



CHRISTUS CULTURA

THE JOURNAL OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES



INAUGURAL EDITION | April 2019

Mission Statement

Our mission at *Christus Cultura* is to explore and highlight in innovative, cutting edge ways the intersection of Christian faith and the human experience as expressed in the study of the social sciences, including history, political science, psychology, sociology, criminology, international studies, Christian and missionary studies, and much more.

Vision

To that end, contributors to this journal present original research and solicited items—from articles and essays to book reviews and commentaries—on issues important to the Christian life as it is experienced now, in the past, or could be experienced in the future. Our scope is intentionally broad, both in terms of geography and time, as well as in content, because we seek to provide readers with a rich mosaic of the ways in which the influence of a single man, a humble carpenter from Nazareth, has continued to shape the human experience, society, and culture in profound ways. It is our sincere desire that readers will find the journal rewarding and spiritually life-enriching and that the content presented will serve, whether in profound or subtle ways, as a vehicle of the Great Commission (*Matthew 28:16-20*).

Christus Cultura, Staff

Managing Editor,

Charles William Carter, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of History
Shorter University

Associate Editor,

Jared Adam Linebach, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and
Chair of the Department of Social Sciences
Shorter University

Webmaster,

Andrew Bailey
Shorter University



Contents

Letter From Editors

Scholarly Articles Section

Christology and Time: How the Incarnation Revolutionized History

--Brenton H. Cook, Bob Jones University

A Rich Land with a Complex History of Faith: Russia and Modern Challenges to the Spread of Evangelical Christianity

--Charles W. Carter, Shorter University

A Scriptural View of Crime

--Jared A. Linebach, Shorter University

Labeling Theories and Sex Offender Registries: The 21st Century Scarlet Letter:

--Tari McNeil, Liberty University

Reentry Policy and Criminal Theory

--Steven D. Grant, Liberty University

Scholarly Book Reviews Section

Seven Women and the Secret of Their Greatness

Author: Eric Metaxas. Publisher: Thomas Nelson Books, 2015.

--Review by Rosemary Thrasher, North Greenville University

In the Footsteps of King David: Revelations from an Ancient Biblical City

Authors: Yosef Garfinkel, Saar Ganor, and Michael Hasel. Publisher: Thames & Hudson, 2018.

--Review by Brenton H. Cook, Bob Jones University

Cold-Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels

Author: J. Warner Wallace. Publisher: David Cook, 2013.

--Review by Lindsey E. Gayle, Liberty University

What God Has Joined Together

Author: Travis Agnew. Publisher: Tag Publishing, 2018.

--Review by Andrea Stiles, Shorter University

A Calling to Care: Nurturing College Students Toward Wholeness

Authors: Timothy W., and Kirsten D. Riedel.

Publisher: Abilene Christian University Press, 2018.

--Review by Andrew Bailey, Shorter University

Special Undergraduate Student Spotlight Article

How to Help a Third World Nation: An Examination into the Third World Countries of Central America

--Sydney Holmes, Shorter University

Contributors to the Inaugural Edition

Andrew Bailey, Ph.D. Candidate (New Orleans Baptist Seminary),
Webmaster, Shorter University

Charles W. Carter, Ph.D. (Ohio State University), Associate Professor of
History, Shorter University

Brenton H. Cooke, Ph.D. (Bob Jones University), Associate Professor of
Bible and Church History, Bob Jones University

Lindsay E. Gayle, Ph.D. Candidate in
Criminal Justice, Liberty University

Steven D. Grant, Ph.D. Candidate in
Criminal Justice, Liberty University

Sydney Holmes, History Major
Undergraduate, Shorter University

Jared A. Linebach, Ph.D. (Alliant International University), Associate
Professor of Criminal Justice and
Chair of the Department of Social
Sciences, Shorter University

Tari McNeil, Ph.D. Candidate in Criminal
Justice, Liberty University

Andrea Stiles, M.A. (Harvard University),
Instructor of Psychology, Shorter
University

Rosemary Thrasher, M.A. (Clemson University), Instructor of History,
North Greenville University

Acknowledgments

The Editorial Staff would like to thank some individuals who contributed to the design of this journal. **Mr. Andrew Bailey**, the webmaster of Shorter University, designed the logo for the journal. In addition, **Ms. Kate Linebach** designed the front cover for the journal. **Dr. Kathi Vosevich** provided warm encouragement when we approached her with the idea of establishing a journal for Christian academics who write on the intersection of Christianity and the Social Sciences. To these individuals, we offer our sincerest gratitude.

Letter from the Editors

Greetings, Dear Readers!

The publication of this edition, the very first, of our *Christus Cultura: The Journal of Christianity in the Social Sciences* marks the culmination of a year-long process of turning into reality a vision of an academic journal where scholars can publish on topics that examine the social sciences through an Evangelical Christian lens. The absence of such a journal has been recognized for a long time. Indeed, academics at Evangelical Christian universities need a print-forum to share with other like-minded Christians their research and discuss the ways in which their faith shapes their scholarship, both inside and outside the classroom. As we say in our vision statement, it is indeed our sincere desire that readers will find our journal rewarding and spiritually life-enriching and that the content presented will serve, whether in profound or subtle ways, as a vehicle of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20).

We, as believers, must keep our final destination in mind in all things, great and small. That destination will be a place of the fullness of joy (Psalm

16:11), a place with no more death or mourning (Revelation 21:4), and a place with no more crying or pain (Revelation 21:4). Given these marvelous promises of the age to come, we long for that time. Though we are not there yet, we can train our thoughts to be heavenward. “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things (Philippians 4:8, ESV). It is our right and privilege as believers to be able to focus on the things above. It is our goal with this journal to help shed an eternal light on events and phenomena in this world.

In Christ,

Charlie Carter & Jared Linebach
Shorter University
Rome, GA

April 1, 2019

CHRISTOLOGY AND TIME: HOW THE INCARNATION REVOLUTIONIZED HISTORY

By Brenton H. Cook, Ph.D.

Bob Jones University



Image Credit: Pixabay

The Second Story of the Incarnation

Central to a Christian philosophy of history is the claim that God entered time. Jesus Christ the Messiah, God’s only begotten Son, entered a human womb, was raised as an ordinary Jewish boy, rose to fame in Judea and Galilee, died a human death, and resurrected after three days. His life appeared ordinary enough, despite his many miracles; prophets before him had done the same. But His resurrection signaled his mission was part of a

higher cosmic purpose that came to be understood by his followers who set about to transform the course of history.

What did it mean for God to come into time? This was the major question with which the early church wrestled for more than four centuries until Augustine of Hippo gave the definitive Patristic response.¹ The story of the development of Christology through the first four ecumenical church councils is well known. The church gave a clear answer to the question: “who is Jesus Christ, and what is His relationship to the Old Testament Yahweh?”

However, less well known is a second story of how a robust Christology led to a radical rethinking of the nature of time and the purpose of history. The whole narrative of human history, which was situated in time, came to have cosmic significance through the incarnation of Christ. In the words of Ernst Breisach, “Time was the space provided by God for accomplishing the great work of the mission to mankind.”²

It is the second story that is the concern of this work. The first section will attempt to define the terms “history” and “time.” It will also uncover the modern scientific idea of the “arrow of time.” The second section will investigate the Christian revolution in historiography brought about by the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It will demonstrate that Christianity is not only compatible with, but actually was an impetus toward a modern conception of time and history. Finally, it will show that only a Christian conception of history, centered on the doctrine of the resurrection, can give history a teleological structure.

Defining History and Time

To understand what it means for God to act in human history, one must begin with a clear definition of “history” as the space in which God acts. Further, to understand what history is, one needs to develop a coherent understanding of “time” as the space in which history occurs. Both terms are so commonplace

to human experience, they initially appear easy to define. But both (especially “time”) prove surprisingly difficult to define precisely.

What is History?

A rudimentary, but essentially useless definition of history, is “everything that happened before this moment.” History is a series of past *incidents*.³ Every day billions of incidents happen across the globe in the lives of billions of people. The vast majority, however, never find their way into the history books. History, therefore, in a more specific sense is *information*. The writing of history depends upon the collection of records, artifacts, oral testimonies, fossils—extant clues to the incidents of the past. History is also a process of *induction* whereby the historian gathers relevant information and attempts to organize it into a coherent scheme. And history also involves *interpretation* of these records. Every historian brings to the interpretive task his biases; consequently, no interpretation of the facts is guaranteed to fully capture the meaning of the incident. Finally, history is *impartation*. A historian engaged in impartation creates a narrative of the past situating incidents in time and space on the assumption that there is some “scheme of things,” some coherent order or purpose to the past.

Early Christian historiography, in contradistinction to classical historiography, operates on the assumption that history is teleological. God would not have acted in human history without some great purpose. Jesus Christ’s life, his birth, his obedience to the Father’s will, his death, his resurrection, and his ascension are not mere *incidents* whose *information* happened to be preserved by several gospel writers.⁴ Rather, an *inductive* study and *interpretation* of those gospel accounts immediately suggests the significance of Christ’s life ripples into the past and into the future.⁵ Moreover, the New Testament epistles clarify that the Gospels should be *interpreted* and *imparted* not only in a local Jewish Palestinian context but as pivotal events within a grand

narrative which involves the totality of human experience in time. Christopher Dawson has said that within “the Christian interpretation of history . . . the whole temporal process of the life of humanity finds its end and meaning.”⁶

When considering the discipline of history with the widest angled lens possible, historiography merges with theological considerations. History becomes more than a mere collection and interpretation of ancient documents. It leads to the question of whether there is a grand scheme to all the events of the past and even the future (which will one day be the past). If God has acted in the past with a purpose, presumably His actions in the future will be compatible with His actions in the past. History and eschatology, therefore, are both concerned to discover what God is doing in time.⁷

A Christian historian will practice the same historiographical methods as his secular counterparts when researching the *incidents* of the past. But inevitably he will assume that when dealing with history at a macroscopic level, there is a teleological order to the past, present, and future—to history and time—because of the incarnation of the Son of God. Gordon Clark argues,

It could hardly be otherwise. If the second person of the Triune God actually became flesh and dwelt among us, and died on the cross for men, that event would naturally overshadow every other aspect of the world, scientific or historical. And such a descent of Deity into human affairs would not only involve a theory of history logically, but must psychologically provoke some general reflection on history. Both logically and actually therefore Christianity has a philosophy of history.⁸

What is Time?

History is situated in time. The term “time” seems simple enough to define, but proves increasingly complex upon deeper

investigation. Augustine said of the term *time*, “I know what it is if no one asks me, but if I want to explain it to an inquirer, I do not know.”⁹

Zeno, the ancient Pre-Socratic philosopher, was the first to raise paradoxical questions regarding time.¹⁰ If Achilles magnanimously grants to the tortoise a significant headstart in a race, then he guarantees his failure. The gap between the two racers can be subdivided into an infinite number of increments that must be traversed in time once the race begins. But how, given a limited allotment of time, can Achilles traverse infinity?¹¹

Another puzzle concerns the common three-fold division of time into past, present, and future. Conscious human observers invariably view themselves as situated in the present or the *now* of time. But what is *now*? The future is not now. The past is not now. Past and future are non-existent when contrasted with the present. A thousand past events over a thousand years could have transpired in the space occupied in the present by a person, but none of those events are presently real. Nevertheless, the past must be real in some sense, otherwise, the present would be incomprehensible. A person suddenly seized by amnesia can comprehend neither who nor where he is. Memory brings the past into the present. But memory is fallible, calling into question our understanding of past reality.

The future too must be real if the present is to find meaning. In fact, all human endeavor is motivated by the assumption of a future beyond the *now*. Humans eat, breathe, sleep, and work on the assumption there is more life to come. Without some future purpose, the present is meaningless.

What this discussion has shown is that the concept of the present is paradoxical. The past and future are non-existent with respect to the present. But the present is empty without the existence of the past and the future.

Yet another puzzling problem concerning time is whether it should be understood subjectively or objectively. The subjectivist approach sees time as a category

imposed on nature by the human observer. The objectivist approach sees time as an independently existing phenomenon in the universe.¹² The subjectivist approach argues that humans experience time in different ways. For instance, adults tend to view time as passing much more quickly than do children. A *week* seems interminable to a four-year old waiting for his birthday celebration; an elderly person wonders where the *years* have gone. But can it be that a *week* is a long period of time; whereas *years* constitute a short period of time? These differences in perspective suggest there is a psychological dimension to the human perception of time.

Immanuel Kant argues for the subjectivist approach. Time is an *a priori* category that humans impose on the data of experience.

Time is not something which exists of itself, or which inheres in things as an objective determination. . . . Time is nothing but the form of inner sense, that is, of the intuition of ourselves and of our inner state. It cannot be a determination of outer appearances; it has to do neither with shape nor position, but with the relation of representations of our inner state.¹³

The subjective approach seems correct in its insistence that observers perceive the passage of time differently. However, this approach does not offer a completely satisfactory view of time for the simple reason that the effects of time can be experienced by persons who are not subjectively aware of its passing. A fetus ages in the womb as does a body in a coma; presumably, neither is subjectively aware of the passage of time.

The objective approach, which enjoys the support of modern physics since Newton, sees time as an independent ontological category. The celebrated British astronomer Arthur Eddington has said “[Time] permeates every corner of physics. It stands in no need of

logical defense. . . . It has been woven into the structure of the classical physical scheme.”¹⁴ Einsteinian physics has only reinforced the view that time is an objective physical phenomenon that can be manipulated by gravity.¹⁵ Isaac Asimov comments on the possibilities Einstein’s theory of relativity opens up regarding time.

If it turns out that motion will really slow down clocks and leave a permanent mark in the form of lost time, that could have an interesting effect on the possible adventures of future men in space. If a speed near that of light could be maintained, time would slow for the space voyagers. They might reach a distant destination and return in what seemed to them weeks, though on the earth many centuries would have passed. If time really slows in motion, a person might journey even to a distant star in his own lifetime. But of course he would have to say good-bye to his own generation and the world he knew. He would return to a world of the future.¹⁶

If Einstein is correct, time is a real property of the universe and not merely a subjective construct.

But the objectivist approach is not entirely adequate either for two reasons. First, human observers do not perceive time as an independent objective phenomenon. Rather, they perceive themselves as being *in* time in such a way that there is a real *now* which can be experienced as categorically different than *not now*. An observer can view a mountain, a star, or an ant as entirely distinct from himself. But he cannot observe time in this way. Even an astronomer travelling at light speed would experience a *now* relative to his motion, even if it differed from the *now* experienced by humans on earth. Presumably he would live through an average human lifespan of seventy years relative to his motion through space, even while significantly more years elapsed on earth. This

now is a “privileged temporal location”¹⁷ that is subjectively perceived.

From a Christian perspective, a second difficulty for the purely objective approach is that time affects the non-physical world that lies beyond the reach of either Newtonian or Einsteinian physics. Christians use time-laden terminology like spiritual *growth* and *progressive* sanctification and Christian *maturity* to describe developing conditions of the human soul.

A proper conception of time, then, must incorporate both subjective and objective definitions. Whether philosophers and scientists agree to this incorporation, human civilizations have always incorporated both concepts. On the one hand, civilizations have oriented their societies to objective, measurable astronomical phenomena. Lunar calendars track the waxing and waning of the moon. Solar calendars track the movement of the sun across the sky. On the other hand, civilizations have incorporated arbitrary units of time based on subjective human criteria that are detached from the movement of astronomical bodies. The seven-day week is the obvious example.¹⁸

Such paradoxes regarding time do serve higher purposes than creating mental angst. One purpose is apologetic and is beyond the scope of this paper.¹⁹ Another purpose is to show that irrespective of how the philosopher defines time, every conception of time rests on an unavoidable assumption. Time has *direction*. Whether time is understood as a sequence of past, present, and future, or whether it moves swiftly or slowly, or whether time is understood subjectively or objectively, an underlying assumption is that time moves in *one* direction. The directionality of time is not only compatible with the Christian worldview, it was one of Christianity’s distinct contributions to an understanding of history (as will be shown below).

The Arrow of Time

The truth of time’s directionality was definitively stated by Arthur Eddington, in a series of lectures he gave in 1927. He dubbed

the concept of directionality, “time’s arrow.”²⁰ Eddington was particularly concerned to show that the second law of thermodynamics assumed time moved in one direction.

Let us draw an arrow arbitrarily. If as we follow the arrow we find more and more of the random element in the state of the world, then the arrow is pointing towards the future; if the random element decreases the arrow points towards the past. That is the only distinction known to physics. This follows at once if our fundamental contention is admitted that the introduction of randomness is the only thing which cannot be undone. I shall use the phrase ‘time’s arrow’ to express this one-way property of time which has no analogue in space.²¹

Since Eddington first delivered these remarks, several arguments in support of time’s asymmetry have been developed under the concept of “the arrow of time”:

- (1) *The thermodynamic arrow of time* (as developed by Eddington) argues that the increase of disorder (entropy) moves in one direction.²²
- (2) *The psychological arrow of time* argues that since humans can remember the past but not the future, time must move from past to future.
- (3) *The volitional arrow of time* argues that human volitional action aims at changing the future, but never the past.
- (4) *The causal arrow of time* argues that causal events invariably precede effect events in a directional sequence.²³
- (5) *The cosmological arrow of time* argues from the expansion of the universe to a necessary direction in time.

These arguments introduced nothing new to human experience; rather, they served to put into argument form what has always been experienced by human observers relative to time. The concept of “irreversibility” in thermodynamics was formalized by the German physicist Rudolf Clausius in the 1850s.²⁴ Likewise, the twelfth-century Persian polymath Omar Khayyám, captured the idea succinctly in his world-famous poem, *Rubáiyát*:

*The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit,
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.*²⁵

The notion that time has direction, and consequently that history is teleological, seems so common place, it is difficult to comprehend that philosophers and historians ever believed otherwise. However, it was the Christian worldview, which was introduced and expanded in the first five centuries of church history, which brought about a revolution in how men thought about time. In fact, Christianity so thoroughly changed how people thought about history that modern secularists have implicitly borrowed Christianity’s linear philosophy of history. It was the incarnation of the second person of the Godhead, which brought about this revolution.

The Incarnation and Historiographical Revolution

A superficial understanding of Christ’s incarnation suggests it was a rare other-worldly event that has little to do with the present course of human history. Christ was virgin-born, lived a perfect life, died for human sins, resurrected and disappeared back into heaven. Sure, he’s coming back one day to reward those who believe on him. But in between his advents, he’s had no real effect on history. The seasons roll by; the great wheel of time churns out endless centuries marked by incessant wars, natural disasters, and the rise and fall of endless human civilizations. Jesus’ gospel is an otherworldly message for those who want to

escape the cycle and go off to live in heaven with him forever. Such inchoate views of the incarnation often combine with pessimistic eschatologies (especially in America during the last century) in which the goal of history is Christ's return to put an end to the miserable cycles of human existence.

This pattern of thinking is not only foreign to the New Testament, it represents an ancient pagan philosophy of history that has not been fully discarded by Christians. Far from believing that history was an endless cycle of fatalistically determined events, the early church came to recognize that God came into human history to accomplish a great purpose, to drive history forward teleologically to a grand outcome. Early Christians discovered in the Jewish Old Testament a clear doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*, a beginning to history. They discovered in Christ's advent, a central event in history. And they discovered both in the Old Testament sources and in the prophecies of Jesus Christ that history is moving toward a goal. Simply put, history is *linear*. This linear philosophy contrasted sharply with the classical view of history, which posited endless cyclical recurrence. Against the backdrop of this classical view, the Christian linear view stands out as revolutionary.

The Classical View of Time and History

The formal discipline of history emerged in the same soil of ancient Greek culture that gave birth to philosophy. Early philosophical inquiry was cosmological in its orientation, concerned with the question of the source of the natural world. Likewise, early attempts at historical inquiry were imbued by naturalistic assumptions. The Greeks believed that cycles in nature were mirrored by cycles in history. The year moves cyclically through four seasons. There was a daily rhythm to nature of birth, growth, maturity, and death. Likewise, the whole course of human history moved repeatedly through an endless repetition of events.

This cyclical view was not a marginal view, but was espoused by most ancient historians. Ronald Nash says, "Almost all of the great civilizations existing before the beginning of the Christian era ascribe to a cyclical pattern to history. This was true in most of the ancient cultures, including Babylonia, Persia, ancient Egypt, India, China, Greece and Rome."²⁶ Likewise, J. B. Bury argues, "The theory of world-cycles was so widely current that it may almost be described as the orthodox theory of cosmic time among the Greeks, and it passed from them to the Romans."²⁷

These cycles did not merely demonstrate certain similarities between cycles; actual events repeated endlessly. John W. Montgomery argues, "For the philosophers and historians of Greece and Rome, history had no beginning and would have no end; and in the eternal cyclical pattern of the universe, Socrates would drink the hemlock again and again."²⁸ Plato, perhaps the greatest among the ancient philosophers, referred to the great cycle of history as the "perfect year"²⁹ at the end of which all the planets would align and the cycle of time would begin again. Likewise, Marcus Aurelius, representing ancient Stoic beliefs, spoke of the "the great cyclic renewals of creation."³⁰

Cyclical views of history serve to downplay the significance of historical events. There can be no fixed and permanent meaning to an event that ceaselessly recurs in a constant revolution of cycles. In fact, Mircea Eliade has shown that cyclicalism amounts to an outright denial of the importance of history because eternal truths cannot coexist with the cycle of time. He suggests that only a Platonic pursuit of the forms can deliver the philosopher beyond the ceaselessly recurring shadow world of time:

The desire felt by the man of traditional societies to refuse history, and to confine himself to indefinite repetition of archetypes, testifies to his thirst for the real and his terror of 'losing' himself by letting himself be overwhelmed by the

meaninglessness of profane existence. . . . [His] behavior is governed by the belief in an absolute reality opposed to the profane world of ‘unrealities’; in the last analysis, the latter does not constitute a ‘world,’ properly speaking; it is the ‘unreal’ *par excellence*, the uncreated, the nonexistent: the void.”³¹

Eliade emphasizes an important point: there can be no ultimate meaning inside a cyclical view of history. What has happened, will simply happen again and again. The ancients found a certain comfort in this fact. The view that history is “open” to unknown future possibilities brought with it a certain terror. But in closing the circle of history, they relinquished the hope that history had any ultimate meaning. Unless history is linear, there can never be an outcome to the story of man in time. But for most of the ancients, opening the circle was too terrifying a prospect.

The Christian Revolution of Time and History

In the first century, a revolution began in historiography when the incarnation opened the circle of history. The ancient Hebrews, almost alone among the ancients, predicted the opening of the circle. The early Christians completed it, stretching history out along a continuous line with a definite beginning, a central event, and a culmination. Ernst Breisach writes,

The pagan and Christian inhabitants of the Roman Empire lived in two radically different mental worlds. . . . A distinctly Christian view of history evolved in the discussions among the church fathers. . . . The Great Comic Cycle of Plato and other philosophers, which repeated itself after thousands of years, did indeed yield to a world created *ex nihilo* and running its course only once. . . . History showed a development

with a unique beginning, central event, and ultimate goal, told by Scripture.³²

This view of a “unique beginning” to history was unquestionably contributed to the church by the Hebrew Old Testament. Among the Greek philosophers, there never emerged a clear doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* even among those such as Aristotle who posited belief in God as a Prime Mover. Pre-Socratic cosmology rested on a materialistic assumption; the universe was reducible to water, earth, air, fire, or even numbers as the Pythagoreans would have it. Plato’s demiurge exercised a creative function, but he worked with pre-existing materials from previous revolutions of the cycle. For the ancient Hebrews, however, there was no time, no history, and no material universe before the beginning found in the first book of the Law.

The Hebrews also understood God to act in history in decisive ways. God’s actions were especially revealed in the exodus from Egypt in which God destroyed their captors and chose them to be His special people. There is no hint in the Old Testament that such an event would be repeated again and again through endless cycles of time. True, the Hebrews did experience cycles of sin, judgment and restoration, but there is no hint in the Old Testament that these cycles were driven by the irreversible wheel of fate. Rather, the cycles resulted from the nation’s corporate failures. These failures provoked the warnings of the prophets, who not only promised release from captivity, but pointed forward to a grand kingdom age in which the provisions of the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants would be fulfilled. There was no suggestion among the prophets that time itself would repeat. Mircea Eliade says of the Hebrew contribution,

For the first time, we find affirmed, and increasingly accepted, the idea that historical events have a value in themselves, insofar as they are determined by the will of God. This

God of the Jewish people is no longer an Oriental divinity, creator of archetypal gestures, but a personality who ceaselessly intervenes in history. . . . Historical facts thus become ‘situations’ of man in respect to God, and as such they acquire a religious value that nothing has previously been able to confer on them. It may, then, be said with truth that the Hebrews were the first to discover the meaning of history as the epiphany of God, and this conception, as we should expect, was taken up and amplified by Christianity.”³³

If the Old Testament implicitly assumes a linear philosophy of history, the New Testament boldly asserts it from beginning to end. The New Testament begins with the incarnation and culminates with the end of history and the beginning of a permanent new world. The New Testament does not view the incarnation as a mere *incident* of passing historical interest. The New Testament does not assert that Christ came into human history merely to disappear again and let the endless cycles resume. Rather, the New Testament presents the incarnation as the climactic event of the first creation and the inaugural event of the new creation toward which all history moves.

The incarnation is of such supreme importance, the first four books of the New Testament return to the theme from various angles. The fifth book of the New Testament argues that the message of Christ’s incarnation is so compelling and novel a truth in human history, it began to radically transform the Roman Empire from the first sermon at Pentecost. A series of epistles follow in which various facets of the gospel are explained and applications made to the followers of Jesus Christ. The final book of the New Testament Canon, regardless of what hermeneutic is applied to it, demonstrates decisively that history is moving forward to a consummation

of the ages and the inauguration of a permanent new world.

The climactic event in history is the incarnation of Christ which throws open the circle of history for time and eternity is the resurrection. When God acted in human history, He not only changed the course of history, He changed Himself through the permanent addition of humanity to the Second Person of His Godhead. God, in the person of Jesus Christ, not only took a human body, he kept it, *forever*. Jesus never loses His humanity. He will not be endlessly reincarnated in a future revolution of the wheel of time. He was resurrected in a human body, and that resurrection was merely the first-fruits of the resurrection of the new world.

The bodily resurrection of Christ means that whatever cycles there may be of human disobedience, misery, and death, these are brought decisively to an end by the Christian’s resurrection with him. It means that whatever endless attempts were made at appeasing God through ceremonial cleansing and animal sacrifices, these are now brought eternally to an end through Christ.

The author of Hebrews seems to be aware that many of his contemporaries failed to apply the significance of Christ’s coming to an evaluation of a cyclical view of history. In the first chapter, he presents Christ as superior to all those who have come before. For someone committed to a cyclical view, these judgments of superiority are meaningless.³⁴ Further, the author of Hebrews points to the unique character of Christ’s actions. They are non-repeatable. “He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.”³⁵ Again, the author says,

Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the

world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. . . . Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.³⁶

And again,

And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.³⁷

These “once-for-all” passages in Hebrews argue not only that history cannot be cyclical, but that there is some great goal in history. Gordon Clark argues,

This goal cannot be merely the end of a cycle that is to be repeated again.... A true goal is final, ultimate, and permanent. Accordingly, if history is to be granted significance, something must happen once for all. The end is a unique event, and the whole historical process that leads up to the end consist in a series of unique events.³⁸

This is the great second-story of the incarnation. The incarnation, especially as it climaxes with the resurrection, gives the whole course of human history meaning and direction. History is moving forward, ceaselessly pressing toward the end for which God brought time into existence. Jesus spoke of this *end* to his disciples. “And this gospel of the kingdom will

be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”³⁹ The apostle Paul also spoke of this *end* in his great chapter on the resurrection in which he links Christ’s resurrection to the future resurrection of all believers. “Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.”⁴⁰

The Augustinian Application

At the time of Constantine the Great, professional Christian scholars began to compile the history of the church. Eusebius is best known among them. But others, including Socrates, Sozomen, Evagrius and Orosius told the story of the first three centuries of the church. Although they assumed a linear philosophy of history, these authors were not primarily interested in articulating a Christian philosophy of history. Their work was to bring the record up-to-date from the first-century records of Acts.⁴¹

It was Augustine, who although not himself a historian, should be credited with giving the linear view of history its final Patristic form.⁴² In his *Confessions* Augustine relates his passage through a variety of ancient schools of thought, which often included cyclical interpretations of history. But upon his acceptance of Christianity and his reading of the book of Hebrews, Augustine came to adopt a linear philosophy of history. A cyclical view, he determined, was incompatible with Christianity.

[Philosophers] have therefore asserted that these cycles will ceaselessly recur, one passing away and another coming. . . . They exempt not even the immortal soul that has attained wisdom, consigning it to a ceaseless transmigration between delusive blessedness and real misery. . . . According to those philosophers, the same periods and events of time are

repeated; as if, for example, the philosopher Plato, having taught in the school at Athens which is called the Academy, so, numberless ages before, at long but uncertain intervals, this same Plato and the same school, and the same disciples existed, and so also are to be repeated during the countless cycles that are yet to be,—far be it, I say, from us to believe this. For once Christ died for our sins; and, rising from the dead, He dieth no more . . . and we ourselves after the resurrection shall be ‘ever with the Lord.’⁴³

The event that settled the issue for Augustine was the once-for-all character of the death of Christ. In fact, the birth of Christ ushered in the sixth and final age in the drama of redemption.⁴⁴

Augustine’s magnum opus, the *City of God* postulates that throughout history there are two parallel kingdoms, the kingdom of man and the kingdom of God. When the temporal kingdom of man—the *Pax Romana*—crumbled around the fifth-century Roman citizen, the Christian need not despair; his life was part of a larger historical narrative. The fortunes of God’s kingdom were not tied to the fate of any one human civilization. God’s great kingdom would march on over the wreck of nations and empires.

At the heart of Augustine’s *City of God* is not only the notion that history has *direction*, but that history has *progress*. In the kingdom parables, Christ had predicted the growth of the kingdom using the analogy of a mustard seed. Augustine believed that history was the story of the growth of that seed.

Augustine’s teleological conception of history passed decisively into the thought stream of western culture for the millennium following his death. But even today, historians still work on the assumption that history has direction. J. W. Montgomery says, “All our modern conceptions of historical progress—whether religious or materialistic, Christian or Marxist—take their origin ultimately from the

Biblical idea of history.”⁴⁵ Similarly, George Grant writes, “What must be insisted is that the very spirit of progress takes its form and depends for its origin on the Judeo-Christian idea of history.”⁴⁶

During the Enlightenment, philosophers and historians rejected the notion that history is moving toward its God-intended climax. Nevertheless, they preserved the view that history is directional, progressive, and purposeful. Very few have willingly returned to the cyclical view of the ancients.⁴⁷ Roy Swanstrom argues, “The majority of those who think seriously about history think in terms of a beginning and a linear movement through the centuries to the present and on into the future. They attach some meaning to the entire flow of time.”⁴⁸

Conclusion: Resurrection and the Meaning of History

This work has demonstrated that history, conceived broadly, is the impartation of a narrative concerning man’s experiences in time. Time, regardless of how it is defined by philosophers, has directionality. Thus, most modern historians operate from the assumption that the narrative of man’s experience in time must move toward some great end. The arrow of time moves progressively forward and does not cycle back endlessly through successive revolutions as many ancient historians believed.

This paper has also shown that it was neither modern science nor modern philosophy that introduced the concept of linear history; it was introduced by a Christian theology centered on the doctrine of Christ’s incarnation. If God acted in human history, He must have had some great end in mind for doing so. The incarnation climaxed with the resurrection of Jesus Christ, in which his incarnation became a permanent condition. Christians can hardly conceive of time cycling back to a pre-incarnate period in time. God, in the person of Jesus Christ, took a human body, and he keeps it, forever. Christ’s resurrection points to a future resurrection that stands at the end of history and as the gateway

to the new world, the resurrection unto eternal life in which all the labors, sorrows, joys, and triumphs of this life will merge with their eternal purposes in the next life.

It is the resurrection, then, that gives meaning and purpose to history. To see this, one need only examine those philosophies in western culture that have borrowed from Christianity the view that Christianity is linear and directional, but have failed to acknowledge that God came into human history and acted with a purpose. Karl Marx viewed history as progressing linearly through a series of revolutions spawned by class conflicts. George Hegel viewed history as progressing linearly through a conflict and synthesizing of ideologies in which the spirit of the absolute became self-aware in human consciousness. Charles Darwin viewed history as progressing linearly through competition and the survival of the fittest. Enlightenment philosophers viewed history as progressing linearly toward an inevitable utopian society. In every case, the philosopher borrowed from Christianity the notion of linear progress, but it was a progress denuded of any lasting significance because it could not solve a single problem. Death.

Bertrand Russell was brutally honest on this point. His materialism could offer history no ultimate purpose in the face of the inevitable onslaught of death:

That Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried

beneath the debris of a universe in ruins—all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair can the soul's habitation be safely built.⁴⁹

When Paul visited Athens in the first century, his message of the resurrection was met with derision from both the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers who had adopted a cyclical view of history. Two thousand years later, despite the enormous influence of Christianity in human civilization, despite the fact that history splits in half—historians date events before Christ by counting backwards from His incarnation and events after Christ by counting forward from his incarnation—the Christian view of history, centered on the incarnation and resurrection is still a difficult sell. Christopher Dawson has said it well,

Hence it is very difficult, perhaps even impossible, to explain the Christian view of history to a non-Christian, since it is necessary to accept the Christian faith in order to understand the Christian view of history, and those who reject the idea of a divine revelation are necessarily obliged to reject the Christian view of history as well. . . . That God should have chosen an obscure Palestinian tribe—not a particularly civilized or attractive tribe either—to be the vehicle of his universal purpose for humanity, is difficult to believe. But that this purpose should have been finally realized in the person of a Galilean peasant executed under Tiberius, and that this event was the turning point in the life of mankind and the key to the meaning of history—all this is so hard for the human mind to accept that even the Jews themselves were scandalized, while to the Greek philosophers and the secular historians it seemed sheer folly.⁵⁰

References

¹Jaroslav Pelikan says, “The role of Augustine . . . affected the history of every doctrine. . . . Almost anywhere one touches the history of early Christian doctrine, Augustine is there either as a synthesizer or as a creator or as both. Almost no doctrinal emphasis was alien to him.” Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: a History of the Development of Doctrine*, vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)* (New York: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 293-94.

²Ernst Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval, & Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 80.

³I am here using Earle Cairns’ categories, *incident, information, induction, interpretation, and impartation* developed in his excellent treatment of historiography, *God and Man in Time: A Christian Approach to Historiography* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 1979), 13.

⁴The purpose of this work is not to defend the historicity of New Testament events. On this topic, readers should consult the following among other. Gary R. Habermas, *The Historical Jesus: Ancient Evidence for the Life of Christ* (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 1996). J. Ed Komoszewski, et. al., *Reinventing Jesus: How Contemporary Skeptics Miss the Real Jesus and Mislead Popular Culture* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2006). F.F. Bruce, *The New Testament Document: Are They Reliable?* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981). N.T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God (Christian Origins and the Question of God, Vol. 3)* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003). John McRay, *Archaeology & the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1991). Eta Linnemann, *Historical Criticism of the Bible: Methodology or Ideology? Reflections of a Bultmannian turned Evangelical*, trans. by Robert Yarbrough (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications 1990).

⁵For example, Jesus’ teachings and actions clearly had some reference to the entire Old

Testament legal system. And His kingdom parables stretched forward into the centuries following his death and resurrection.

⁶Christopher Dawson, *Dynamics of World History*, ed. John J. Mulloy (LaSalle, Ill: Sherwood Sugden & Co., 1978), 251.

⁷Ronald Nash concurs with the distinction between different kinds of history. He argues that there are essentially two approaches to history. “The first is what some call scientific history. Gordon Graham defines it as ‘the attempt simply to arrive at an accurate account of past events based upon sufficient evidence.’” Again, quoting Gordon Graham, Nash argues, “the second approach to history [is] the attempt to grasp ‘the meaning of human history as a whole.’ . . . Two names for this approach are *Speculative history* and *the philosophy of history*.” Ronald Nash, *The Meaning of History* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 5.

⁸Gordon H. Clark, *A Christian View of Men and Things* (Unicoi, TN: The Trinity Foundation, 1991), 80-81.

⁹“Si nemo a me quaerat, scio, si quaerenti explicari velim, nescio.” Translated in John Warwick Montgomery, *The Shape of the Past: A Christian Response to Secular Philosophies of History* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship Inc., 1975), 20.

¹⁰A good introduction to Zeno is found in James Jordan, *Western Philosophy: From Antiquity to the Middle Ages* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), 27-29.

¹¹A difficulty for Zeno’s paradox that he does not address is that an infinite series, produced by division (rather than addition or multiplication) can add up to a finite number. Theoretically, the twelve inches of a ruler can be infinitely subdivided, 6”, 3”, 1.5”, .75” and so on. But the addition of all these subdivisions will always add up to exactly 12 inches.

¹²Andrew Rule distinguishes between these approaches. “Psychological [subjective] time

must be real because we can be aware of it as a purely inner experience to consciousness; but is it the only real time, the objective time being merely and ‘artificial’ schematization for some limited purpose? Or is objective time the only real time, psychological time being the result of some subjective warping? Are both real time; and, if so, how are they related? Or is time as such unreal? Andrew K. Rule, “Time,” in *Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, An Extension of the New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*, ed. L.A. Loetscher (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1955), 2:1116.

¹³Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, tr. Norman Kemp Smith (London: Macmillan, 1933), 76-77.

¹⁴Arthur Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1928), 36.

¹⁵Readers unfamiliar with Einstein’s theory will be helped by Stephen Hawking, *A Brief History of Time*. 10th ed. (United States: Scientific American Modern Classics, 2004), 15-35.

¹⁶Isaac Asimov, *The Intelligent Man’s Guide to Science* (New York: Basic Books, 1960), 1:286-87.

¹⁷This is Gregory Ganssle’s language in *God and Time: Four Views* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2001), 14.

¹⁸One of the finest treatments of historical conceptions of time is Daniel Boorstin’s magisterial work, *The Discoverers* (New York: Random House, 1983).

¹⁹C.S. Lewis posed an intriguing argument for the soul based on the universal assumption that time is moving too swiftly. No parent laments that his kids grow up too slowly. Older people universally ask, “Where have the years gone.” People complain of time “flying” but never “crawling.” This universal sense that we are awkwardly situated in time stems from the fact that each of us has an eternal soul that has been bound by time. The naturalist cannot account for this sense of time’s passing too quickly. Lewis’ argument is nicely summarized in Louis Markos, *Apologetics*

for the Twenty-First Century (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 27.

²⁰Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World*, 69, 88, 100, 295.

²¹Ibid., 69.

²²Stephen Hawking gives an analogy. “Imagine a cup of water falling off a table and breaking into pieces on the floor. If you take a film of this, you can easily tell whether it is being run forward or backward. If you run it backward you will see the pieces suddenly gather themselves off the floor and jump back to form a whole cup on the table. You can tell the film is being run backward because this kind of behavior is never observed in ordinary life.” Hawking, *A Brief History of Time*, 148.

²³David Hume famously raised epistemological difficulties with the relationship between cause and effect relationships. But his argument primarily concerned the observer’s inability to define a cause, rather than the sequencing of events.

²⁴In 1854, Rudolf Clausius published an argument “On a Modified Form of the Second Fundamental Theorem in the Mechanical Theory of Heat” in which he argues that cooler bodies never transfer heat to hotter bodies. Thus, a steaming hot cup of tea will transfer heat into the room in which it is placed, cooling the tea, and raising the room temperature (albeit slightly), but the cooler room will never raise the temperature of the room.

²⁵William H. Martin and Sandra Mason, eds. *Edward FitzGerald’s Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám: A Famous Poem and Its Influence* (London: Anthem Press, 2011), 15.

²⁶Nash, *The Meaning of History*, 31.

²⁷J. B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into its Origin and Growth* (London: MacMillan and Co., Limited, 1921), 12. Bury argues that for the Pythagoreans, for instance, “each cycle repeated to the minutest particular the course and events of the preceding. If the universe dissolves into the original chaos, there appeared to them to be no reason why the second chaos should produce a world differing in the least respect from its

predecessor. The nth cycle would be indeed numerically distinct from the first, but otherwise would be identical with it, and no man could possibly discover the number of the cycle in which he was living. . . . The course of the world's history would contain an endless number of Trojan Wars." Ibid.

²⁸Montgomery, *The Shape of the Past*, 41-42.

²⁹"None the less however can we observe that the perfect number of time fulfils the perfect year at the moment when the relative swiftness of all eight revolutions accomplish their course together and reach their starting-point, being measures by the circle of the same and uniformly moving. In this way then and for these causes were created all such of the stars as wonder through the heavens and turn about therein, in order that this universe may be most like to the perfect and ideal animal by its assimilation to the eternal being." R.D. Archer-Hind, ed., *The Timaeus of Plato* (New York: MacMillan and Company, 1888), 129-131.

³⁰Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, *Meditations*, 11/1, trans. Maxwell Staniforth (London: Hammondswoth, 1964), 165.

³¹Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 2005), 91-92. J. W. Montgomery observes similarly, "Non-Western cultures have centered their attention not on man's action in time, but on eternal truths outside of time (i.e., on metaphysical speculation), and on representations of these truths in mythical dress." *The Shape of the Past*, 35.

³²Breisach, *Historiography*, 77.

³³Eliade, *Myth of the Eternal Return*, 104.

³⁴Ronald Nash makes this case in *The Meaning of History*, 45.

³⁵Hebrews 7:27 (ESV)

³⁶Hebrews 9:25-28 (ESV).

³⁷Hebrews 10:11-14 (ESV).

³⁸Clark, *A Christian View of Man and Things*, 78.

³⁹Matthew 24:14.

⁴⁰1 Corinthians 15:24-25.

⁴¹A fine work on early church historiography is Glenn Chesnut, *The First Christian Histories*, 2 ed. (Macon, GA: Mercer University, 1986).

The best general work on Christian historiography is Michael Bauman and Martin Klauber, eds. *Historians of the Christian Tradition* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995).

⁴²A study of Augustine can be a massive undertaking. His philosophy emerges through an inductive study of his *City of God*. A succinct introduction can be found in Gordon H. Clark, *Historiography Secular and Religious* (Nutley, NJ: The Craig Press, 1971), 282-253.

⁴³*City of God*, Book 12, chpt. 13.

⁴⁴Augustine's stages of redemptive history are: (1) From Adam to Noah. (2) From Noah to Abraham. (3) From Abraham to David. (4) From David to the Babylonian Exile. (5) From the Babylonian Exile to the labor pains of Mary. (6) The birth of Jesus Christ to the end of the age.)

⁴⁵Montgomery, *The Shape of the Past*, 42.

⁴⁶George P. Grant, *Philosophy in the Mass Age* (Vancouver: Copp Clark, 1959), 49.

⁴⁷Friedrich Nietzsche is an exception. In the *Gay Science* he argues for a return to cyclical view under the notion of "eternal recurrence." Historians Oswald Spengler and Arnold Toynbee are sometimes interpreted as embracing a cyclical view. But theirs was not the repetitive cycle of the ancients. Rather, they argued that there were cycles *in* history, but history itself was not an ever-recurring cycle. The book of Judges demonstrates that there were cycles of blessing, failure, judgment, and repentance in ancient Israel. But these were not identical cycles of identical events.

⁴⁸Roy Swanstrom, *History in the Making: An Introduction to the Study of the Past* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1978), 37.

⁴⁹Bertrand Russell, *A Free Man's Worship* (1903).

⁵⁰Christopher Dawson, "The Christian View of History" in C.T. McIntire, ed. *God, History, and Historians: Modern Christian Views of History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 31.

A Rich Land With A Complex History of Faith: Russia and Modern Challenges to the Spread of Evangelical Christianity

By Charles W. Carter, Ph.D.

Shorter University

Throughout its rich, storied history, evangelical Christianity has faced hurdles that have hindered it from taking firm root in the soil of the world's largest country: Russia. To be sure, Eastern Orthodoxy has been the dominant brand of Christianity in Russia for centuries, often heavily promoted by the state from tsarist times to the present. Indeed, ever since Greek-speaking Byzantine missionaries converted Prince Vladimir of Kiev to Orthodoxy in the tenth century, Russians have had an affinity for the Orthodox model of the faith and worship, seen in everything from its ornate onion-domed churches, icons, and chants to its focus on a patriarchal model of ecclesiastical leadership. Given Russia's historical trajectory and tradition of autocratic governmental and church rule, the marginalization of non-Orthodox forms of the faith, including Roman Catholicism and especially evangelical Christianity, has become an entrenched feature of ecclesiastical life.

Notwithstanding the heavy oppression of non-Orthodox Christianity during the Soviet era (1922-1991), there were renewed hopes that the advent of democracy in Russia after the Cold War would usher in a new age in which evangelical Christianity would make great strides in winning converts.

Yet in the Putin era, such optimism has been borne out with mixed results. Although Russia has never had as strong an evangelical presence as it does today, powerful forces remain at work in the nation that strive to blunt evangelism's impact. In fact, democracy in Russia over the past two decades has become a facade for a new kind of state authoritarianism in which the government, at the urging of the Russian Orthodox Church, continues to stamp out, with differing degrees of success, any perceived opposition to Orthodoxy's position of dominance on issues of faith.

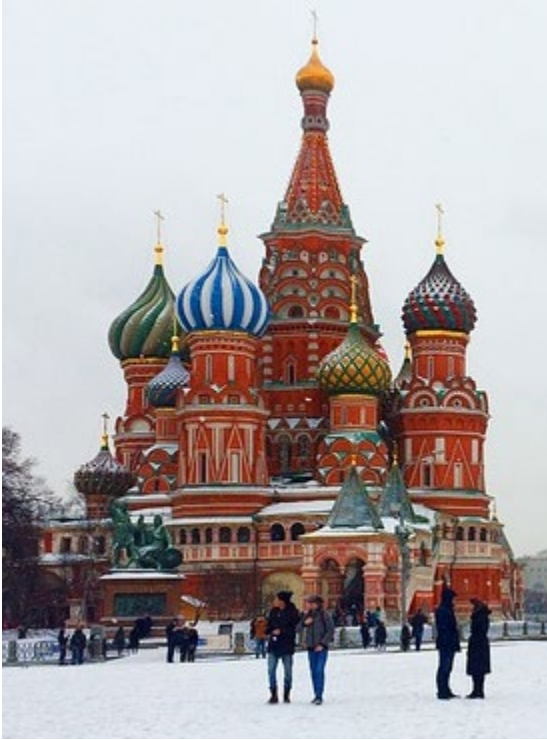
The Rise & Dominance of Orthodoxy in Tsarist Russia

The Russian Primary Chronicle dates Christianity's official origin in Russia to the actions of Grand Prince Vladimir I of Kiev. Specifically, in 988 A.D., the prince made Christianity the official faith among the Kievan Rus, who historically had been pagans and whose collective identity later formed the basis of modern Russian identity (Leong, xii). At the time of Vladimir's fateful decision, the Byzantine Empire, the cradle of Eastern Orthodoxy, was at the zenith of its power and international cultural influence, thus serving as a model for Vladimir both to gain knowledge of Christianity and to forge an importance alliance for his kingdom. In the process, Byzantium exerted considerable influence on the Russian Orthodox Church in terms of liturgical development (Leong, 26-27).

In addition, the Byzantines provided the model for the architectural design of Russian churches, as the first of such churches adopted the cross-cupola (dome) motif prominent in Byzantium. Later, Russian churches set themselves apart from their Byzantine influencers by reducing the number of support columns and pillars (Bremer, 11).

Ever since, the beautifully crafted onion-domed churches of Russia have remained a symbol of Orthodoxy worldwide. To outside observers, these churches even today continue to serve as a testament to the deep religiosity

of the Russian past. The great Orthodox cathedrals, such as Saint Basil's in Moscow, remain a major feature that drives tourism to Russia.



St. Basil's Cathedral, Moscow, Image Credit: Pixabay

At the same time, however, the state-sponsorship of Orthodoxy in Russia's long tsarist period of history resulted in the marginalization of Protestant Christianity, especially in the 1800s. The nineteenth century, of course, saw many foreigners travel to Russia, some of whom sought to spread the evangelical faith.

One such movement, known as Stundism, was influenced by German Evangelicalism. The Stundists in Russia, known for setting aside an hour each day for Bible study, called for the widespread proliferation of the Bible among the masses, as well as upheld a literal view of the Bible's revelation. They were not surprisingly deemed a threat to Orthodoxy's control, and so a law enacted in 1894 under Tsar Alexander III

outlawed their religious activities (Wardin, 244).

Given their similarities with the Stundists, Russia's small Baptist community feared that heavy restrictions on spreading the Gospel would affect them as well. Indeed, it appears that many Baptists were subject to much scrutiny from time to time, given their focus on the Bible. Yet, occasionally, Russian officials were advocates for the Baptists. "The spread of Baptists who recognize the civil authorities," one official wrote in the mid-1800s, "is in no contradiction with the state interests of the empire" (Werth, 96). At the same time, Baptist and Free Church missionaries lived in fear, and the type of Christianity they promoted was shunned by the state.

Not until the Edict of Toleration (1905), enacted under Tsar Nicholas II, did the situation significantly improve. With this legislation, such evangelicals were now free to, among other things, hold religious services, produce their own religious literature and import literature from abroad, and even own property (Wardin, 325). As historian Heather J. Coleman writes, "The 1905 Revolution launched a period of rapid expansion for the Baptists, both numerically and organizationally" (Coleman, 25). The situation had never looked brighter for evangelical penetration of the world's largest country.

The Bolshevik Revolution: The Soviet Persecution of Christians of All Stripes

Yet hopes for progress were short lived, as the Russian Revolution (1917), organized by communist agitator Vladimir Lenin and his fellow Bolsheviks, ushered in an unforeseen and unprecedented age of Christian persecution in Russia--the likes of which Europe had never seen before. In the tsarist period, Christianity had been so ingrained in Russian national identity that foreign travelers often referenced the intense Christian religiosity of Russians. The country, for example, was often called *Holy Russia*, given

the widespread presence of churches and chapels. But for Lenin's communist Bolsheviks, all religion had to be stamped out, as it was viewed as a mere form of social control. Karl Marx, the German philosopher behind the ideology of communism, had notoriously referred to religion as the "opium of the masses." As a virulent atheist and devout follower of Marx, Lenin held similar views about religion. Lenin's success in establishing military and political control over all of Russia by 1922, after a bloody and heart-wrenching civil war that saw many Christian deaths, meant the rise of a new age of terror.

The Bolsheviks, who changed Russia's name to the Soviet Union, made atheism the official new state religion. Realizing that the tsars of the past routinely had used the Orthodox Church as a tool for social control, the Bolsheviks sought to curtail the power of the church in order to control the masses themselves. Monasteries were shut down, for example, and prominent church leaders were arrested, including Patriarch Tikhon (Phillips, 62-63). In addition, the state seized many of the churches, blowing up some with dynamite and converting others to office space for official party purposes. Some Bolsheviks, attempting to win over the religious, claimed that religion should continue to be a private matter.

It was Lenin, however, who intervened with a decree announcing the separation of church and state (Bremer, 80). Although many nations with robust religious communities also have professed a principle of separation between church and state, including the United States, such rhetoric meant something totally different for the Bolsheviks. It meant state persecution of Christian communities. The government, with its newly created *League of the Militant Godless*, set to task in the early Soviet era mocking Christian beliefs as superstition in state propaganda (Phillips, 63).

With Lenin's death in 1922 and the rise to power of Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, religious persecution carried on. Although Stalin had once entertained becoming a priest

in his youth, his later conversion to Marxism and murderous ways while in power revealed a hostility to faith.

Not only were Christians targets but other faiths as well. Given increasing Soviet tension with Japan in the 1930s, for example, Buddhists in particular were singled out for scrutiny, with many facing accusations of spying for Japan. Indeed, it seemed that Stalin's paranoia knew no bounds. Against this backdrop, Christians too faced persecution in the early Stalin era as well. Yet it was largely sects on the margins, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, that often found themselves in the notorious labor camps, known as *gulags* (Rappaport, 227). In addition, the Russian version of the Salvation Army, the *Armiya Spaseniya*, was disbanded in 1923 and only allowed to reemerge officially decades later (Merritt, 478). Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, there were still approximately one-half million Baptists in Russia in 1927 (Rappaport, 227).

As the Soviet Union industrialized and became a superpower under Stalin, the Soviet government increasingly co-opted the Orthodox Church for state purposes. If Stalin could not wipe out the faith of the masses, he reasoned, he could at least control it to promote his own ends.

The first prominent incidence occurred during the Second World War, known in Russia as the *Great Patriotic War*. Stalin relaxed restrictions on the Orthodox Church after the Nazi invasion of Russia wreaked havoc on Soviet morale. As a result, the Soviet leadership encouraged church attendance to unite the masses and provide a boost in national confidence. "The Russian people accepted this war as a holy war, a war for their faith and their country...., Metropolitan Nikolai even proclaimed, "Patriotism and Orthodoxy are one" (Miner, 51).

In 1944, amid the war, the Union of Evangelical Christians and Baptists (AUCECB) also came into existence. As historian Constantine Prokhorov writes,... "a single Evangelical Christian-Baptist body was

easier to control” (Prokhorov, 17). This union included not only Baptists but also later Pentecostals and Mennonites, among others. The religious differences, along with the centralization, led to a rupture of the Union by the 1960s (Ibid., 17-18).

Khrushchev & the Closing of Churches

Notwithstanding such developments, Stalin’s death in March 1953 marked an end to one of the worst eras of violent persecution in Soviet history. His successor as leader, Nikita Khrushchev, made history in 1956 by denouncing the cruel state excesses associated with Stalin and his cult of personality. The process was known as *De-Stalinization*, an informal repudiation of the past.

Yet while many Christians may have reasoned that the time was now ripe for fertile evangelical activities, they were badly mistaken about Khrushchev’s toleration of religion. The new leader’s vow to defeat the West in the Cold War, along with his unpredictable rhetoric, produced renewed anxiety.

In fact, Khrushchev launched a major anti-religious campaign, one of the most restrictive in Soviet history. He was especially effective, more so than any other Soviet leader, in closing churches. Indeed, more than five thousand churches were closed under Khrushchev’s rule (Marsh, 82). The government had introduced so much red tape that it was extremely difficult for even Orthodox churches to register for approval. In fact, some 4, 219 Orthodox Christian societies were stripped of their official registration between 1961 and 1966 (Davis). Such was life during Khrushchev’s anti-religious campaign.

An Era of Contradictions: The Brezhnev Period

Perhaps a sigh of relief among Evangelicals came in 1964 when Khrushchev was removed from power in a bloodless coup

led by communist party strong-man Leonid Brezhnev.

Indeed, Brezhnev’s long rule of the Soviet Union (1964-82) was characterized by considerable improvement with the West, with implications for greater religious toleration. Indeed, the 1970s was the era known as detente: a relaxation of tensions amid the Cold War marked by the de-escalation of the nuclear arms race and unprecedented communication between Moscow and Washington. Significantly, the high point of detente was Brezhnev’s signing of the Helsinki Accords in 1975, a document that gave the impression that the Soviets would begin respecting human rights--a supposed marked break from the authoritarian past.

And, indeed, in some ways, Brezhnev’s detente benefited Baptists within the Soviet Union. For starters, Brezhnev was far less likely to use violence to curtail the activities of Baptists. Rather, it seems his government focused on winning over the masses to atheism through the school system and education (Jones & Randall, 53). During Brezhnev’s rule, Baptists in the Soviet Republic of Moldavia even obtained official sanction to publish some 8,000 Bibles and hymn books (Ubeivolc, 41).

At the same time, Baptists still sometimes gave their life for their faith, as evidenced by the 1972 murder of Vanya Moiseev. A soldier, Moiseev eagerly shared his evangelical faith with family and fellow soldiers, in the process gaining converts. Although uncultured, Moiseev claimed to see visions of angels, a testament to his personal religiosity. Yet he was beaten and stabbed to death by fellow soldiers (Wurmbrandt, 53), a development that led many to view Moiseev as a true modern-day martyr. “Are you a believer? Be ready to die!” became a slogan among some Baptists in this contradictory era of official tolerance but unofficial suppression (Prokhorov, 108).

Interestingly, the presidential rise of Jimmy Carter (a Baptist) in 1977 encouraged

Soviet Baptists to file applications for emigration. Perhaps they mistakenly believed that the United States now would eagerly take them in. Baptists and Pentecostals had filed 35,000 of such applications by 1977, even though no major departure wave among such Christians and others seeking religious freedom ensued until the late 1980s (Hardwick, 129). Yet the Brezhnev administration, thanks to the intervention of Carter, did release from prison in 1979 Soviet Baptist leaders Gennadii Kryuchkov and Georgii Vins and allowed their emigration to the United States (Johnson, 324).

Gorbachev, Glasnost, & Christianity

No doubt, Mikhail Gorbachev's rise to power in the Soviet Union in 1985 ushered in a new era of change. In many ways, Gorbachev marked a dramatic break from the heavy-handed rule of the past. He introduced the concept of *glasnost*, or openness, that gave Russians freedom to speak their minds and discuss the negative features of the Soviet past, including the issue of religious persecution. In addition, Gorbachev renounced the Brezhnev Doctrine, which had been an explicit Soviet threat to intervene militarily in Eastern-bloc nations that sought democratic reforms. Gorbachev believed that the nations of Eastern Europe under Soviet control, such as East Germany, Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Bulgaria, all had the right to chart their own course of development, free from Soviet coercion.

Against this backdrop, several positive developments ensued for Evangelicals during Gorbachev's stint in power (1985-91). The Salvation Army was allowed to reopen, and the Soviets allowed religious believers, who had faced persecution, to emigrate. Not only that, 1988 marked Christianity's 1000-year-presence in Russia. The Gorbachev government, one historian notes, approved of the celebration of this pivotal event, "which signaled the end of the period of State militant atheism" (Prokhorov, 16).

The New Era: Democracy & the Hopes for Russian Evangelical Ascendancy

The end of the Cold War and the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991 were among the most momentous historical developments of the twentieth century. Against this backdrop, evangelical missionaries hoped for unprecedented opportunities to win over converts in the once again newly renamed Russia. Indeed, Christianity, in this early post-Soviet era, seemed to experience somewhat of a Renaissance. After all, seventy years of state-sponsored atheism, with all of its spiritual and societal plagues, had left the masses alienated. Not surprisingly, then, the early years of Russian democracy under Boris Yeltsin's leadership (1991-99) saw a flourishing of Baptist missionary activity, both foreign and domestic.

The fear of growing Baptist influence, however, led the Russian Orthodox Church to seek to stamp out evangelical activities. Bending to pressure by 1997, Yeltsin made a deal with the Russian Orthodox Church to favor Orthodoxy. In return, he expected and indeed received the Orthodox Church's powerful support of the political class, including endorsing his candidacy in elections. (Steinberg & Wanner, 285-86). Thus, a new era of privileging Orthodoxy and marginalizing Evangelical Christianity had emerged

This "I-will-scratch-your-back-if-you-scratch-mine" relationship between Russian political and Orthodox Church power has continued during the more-than-decade long rule of Vladimir Putin (1999-2008, 2012-present).

This special relationship, however, has not always meant that the Orthodox Church simply does the bidding of the Putin administration. Sometimes the situation works in reverse. Patriarch Alexy, the current patriarch's predecessor, was a respectful critic of Putin's efforts to change the Russian

pension system a few years back, a development that led Putin to change course “Alexy did not damage his relationship with Putin,” John and Carole Garrard write, “because he did not challenge state authority” (Garrard, 249).

Still, in recent years, non-Orthodox Christian missionaries have faced new burdens in spreading the faith. In particular, 2016 saw a dramatic turning point in terms of new restrictions in Russia on Protestant evangelization efforts. That year, a law came into effect that prohibited the sharing of the Gospel in people’s homes and on the Internet. The only legal space to share one’s faith, according to the law, was the confines of a church building. The Russian Orthodox Church, however, has been exempt from the law, a position that clearly demonstrates the privileging of Orthodoxy by the state. This law, known as the Yarovaya law, played a role in the US Commission on International Religious Freedom’s designation of Russia as one of the worst places in the world in terms of freedom of religion (Shellnutt).

Conclusion

The history of Russia, both in the distant past and today, has been characterized by the privileging of Orthodoxy and the marginalization of Evangelical Christianity. No doubt, the worst era was Soviet rule, which saw the persecution of not only Baptists but also Orthodox Christians. At the same time, the tsars, with the qualified exception of Nicholas II, also favored Russian Orthodoxy as a tool to promote state interests. Today, the situation is very similar to the way it was in the past. Christians are no longer ridiculed, as they were during the Soviet era. However, Putin depends on the Russian Orthodox Church’s approval to hold onto power. Not surprisingly, then, laws are enacted in such a way as to promote Russian Orthodox interests above those of other Christian faiths.

In light of the new restrictions in Russia imposed on evangelical activity, what is the Bible-affirming Evangelical Christian to do? First, it is important to pray to God for positive change in Russia. To begin, we should pray that the Russian leadership will become more open to the missionary work of Baptists and other Evangelical Christians. We should also pray that the Russian citizenry demands greater religious toleration. If the latter occurs, the Russian political class would be forced to allow greater freedom of religion in Russia, a development that has never occurred in the nation’s long history. Lastly, we should pray for courage and perseverance in the face of opposition. At present, missionaries must adapt to the current circumstances, even if it means the risk of deportation. God expects no less of his children.

References

- Bremer, Thomas. *Cross and Kremlin: A Brief History of the Orthodox Church in Russia*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2013.
- Coleman, Heather J. *Russian Baptists and Spiritual Revolution, 1905-1929*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005.
- Davis, Nathaniel. *A Long Walk to Church: A Contemporary History of Russian Orthodoxy*. New York: Routledge, 2018.
- Hardwick, Suan Wiley. *Russian Refuge: Religion, Migration, and Settlement on the North American Pacific Rim*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

- Johnson, Robert E. *A Global Introduction to Baptist Churches*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Jones, Keith G. and Ian M. Randall. *Counter-cultural Communities: Baptist Life in Twentieth Century Europe*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008.
- Leong, Albert. *The Millennium: Christianity and Russia, AD 988-1988*. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990.
- Marsh, Christopher. *Religion and the State in Russia and China: Suppression, Survival, and Revival*. New York: Continuum, 2011.
- Merritt, John G. *Historical Dictionary of the Salvation Army*. Lanham MD, Scarecrow Press, 2006.
- Miner, Steven Merritt. *Stalin's Holy War: Religion, Nationalism, and Alliance Politics, 1941-1945*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Phillips, Steve. *Lenin and the Russian Revolution*. Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 2000.
- Prokhorov, Constantine. *Russian Baptists and Orthodoxy, 1960-1990* Carlisle, UK: Langham Monographs, 2013.
- Rappaport, Helen. *Joseph Stalin: A Biographical Companion*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1999.
- Shellnutt, Kate. "Russia's Newest Law: No Evangelizing Outside of Church," *Christianity Today*, 8 July 2016, at <https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2016/june/no-evangelizing-outside-of-church-russia-proposes.html>
- Steinberg Mark D. and Catherine Wanner (eds.), *Religion, Morality, and Community in Post-Soviet Societies* Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2008.
- Ubeivolc, Vladimir. *Rethinking Missio Dei among Evangelical Churches in an Eastern European Orthodox Context*. Carlisle, UK: Langham Monographs, 2016.
- Wardin, Albert W. *On the Edge: Baptists and Other Free Church Evangelicals in Tsarist Russia, 1855-1917*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013.
- Werth, Paul W. *The Tsar's Foreign Faiths: Toleration and the Fate of Religious Freedom in Imperial Russia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Wurmbrandt, Richard. *The Overcomers: Stories of Love and Strength from the Founder of the Voice of the Martyrs*. Orlando, FL: Bridge-Logos, 2006.



Adam & Eve & The Serpent, Image Credit: Pixabay

A Scriptural View of Crime

By Jared A. Linebach, Ph.D.

Shorter University

There are many perspectives on the view of man, particularly as it relates to the depravity of man. The abundance of theories on how and why people commit crimes can easily be found in any criminological theories book. However, no single theory explains every act of social deviance. That is, all

theories explain *some* crime but not all theories explain *all* crime. Opposing viewpoints from early criminological theory illustrate the shaky foundations of the criminological discipline. The classical school of criminology viewpoint is based on the free will of the offender, while the positivist school of criminology viewpoint is based on deterministic characteristics of the offender. As with most problems that theorists attempt to solve using opposite ends of a spectrum, neither can be completely accurate which means there must be some middle ground or alternative perspective that addresses the problem more fully.

Though there is no “modern theory” – a theory posited within the last 500 years – that addresses the existence of criminality fully, there is a perspective that, when adopted, seems to address the root of criminal behavior. Prior to the establishment of the classical and positivist schools of criminology, a practical application of the supernatural theory of crime was the foundation for society. This supernatural perspective will be addressed later but it is the modern outgrowth of the Scriptural view of crime as specified within the pages of the Holy Bible. Over time, the Scriptural view of crime gave way to the supernatural theory because the supernatural theory made it easier to punish individuals who engaged in criminal activity.

This article will discuss the Biblical support for the total depravity of man – also known as the sin nature and original sin – as the root cause of criminal conduct. Herein, the two terms, total depravity of man and sin nature, will be used interchangeably to refer to the state of mankind as defined by God. The term original sin will be used to refer to the fall of man as described in Genesis 3. It should also be noted at the outset that the discussion of the sin nature will be from God’s perspective not from man’s perspective. There are plenty of other theories that deal with the depravity of man from man’s perspective.

Defining Human Nature: Imago Dei

Humanity was created by God and for God. God created man from the dust of earth and created woman from man on the sixth day of creation. This was the only time, during the creation account, that God is recorded as identifying the whole of His work as “very good” (Genesis 1:31, ESV). When Moses records the creation account and provides God’s discussion with Himself about the creation of man, he does so using some specific terms: “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Genesis 1:26, ESV). The meaning of image and likeness has casually come to represent a physical likeness to God. However, the real meaning is a bit less obvious.

The use of “our image” and “likeness” in Genesis indicates a deeper meaning than physical likeness, especially since “God is spirit” (John 4:24, ESV). It seems much more likely that being made in the image of God relates more to our moral, intellectual, and spiritual nature (Munyon, 1994). The image of God is more about who we are and less about something we have or something we do (Munyon, 1994).

Another scholar describes the image of God as both a “natural and moral image” (Menzie & Horton, 1993, p. 84). The natural image encompasses the intellectual aspects of the person, but elaborates to include elements of personality, sensibility, and rationality. In contrast, the moral image houses our will, our freedom to make decisions. “Moral image in mankind is also the quality of our personality that relates to the rightness or wrongness of the use of our powers” (Menzie & Horton, 1993, p. 85). It is this sense of right and wrong that allow us to relate to God.

These two perfectly formed first humans – Adam and Eve – came to reside in the Garden of Eden. They enjoyed fellowship with God, walking with Him in the cool of the day. They enjoyed the fruit of the garden and were allowed to eat of any of it except that from one tree. They enjoyed perfect communion and communication with God in that place. There, they were perfect image

bearers of God – they were as perfect as they, or we, would ever be. All of this was shattered after the temptation – not as a result of the temptation, but rather a result of yielding to the temptation – of Adam and Eve at the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil in the midst of the garden (Genesis 2-3, ESV).

Defining Human Nature: Sin Nature

In order to begin to define the concept of the sin nature, original sin must first be established. While the term “original sin” is found nowhere in the 66 books that make up the canon of Scripture – the Holy Bible – original sin, as a concept, is well established by the Apostle Paul. The concept of original sin is one that begins in the beginning. Original sin, as described in Genesis 3, portrays the first man, Adam, and his female counterpart, Eve the suitable helper, as having stepped outside the confines of God’s command. Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit hanging from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. It made no difference to a Holy God that Adam and Eve were coerced or entrapped in this temptation to consume the fruit by the serpent. While the serpent reaped its own consequences by presenting the temptation, the act of disobedience against the Divine was committed freely by Adam and Eve.

One result of the original sin, Adam and Eve were forced to leave the paradise where God had originally placed them to live out their days. The original sin not only had geographic consequences, but it also had physiological and psychological consequences. The physiological consequences came in the form of hard manual labor, pain in childbirth, and death – thought not immediate physical death. The psychological consequences came in the form of subjugation to one’s husband and the realization that one would eventually die. Original sin, while limited to the Garden of Eden, has lasting consequences for all of humanity.

The original sin is only the starting

point for the conversation about the sin nature. Just as with original sin, the terms sin nature or the total depravity of man are not found in the Scriptures. However, just like original sin, the framework for understanding the sin nature is abundantly clear. The concepts of sin nature and total depravity can be expressed in positive and negative terms. “Negatively, it means that man, as a result of the fall, has lost his original righteousness and love for God. Positively, it means that man’s moral nature has become corrupted, and that he has an irresistible bias toward evil” (Barabas, 1967, p. 213).

The notion of the sin nature is most clearly expressed by the Apostle Paul in his writings. First, Romans 5 provides the clearest picture of the sin nature within man. A deeper analysis of New Testament passages will be assessed later but Romans chapter five gives an excellent description of the transmission of the sin nature. “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man [Adam], and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12, NIV). The Apostle Paul’s point is expounded in five additional passages in Romans 5:

- “the many died by the trespass of the one man” (Romans 5:15, NIV)
- “the result of the one man’s sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation [to all]” (Romans 5:16, NIV)
- “by the trespass of the one man, death reigned [from the time of Adam to the time of Moses; verse 14] through that one man” (Romans 5:17, NIV)
- “the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men” (Romans 5:18, NIV)
- “through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners” (Romans 5:19, NIV)

The flow and purpose of these passages clearly indicate the divine conceptualization of the sin nature. Sin and the sin nature entered the human race through Adam “in an abuse of the freedom given to created beings equipped with a will” (Menziez & Horton, 1993, p. 87) and has been transmitted to every other human, making the entire human race sinners and worthy of the consequences for that sin: death (Romans 6:23). The exact mode of transmission for the sin nature is a mystery. Genetic transmission and evolutionary development transmission are two posited modes of transmission. Scripture gives no clear answer to the question about how the sin nature is propagated within the human race. What is known is that sin is an all-pervasive tendency which must be dealt with if the human race is to live as God intended.

Human Nature in the Old Testament

The Old Testament discusses the characteristics of human nature. The account begins in Genesis 2 after the creation of all things, to be discussed in greater detail later. The major theme relating to the sin nature in the Old Testament is that, since the original sin of Adam – known simply as “the fall” – , the human race was and is sinful from before we were born. Psalm 51:1-5 states “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me” (ESV).

The Psalms continue a few chapters later to discuss the beginning of the human sinful condition. Psalm 58:1-3 states “Do you indeed decree what is right, you gods? Do you judge the children of man uprightly? No, in

your hearts you devise wrongs; your hands deal out violence on earth. The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth, speaking lies” (ESV). The theme of post-fall sinfulness from birth is clearly delineated. However, Isaiah provides a bit of good news as it relates to our condition. Isaiah 48:8-9 states “You have never heard, you have never known, from of old your ear has not been opened. For I knew that you would surely deal treacherously, and that from before birth you were called a rebel. ‘For my name's sake I defer my anger; for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you, that I may not cut you off’” (ESV). Isaiah’s words illustrate that God is not pleased with our natural state, but He also does not desire to completely wipe us out as He did to humanity with the flood – except Noah and his family.

So, the sin of Adam and Eve lead to their banishment from the Garden of Eden and to the transmission of a broken nature to the rest of humanity. However, Deuteronomy 24:16 explains: “Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, nor shall children be put to death because of their fathers. Each one shall be put to death for his own sin” (ESV) and “In those days they shall no longer say: ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.’ But everyone shall die for his own iniquity. Each man who eats sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge” (Jeremiah 31: 29-30, ESV). Additionally, Ezekiel 18:20 states “The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself” (ESV). These three passages clearly explain the state of the human condition. Somehow the original sin committed in Eden led to the sinfulness of Adam and Eve, and it led to the inclination to commit sinful acts by their descendants.

The last concept to discuss before moving to the New Testament passages can be found in Job 14:4 which states “Who can

bring a clean thing out of an unclean? There is not one” (ESV). While some of the earlier passages provide a bit of hope when it comes to remedying the human condition, the passage seems to indicate that there is no turning back from one’s sinfulness, or uncleanness. As the sin nature is examined through an Old Testament lens, there seems to be no permanent cure for the sin nature.

Human Nature in the New Testament

The Old Testament was the written Word of God prior to the incarnation of Christ which required a specific theme for discussing the sin nature. As the New Testament passages are assessed, it is clear that a different theme can be, and must be, expressed by God. The major theme as it relates to sin nature in the New Testament is that there is a contrast between the sinful nature and the spirit that must be explored. The Apostle Paul clearly delineates this theme when he says: “For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do” (Galatians 5:17, ESV). Just as in the Old Testament, the term sin nature does not exist in the pages of the New Testament. However, the concept is certainly carried over from the Old Testament framework.

The New Testament does not spend time debating the merit or existence of a sinful nature. Rather, the writers of the New Testament assume – work from the premise – that the sinful nature is a reality in the life of all humanity. Jesus makes that point very clear in a discourse with a young rich ruler: “And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, “*Good* Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me *good*? No one is *good* except God alone” (Mark 10:17-18, ESV, emphasis added). Christ was making a point to the young man that goes beyond the scope of this chapter, but nonetheless, Jesus is expressing

the state of human nature: our nature is totally corrupt, sinful. This utterly sinful nature to which Jesus refers is completely contrary to his wholly holy nature. His nature – the result of His divinity as evidenced by His conception by the Holy Spirit and virgin birth – is one that is completely without blemish or spot which is what made Him the perfect contrast to the sinful nature.

As has already been stated, the consequences of that original sin have lasting effects on all of us. Some of the ways in which all humans living today are affected by that first sin include:

- that all humans are bound to Adam in some way (See Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22),
- that all humans are completely unable to impress God with our ability to do good (See Romans 3:23), and
- that all humans have been affected by and have contributed to the universality of sin in that an adult with a corrupt nature will produce offspring with a corrupt nature (See Job 14:4; Matthew 7:17-18; Luke 6:43) (Marino, 1994).

The existence of the sin nature is not refuted in the pages of the New Testament. However, the writers of the New Testament do focus on contrasting the two natures: the sinful nature and the spirit-lead nature. Romans 7:18-20 states “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me” (ESV). Romans 7 details the difference between the two natures. First, the sinful nature is one that resides in the *flesh* though the body is not of itself evil. The Greek word used for flesh is *sarx*. The Apostle Paul knows that *sarx* traditionally

refers to the physical body but is using the term in Romans 7 and 8 to describe the “seat of wrong desire” (Marino, 1994, p. 278). Second, the flesh does what is evil (See Romans 7:5; Galatians 5:17-21) and nothing good dwells there (Romans 7:18). Third, the Apostle Paul recognizes that a battle is raging within his being; a battle for control of the body and actions.

The Apostle Paul continues in the next chapter. “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God” (Romans 8:5-8, ESV). The Apostle Paul is still using *sarx* to describe the flesh here, but is using *phroneō* for mind. The Apostle Paul is actually using a word that means to think after or be of a certain mind (Vine, 1996).

The Apostle Paul's usage in the New Testament correlates closely with the Old Testament usage of *lev* or *levav* which refers to heart, mind, and understanding. Taken together, the Old and New Testament terms for mind/heart connote a place that can be corrupted (See Genesis 6:5; Deuteronomy 15:9; Isaiah 29:13) but is not the seat of corruption within the human being (Marino, 1994). The prophet Jeremiah warns of the capabilities of the heart – the *levav* – in a thematically appropriate verse for a theory of crime from a Scriptural standpoint: “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick [or wicked]; who can understand it?” (Jeremiah 17:9, ESV).

The Two “Adams”

Fortunately for the whole of humanity, God did not leave us to flounder in a state of total depravity. He made a way for us to rejoin Him and His family.

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved. (Ephesians 2:1-5, ESV)

This passage contrasts the two natures, but it also hints at a contrast between what has commonly been referred to as the “two Adams”. “Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven” (1 Corinthians 15:45-47, ESV). It can be understood from this passage that the first Adam is the Adam of Genesis who was created in God’s own image yet partook of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil condemning all of humanity to isolation from God. By contrast, the second Adam, the last Adam as 1 Corinthians explains, is none other than Jesus Christ who came into this world to reconcile all of humanity back to God and heal our broken relationship with Him.

While many could recite the account of the creation from memory, it can often be described as the gist of the story rather than a presentation of the details of that account found within the pages of Scripture. Far too often, the details and precise order of events gets lost in our memory of the account. Understanding the comparison of the two Adams begins with a proper understanding of

the timeline found with the second and third chapters of Genesis. Within the pages of Scripture, a chronological account is not always given. However, almost always within a chapter or even a book of the Bible is the account provided chronologically. The details found in chapters two and three of Genesis are no different – they may be presented out of chronological order but there is no way to discern that based on the information provided. Therefore, the best course of action is to take Scripture literally as it details the account of the fall of man.

Timeline of Genesis 2 and 3

Genesis 2 begins with a review of the rest that God enjoyed after creating the whole of the universe. In verse 7, we begin to see a more detailed account of the creation of man and the events that followed. The account found in chapter 2, in order, are as follows:

- God formed man out of the dust of the earth and breathed life into his nostrils causing the man to become a living soul.
- God planted a garden eastward in Eden and place the man within it.
 - Within the garden, all manner of trees and plants could be found.
- God gave a decree to the man.
 - The man could eat freely of any tree within the garden.
 - The man was required to avoid eating from one specific tree: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
 - If man ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he would surely die that day.
- God recognized that Adam needed someone to help him – it is not good for man to be alone.
- God formed every manner of beast and fowl. He brought them before

the man who named each one, but none were found to be suitable as a helper.

- God caused the man to enter a deep sleep, took one of his ribs, and formed woman from that rib.

At this point, things seem to be going really well. Adam has named all the beast of the field and all the fowl of the air. Adam has even been provided a wife, a helper, whom he can enjoy. Both Adam and Eve are naked and are not ashamed of being so. They were innocent and without blemish at that time. They enjoyed all that the garden in Eden had to offer. However, chapter 3 of Genesis begins with a description of the antagonist of the account. While the details found in chapter 2 are all initiated by and focused around God, the details of chapter 3 are focused around the activities of man: there is a lesson in that. The main details, in order, of chapter 3 are as follows:

- The serpent, who was more subtle than all other beasts, speaks to the woman saying “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’”.
- The woman then corrects the serpent identifying that they may eat of any tree in the garden except one. However, the woman does not quite quote God correctly either: “You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.”
- The serpent then tells the woman that she will not die, but that her eyes will be opened and she will be like God.
- Seeing that the fruit of the tree was good for food, the woman decided to eat of the fruit.
- The woman offered the fruit to the man who decided to eat it.

- The eyes of the man and woman were opened, they recognized their nakedness, and they hid.
- The man and the woman made clothes out of fig leaves in an attempt to cover their nakedness.
- God, in the cool of the day, comes calling in the garden for the man and the woman.
- The man explains that he hid from God because he was afraid because he was naked.
- God inquires who told them that they were naked.
 - Part of that inquiry is God’s asking if the man and woman ate of the forbidden tree’s fruit.
- The man speaks up first placing the blame on the woman, and indirectly God, who gave him the fruit to eat.
- God turns to the woman who places the blame on the serpent who deceived her.

Consequences are placed on each of the three parties. The man gets his punishment, the woman gets her punishment, and the serpent gets his punishment. Despite passing blame onto someone else, everyone is responsible for his or her own actions in this account.

Contrasting Characteristics of the Two Adams

The first Adam, the one found in Genesis tending the garden, and the second Adam, the one foretold by the prophets and fulfilled in Christ, have some similarities. Both Adams were flesh and blood in the image of God. Both Adams bore the consequences of sin and were sentenced to death. Both Adams were representatives for their respective natures: bringing life or death. Both Adams engaged in one defining act that

altered the course of humanity. While these similarities exist, the differences between the two Adams are much more important in the discussion about the sin nature.

The differences that exist between the two Adams are not just slight differences. They seem to be diametrically opposed to one another; these differences are complete opposites as they concern the whole of humanity. The differences are outline as follows:

- The first Adam was form out of the dust of the earth, while the second Adam was sent from heaven (1 Corinthians 15:47).
- The first Adam was made a living being, while the second Adam was a life-giving spirit (1 Corinthians 15:45).
- The first Adam was characterized with disobedience, while the second Adam was characterized by obedience (Romans 5:19).
- The first Adam transgressed (Hosea 6:7), while the second Adam was tempted in every way as we are but was without sin (Hebrews 4:15).
- The first Adam was faithless (Hosea 6:7), while the second Adam was faithful (Hebrews 3:1-2).
- The first Adam ushered sin into humanity (Romans 5:12), while the second Adam ushered the no-strings-attached gift of justification into humanity (Romans 5:15-16).
- The first Adam's actions resulted in death, while the second Adam's actions resulted in resurrection (Romans 5:17-18).
- The first Adam brought death to all humanity, while the second Adam brought life to all humanity (1 Corinthians 15:21-22).

Through the first Adam, the perfect *imago dei* was broken. The whole of humanity still resembles God's image in some ways but does not perfectly resemble God's image. The point the second Adam, Christ, was to reconcile humans back to God. We still do not perfectly resemble God, but, after the point of salvation, God no longer sees the shortcomings of the individual when He looks at him or her. Christ's single act on the cross of Calvary allowed for all of Adam's disobedience to be undone. That is the hope of the Gospel: men no longer need to remain separated from God but rather can be separated to God!



Image Credit: Pixabay

Significance to Criminological Theory

While the discourse of Scripture provides a great deal of hope for the believer regarding the sin nature, there is still a nature that pulls individuals toward sin or lawlessness. This pull is described by the Apostle Paul in Romans: "For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do

the very thing I hate” (Romans 7:14-15, ESV). The Apostle Paul recognized that even having a transformed life, accepting the gift of Christ which is eternal life, is not sufficient to negate or obliterate the sinful nature swirling within each person. Perhaps, then, the question that should be asked is not “how is it that some engage in criminal activity”, but rather it should be asked: “how is it that some do not engage in criminal activity?”.

Given the facts of Scripture, it would seem significantly more likely that one would engage in lawless, criminal, sinful acts rather than actively avoid that kind of behavior. It must be true that it is easier for humans to choose the sinful, lawless action as the Apostle Paul describes. However, God has established various institutions to help curb or manage the urge to engage in criminal behavior. Some of those institutions are: the family, the community, and the government.

God has established these spheres of influence that people might be able to better live with one another. The smallest sphere is that of the family environment. The family has a very clear chain of command in Scripture. First, the father is the head of the household, answerable to God for the spiritual direction of the family (Ephesians 6:4). Second, the wife is answerable to God but also to her husband. She is to support her husband in his pursuit to establish a godly home and family (Ephesians 5:22-24). Third, children are to obey their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3). The task of leadership over the children rests with the father and mother. It is their job to ensure that children are directed and disciplined toward the right things. Scripture teaches: “Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6, ESV). This first sphere, the family, can go a long way toward curbing lawless, sinful acts in individuals.

The second sphere is that of community. This community might also be referred to as the local fellowship, the congregation. Therein, a specific progression

is appropriate as outlined in Matthew 18:15-20. First, when a brother in Christ commits a wrong against an individual, the individual is to go and speak to the brother. If that is effective, the chain of correction ends. However, when that is not effective in correcting the behavior, a small group of two or three go to speak with the brother in an attempt to correct the behavior. If that is effective, the chain of correction ends. However, when that is not effective, the group grows to the entire congregation. The whole of the local fellowship gets involved in the correction. The goal is not to shame the brother into submission, but rather the goal is to help the brother recognize the err of his ways and reconcile him back to the local fellowship and to God.

The third sphere endowed with authority by God is the government. In the Old Testament, judges were used as governing bodies for the people of Israel. However, the Israelites demanded a king like other nations (1 Samuel 8:5-6). God granted that request and in so doing gave authority to the king over the people. Israel, and all other nations, have had godly, benevolent rulers, and they have all had ungodly, malevolent rulers. The type of ruler really makes little difference in his or her ability to exercise authority over the people. “Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment” (Romans 13:1-2, ESV). Those who fail to obey the laws established by the governing authorities will feel the wrath of that governing authority: “for he, [the governing authority], is God’s servant for your *good*. But if you do wrong, be afraid for the does not bear the sword in vain” (Romans 13:4, ESV, emphasis added). The sword has often been used as an illustration for capital punishment; however, it is at least a tool for discipline and correction, the point of which is to encourage people to act rightly –

that is, in accordance with God's law.

When these spheres of influence fail, individuals cave to the sinful nature within them and criminal, lawless behavior can result. Various theoretical perspectives have merit when it comes to understanding why individuals commit crime. However, none of those theories even come close to an overarching, all-encompassing reason why crime exists. The acceptance that sinfulness is within everyone is the only explanation for all types and variations of criminal or deviant activity. The real choice is whether to take God at His Word.

Jr. (Eds.), Vine's complete expository dictionary of Old and New Testament words. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

References

- Barabas, S. (1967). Zondervan's Pictorial Bible Dictionary. M. C. Tenney (Ed.). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Jeeves, M. A. (1976). *Psychology & Christianity: The view both ways*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Lamoureux, D. O. (2015). Beyond original sin: Is a theological paradigm shift inevitable? *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith*, 67(1), 35-48.
- Lee, J. & Theol, M. (2014). The human dark side: Evolutionary psychology and original sin. *Journal of Religious Health*, 53, 614-629.
- Marino, B. R. (1994). The origin, nature, and consequences of sin. In Editor S. M. Horton (Ed.), *Systematic theology: Revised edition* (pp. 255-290). Springfield, MO: Logion Press.
- Menzies, W. W. & Horton, S. M. (1993). *Bible doctrines: A Pentecostal perspective*. Springfield, MO: Logion Press.
- Munyon, T. (1994). The creation of the universe and humankind. In Editor S. M. Horton (Ed.), *Systematic theology: Revised edition* (pp. 215-253). Springfield, MO: Logion Press.
- Vine, W. E. (1996). An expository dictionary of New Testament words with their precise meanings for English readers. In Editors M. F. Unger and W. White,

Labeling Theories and Sex Offender Registries: The 21st Century Scarlet Letter

By Tari McNeil

Liberty University

Lemert's *general theory of deviance* (1951) built upon the theoretical foundation previously established by Tannenbaum's (1938) *labeling theory*, which sought to provide a general theoretical explanation for the negative and correlative effect of assigning a specific behavioral label or definition to individual persons based upon their presumed socially deviant behaviors. Tannenbaum (1938) theorized that once negatively associated with a societally imposed label, a person typically internalized that societally imposed label and continued the deviant behavior because of their perception that they were what society had defined them to be (Bernard, Snipes, & Gerould, 2016). Lemert's general theory of deviance (1951) elaborated on Tannenbaum's (1938) labeling theory through Lemert's argument that it was likely that there were also biological, psychological, or social components involved in criminal and socially deviant behaviors, and that there were also two separate and graduated levels of these specific behaviors: *primary* and *secondary*. Primary deviance was defined as the infrequent and unorganized criminal and or socially deviant behavior demonstrated by individual persons which had elicited a negative reaction and behavioral label from the general society of those persons. Left unchecked and unlabeled, Lemert (1951) argued that these particular behaviors were not likely to increase in either frequency or nature (Bernard et al., 2016). Secondary deviance was defined as the internalized

adoption by individual persons of the negative label artificially imposed on them by their particular society as a result of perceived criminal and or socially deviant behaviors (Bernard et al., 2016). Simply stated, Lemert (1951) argued that once negatively labeled by their society, affected persons were not effectively dissuaded from continuing their criminal and or socially deviant behaviors, and instead acted in accordance to how their particular society had already defined them to be (Bernard et al., 2016).

Lemert's general theory of deviance (1951) has contemporary relevance in the American criminal justice system, particularly in the development and implementation of sex-offender registries (Bernard et al., 2016). Generally speaking, sex offender registries provide law enforcement officials with a standardized means of monitoring convicted sex offenders, and American society with valuable information regarding sex offenders living and or working in their neighborhoods. It is also true that there are two specific flaws in sex offender registries that render them susceptible to becoming the 21st century equivalent of the "Scarlet Letter."

Summary

Although this paper is primarily focused on Lemert's general theory of deviance (1951), Bernard et al. (2016) also discussed additional evidence-based research on labeling theories conducted by others, and also provided readers with a comprehensive discussion of evidence-based research into *conflict criminology*. As a result, readers were provided with an informed definition and understanding of each theory, and its specific relevance and value to a better understanding of criminal and or socially deviant behavior. A brief overview of labeling theories and conflict criminology is provided (Bernard et al., 2016).

Tannenbaum's labeling theory (1938) was developed from his research into conflicts that he believed typically occurred between juveniles and adults in urban areas. There are

two essential concepts to this labeling theory: *definition of the situation*, and *internalized definition* (Bernard et al., 2016). Tannenbaum found that juveniles and adults in urban areas typically defined neighborhood conflicts differently. While juveniles saw their behaviors as typical child's play even as the juveniles grew older, adults appeared more likely to believe that juveniles should "grow out" of certain behaviors at some point in the reasonably foreseeable future (Bernard et al., 2016). When that did not happen as quickly as adults desired, adults tended to figuratively attach a negative label or stigma to specific deviant behaviors and to the juveniles, which established a negative correlation between the presumed deviant behaviors of juveniles and the overall social identity of those juveniles. Once a juvenile internalized the negative definition of their behaviors and social identities, Tannenbaum (1938) found that juveniles tended to act in accordance with the image that their society believed them to be (Bernard et al., 2016).

Lemert's general theory of deviance (1951) elaborated on Tannenbaum's labeling theory (1938). Lemert (1951) included both juveniles and adults in his theoretical explanation of criminal and deviant behaviors, and also stated that these behaviors were likely influenced by biological, psychological, and social factors specific to individual persons (Bernard et al., 2016). Although Tannenbaum (1938) essentially explained the basic elements of the differing types of criminal and deviant behaviors, Lemert (1951) specifically affixed explanatory terms to describe the two levels of deviant behavior: primary and secondary. (Bernard et al., 2016). Recall that primary deviance was explained as the infrequent and unorganized criminal or socially deviant behavior demonstrated by individual persons, which had elicited a negative reaction and behavioral label from their specific societies. Secondary deviance was explained as the internalized adoption by individual persons of the negative reaction and behavioral label imposed on those

individual persons by their specific societies, but which did not effectively dissuade those affected persons from continued criminal and or socially deviant behavior (Bernard et al., 2016). Overall, Tannenbaum (1938) and Lemert (1951) both found that labeling specific behaviors of individual persons as criminally and or socially deviant and also directly associating socially undesirable behaviors with the social identity of those persons, did not effectively dissuade those persons from continued criminal activity or further deviant behaviors (Bernard et al., 2016).

Other researchers found that at least some criminal offenders did not consider themselves as such, even if already proven guilty of a criminal offense. Although each of these researchers studied a different type of criminal offender, Yochelson and Samenow (1976), Cameron (1964), and Cressey (1953), all found that the criminal offenders they studied had not internalized a negative self-image of themselves as a result of criminal convictions (Bernard et al., 2016). Instead, as Sykes and Matza (1957) argued, each was able to rationalize or "neutralize" their criminality so that it either justified their criminal offending or ameliorated their criminal culpability. Specifically, Sykes and Matza (1957) stated that there were five explanations for this type of justification or neutralization of criminal offending: *denial of injury*, *denial of responsibility*, *denial of the victim*, *condemning the accuser*, and a stated belief in a *higher loyalty* (Bernard et al., 2016). Overall, each researcher provided a nuanced perspective on the variety of criminal offenders, criminal offenses committed, and how specific offenders reconciled criminal offending with their desired social image (Bernard et al., 2016).

Bernard et al. (2016) provided an overview of *conflict theories*, and a brief explanation of each is provided. Sellin (1938) stated that conflict was inherent when the cultural norms of a particularly complex society were violated. More specifically, Sellin (1938) stated that there were two types of

conflicts: *primary cultural conflicts* and *secondary cultural conflicts* (Bernard et al., 2016). Primary cultural conflicts were defined as conflicts that arose between the conflicting cultural norms of two different cultures in a particular society. Secondary cultural conflicts were defined as those that occurred when a single culture evolved into many different subcultures within the same complex society (Bernard et al., 2016). Sellin's theory (1938) held that with differing cultural norms in the same society, that the resulting conflict between those norms significantly contributed to the level of criminal offending in that particular society because the existing law in those particular societies would no longer represent a consensus among all cultures in that society (Bernard et al., 2016). Vold (1958) elaborated on Sellin's (1938) conflict theory and explained the significance of groups in conflict theory. More specifically, Vold (1958) explained that the differing goals and social dynamics of competing groups contributed to a sense of conflict as each worked to make their specific contribution to a particular society (Bernard et al., 2016). Vold (1958) believed that conflicts between competing groups in a particular society contributed to the level of criminal offending in a particular society, because of the conflicting legal goals of the majority citizens tasked with the specific crafting and enforcement of laws for that society, and those not in the majority who were tasked with abiding by laws they did not draft and may not intend to abide by (Bernard et al., 2016). Turk (1969) developed his *theory of criminalization* during a particularly turbulent period in American history, and his theory represented a nuanced perspective on criminological theory reflective of that time. Turk (1969) argued that there were specific conditions conducive to conflict between the differing levels of authority and subordinate citizens in a particular society (Bernard et al., 2016). Generally speaking, Turk (1969) stated that the level of organization and psychological sophistication of each were predictive of the likelihood of conflict

between them, and that increased levels of criminal offending were more likely when the differing levels of authority possessed greater power than the subordinate citizens (Bernard et al., 2016).

Contemporary Relevance

Although the labeling theories and conflict theories described are somewhat different in their attempts to provide an adequate theoretical explanation for criminal offending, there is a common element between each theory when evaluated and compared as a whole. Each theory included a description of conflict and its potential influence on criminal offending (Bernard et al., 2016). Labeling theories stated that conflicting definitions of deviant behaviors inevitably resulted in differing interpretations of appropriate behaviors and helped thwart effective solutions to criminal offending. Conflict theories focused on the specific nuanced details of certain characteristics typically present during times of conflict: differences in cultural norms, levels of authority, and group and individual dynamics (Bernard et al., 2016). Although no one specific criminological theory alone could adequately explain the genesis and evolution of all criminal offending, each theory included a description of a specific label that was attached to a specific culture, a specific type of authority and citizenry, and or to specific group and individual dynamics, which helped provide a better understanding of how specific labels could help identify relevant actors and potential areas of conflict. This may aid in a more informed understanding of the criminal offending, resulting in more effective interventions and legal sanctions for criminal offenders (Bernard et al., 2016).

Returning to Lemert's general theory of deviance (1951), his theoretical explanation of the significance of primary and secondary deviance in relation to criminal and deviant behaviors has profound implications for the effective development and implementation of sex offender registries (Bernard et al., 2016).

Sex offender registries are a dual-purposed and externally imposed sanction on convicted criminal offenders: a standardized means for effective law enforcement monitoring of convicted sex offenders, and as a publicly available resource for concerned citizens regarding specific sex offenders living and or working in their neighborhoods. A comprehensive overview of sex offender registries and their relevance to Lemert's general theory of deviance (1951) are provided.

Sex Offender Registries

According to Thomas (2012), the United States and the United Kingdom have been the trailblazers responsible for the initial development and implementation of sex offender registries. There are currently approximately 650,000 registered sex offenders in the United States, so there is clearly a need for an efficient and accurate sex offender registry in this country (Levenson, 2009). A comprehensive explanation of the relevance of Lemert's general theory of deviance (1951) to the effective development and implementation of sex offender registries in the United States is provided. A brief overview of suggested recommendations for sex offender registries located in the United States is also provided.

Lemert's general theory of deviance (1951) was not specifically developed as a means of providing guidance for the effective development and implementation of sex offender registries in the United States, but this theory is relevant to American society's determination that there must be a standardized database of individualized and publicly available information regarding the enormous amount of convicted sex offenders in the United States today (Bernard et al., 2016). Primary deviance as it is applied to sex offender registries located in the United States, could be explained as the generally negative reaction of society to the criminal deeds of convicted sex offenders and the correlative societal need to identify, label, and

monitor the daily life activities of these particular offenders. (Bernard et al., 2016). Secondary deviance as it is applied to sex offender registries located in the United States, could be explained as the resulting realization of convicted sex offenders that they have not only criminally convicted of specific sex offenses, but also socially convicted and segregated as a result of their conviction for specific sex offenses designated by their particular jurisdictions (Bernard et al., 2016). Although specific restrictions convicted sex offenders varies by jurisdictions, convicted sex offenders are typically prohibited from certain types of employment such as professional positions associated with minor children (Thomas, 2012). Mandated residency requirements for convicted sex offenders is also common (Levenson, 2009). As a result, some convicted sex offenders could internalize a negative self-image initially imposed on them as a result of their criminal convictions for sex offenses and fail to desist from continued criminal offending especially when similarly situated with other convicted sex offenders in close proximity.

There are two specific flaws in the current development and implementation of sex offender registries in the United States today: relatively unfettered public access to individualized information about specific sex offenders, and sometimes illogically mandated residency requirements for convicted sex offenders. Thomas (2012) stated that the United States is the only country in the world that provides interested persons with open access to information about convicted sex offenders included on sex offender registries located in the United States. This is despite the varying jurisdictional definitions of what constitutes sex offending, and the current accuracy of the published information about specific sex offenders (Thomas, 2012). Mandated residency requirements for convicted sex offenders typically include prohibitions against residing in within a certain proximity to parks, day care centers,

and other areas that are typically frequented by children. Levenson (2009) stated that while there was limited research about the effectiveness of housing restrictions, some studies had concluded that these particular mandated residency restrictions had little effect on the recidivism of some sexual offenders since it was a well-established fact that the sexual victimization of children is typically done by those closest to them such as a family member or by a person otherwise already known to the family. As a result, sexual predators are more likely to have ready access to their desired victim regardless of the actual residency of the perpetrator of that type of sexual victimization (Levenson, 2009).

Two recommendations for more accurate and effective implementation and development of sex offender registries in the United States are provided. First, public access to individualized information about specific sex offenders should be restricted to individuals personally requesting access to that information directly from the relevant law enforcement agency. Although perhaps intimidating to some interested persons, it is preferable that that law enforcement provides current and accurate information regarding convicted sex offenders only to identified persons rather than allow unfettered access to this type of information from the comfort and anonymity of one's own home. Especially with the varying jurisdictional definitions of sex offending, and sometimes inaccurate or outdated information, sex offender registries could become a source of nosy neighbors and criminally minded citizens. Second, while it is understandable that American society would want to help better ensure the safety of its most vulnerable citizens, some mandated residency restrictions are simply unreasonable. For example, Levenson (2009) stated that 99% of homes in Orange County, Florida are within 2,500 feet of parks and day care centers. Not only does it mean that convicted sex offenders only have approximately 1% of the homes in that county to choose from in order to fulfill mandated residency

requirements, assuming that those properties were also available for selection, but this also means that the entire sex offender population of that particular county would be limited to living in that specific area of the county. This would likely do little to safeguard the perception and reality of public safety in that particular geographic area, and also do little to positively affect the property values of those properties (Levenson, 2009). Unless well-thought out and implemented, information about specific sex offenders included on sex offender registries located in the United States risks subjecting sex offenders to becoming unwitting recipients of the 21st century version of the scarlet letter, becoming further branded by society as a result of criminal convictions for sex offenses.

Christian Worldview

Joshua 2:1-24 provided a welcome biblical perspective on both the negative and positive effects associated with that society's stigmatization and labeling of sexual offending, as well as a biblically purposed version of the scarlet letter (New International Version). Rahab was a known prostitute in Jericho, a biblical land targeted by Joshua and several spies who were intent on seizing Jericho on God's command for the residency of God's children. Although the local society had looked down on Rahab because of her occupation as a prostitute, Joshua didn't. After having received refuge in Rahab's house from representatives of the King of Jericho intent on apprehending spies known to be hostile to the ruling interests of the King, Joshua instructed Rahab to tie a scarlet cord in the window of her house so that when Joshua and his men returned to seize the land they would not also unintentionally cause harm or fatal injury to either Rahab or her family as a result of her previous faith-based aid and assistance to them. Because of her faith-based and valuable assistance to God's earthly cavalry, Rahab's deliberate placement of the scarlet cord in a window of her home spared her and her family from the wrath of

God during the battle vanquishment of Jericho (Joshua 6:17).

Reentry Policy and Criminal Theory

By **Steven D. Grant**
Liberty University

References

- Bernard, T., Snipes J., & Gerould, A. (2016). *Vold's theoretical criminology* (Seventh Edition). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Levenson, J. (2009). Restricting sex offender residences: Policy implications. *Human Rights*, 36(2), 21-23.
- Thomas, T. (2012). *The registration and monitoring of sex offenders: A comparative study*. London, England: Routledge.

In January 2008, Pres. George W. Bush signed into law the *Second Chance Act of 2007*. The purpose of this law was to reauthorize government funding for reentry programs originally passed in 1968 under the law entitled Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act (United States, 2008). Reentry programs have been a part of criminal justice programs throughout history with the primary question hypothetically being, how do offenders reintegrate into society after their incarceration, and what can society do to prevent released offenders from becoming part of the 68% of those individuals that returned to prison within three years after initial release (Lafleur & O'Grady, 2016)?

While this hypothetical question is fundamental to modern reentry theory, this question is only a reformulation of a question that has been pondered by various civilizations across time. The concept of reentry and how it is implemented in a society has risen and fallen across time as attitudes of societies toward crime has changed (Kleinfeld, 2016) The scope of this paper is to consider the formation of current reentry policies and how specific criminal theories may have influenced the formation of these policies.

Current Reentry Policy

The concept of punishment for violations of the law seems to be a basic idea to the human psyche (McGeer & Funk, 2015). Indeed, in the first criminal act recorded in Scripture, the murder of Abel by his brother Cain, punishment is meted by God, the ground was cursed so Cain would no longer



Moses & The Ten Commandments. Image Credit: Pixabay, Modified.

be able to cultivate crops and Cain would be, "... a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth" (Gen 4: 12b, NASB). Cain's reaction is revealing. Cain be subject to the penalties listed above, and God's face was hidden from Cain. Cain also feared that anyone finding Cain, would kill Cain for the murder of Abel (Gen 4:13-14). If McGeer and Funk (2015) are correct in their assessment that seeking punishment for crimes committed is a normal human reaction, then Cain's fear was very real.

Punishment can take many forms and McGeer and Funk (2015) posit that seeking punishment for crimes committed is a factor in human thinking, based upon evidence that supports their claim. However, their research also indicates that humans prefer a punishment that is not only has a form of retribution but also a component of the punishment that goes beyond mere retribution. Reentry theory is one component of the idea of something that goes beyond the retribution for a crime (O'Hear, 2007).

The simplest definition of reentry is, according to the Report of the Re-entry Council (n.d.), "...the process of transition that these individuals, who are predominantly male and disproportionately nonwhite, make from prison or jail into the community" (pg. xviii). While the definition is simple the execution of the policy and reasoning behind the present push by federal, state and local governments is more complicated. The execution of reentry policy is a subject beyond the scope of this paper but the emphasis on reentry in the present criminal justice system is a reaction to the higher number of offenders that are being released into society in the last few years (Pinard, 2010).

The higher number of individuals released has been traced to the philosophy of imposing harsher sentences on crimes committed by individuals which began in the 1970s and 80s. Policies such as three-strike laws and determinate sentencing incarcerated offenders longer and the Americas prison population grew (Pinard, 2010; Amasa-

Annang & Scutelnicu, 2016). American's are now questioning the wisdom of harsher sentencing as overcrowding and the economic realities of having to house and feed a growing prison population become known. For example, the amount spent on corrections went from \$9 billion nationwide in 1982 to \$60 billion in 2002 (Report of Reentry Council, n.d.). Because of these realities, reentry is an attractive alternative within the criminal justice system.

Reentry however is not a new concept. Under the Mosaic law, those laws which did not result in the death penalty, had penalties that required individuals to reimburse what was stolen from their neighbors (Exodus 21-22). Cities of refuge were set up across ancient Israel for those that accidentally killed someone. By living in these cities, these individuals were safe from those seeking vengeance for the death they had caused but, the individual had to remain in the city until the death of the High Priest (Deuteronomy 19:1-10). In each case after the requirement of the law were met, the offenders returned to society and their lives with no other punishment.

While a comprehensive study of the history of how criminal justice systems in the past have dealt with both retribution and rehabilitative issues toward convicted criminals is desirable, such a study is not germane to this paper. Modern reentry policies can trace its beginnings to the early 1800s. At that time in England those convicted of crimes not worthy of the death penalty, were placed in prisons where conditions were horrific (Craig, 2009).

Public opinion of the time believed criminals should be locked up and were beyond redemption. Prisoners that did return for prison were often shunned without any hope a normal life in society. Prisons were privately run with little government oversight. The normal needs of sanitation, feeding of prisoners, and housing were barely adequate. A common trough was used as a bathroom, individuals allowed to visit areas where

prisoners were housed were overcome by the stench of human waste, unwashed bodies, and disease. The mentally ill, men and women, prisoners that had committed different levels of crime were commonly housed together, and all shreds of human dignity were stripped from the prisoners (Craig, 2009).

In 1813, Elizabeth Fry visited the women's section of London's Newgate Prison. Fry encountered these conditions and began pushing for reforms and policies which resemble modern reentry policies. By 1817 Fry established an organization that provided clothing, education for prisoners and their children incarcerated with them, vocational training enabling these women to make a living when they returned to society, and programs that spoke to the spiritual needs of the prisoners. Eventually, Fry and her compatriots, brought about prison reforms many of which are incorporated into correctional facilities today (Craig, 2009).

Today's reentry policy has much in common with Fry's ideas about education, vocational training and other programs that help released offenders reintegrate into society. However, as previously discussed, the emphasis on reentry policy today stems from different needs than those that were prevalent in Fry's time. The basic needs of offenders however, remain the same (Craig, 2009).

The main emphasis of present reentry policies focuses on providing the support systems that are needed for the successful reintegration of offenders into society. Basic support issues such as housing, education, vocational training, and employment, are primary issues that are discussed by those that formulate reentry policies. Other needs related to mental health, peer mentoring, drug abuse and family counseling are also discussed to a greater or lesser degree depending on the jurisdiction. The basic issues are agreed-upon at the federal, state, and county levels (Report of Reentry Council, n.d.; Levitan, 2018; Fresh Start, 2016).

The Second Chance Act of 2007 was an effort on the part of the federal

government to provide additional funding to states as they attempted to formulate reentry programming that would successfully allow offenders to reintegrate into society and slow the rate of recidivism among offenders (United States, 2008). With this type of funding made available questions inevitably arise concerning the types of programs that can be created to facilitate a greater chance of reentry for offenders. Governmental and nongovernmental programs along with private businesses have been created to help with offender reintegration (Mijs, 2016; Halushka, 2016;).

Despite all the positive aspects of reentry key questions remain. At what level should reentry programs take place? Are the states primarily responsible for overseeing reentry or should communities themselves take the lead in reentry initiatives in their areas. If reintegration is the responsibility of the state government to a level should the state let the communities become involved? Perhaps the key point in discussing reentry policy is that successful reentry policies are a way of reducing recidivism but is this an accurate measure of a successful policy (O'Hear, 2007; Mellow & Barnes-Ceeney, 2017)?

These are valid questions that need an answer which unfortunately, are beyond the purpose of this paper. The purpose of this paper is to discover the foundational criminal theories that have influenced the formation of reentry policy as it exists today. It is to this purpose that this paper will be directed.

Foundational Theories

There are many theories that posit the reasons that an individual may commit a criminal act. This essay will examine three of these theories and their relationship to the formation of modern reentry policy. Classical, Social Disorganization and Control theories will be considered.

Classical Theory

Looking at the various ideas of current reentry policy and how those ideas are written into those policies, this writer is struck by the underlying tone which insinuates that offenders made a rational choice in choosing to commit the crime for which they were imprisoned. Rational choice theory is part of the classical theory of crime which posits that those that commit crimes have made a free will choice to commit the crime of which they convicted. This is of course after these individuals have carefully considered the opportunities at hand and the ramifications of what might happen if the individual is caught. It is hoped that the consequences of an individual's criminal actions would deter someone from committing the crime. These consequences include swift action in punishing the individual or sentences that are sufficiently long enough to cause individual to rethink about committing the crime again (Bernard, Snipes, & Gerould, 2016).

Current reentry policy reflects this philosophy. Individuals entering reentry programs are placed within these programs in the hope to prepare them to reenter society. However, there is still a perception that these individuals present a risk to society. This risk comes in the form that they could recidivate, so programming is geared to focus on their past weaknesses rather than their strengths. After all, those reentering society have broken the social contract of society so the writers of reentry policy take this underlying lack of trust into consideration that require strict rules that the individuals in reentry programs are required to follow, but these individuals are afforded very little input into what path they would like to see their particular program take (Schlager, 2018; Kleinfeld, 2016).

Policy writers emphasize recidivism as a main goal of establishing successful reentry programs. The elimination of recidivism is usually said to be accomplished by helping those being reintegrated to become prosocial citizens (Fresh Start, 2016). These are worthy aspirations but here again the assumption of

risk to society with the possibility that those that are in reentry may choose to break the law and returned to prison thereby putting public safety at risk (Schlage, 2018).

The aspirations of reentry policy should be embraced. The Fresh Start (2016) program of Gallatin County in Montana provides for those in reentry to have case managers and supervision by probation and parole during their time in the program. This is a valid precaution, and the policy is still written with public safety in mind (O'Hear, 2007).

It is important to consider that while the concepts of rational choice and other aspects of classical theory are subjectively written into reentry policies, there is the reality that an individual in reentry, continues to use rational choice and must consider the choices they are offered when working their reentry program. The consequences of those choices can have a positive aspect. Individuals in these programs can use the same rational thought processes to choose positive paths that will help them successfully reintegrated into society (Schlager, 2018).

From a Judeo-Christian perspective, the points of classical criminal theory fit well with the biblical perspective of human nature. Man's freedom to choose is a gift from God and dovetails with the concepts of rational choice theory. There are many passages of Scripture that point out man's freedom to choose obedience to God over rebellion. God's instructions to Adam regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen 2:16-17) is one such passage.

Perhaps a stronger passage however is in Joshua 24 during Joshua's last instructions to Israel. In this classic passage in verses 14 and 15, Joshua tells Israel to choose between God, the Egyptian gods, or the gods of the Canaanites. A clear choice was given to Israel and Israel also knew the consequences of following any other god but the God that delivered them from Egypt. The book of Deuteronomy is replete with the blessings of choosing to follow the God of Abraham Isaac

and Jacob and the curses for following any other god but Jehovah.

In this passage rational choice, a clear presentation of consequences of not following God and a form of deterrence in these consequences is presented. It is hoped those consequences would be enough to prevent the children of Israel from following other gods. By analyzing this passage, as well as others, the fundamental concepts of classical theory can be seen as a biblical concept. The use of classical theory philosophy as it relates to reentry policy rest solely on the idea that offenders make rational choices after analyzing consequences of their choices. The results of this is a written policy that subliminally considers the negative aspect of the offenders' crimes and the risk that these individuals may pose once they are released back into society (Schlage, 2018).

Social Disorganization

When reading the Fresh Start Strategic Plan (2016) the Montana State Wide Reentry Taskforce's report to the Law and Justice Interim Committee (Levitan, 2018), and the Report of the Reentry Policy Council (n.d.) this writer was struck by the specific way in which these reports and plans address the issues of housing, employment, and family support. There are other issues addressed within these reports, but these three specific issues are also discussed in social disorganization theory.

Social disorganization theory suggests that the commission of crimes within a community are related to communities that have high unemployment rates and have a high level of fluidity in the families that relocate in and out of the community. This fluidity also contributes to a greater lack of family continuity. Because of weak family continuity and the fluidity of people moving in and out of these communities, whole communities lack a cohesiveness which prevents the community from reaching a consensus on problems that are facing that

community (Bernard et al, 2016; Windsor, Jemal, & Benoit, 2014).

Often when inmates are released into existing reentry programs, they are sometimes released into the communities from which they came. Often the effects of social disorganization in these communities contributed to the reasons that released offenders committed their crimes (Mellow & Barnes-Ceeney, 2017). Many reentry policies take these facts into consideration with state policies often supplying the basic framework of understanding on how to support community efforts to flesh out the plans of implementing programs that help offenders to address the issues of housing, employment, family support and the other issues that face offenders trying to reintegrate (Report of the Reentry Policy Council, n.d.; Windsor et al, 2014).

Evidence that social disorganization is foundational to how reentry policy is formulated will be presented by this writer relating to the issues of housing and employment. These two issues dictate how reentry policies are written to provide answers for housing and employment concerns that are facing offenders after release from prison.

Adequate housing is considered to be the major concern of offenders upon release. Offenders that lack reliable housing and use the temporary housing found in homeless shelters have a higher rate of reincarceration than homeless people have never been a part of the criminal justice system. It is often difficult for offenders to obtain housing because of their criminal histories (Levitan, 2018). States, such as the state of Ohio, that engaged in programs that study and provide housing support for offenders both economically and by way of giving incentives to public and private owners of rental properties. Of the offenders that participated in study, "60% were less likely to be we incarcerated, 40% less likely to be rearrested for any crime, and were significantly more likely to receive more mental health and substance abuse services" (Levitan, 2018 pg.

16). The program studied in Ohio became permanent after a five-year study (Levitan, 2018).

States then begin to consider legislative action that will provide incentives to renters so that offenders may find better housing. Other legislative action would include additional funding to support offenders in finding housing and look at regulations that will make it harder for landlords to use the criminal history of an individual as a means of denying housing to offenders. Private stakeholders are also finding opportunities to open private housing facilities that specifically deal with offenders that are reentering society. The impact of the housing issue is being addressed legislatively at the state level, and more directly at the local level by local reentry efforts (Levitan, 2018; Mellow & Barnes-Ceeney, 2017).

Employment is the second issue that is helping to rewrite the horizons of reentry policy. As reentry policies began to make headway as an option to offenders reentering society adjust to a new life away from the structure that is often found in prisons, states began to not only make funds available for several programs which included vocational training. These programs, including the vocational training, often started in prison, but training was also provided through state agencies and private organizations most often in local communities. The relationship government funding agencies and private training job placement businesses is sometimes complicated, especially for nonprofit organizations (Mijs, 2016; Halushka, 2016).

For these organizations, funding is often dependent upon performance. Organizations often have quotas for placing offenders in jobs successfully and if quotas are not met, organizations may lose the funding which will be given to another organization that performs better. While this exchange between governmental funding and private organizations may seem convoluted the important take away from this example is that

there is an effort on the part of government and private stakeholders to provide employment opportunities that enhance and are foundational to the reentry process (Mijs, 2016; Halushka, 2016).

From a Christian perspective, Scripture is quite clear regarding the need for society to help those that are having a difficult time living their lives. Clearly, offenders reentering grading into society fit this criterion. As previously discussed those individuals returning from the cities of refuge were free to live their lives in society without legal penalties (Deuteronomy 19:1-10). In many passages across the old and new Testaments God directs the people of the church and Israel to care for the needs of the widows, orphans, strangers, and the poor and to give them justice (Zachariah 7:9-10). The call is also given to visit prisoners while incarcerated (Matthew 25:36, 39, 43, 44).

Except for the passage in Deuteronomy 19, it would be poor isogesis on the part of this writer to insinuate that any of these verses indicate reentry as being part of God's call to help those less fortunate members of society. However, this writer cannot help but wonder if it is indeed not the mission of society to help prisoners reintegrate into society. If offenders are considered poor and in need of justice, this writer can justify this position. Unfortunately, there is a tendency in American jurisprudence to follow the American idea that individuals that commit crimes are no longer part of society (Kleinfeld, 2016). This is not a biblical position and it is incumbent upon Christians to forgive and allow reconciliation to those individuals that are guilty of criminal actions against society and in some cases against individual members of the church (Ephesians 4:31).

Control Theories

There are a great number of control theories in criminal justice philosophy. Individuals researching reentry policies, cannot help but realize the foundational

impact that such theories have on reentry policy. Control theories in general look at characteristics such as low self-control on the part of offenders, informal social controls (institutions such as marriage, service and the military, family ties, employment, and becoming a parent), and conforming to societal norms are only some of the many aspects that control theories hypothesize as causes of crime (Bernard et al, 2016; Lafleur & O'Grady, 2016; Lafleur, 2017).

There are indeed a great many theories that consider the causes of criminal activity however when looking at reentry policies as written it is difficult to ascribe anyone control theory as being foundational to those policies. Therefore, this writer will consider control in general and their effect on reentry policies. Lafleur & O Grady (2016) recognize this difficulty in an article which calls for an integrated control theory to help understand the process of reintegration.

Written reentry policies place a lot of emphasis on offenders being under supervision in all aspects of the reentry process. There are programs that are part of the reentry process that touch on subjects such as parenting, anger management, addiction counseling, and other programs that promote prosocial behavior that are based on cognitive thinking and evidence-based practices. These policies and the programs that are formed to enhance these policies are designed to instill in the offenders the thoughts and skills needed to conform to societal expectation (Mijs, 2016; Windsor et al, 2014).

What is intrinsic to reentry policies is that regardless of what is being taught the priority of any of these programs is to instill the idea that controls need to be in place in the lives of the offenders. This was evidenced in the research compiled by Halushka (2016). In the research of organizations that help offenders find employment, Halushka noted that these organizations maintained an atmosphere of accountability which was impressed as a desirable characteristic to the

offenders in the program. This characteristic was emphasized as necessary for participants to continue to hold a job after placed.

It seems that as policy is written there is one insurmountable factor that keeps coming to the forefront of these written policies. The aspect of offender risk was discussed in the section covering classical theory. Yet, here again policy that is written is written from the perspective that if offenders in reintegration programs can be taught aspects of self-control, as well as how to inculcate themselves within the aspects of their lives that come under the umbrella of informal social controls and if these characteristics can be part of the individual offender's mind set, there will be less risk to society (Schlager, 2018). Unfortunately, little research has been done to ascertain the effectiveness of such programs making the implementation of such theories what Lafleur (2017) calls atheoretical. If Lafleur's analysis is correct, then more research must be done in this area to verify the success or failure of such theories.

From a biblical viewpoint, the philosophy of control theory is to some extent validated by Scripture. Romans 13:1-8 discusses the reason behind the establishment of governments. Verse three is particularly insightful as it reads, "...for rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same" (NASB). What is particularly telling about this verse is that those that obey the law have no fear. This writer implies that individuals that have a strong desire to adhere to the law and conform to the rules of society be a proof of control theory. It is only those that break the law that have a need to fear punishment by governing authorities

Conclusion

Three criminal theories have been discussed as foundational to the implementation of current reentry policy. However, it should not be construed that

these are the only three policies that are inculcated into reentry policies as written. The number of criminal theories in existence make it impossible to comprehensively discuss all the could be foundational theories for reentry policy. It has also been discussed that reentry as a judicial tool is not new and has as a concept been present since biblical times (Schlager, 2018).

Reintegration of offenders needs to be constantly reengaged by policymakers. Those that make reentry policy should not be afraid to see reentry is a work in progress and should one aspect of reentry fail, policy makers should make the necessary changes so what works will be found (Farabee, 2007). In all three theories discussed, biblical views have been offered that support the legitimacy of the theories as they relate to reentry policy.

Reentry policy as a theory is admirable and necessary to help offenders reintegrate into society. As this writer researched the various theoretical needs of reentry policy and what is necessary to make reentry policy successful, this writer was encouraged by the foresight with which many contributors to policies have put into their efforts. What is disappointing however is the seeming inability to transfer the theory into practical reality.

References

- Amasa-Annang, J., & Schutelnicu, G. (2016). How promising is the Second Chance Act in reducing recidivism among male ex-offenders in Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi? *Journal of Public Management & Social Policy*, 23(2), 22-33.
- Bernard, T. J., Snipes, J. B., & Gerould, A. L. (2016). *Vold's theoretical criminology* (7th ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Craig, S. C. (2009). A historical review of mother and child programs for incarcerated women. *The Prison Journal*, 89(1)
- Farabee, D. (2007). For the Second Chance Act, great strides will come in small steps. *Federal Sentencing Reporter*, 20(1), 136-137.
- Gallatin County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. (2016). *Fresh Start Strategic Plan* 1-13.
- Halushka, J. (2016). Managing rehabilitation: Negotiating performance accountability at the frontlines of reentry service provision. *Punishment & Society*, 19(4), 482-502.
- Kleinffeld, J. (2016). Two cultures of punishment. *Stanford Law Review*, 68, 933-964.
- Lafleur, R. (2017). Making it on the Outside: Unraveling the effects of self-control and informal social control in reintegration (Doctoral dissertation, Guelph)
- Lafleur, R., & O'Grady, B. (2016). Making it on the outside: Towards an integrated control theory for understanding the reintegration process. *The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice*, 55(1-2), 42-56.
- Levitan, M. (2018). Report to the Law and Justice Interim Committee (pp. 1-32) (United States, Montana Department of Corrections, Reentry Task Force).
- McGeer, V., & Funk, F. (2015). Are 'optimistic' theories of criminal justice psychologically feasible? The probative case of civic republicanism. *Criminal Law and Philosophy*, 11(3), 523-544.
- Mellow, J., & Barnes-Ceeney, K. (2017). Key factors to promote successful comprehensive reentry initiatives. *Federal Probation*, 81(3), 22-31.
- Mijs, J. J. (2016). The missing organizational dimension of prisoner reentry: An ethnography of the road to reentry at a nonprofit service provider. *Sociological Forum*, 31(2), 291-309.
- O'Hear, M. M. (2007). The Second Chance

Act and the future of reentry reform. *Federal Sentencing Reporter*, 20(2), 75-83.
doi:10.1525/fsr.2007.20.2.75

- Pinard, M. (2010). Reflections and perspectives on reentry and collateral consequences. *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 100(3), 1213-1224.
- Schlager, M. D. (2018). Through the looking glass: Taking stock of offender reentry. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 34(1), 69-80.
- United States. (2008). *An act to reauthorize the grant program for reentry of offenders into the community in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, to improve reentry planning and implementation, and for other purposes*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O.
- United States, Department of Justice, Council of State Governments. (n.d.). *Report of the Re-Entry Policy Council*.
- Windsor, L. C., Jemal, A., & Benoit, E. (2014). Community Wise: Paving the way for empowerment in community reentry. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, 37(5), 501-511.

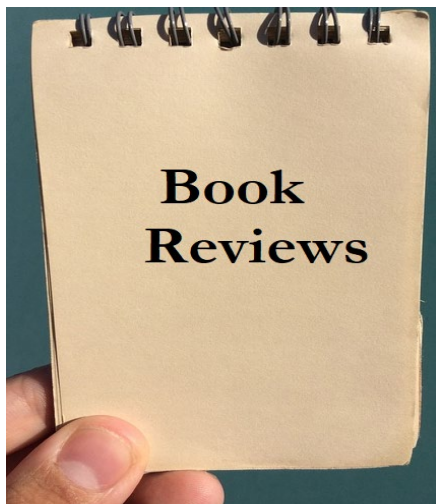


Image Credit: Pixabay, Modified.

Seven Women and the Secret of Their Greatness

Author: Eric Metaxas.
Publisher: Thomas Nelson Books, 2015.

Review by
Rosemary Thrasher
North Greenville University

Seven Women and the Secret of Their Greatness by Eric Metaxas, published by Thomas Nelson Books in 2015, is the much anticipated answer to *Seven Men and the Secret of Their Greatness* by the same author. The seven women are Joan of Arc, Susanna Wesley, Hanna More, Maria of Paris, Corrie ten Boom, Rosa Parks and Mother Teresa.

The title is somewhat misleading, because the path to greatness is not a secret. Matthew 5:19 says, "Whosoever shall do and teach [these commandments] shall be great in the kingdom of heaven," and Matthew 18:4 continues, "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Greatness, then, requires both obedience to God and humility. The way Metaxas describes greatness in the introduction is quite similar, "using what God gives you for the benefit of mankind,"(viii).

Metaxas does not preach about greatness, but he lets these women demonstrate greatness through their lives and actions. Two women in particular humbled themselves in the service of others. Corrie ten Boom showed love to her Jewish neighbors by gathering extra ration cards at great risk to her family, hiding Jews in her home, witnessing to prison guards, and holding worship services in Ravensbruck Concentration Camp. Mother Theresa often said she was inspired by Christ's teaching that

“in as much as you have done it to the least of these My brethren, you have done it unto Me.” Both these women humbly served those around them.

Joan of Arc, Hanna More, and Rosa Parks had something in common in that they each believed in a cause and were willing to work toward it despite hardships. We may not all believe in the voices Joan says she heard, but she believed in them, and she acted accordingly, enabling her to lift the siege of Orleans and get the Dauphin crowned Charles VII. Hanna More used her writing skills to promote abolition of slavery, education of the poor, and a new, egalitarian attitude toward women. While the politicians of her day worked at changing laws, Hanna worked at the equally important job of enlightening people’s minds. Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus and her action became the flashpoint of the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott. The Supreme Court subsequently ruled that segregated buses were unconstitutional. All of these women helped change history.

Susanna Wesley served her large family despite great hardship. She did what she could with what she had, which was a great education. She reared all of her children in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord,” and produced one of the great preachers of the Great Awakening, John Wesley, and the great hymn writer, Charles Wesley, both of whose influence is with us today.

Eric Metaxas’ characters come alive in *Seven Women*. Each chapter is a short biography that transports you to another time and place. You don’t want to put the book down until you find out what happened to each heroine. The author’s style is engaging and conversational enough to attract casual readers, and the historical backgrounds and the lives of each woman are meticulously researched to please the serious readers.

One of my favorite parts of the book was when Mother Teresa accepted the Nobel Peace Prize, surprising the audience by taking the opportunity to make a strong anti-

abortion speech, causing the officials on the platform to squirm. I was also intrigued to learn that Hanna More became a more “vital Christian” after reading *Cardiphonia*, by John Newton, the former slave-trader-turned-hymn writer. Now I am curious to read Newton’s book, too. I was amazed that Susanna Wesley, who as a young woman had “a theological knowledge superior to many ministers of that day,” (32) did not fully understand salvation until, at the age of seventy one, after hearing her son John preach, the Lord used the words of the Lord’s Supper to convince her that “God for Christ’s sake had forgiven all my sins,” (56).

Seven Women is nothing if not an uplifting and encouraging book. No person who reads this book will ever again think, “What I do does not matter.” Whatever your walk of life, your humble obedience to God’s calling will have consequences that continue on for generations, and that are not revealed until heaven. Readers of *Seven Women* will be blessed and encouraged by the accounts of so many women committed to serving God and serving their fellow man.

In the Footsteps of King David: Revelations from an Ancient Biblical City

**Authors: Yosef Garfinkel, Saar Ganor and Michael Hasel,
Publisher: Thames & Hudson, 2018**

**Reviewed by Brenton H. Cook
Bob Jones University**

In the Footsteps of King David: Revelations from an Ancient Biblical City is a history of the seven-year archaeological investigation of

Khirbet Qeiyafa, a city dating to the reign of King David. The city was largely unknown even to the archaeological community before a 2008 *New York Times* article devoted a full page to describing the site's initial findings. Since then, Khirbet Qeiyafa has generated extraordinary interest disclosing for the first time a layer of civilization contemporary with David. Archaeologists and authors Yosef Garfinkel, Saar Ganor and Michael Hasel devoted seven excavation seasons to the site, concluding their work in 2013. They have managed to produce a highly readable volume introducing not only the city, but the discipline of archaeology to the non-professional.

Khirbet Qeiyafa is located near the area where the biblical tradition locates the shepherd boy's battle with the Philistine giant. While the authors acknowledge the limitations of archaeological research in definitively establishing the existence of David, they interpret the finds at Khirbet Qeiyafa as a refutation of the popular minimalist approach and defend the biblical tradition as reliable.

At the end of the twentieth century King David and his illustrious son Solomon came to be viewed by minimalists as imaginative literary creations. Arguing that the historical texts of the Old Testament were written during the Hellenistic or Persian periods, minimalists viewed the biblical texts as minimally reliable if not entirely apocryphal. Minimalists not only eliminated the possibility of a United Kingdom, but also questioned the existence of a Judahite kingdom before the mid-eighth century BCE. While Garfinkel, Ganor and Hasel fall far short of endorsing the complete historicity of the Old Testament (including the United Kingdom of Judah and Israel), their work represents a significant blow to minimalism and defends the view that Judah was an established Kingdom by 1000 BCE.

Khirbet Qeiyafa is situated at the western edge of the upper Shephelah near the entrance to the Valley of Elah, where the biblical record tells us the Philistine's

mustered their troops against King Saul's army. The city is the first major fortified city to be excavated from the eleventh century. The authors identify Khirbet Qeiyafa (Arabic for "ruin of Qeiyafa") as the city of Shaaraim, mentioned three times in the Bible (Joshua 15:35-36, 1 Samuel 17:52, and 1 Chronicles 4:31-32). In the biblical account of David and Goliath, the Philistines are said to have fled the battle along the road to Shaaraim. Radiocarbon dating on nearly thirty carbonized olive pits indicate the city was destroyed no later than 970 BCE—the best dating yet discovered for any level in any biblical city.

Archeologists identified five stages in the construction of Khirbet Qeiyafa. In the first, the city site was cleared of earlier settlements and a bedrock city perimeter was established. In the second, builders quarried stones from several sites situating them along the perimeter line. In the third, builders constructed two city gates and their chambers. In the fourth, the city walls were raised. In the fifth, private houses were constructed. Unlike other cities from the time, Kherbet Qeiyafa demonstrates detailed central planning.

The city's archaeological yields are impressive, including more than 400,000 pottery sherds, limestone bowls and animal mangers. Iron daggers, swords, bronze arrowheads, a bronze ax and numerous storage jars were unearthed. Fragments of two small alabaster vessels, were also discovered together with Egyptian amulets and several engraved seals and artifacts (perhaps pendants or earrings) carved from animal bones. Cultic objects found at the site include a basalt altar, carved temple models and seven *mazzebot*—standing stones without anthropomorphic or zoomorphic images. A single ostrakon (a potsherd with an inscription) turned up in 2008 but has proven difficult to decipher. Archaeologists have a paucity of written material to work with for the 300-year period from the 12th to the 9th century BCE.

Six factors suggest Khirbet Qeiyafa is a Judahite city. The city's casemate wall plan

resembles that of four other cities in the kingdom of Judah. Analysis of tens of thousands of animal bones disclosed no pig bones. The site turned up no cult paraphernalia typically found in Canaanite cities. The extensive use of iron tools fits the pattern of additional Iron Age cities in Israel. The city is strategically located on the border between the Judean Shephelah and Philistia. And finally, the site yielded an inscription on a sherd that was written in a Semitic language.

In the Footsteps of King David is not merely a detailed archaeological report written for experts in the field. Rather the text reads like an adventure novel, field guide, archaeology introduction, and ancient history all rolled into a single volume. Supplementing the text are city schematics, photographs, maps and diagrams taking the reader on location. The authors include numerous anecdotes describing the complexities and pitfalls of archaeological work and give their readers a realistic assessment of the limitations of the archaeological discipline for reconstructing the past.

***Cold-Case Christianity:
A Homicide Detective
Investigates the Claims of
the Gospels (First Edition)***

**Author: J. Warner Wallace
Publisher: David Cook, 2013**

**Reviewed by
Lindsay E. Gayle
Liberty University**

Cold-Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels was written by J. Warner Wallace, a cold-case homicide detective of twenty-five years. In

this book, Wallace gives a detailed account of the evidence presented in the Gospels, and how to investigate that evidence to determine its reliability and validity. The author was an atheist for many years, who later converted to Christianity after investigating the evidence of Jesus as outlined in the Gospels in the Bible. Wallace uses his investigative skills to guide readers through the evidence presented in the Gospels to show how closely the case for Christianity can be related to his cold cases. The foreword and introductions set the reader up for what to expect in the book and provide some background information on the author himself and how he came to be a Christian. The first section in the book guides readers through ten principles on learning how to be a detective, with supporting examples from homicide cases and witnesses. The second section teaches how to examine the evidence presented in the New Testament Gospels, using the investigative principles outlined in section one.

Throughout the book the author uses clear, concise language that the reader can understand and provides supporting examples or scenarios to help the reader grasp the concepts being presented. When investigating a cold case or the case of Jesus, Wallace informs readers to have an open mind and be willing to assess the evidence without any preconceived notions. He states, “The question is not whether or not we have ideas, opinions, or preexisting points of view; the question is whether or not we will allow these perspectives to prevent us from examining the evidence objectively” (30). Being able to fully investigate the claims of the Gospel begins by putting opinions to the side to truly understand the evidence at hand. Wallace focused on investigating the eyewitness testimony (chapter 4) and discussed the importance of reviewing the eyewitness testimony in cold-cases to determine the validity of it. However, for the case of the death and resurrection of Jesus, Wallace cannot review the original eyewitness’s testimony because they are deceased. In cold

cases, detectives may be able to return to the same witness to hear their story again. For Wallace, he has to use the evidence in the Bible about eyewitness testimony.

Another of the principles discussed is to hang on to every word (chapter 5). In doing this, the reader, when investigating the claims of the gospels, should pay close attention to the words and phrases used in the gospel. To pick apart the wording of the gospels to develop a full understanding and analysis of what the Bible is saying about the account of Jesus. Wallace tells how in the gospel of Mark, Peter is frequently mentioned and was the source of information in Mark's gospel. This led to the proof that Mark was an eyewitness account to the case of Jesus. Wallace also discusses conspiracy theories as they relate to the eyewitness accounts of the death and resurrection of Jesus through the Apostles. Wallace notes that the Apostles could not have conspired together due to their extended time apart from one another after the death and resurrection of Jesus. Also, "none of the twelve recanted their claims related to the resurrection" decades after the incident and were persecuted for their claims (116). This evidence proved the Apostles were eyewitnesses who told the truth.

Examining the evidence of the gospels was done by asking four questions: were they present, were they corroborated, were they accurate, and were they biased? Wallace provides detailed information to answer these questions and discusses how the eyewitness accounts pass each test to prove the case of Jesus. Wallace leaves the final decision up to the reader on how they want to go from "belief that" to "belief in." At the end, the author leaves readers with a postscript, which provides them with details surrounding his personal encounter of turning to Christ after reviewing the evidence in the Gospels. Wallace tells how he became a "two decision" Christian, meaning he accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior, but that had to be done after carefully examining the evidence of Jesus. Knowing the truths of the evidence allowed

Wallace to be fully accepting that Jesus was the truth. This book is an excellent read for those who are wanting to dig deeper into the evidence of the Christian faith. Also, it serves as a great tool to help defend your faith to those who may have trouble believing.

What God Has Joined Together

Author: Travis Agnew
Publisher: Tag Publishing,
2018

Reviewed by Andrea D. Stiles
Shorter University

In this book, Travis Agnew, pastor, author, and devoted father, makes the case for the necessity of a biblical foundation for successful marriage. From the outset, the author relies on a biblical definition of marriage from Genesis and honors the symbolism of marriage to illustrate the relationship between Christ and the church that is detailed in Ephesians. Written in a direct and concise manner, *What God Has Joined Together*, addresses common challenges to marriage. In 31 brief chapters, the author names and describes what often creates a divide between spouses. Each title contains the words, "Let no _____ Separate." This design makes for easy access to useful information on specific topics. Additionally, each chapter utilizes relevant scripture passages for readers to reference, study, and apply. Topics include conflict, selfishness, indifference, expectations, communication, secrets, hardship, incompatibility, disrespect, addiction, adultery, pornography, money matters, pride, friendships, in-laws, children, career, midlife struggles, and more. The straightforward approach to addressing these issues makes them experientially relatable. Personal journal

pages for noting reflections and responses to suggested scripture reading identifies the author's purpose to draw readers into engagement with scriptures' teachings on marriage.

The author's understanding of marital pitfalls is communicated as one who walks the marriage road with his own two feet. His reliance on scripture to shine illuminating light on the nature of those involved in marriage guides the reader and encourages honest reflection. The emphasis on every person's need for correction, direction, and commitment orients the reader to a biblical perspective. Obviously written to a Christian audience, the author does not shy away from the fact that the challenges unbelievers face in marriage also emerge in Christian marriage. He acknowledges the human susceptibility to error that leaves no one untouched. Intertwining scripture with story connects the present to the past, making clear that the root of marital conflict has not changed. The tendency for human beings to look outside of self to another as the cause of their own dissatisfaction is universal and only changes when this truth is faced with acceptance and humility.

Each topic covered reveals the fundamental role of sin nature that is to be battled daily for marriage to be a picture of sacrificial love. Love is defined as unselfish, grace-based, chosen, committed action as opposed to an emotional, feeling state. Responsibility for honoring the marital commitment is placed on the individual, fostering maturity and encouraging personal agency. The book's journal section calls for considering personal experience in light of scripture giving opportunity for readers to notice their own attitudinal or behavioral mishandling of the marriage relationship. The format calls for accountability; to document where you are, where you need to be, and how you plan to get there. As one gains biblical understanding from chapter to chapter, roles and responsibilities are clarified, and God's purpose for marriage is discovered.

The centrality of commitment to Christ for marital longevity and vibrancy is unmistakable in the pages of this short book as well as the possibility for marriage to reflect the wonder of the gospel to a watching world.

This book is a must-read for dedicated marriage partners who hope to build and maintain a lifelong, healthy marriage. Though written for a Christian audience, there is valuable wisdom to be gleaned for anyone who is willing to consider a radically different view of marriage than that of current western culture.

Rather than seeing marriage simply as a means to happiness, status, and personal fulfillment, marriage is presented as an opportunity to learn and grow in sacrificial, not self-serving, ways. It offers insight into the heart of both the Christian faith as a whole, as well as to the integral role of marriage within the faith. All of one's relationships may be enhanced by applying the concepts and practices of peacemaking, understanding, and self-regulation that the book promotes. Making clear the necessity of commitment to superordinate goals, those things that matter to both or all members of a relationship, rather than to what matters to a single individual, leads to better relationship satisfaction for those involved.

Because it is a relatively short book, only 128 pages, it can be read quickly for information on a broad range of interpersonal challenges. The topics are ones to revisit when relevant circumstances call for clarification on appropriate responses that will likely result in preservation of relationship. At this particular time in America when about half of all marriages end in divorce, this little book provides a hopeful alternative, one that honors the call to love long and to share life as one through all of its difficulties and joys until death, nothing else, requires parting.

A Calling to Care: Nurturing College Students Toward Wholeness

**Authors: Timothy W., and
Kirsten D. Riedel
Publisher: Abilene Christian
University Press, 2018.**

**Review by Andrew F. Bailey
Shorter University**

Herrmann and Riedel have put together a rather helpful collection of essays about the need for higher education institutions to consider their role in caring for their students. Each contributor to the book works in a higher education or university context and thus are each poised to give particular insight into the nature of the relationship between institutions, including professors and staff, and students. Several chapters of the book stand-out as particularly helpful in developing a better understanding of what it means for an institution of higher education to care for their students, especially from a Christian worldview.

First, Miroslav Volf (Yale Divinity School) writes an essay entitled “What will save the world? Caring for a World We Cannot Save.” Here, he discusses the nature of the world broken by sin, a brokenness which needs fixing but cannot be fixed by human effort. Humans can, however, “mend” the situation, or to “improve the state of a single person” (27). He juxtaposes the Christian worldview of man’s brokenness with the failed attempts of modernism to fix the world through scientific analysis. He argues that the only true solution comes from a Christian conception of the world.

Another helpful article is “Teaching Students to Care for Themselves” by Kristen D. Riedel (Belmont University), Emilie K. Hoffman (Taylor University), and Jessica L.

Martin (Taylor University). This chapter seeks to address the reality that students often have no real conception of what true self-care means, especially living in a context that gives them false examples of what good self-care looks like. They take the time to note that true self-care cannot come from technology or society but from a Christian understanding of existence as being ultimately about the pursuit of God, citing the work of James K. A. Smith. They also note that self-care is not simply beneficial, but a calling upon their lives from God, claiming that “when self-care is viewed as a vocational pursuit, it becomes one that is intentionally implemented in *practice*, with *mindfulness* of self and the practice, and one that is *holistic*” (96). They demonstrate that true spiritual maturity, which is what mentors are seeking to engender in their protégés.

A further article that bears mentioning is “A Call for Holistic Intellectual Care of University Students: An Essay for the Twenty-First Century Academy” by Anita Fitzgerald Henck (Azusa Pacific University). In this essay, she points to the modern tragedy of the “loss of intellectual cultivation of individuals, communities, and society at large” (112). She argues that, by focusing on self-examination in a spiritual sense, which contemporary higher education institutions have done, encouraging the growth of the spiritual self, colleges and universities have lost their primary focus, which is to foster “intellectual development and care” (113). This critique of contemporary institutions is well taken, in that self-actualization has become the measure for success in higher education, especially in a secular context. Henck is right that what is needed is a return to developing students intellectually, and Volf is right that this cannot be done through a purely modernistic framework but through the lens of a Christian worldview.

Herrmann finishes this book with a powerful essay entitled “Higher Education as an Exemplar of Care: Creating a Campus Culture of Care”. Here he makes the scathing accusation that, far too often, institutions and

personnel of higher education have been “guilty of treating students as revenue streams” rather than as human beings who have been placed under their care (197). He also notes that, since Christian higher education has not been as lucrative monetarily as they have been in previous years, this financial turbulence has led some institutions “to act as if their mission is simply to survive” rather than their own stated mission of caring for their students (198). His solution is to develop a mentoring structure and to actively attempt to avoid a consumerist mindset about the nature of institutions. He notes “caring for students is much more complex and driven by much different ends than caring for customers” (210). The idea that institutions do not exist simply as training for professions feeds a robust understanding of the true value of liberal-arts based education; a value lost all too often in today’s colleges and universities but a value that, if better understood, will chart new paths for success.

Special Undergraduate Spotlight Essay:

How To Help A Third World Nation: An Examination into the Countries of Central America

**By Sydney Holmes
Shorter University**

Since its founding in 1776, America has been a beacon of hope and prosperity to those who desire a better future. Americans are very fortunate to live in a first world country, where they have limitless option and opportunities. The United States has millions of immigrants flooding into the country, hoping to call it home. Most of these people come from third world countries. The term *third world country* originated from the Cold War to distinguish those who were neutral in the war but has evolved to mean a country that is poverty stricken. Some of these countries are better off than others. Specifically, in Central America, most of the countries are in economic and political turmoil. However, Costa Rica is in the middle of Central America, and it is far more prosperous than its neighbors in the region like Honduras and Nicaragua. Indeed, Costa Rica is doing better than its neighbors due to a stable government, limited dealings in narcotrafficking, and a great relationship with the United States.

To understand the situation in Costa Rica, we first need to understand the conditions of its neighbors. Nicaragua has always had a rocky government since its independence. When the Spanish left, there was no one to take their place. Many of the up

and coming politicians and generals grabbed for power. One of these ambitious politicians in the 1930s was Juan Bautista Sacasa, and his trusted general was Cesar Augusto Sandino. At the time, there was a small conflict between Nicaragua and the United States over the presence of American troops in Nicaragua. Juan Sacasa favored compromise with the United States, while Cesar Sandino wanted the Americans gone. As Alejandro Cesar writes, "Sacasa soon comes to a compromise arrangement with the US Special Commissioner in Nicaragua, but Sandino refuses to lay down his arms. Instead, he withdraws to the mountains of northern Nicaragua with several hundred followers to launch a guerrilla campaign" (Cesar, 637). This campaign led to a civil war in the country led by Sacasa and Sandino. After a bloody campaign, Sandino and his Sandinistas seized power of Nicaragua.

Sandino ended up making a treaty with the United States, which helped set up the new Nicaraguan government through American funding. A few successors later and Anastasio Somoza, a corrupt leader, was now in charge of Nicaragua (Cesar, 637). After the discovery that funds were being misused, the United States withdrew its support, leaving the country in the hands of a long line of corrupt rulers. This reaction put a small dent in the country's relationship with the States.

Nicaragua now portrayed Americans as wolves in sheep's clothing. "...[T]here has been much criticism of American activities," one expert writes, "and the criticism of the activity most frequently heard is that the troops of the United States are in Nicaragua to defend the interest of Wall Street, which is exploiting the country in merciless fashion" (Cesar, 641). Even today, Nicaraguans have a dismissive attitude towards American aid and prefer to operate without it, which is acceptable to the Americans who want to end the primary source of income for most Central Americans, drugs. Central America is used to pushing drugs into the United States starting from Columbia and ending in Mexico.

Nicaragua and Honduras are considered two crucial stops in the drug delivery route. Nicaragua is currently in a civil war, and part of the war is a battle against the drug cartels.

Honduras is the other country caught in the drug violence in Central America. Before the cartel smuggles the drugs into the United States, the drugs must pass through Honduras (Lewis 139). Honduras is a nation of drug violence. Those who stand in the way of the drug lords or are in the wrong place at the wrong time have a habit of disappearing. Honduras has the highest murder rate in history. It also holds the title of the highest murder rate in a non-war country. There is no escape from the drug violence: "On average, there were 20 homicides a day. 83.4% of these homicides were committed with firearms" (Lewis, 139).

Unfortunately, it does not seem like this is a problem that will be solved anytime soon, as drug violence is increasing. "Honduras is considered a major drug route to the U.S. Smuggling is said to have increased after the US suspended anti-drug support following the 2009 Honduran coup d'état," one expert notes. "Weak domestic law enforcement institutions make Honduras a popular point of entry for drug routes through Central America" (Gootenburg, 23). In addition to drug violence, the government in Honduras is anything but secure. Many of the government officials have participated in money laundering scams. Honduras is anything but a safe and stable place to live. Now that we have a better understanding of Costa Rica's surroundings, we can begin to see what makes it different than its neighbors.

Unlike its neighbors, Costa Rica has a great relationship with the United States. Costa Rica is one of the few places in Central America where democracy is not a facade put on by the drug lords. Costa Rica, as a result, is one of the safest nations in Central America.



Sydney Holmes (top-left) with Costa Rican School Children, Photo Credit: Sydney Holmes

One of the reasons Costa Rica is positioned better than its neighbors is because it has strong, amiable relations with the United States. Costa Rica and the United States get along for many reasons, “The United States and Costa Rica have a history of close and friendly relations based on mutual respect for democratic freedoms, free trade, and other shared values” (“Costa Rica”). Costa Rica also has a democratic government like the United States. In fact, the United States helped Costa Rica form its democratic government. It is one of the few places in a third world country where democracy is not just a facade for the world to see. Every citizen gets a vote and a say in determining who the president will be. The similarities in the governments make it easier to trade with other democratic nations, like the United States.

Costa Rica’s largest export is coffee. It has six different coffee growing regions that produce so many different roasts and types of coffee. The United States has even set up a few Starbucks coffee plantations in Costa Rica. Usually, when one hears of a country setting up a business in another country, one expects to hear the worst. Wages for farmers have improved for those who work on the coffee plantations, and many can afford smaller luxuries they could not afford before. Because of its trade agreement, Costa Rica has also taken steps to stay neutral and in some cases attempt to prevent the flow of drugs moving through the country. “The United States and Costa Rica enjoy robust bilateral law enforcement and security cooperation,” one source notes, “and have signed a maritime cooperation agreement that facilitates narcotics seizures, illegal migrant rescues, illegal fishing seizures, and search-and-rescue missions” (“Costa Rica”). By making an agreement with the United States to try and put a halt on migrants, drugs, and other potentially harmful activities, Costa Rica is indeed the safest country in Central America.

Costa Rica also has another source of revenue because of its good relations with the United States. Many Americans either move to Costa Rica or spend vacation time there. The number of American tourists only grow each year. Indeed, some 120,000 US citizens reside there (“Costa Rica”). Tourism has helped the Costa Rican economy. Americans love it because the exchange rate is in favor of the US dollar. The exchange rate is about 593 Costa Rican *Colones* for one US dollar. Costa Ricans love American tourism because of the extra flow of currency coming into their economy. To those who sell their produce or artisan products in the market or to those who run large tourist attractions everyone benefits from American tourism.

Perhaps because there are a large number of Americans on Costa Rican soil, the United States also offers Costa Rica military support. Costa Rica does not have its own

army. It has not had one for almost 70 years ('Costa Rica'). The United States does not have a military base in Costa Rica. However, the United States government has stated that should Costa Rica ever need foreign assistance, the United States would be there to assist the nation ('Costa Rica'). There have been some protests from Costa Rica's neighbors like Nicaragua and Honduras that the United States should not ever have a military presence in Costa Rica. Their governments are not nearly as stable as Costa Rica's, and the leaders in power do not want to give it up. They make their arguments against the United States military presence by saying the United States would only use it as a ruse to gain access to Central America's resources (Busey). Hopefully, there will not be a need for the United States to have a full military presence in Costa Rica.

Costa Rica is so different from its neighbors. It leaves the question: What is Costa Rica doing right and how can we improve life throughout Central America? A majority of Costa Rica's safety is directly related to its alliance with the United States. Unlike their neighbors, Costa Ricans listen when the United States gives advice and aid. Their government is also a real democratic society, unlike the other countries that use democracy as a front. Most of these other countries hate democracy because of the bad name their leaders have given it (Busey). Costa Rica has wisely used its foreign aid to benefit the country not just its leaders. Aid has been offered to seven Central American countries by the United States, including Honduras and Nicaragua. These countries either misuse their aid or reject it altogether. Costa Rica has successfully had less drug-related violence than the rest of Central America. Costa Rica honors its agreements with the United States.

The United States of America can only provide so much aid to countries that resist help. The United States still sends aid to the same seven Central American Countries: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala,

Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama, "The Strategy is a bipartisan, multi-year U.S. government plan covering all seven Central American countries. The Strategy aims to secure U.S. borders and protect American citizens by addressing the security, governance, and economic drivers of illegal immigration and transnational crime, while increasing opportunities for U.S. and other businesses. The Strategy focuses on three overarching lines of action: 1) promoting prosperity, 2) enhancing security, and 3) improving governance ('Costa Rica')." The United States does have a self-interest in helping these states develop. By making these nations stronger, it will cut back on some of the illegal drug and migrant problems the country is facing. However, it is a mutual beneficiary plan. By helping the nations become stronger on their own, their nations quality of life improves. Millions of people will be better off, and fewer children will be starving or hurt. The list goes on and on. Safety is one of our basic human needs. If humans do not feel safe, they can make some very bold and rash decisions in order to make them feel safe. By making the people of the nation feel safe, the country gains more stability.

The United States cannot do all the heavy lifting by itself. The people of the other nations must do their part to help their nations grow in every way possible. They must end the drug violence. They must help put an end to their corrupt leadership. They need to help make their economies grow. If the people do not support the foreign aid and accept that things need to change, nothing will ever change despite how much foreign assistance they receive (Mark). The aid would prevent the situations from becoming worse.

In conclusion, there is no one way or correct way to help a third world country. Each country has its own set of problems politically and economically. If the people are not in support of aid like those in Honduras or Nicaragua, the aid will seem futile. However, there are countries in Central

America that give us hope. Costa Rica is not perfect. Many people live in poverty, but there is a noticeable difference in the way their country thrives in the circumstances. There will probably always be some nations labeled as third world countries, but that does not mean their standard of living should not improve. The United States can only help so much, but the most important thing we can do is to never give up on those who have in some ways given up on themselves.

References

- Busey, James L. "Foundations of Political Contrast: Costa Rica and Nicaragua." *The Western Political Quarterly* 11, no. 3 (1958):. doi:10.2307/444571.
- Cesar, Alejandro. "Nicaragua and the United States." *Advocate of Peace through Justice* 90, no. 10/11 (1928): 641-44. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2066205>
1.
- Chalk, Peter. "U.S. Responses." In *The Latin American Drug Trade: Scope, Dimensions, Impact, and Response*, 59-66. RAND Corporation, 2011. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mg1076af.14>.
- "Costa Rica." U.S. Department of State. February 09, 2018. Accessed October 08, 2018. <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2019.htm>.
- Gootenberg, Paul. "Talking about the Flow: Drugs, Borders, and the Discourse of Drug Control." *Cultural Critique*, no. 71 (2009): 13-46. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25475500>.
- Lewis L. Yarlett. "History of Rangelands in Honduras." *Rangelands* 2, no. 4 (1980): 139-40. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3900020>.
- Mark D. Merlin. *Economic Botany* 56, no. 1 (2002): 100. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4256534>.