

Revelation and Scripture

NOVEMBER 28, 2000: CLASS

- I. Intro
- II. How do you do theology?
- III. Revelation
- IV. Scripture

1. Apostolic Scriptures
2. "How Lutherans Do Theology" in some festschrift, somewhere, by Dr. Scaer
3. 2 Peter and the Canon
4. Pieper Vol. 1
5. "Yes, Virginia, There is a Santa Claus", Christianity Today, Dr. Scaer

Prolegomena: establish the basis from which you will proceed

- 1950: Karl Barth establishes the "Word of God" as event as the basis for theology
- It used to be that people knew about God through the Bible
- BUT: What about the people who wrote the Bible? THEY had no Bible, so how did they know about God?
- Rationalism posited that people could know THINGS by our own reason
 - The natural realm can figure out what is happening in the supernatural realm
 - Maybe there IS no supernatural realm, and the natural realm is all there is
 - KANT believed reason was undependable: morality, right and wrong, was the basis of knowledge; God would straighten everything out in the next world
 - SCHELIERMACHER posited the self-consciousness as the site of knowledge
 - Consciousness of God follows after consciousness of self
 - Congregations are groups of God-conscious people
 - BARTH repositioned a God who was wholly other OUTSIDE the consciousness
 - God is encountered when GOD's ego meets MY ego (begegnung)
 - Encounter occurs in the Bible, which simultaneously IS and IS NOT Word of God
- Pieper:
 - The Holy Ghost inspires the Apostles to write the books
 - BUT why does it then matter what happened between the cross and the writing?
- Barth:
 - The Apostles encounter Jesus and RECORD that encounter in a book, which we read
 - BUT then the farther we get from the sources, the weaker the current of power!
- Bultmann:
 - Over the 20 years, people remembered various stories and sayings of Jesus
 - These eventually got written down in the Bible
 - So WHO had authority during this period?
- The NT is authoritative because it is *apostolic*, because of the inspiration of the apostles
- The key to understanding NT is understanding the 20 years between the cross and the Bible
- The Bible is historically true, but not a historical book
 - Theology cannot be proven or disproven: it is always the details that are under attack
 - Birth and resurrection narratives are always under dispute
 - They CANNOT be ordered: they fit a *theological*, not historical chronology
- When religion abandons the supernatural, it has no reason left to exist
 - Our culture is finding truth where there are no truth claims being made (angels, pagans)

- That's why rationalism was and continues to be a FLOP

THE ORAL SCRIPTURES

- No more than 15% of people in cities and towns could read in the ancient world
- The preparation of a manuscript was done by at least two scribes:
 - One to be sent out
 - One to be kept as a personal copy
- The scriptures were never intended to be read in private or silently
- They were PRODUCED through an oral reading (copies), and repeated out loud
 - The Scriptures were MEANT to be READ out LOUD

HOW WE DO THEOLOGY

- Pieper's problem is that he *a priori* assumes a distinction between theology of grace and law
 - He does not establish the reason for that distinction
 - There is the possibility that a non-Christian religion of grace could be the true religion
- The Scripture is a book produced and used within a Christian community
 - The Scriptures went into the "Babylonian Captivity" in the Enlightenment
 - The study of the Scriptures in a secular university is a gross indecency
- Theology: the detailed study of religion, of what the church believes (**TEST**)
 - Historical, Pastoral, Systematic, Exegetical – the basis of all theology
 - Philology: the meaning of words in the context in which they are used
 - Archaeology: Museum in Chicago or New York safer places to study
 - A rather subjective approach to knowledge
 - It can be anybody's guess what certain things are
 - Textual: Brought in by 1880; attempt to determine the original text
 - May, in fact, be more useful to stick with a longstanding manuscript
 - 2 Tim 3:16 likely refers to the Septuagint
 - Higher: what is the setting of the texts we now have?
 - The Gospels are NOT historical biographies: they are kerygmatic stories
 - Form: determining the community where specific stories arose
 - Literary: agnostic and fundamentalist: you can agree with it, without it changing you
 - Sociological: what did the community believe, and how did it act?
 - If there was no Gospel, why was the early church being persecuted?
 - Therefore, there could have been no Q, since there are no salvific statements in Q
 - "Was crucified, dead, and buried" is the only verse that counts in the creeds or Scripture
- Systematic Theology: three names called dogmatics, systematics, or theology
 - Confirms the confession of the church as it relates to the apostolic confession
 - How certain things contradict the apostolic confession of the church
 - Dogmatics is the "traffic cop" of theology
 - Not everyone is a theologian, but ALL people do theology
- Topics of systematic theology: follows Ft. Wayne's dogmatic sequence
 - Bibliology: authority in the church and the Scriptures
 - Theology: doctrine of God
 - Cosmology: doctrine of creation, angelology, anthropology
 - Harmatology: study of sin
 - Christology: the study and doctrine of Christ
 - Ecclesiology: the doctrine of the church
 - Soteriology: the sacraments, sanctification

- Symbolics: the study of the confessions
 - The earlier have the place of honor, the later the role of interpretation
 - The F.of C. explains the A.C. which explains the Apostles' Creed
- Christian Ethics: taught in the pastoral department; dealt with the "race riots"

ETHICS AND DOGMATICS

- Ethics adjusts itself to a new situation
 - The address of the Church to the world in which it finds itself
 - The eternal Word of God meets the ever-changing world
 - The ideas of the world bleed into the Church, and are challenged by "ETHICS"
 - Joseph Fletcher: "Situation Ethics"
 - Every situation contained the answer to its own problem
 - The two women with two children on a wagon train
- Polemics, Apologetics, and Irenics
- Polemics: one thing is right and another is wrong
- Irenics: recognizing common points of agreement
- Apologetics: presenting arguments in favor of a particular position
 - Using the instruments of the unbeliever against themselves is the only true apologetics
 - Taking the objections to Christianity and addressing them directly
 - Matthew points out that Solomon's mother was "the wife of Uriah the Hittite"
 - So Jesus' "illegitimate birth" no more disqualifies him than Solomon
 - The Reformed focus on apologetics, because they have no certainty of salvation
 - Proof by holiness, history, and philosophy
- History of Dogma: the official positions of the Church
- History of Doctrine: that which is generally believed, but not necessarily encoded
- History of Christian Thought: study of Barth, Schliermacher, Tillich, etc.
- Practical Theology: "the amorphous blob" into which everything else fits
 - Pieper: "The crown of theology"
 - Home missions: 1 out of every 2 graduates started a congregation (1940s and 1950s)
 - Evangelism:
 - Foreign Missions:
 - Catechetics: adult catechument, etc.
 - Homiletics:
 - Religious Education:
 - Liturgics:
- Pastoral Theology: where the pastor spends most of her time
 - 1) Believe like a Lutheran
 - 2) Worship like an Anglican
 - 3) Preach like a Baptist
 - 4) Administer like a Polish Priest (don't speak publicly, threaten privately)
 - 5) Look bored

Hymnal Supplement changes the Gloria Patri by making it a Trinitarian, not a Hymn to the Son

DECEMBER 5, 2000: CLASS

- TEST: Thursday, December 14, 2000
- Order of dogmatics: there are other ways of doing theology:

- Pater, Filius, et Spiritus Santus (John of Damascus, Finns, etc.)
 - Tries to follow the Creed as an outline
 - Not a good approach: starting with the doctrine of God gives us Unitarianism
- Theology is now increasingly broken up along nationalistic lines
- Pieper starts with Law and Gospel
 - Where did the idea of starting from Law and Gospel come from?
 - It is using an abstract idea from the community as a starting point: Schliermacher
- See notes above

DECEMBER 7, 2000: CLASS

- REVELATION AND SCRIPTURE
- Pieper: books are inspired, but not the authors
 - Denies the incarnation?
 - The writers were witnesses
- The Apostles themselves were considered authoritative: why?
- How was it that even long after the event, the Apostles still had an authoritative message?
 - Because the Apostles intercommunication should have confused their methods
 - Time would have blurred their message
- Anti-incarnational:
 - Books inspired by the Spirit apart from the event deny the need for the historical event
 - What happens to the words heard by the Apostles pre-resurrection?
 - Nothing different is happening in the Scriptures than was happening in the books
- SEMINEX: the Gospel is simply the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins
 - The church has the treasury of all of Jesus' sayings and deeds
- Hebrews: HAD to be written before 60 AD because of the Temple details
- The authority of every book rests within itself
- OLD TESTAMENT
 - Every book of the Old Testament is commentary on Moses' teaching
 - It is established by its line of historical continuity
 - Moses is not a prophet: he speaks *directly* to God, uniquely
 - Jesus appears as the new Moses, in the pattern of Moses
 - Persecution of a wicked king
 - Killing of children
 - Escape to Egypt
 - Ascends the Mount to hear God
 - Inaugurates his own Passover
- Matthew 21: The Entrance into Jerusalem
 - Jesus sat on the (plural) garments, not on the donkey AND the colt
 - The clothing on the animal must have had some significance (Solomon's ride?)
 - Zechariah is very influential in the writing of Matthew
- Psalm 22 is not a cry of dereliction, but a cry of hope
- INSPIRATION
 - Matthew 10:16-19
 - "When they take you, do not be concerned about having memorized what you will say. It does shall be given to you in that hour what you shall say. For you are not the ones who are speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking in you."
 - What the Spirit inspired, what they believed, and what they said, was all the same thing

- Ebiblecommentary.com (11 am, Dr. Scaer)

DECEMBER 12, 2000: CLASS

- Test on Friday
- Everything we say about God is anthropomorphic,
 - SO we really don't know anything about God
 - We SHOULD be starting God with the discussion of Jesus
 - Theology is about statements of the form:
 - "SEEN" / is / "UNSEEN"
 - Jesus is God, Bread is Body, Bible is God's Word
 - A rationalist would say that both must be empirically verifiable
 - A Barthian would say that neither expression is accessible
 - Lutherans teach that which the Church has always taught (with some interruptions)
- The Gospel is preached (kerygma)
 - Faith is created (pisteuein)
 - Faith is expressed through confession (homologeō)
 - Explication of the confession leads to dogmatics (didache)
- The opposite is to be "scandalized":
 - To be offended
 - To cross the road and walk down the other side of the street
- Matthew 28:30: "teaching them to preserve all things whatsoever I have commanded"
 - The Church's responsibility is to preserve the doctrine of Jesus
 - Keep it in a "lock box"
 - Jesus is the chief theologian of the Church

JANUARY 9, 2001: CLASS

General vs. Special Revelation

- General:
 - Deduced from the world
 - Available to all
- Special:
 - Direct or mediated communication
 - Known only through Scripture and the Word
- New Testament words related to revelation
 - Dhlow:
 - Apokaluptw:
 - Fanerow:
- Scripture serves to:
 - Communicate God
 - Teach in righteousness
 - It's communication is both
 - personal
 - prepositional,
 - not one alone or the other

JANUARY 23, 2001: CLASS

- Lutherans do not insist on a canon
- Reformed do, because they need a solid codex
- How do we then view the Bible
 - 1) Moses is the redemptive figure of the Old Testament
 - God speaks to Moses face to face
 - Every book of the Old Testament attaches to Moses
 - Moses hands on to Joshua, Judges follows Joshua
 - Every book looks to the future for a follow-up revelation
 - Every book is a commentary on the book of Moses – Mishnah on the Torah
 - See the last book of Malachi: “Remember *Moses*, and I will *send Elijah*”
 - 2) Matthew starts with J the B (Elijah) in order to bring the OT to a conclusion
 - The genealogy continues the story, and 28:19 brings it to a close with a *present*
 - Elijah comes before the great and terrible day of the Lord – the cross
 - 3) Luke says that many have undertaken to write a narrative (singular)
 - Matthew: 40 AD
 - Luke: shortly thereafter (missionary document)
 - 1 Corinthians 15: “I pass on to you ... according to the Scriptures...”
 - What are the “Scriptures”? The “writings”?
 - Could these be written gospel accounts that they had already received?

JANUARY 25, 2001: CLASS

- 2 Peter Greek New Testament on the TEST
- The letter was sent to multiple churches, therefore there were multiple copies
 - What was the autograph (original), and what the apograph (copy)?
 - Impossible to distinguish, therefore the idea of “autograph” concept is flawed
- SEE written notes on 2 Peter in FOLDER

JANUARY 30, 2001: CLASS

- TEST in 2 weeks: 2 PETER, APOSTOLIC SCRIPTURES, PIEPER
- Pieper:
 - NOT inspiration of persons
 - NOT guidance of the Holy Spirit
 - NOT a part of Scripture, but all things in Scripture
- Barth:
 - You can’t know whether you’re speaking with God or just getting static
 - Agnosticism was a result of deep Barthianism
 - Liturgy provided the stability that a rotten theology could not
- ELCA:
 - Trying to find certainty in the Office of the Ministry
 - Episcopal succession has become the means of creating unity
- Bultmann:
 - Accepted the Bible at *face* value, but could not give *historical* value to it
 - Needed to come up with redaction criticism to give the final form some value
- Literary Criticism:
 - Assumes the story
 - But how does the literary critic know what the story’s them really is?
 - They are too self confident in knowing what the theme really is!

Revelation and Scripture TEST

- 25 question on Francis Pieper
- Apostolic Scriptures (know it!)
- 2 Peter and the Canon (know it!)

February 1, 2001: Class

- Doctrine of inspiration:
 - All scriptures were taken down by scribes, not by the actual authors
 - The spoken word is inspired by the Spirit through incarnational reception of the message
 - Our doctrine is missing the Cross, but rather falls under the Sovereign God
- See notes on 2 Peter
- Why are the Gospels all the same length?
 - Likely the scrolls were all the same length
 - The writers knew how to pace their writing to fill the space they had
- Many so-called “errors” in the Bible are due to:
 - Space limitation
 - Redactional choices
- If someone dislikes the bible, they will find a reason to continue disliking it

FEBRUARY 6, 2001: CLASS

PHILEMON

- A private letter written from Paul
 - But “I am writing to you” doesn’t come with a personal *note*
 - This designates a letter of importance even though the content may seem trivial
- Polycarp meets an aged Bishop Onesimus in Ephesus
 - Could it be the same one mentioned in Philemon?
 - If so, he may have been involved in the formation of the canon
- Paul mentions Philemon as “our fellow brother”
- He describes him as the head of the diocese (the church in your house)
- Paul would have kept copies for himself of all his letters
 - He could have been considered a thief, for “stealing a slave”
 - He could have been charged with revolt, in inciting slave rebellion
- It is a private letter but written in such a way that it could be “overheard”

GOSPEL

- The “according to” is a liturgical designation
- If there were only one Gospel, why would you need an “according to”?

HERODEANS

- 14 possibilities for who these people were
- Whoever they were, they didn’t get along with the Pharisees
- So when the gospel says the Herodeans and Pharisees gang up on Jesus
 - They must be wrong
 - Therefore the healing on the Sabbath by Jesus didn’t happen (SBL Article!)
- Mark 3:6, 12:18: do they tell us anything about Jesus or the Herodeans?
 - No – but then what is it DOING in the Gospel?

- Did the NT writers have a sense of what they were writing?
- Matthew 26:13: “In Memory of Her”
 - “Wherever this is preached” – Matthew intends this preached around the world
 - He uses the word “kosmos” – this is beyond the “ecumene” or civilized world
 - Lalein – this is an authoritative word which includes *her*
 - Outside of the Bible this word usually means “prattling”
 - But why then does the Greek say Jesus came “I egw I al ew”?
 - This is a special kind of authoritative, divine speaking
 - The story about her will be preached as the Word of God
 - “It shall be spoken” – this will be read in liturgy
 - “Me you will not always have” – but doesn’t this contradict the end of the Bible?
- Matthew 28:19: The close of the gospel
 -

February 8, 2001: Class

- Pastoral letters are sent to Timothy and Titus as *references*
- Timothy and Titus could use these to prove their authority

The Artificial Bible

- The Nestle-Aland text is not *a* manuscript, but rather a fabricated, voted manuscript
- Likewise the Masoretic text does not match the Septuagint
- Euaggel ion: a higher term than scripture? It is only used in Mark and Matthew
- Paul is not ashamed of the whole story of Jesus Christ, not simply the gospel of forgiven sins