith questioned-tested-restored, description of a specific scripture engaging practice to address struggles in faith, and invitation for others to engage a similar journey. It succeeds more on some of these levels than others. Carl Rogers once noted that when one is most personal, then one is most universal. It is on this personal-thus-universal note that I find the book most effective. Here we find a vital engaging and candid account of a grueling spiritual crisis and journey. This journey addressed Greg’s very individual and unique needs. Some of the phrases by which he describes himself include: love of autonomy, “adrenaline fueled life,” “an idea man first, and an action man second . . . more of a designer than a builder.” This suggests that the exercise was valuable for a male, somewhat driven cleric, with at least enough openness to scripture to deal with the vacuum of revelation he was otherwise experiencing. Other persons might need other paths. At any rate, it is a fascinating read, filled not only with Greg’s “aha’s” but also with some other new discoveries awaiting each reader. I commend it to you.

Richard P. Olson
Central Baptist Theological Seminary
Shawnee, KS
Indexes
Books Received


Books Reviewed

Hunt, Gregory L.  *Blackbird Singing in the Dead of Night: What to Do When God Won’t Answer.* .......................... 615

McSwain, Larry L.  *Loving beyond Your Theology: The Life and Ministry of Jimmy Raymond Allen.* ............................ 611

Phillips, Thomas E.  *Paul, His Letters and Acts.* ........................... 605

Spinks, D. Christopher.  *The Bible and the Crisis of Meaning: Debates on the Theological Interpretation of Scriptures.* .............. 606


Review and Expositor Index, Volume 108, 2011

AFRICA
Issues in Bible translation in Africa. Lynell Zogbo Spring, 2011
   Vol. 108, pp. 279-296

AGRICULTURE
The grace of good food and the call to good farming. Norman Wirzba
   Winter, 2011   Vol. 108, pp. 61-71

BAPTISTS
A word from . . . An audacious identity: Those scandalous Baptists.

BATTEN, ALICIA J.
The Jesus tradition and the letter of James. Alicia J. Batten
   Summer, 2011   Vol. 108, pp. 381-390

BAUCKHAM, RICHARD
The story of the earth according to Paul: Romans 8:18-23.

BIBLE—Translation
First words . . . Editorial introduction. Roger L. Omanson Spring, 2011
   Vol. 108, pp. 155-158
Bible translation and the myth of “literal accuracy.” Mark L. Strauss
The textual basis for modern translations of the Old Testament.
   Rolf Schaefer and Roger Omanson Spring, 2011
   Vol. 108, pp. 241-252
The textual basis for modern translations of the New Testament.
   Florian Voss and Roger Omanson Spring, 2011
   Vol. 108, pp. 253-261
On the relevance of translation theory. Stephen Pattemore Spring, 2011
   Vol. 108, pp. 263-277
Issues in Bible translation in Africa. Lynell Zogbo Spring, 2011
   Vol. 108, pp. 279-296
BIBLE — Versions
Bible translation and the myth of “literal accuracy.” Mark L. Strauss
The King James version then and now. Philip C. Stine
Early Bibles in pictures: Celebrating 400 years of the King James Bible -
timeline, commentary, pictures. Joel F. Drinkard, Jr

BIBLE. NEW TESTAMENT — Translation
The textual basis for modern translations of the New Testament.
Florian Voss and Roger Omanson

BIBLE. NEW TESTAMENT. BOOKS AND PARTS — Acts
Fall, 2011 Vol. 108, pp. 579-584

BIBLE. NEW TESTAMENT. BOOKS AND PARTS — Corinthians 2
Second Corinthians 8:4 and 9:1 and the larger context of Paul’s
letters. Roger Omanson

BIBLE. NEW TESTAMENT. BOOKS AND PARTS — James
First words . . . On James and changing times. Christopher Church
A word from . . . The tongue. Nancy L. deClasse’-Walford
James: A circular letter for immigrants. Elsa Tamez (translated from
Spanish by Gloria Kinser)
The Jesus tradition and the letter of James. Alicia J. Batten
Summer, 2011 Vol. 108, pp. 381-390
Strong and weak lines: Permeable boundaries between church and
culture in the letter of James. Darian Lockett
Summer, 2011 Vol. 108, pp. 391-405
A “complete’ ethics: James’ practical theology. Christopher Church
Social justice in the epistle of James: A New Testament Amos?
William M. Tillman, Jr
James’ theocentric Christianity: An opportunity for Christian-Muslim
conversation? Christopher Church
Deaf, dumb and blind churches: James meets the who (Jas. 2:14-17).

The heart of the law: Love your neighbor (Jas. 2:8-13). Joel Weaver

Profit or people first? An examination of Jas. 4:13-16. Toby Ziblar

BIBLE. NEW TESTAMENT. BOOKS AND PARTS—John
Emmanuel McCall Fall, 2011 Vol. 108, pp. 585-591

BIBLE. NEW TESTAMENT. BOOKS AND PARTS—Luke
The problem with privilege on a planet prone to prejudice: An
Vol. 108, pp. 575-578

BIBLE. NEW TESTAMENT. BOOKS AND PARTS—Romans
The story of the earth according to Paul: Romans 8:18-23.

BIBLE. OLD TESTAMENT—Translation
The textual basis for modern translations of the Old Testament.
Rolf Schäfer and Roger Omanson Spring, 2011
Vol. 108, pp. 241-252

BIBLE. OLD TESTAMENT. BOOKS AND PARTS—Micah
Vol. 108, pp. 299-311

BIBLIOGRAPHY
Select bibliography on race. Vol. 108, pp. 593-598

BINGHAM, LINCOLN
When two churches became one. Lincoln Bingham Fall, 2011
Vol. 108, pp. 545-556

CARROLL, MATTHEW
A biblical approach to hospitality. Matthew Carroll Fall, 2011
Vol. 108, pp. 519-526

CHRISTIAN LIVING
James: A circular letter for immigrants. Elsa Tamez (translated from
CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

CHURCH

CHURCH AND STATE

CHURCH MERGERS
When two churches became one. Lincoln Bingham Fall, 2011 Vol. 108, pp. 545-556

CHURCH, CHRISTOPHER

CREATION

CULTURE

DE CLAISSE-WALFORD, NANCY L.
DISASTERS
Unique aspects of a technological disaster and its effect upon community life: A pastoral essay on the BP oil spill.  G. Reid Doster

DOSTER, G. REID
Unique aspects of a technological disaster and its effect upon community life: A pastoral essay on the BP oil spill.  G. Reid Doster

DRINKARD, JOEL F. JR
Early Bibles in pictures: Celebrating 400 years of the King James Bible - timeline, commentary, pictures.  Joel F. Drinkard, Jr Spring, 2011 Vol. 108, pp. 209-240

DUNCAN, DEONIE

EASTWOOD, CLINT
A word about . . . A budding theologian: Clint Eastwood.

ECOLOGY
First words . . . Thinking about ecology—Environment after the spill; a reflection from the beginning of this conversation.
To love as God loves: The spirit of dominion. William Greenway
Christian prophetic leadership for the environment.
Richard O. Randolph Winter, 2011  Vol. 108, pp. 73-87
The story of the earth according to Paul: Romans 8:18-23.

EXPLOITATION
The ethics of tourism. Deonie Duncan Fall, 2011
Vol. 108, pp. 527-535

FARMING
The grace of good food and the call to good farming. Norman Wirzba
Winter, 2011  Vol. 108, pp. 61-71
FOOD
The grace of good food and the call to good farming. Norman Wirzba
Winter, 2011 Vol. 108, pp. 61-71

GARDNER, HARRY
Excitement in Nova Scotia: Beyond racism and white privilege.

GOATLEY, DAVID E.
Vol. 108, pp. 579-584

GOD
To love as God loves: The spirit of dominion. William Greenway

GRAN TORINO (Moving picture)
A word about . . . A budding theologian: Clint Eastwood.

GREENWAY, WILLIAM
To love as God loves: The spirit of dominion. William Greenway

HOLOCAUST
A word from . . . Where are you, God? Reflections on spirituality and

HOSPITALITY
A biblical approach to hospitality. Matthew Carroll Fall, 2011
Vol. 108, pp. 519-526

HUMANS
To love as God loves: The spirit of dominion. William Greenway

IMMIGRANTS
James: A circular letter for immigrants. Elsa Tamez (translated from
JESUS TRADITION
   The Jesus tradition and the letter of James. Alicia J. Batten
   Summer, 2011  Vol. 108, pp. 381-390

JORGENSEN, CAMERON
   A word about . . . Pastors, scholars, and the future of the church.
   Cameron Jorgenson  Spring, 2011  Vol. 108, pp. 163-166

KEOWN, GERALD L.
   A word about . . . Racism and the church. Gerald L. Keown  Fall, 2011
   Vol. 108, pp. 501-503

LEONARD, BILL J.
   A word from . . . Where are you, God? Reflections on spirituality and
   Vol. 108, pp. 159-162
   A word from . . . Before we lay on hands: Baptists and ordination.
   A word from . . . An audacious identity: Those scandalous Baptists.

LOCKETT, DARIAN
   Strong and weak lines: Permeable boundaries between church and
   culture in the letter of James.  Darian Lockett  Summer, 2011
   Vol. 108, pp. 391-405

LOVE
   To love as God loves: The spirit of dominion. William Greenway

MAY, DAVID M.
   A word about . . . A budding theologian: Clint Eastwood.

MCCALL, EMMANUEL
   First words . . . Editorial introduction. Emmanuel McCall  Fall, 2011
   Vol. 108, pp. 487-489
   Emmanuel McCall  Fall, 2011  Vol. 108, pp. 585-591
MITCHELL, LOIS
  Excitement in Nova Scotia: Beyond racism and white privilege.

MONTGOMERY, BERT
  Deaf, dumb and blind churches: James meets the who (Jas. 2:14-17).

NOVA SCOTIA
  Excitement in Nova Scotia: Beyond racism and white privilege.

OIL SPILLS
  First words . . . Thinking about ecology—Environment after the spill; a reflection from the beginning of this conversation.
  Unique aspects of a technological disaster and its effect upon community life: A pastoral essay on the BP oil spill.
  Light in darkness: Pastoral conversations from Plaquemines Parish.
  The calls from the gulf shore tragedy—an editor’s response.

OLSON, RICHARD P.
  First words . . . Thinking about ecology—Environment after the spill; a reflection from the beginning of this conversation.
  The calls from the gulf shore tragedy—an editor’s response.

OMANSON, ROGER
  The textual basis for modern translations of the Old Testament.
  The textual basis for modern translations of the New Testament.
ORDINATION
A word from . . . Before we lay on hands: Baptists and ordination.  

PASTORS
A word about . . . Pastors, scholars, and the future of the church.  
Cameron Jorgenson Spring, 2011  Vol. 108, pp. 163-166

PATTEMORE, STEPHEN
On the relevance of translation theory. Stephen Pattemore Spring, 2011  
Vol. 108, pp. 263-277

POWELL, SARA
A word about . . . Finding beauty when we look beyond the surface.  
Sara Powell Fall, 2011  Vol. 108, pp. 505-506

POWER
A theology of power, or lack thereof. William M. Tillman, Jr.  
Fall, 2011  Vol. 108, pp. 509-518

PRAYER
Vol. 108, pp. 159-162

RACE RELATIONS
First words . . . Editorial introduction. Emmanuel McCall Fall, 2011  
Vol. 108, pp. 487-489
A word about . . . Racism and the church. Gerald L. Keown Fall, 2011  
Vol. 108, pp. 501-503
A theology of power, or lack thereof. William M. Tillman, Jr.  
Fall, 2011  Vol. 108, pp. 509-518
Excitement in Nova Scotia: Beyond racism and white privilege.  
When two churches became one. Lincoln Bingham Fall, 2011  
Vol. 108, pp. 545-556
Achieving racial reconciliation in the twenty-first century: The real  
test for the Christian church. Gerald L. Thomas Fall, 2011  
Vol. 108, pp. 559-573
The problem with privilege on a planet prone to prejudice: An  
Vol. 108, pp. 575-578

RACE RELATIONS—Bibliography
Select bibliography on race. Vol. 108, pp. 593-598

RANDOLPH, RICHARD O.
Christian prophetic leadership for the environment. Richard O. Randolph Winter, 2011 Vol. 108, pp. 73-87

SCHÄFER, ROLF

SCHOLARS

SOCIAL JUSTICE

SPEACH

SPIRITUALITY

STEWARDSHIP, CHRISTIAN
Christian prophetic leadership for the environment. Richard O. Randolph Winter, 2011 Vol. 108, pp. 73-87

STEWART, WARREN H. SR
STINE, PHILIP
The King James version then and now. Philip C. Stine Spring, 2011
Vol. 108, pp. 195-208

STRAUSS, MARK L.
Bible translation and the myth of “literal accuracy.” Mark L. Strauss

TAMEZ, ELSA
James: A circular letter for immigrants . Elsa Tamez (translated from

THEOLOGY
A “complete’ ethics: James’ practical theology. Christopher Church

THOMAS, GERALD L.
Achieving racial reconciliation in the twenty-first century: The real
test for the Christian church. Gerald L. Thomas Fall, 2011
Vol. 108, pp. 559-573

TILLMAN, WILLIAM M. JR
Social justice in the epistle of James: A New Testament Amos?
A theology of power, or lack thereof. William M. Tillman, Jr.
Fall, 2011 Vol. 108, pp. 509-518

TOLBERT, SAMUEL C. JR
Light in darkness: Pastoral conversations from Plaquemines Parish.

TOURISM
The ethics of tourism. Deonie Duncan Fall, 2011
Vol. 108, pp. 527-535

UNITED STATES - Religion
Vol. 108, pp. 159-162
VOSS, FLORIAN
  The textual basis for modern translations of the New Testament.
  Florian Voss and Roger Omanson Spring, 2011
  Vol. 108, pp. 253-261

VOTH, ESTEBAN
  Vol. 108, pp. 299-311

WEAVER, JOEL
  The heart of the law: Love your neighbor (Jas. 2:8-13). Joel Weaver

WIRZBA, NORMAN
  The grace of good food and the call to good farming. Norman Wirzba
  Winter, 2011  Vol. 108, pp. 61-71

WORSHIP
  Emmanuel McCall Fall, 2011  Vol. 108, pp. 585-591

ZIGLAR, TOBY
  Profit or people first? An examination of Jas. 4:13-16. Toby Ziblar

ZOGBO, LYNELL
  Issues in Bible translation in Africa. Lynell Zogbo Spring, 2011
  Vol. 108, pp. 279-296