

ENDNOTES

FOREWORD

- ¹ See Mt 11:3.

PREFACE

- ¹ *Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda, est secundum verbum Dei*—“the church reformed, ought always to be reforming, according to the Word of God”. [We recognize the last phrase was a later addition added to insure the priority of Scripture in efforts to reform the church.] The idea here is that the historical church never attains to its perfect form—it never arrives at ecclesial perfection, but must always strive to appropriate more authentic ways of expressing itself.
- ² Quoted from J. D. Douglas, ed. *Proclaim Christ Until He Comes* (Lausanne II in Manila. Minneapolis: Worldwide Publications, 1986), 198.
- ³ “Christless Christianity” was Bonhoeffer’s paradoxical term that he used to describe the Lutheranism of pre-war Germany.
- ⁴ T. S. Eliot, “Little Gidding.”
- ⁵ Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 95.
- ⁶ Frederick Buechner, *Telling the Truth: The Gospel as Tragedy, Comedy, and Fairy Tale* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1977), 84.
- ⁷ Franz Kafka, *Letters to Friends, Family and Editors* (New York: Schocken, 1990), 16.
- ⁸ We recognize that most, if not all, of the Protestant church’s theology has been formulated by men. It is clear that men tend to think somewhat differently to women and therefore the theological code is somewhat imbalanced as a result.

INTRODUCTION: A TALE OF TWO PILGRIMS

- ¹ E.g., Greg Stier, “Three Things Millennials Aren’t Finding in Church,” *ChurchLeaders*, May 27, 2018, <https://churchleaders.com/youth/youth-leaders-articles/254533-millennials-church.html> .

- ² Walter Brueggemann, *Finally Comes the Poet: Daring Speech for Proclamation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1989), ix.
- ³ Pádraig Ó Tuama and Marilyn Nelson, “Choosing Words That Deepen The Argument of Being Alive,” September 6, 2018, in *On Being*, by Krista Tippett, podcast, <https://onbeing.org/programs/padraig-o-tuama-marilyn-nelson-choosing-words-that-deepen-the-argument-of-being-alive-sep2018/>.
- ⁴ *Dead Poets Society*, film, directed by Peter Weir. USA: Touchstone Pictures and Silver Screen Partners IV, 1989.
- ⁵ No specific reference found. This is quoted regularly without citation.

1 MOVING THE MOON

- ¹ Martin Buber, *Eclipse of God: Studies in the Relation Between Religion and Philosophy* (New York: Humanities Press International Inc., U.S., 1988).
- ² In the Bible the concept of an eclipse of God is expressed in the idea of *hester panim*, the act of God whereby he conceals his face as a way of punishing his disobedient subjects; the “darkness of God” that results from his concealment is considered a direct consequence of accumulated human sin, and is therefore regarded as a clear sign of human culpability. But, true to the concept of the eclipse, the hiddenness of God’s face was never about the absence of God (he is always present). Rather it was about concealment of his light.
- ³ Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge MS: Harvard University Press, 2007).
- ⁴ C. S. Lewis, Karl Barth, Hans Urs von Balthasar, James K. A. Smith, Morris Berman, Charles Taylor, John Paul II, and Benedict XVI, among many others.
- ⁵ Call it disenchantment, secularism, scientism, positivism, the immanent frame, idolatry, atheism, or whatever, but we can be sure that the processes have not taken place in God himself, but rather in our human perception and construal of him. We no longer have the epistemological tools by which to apprehend God in most arenas of life beyond the church. God has always been there; the problem is that *we* can no longer see or recognize him (viz. to “glorify him” in the Scriptures cf. Rom 1:18–22). In many ways, the obscuring of God is not new, and has been operative since the Fall, in which sin imposes a kind of theological amnesia on the rebellious human. This is such an important idea, but we have little time to unpack it here. See Charles Taylor’s monumental *A Secular Age*; James Smith’s brilliant and more accessible analysis of it in *How (Not) to Be Secular: Reading Charles Taylor* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014); Morris Berman’s *The Reenchantment of the World* (Cornell University Press, 1981). John Paul II’s writings on this are contained in his *Evangelium Vitae*, <https://goo.gl/zx7qfP>.

- ⁶ Benjamin Mann, “Understanding the ‘Eclipse of God’,” *Catholic Exchange*, February 7, 2014, <https://catholicexchange.com/eclipse-of-god>.
- ⁷ Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae.html.
- ⁸ John V. Taylor, *The Go-Between God* (London: SCM, 1973), 224.
- ⁹ The beauty and glory of the divine life becomes invisible to us. The pressing reality of God slowly dissolves from our perception. In the language of Scripture, we have become *blind* and *insensitive* ... seeing we no longer see, hearing we no longer hear, and this is a sign of God’s judgment on us—we are handed over to our own blindness (Mt 13:13; Jn 12:36–45; Acts 28:26; Rom 1:18 ff). We are no longer equipped to see things in the mode in which they are communicated and therefore how they are to be correctly comprehended and appropriated. Our capacity to see and to interpret—and therefore comprehend the meaning of—the world is thus diminished and distorted. This not only reshapes Christian perspectives of God, these ubiquitous cultural forces in broader Western society likewise shape how all people can know and experience God. We all carry the virus. The crisis really is universal in scope.
- ¹⁰ It’s not that God has moved out of his cosmos. God is still there. We just cannot seem to see or hear him. So if nothing has changed in God’s relationship to his world, then what is the source of this age’s “obscuring of God,” indeed, “darkness of God”? Von Balthasar suggests that the reason for the eclipse of God “lies in the changed position of man vis-à-vis the things of the world, which are no longer the occasion for him to rise up in contemplation to the Absolute but for him to dominate them practically in technological instrumentality.” In the premodern approach to the world, the human spirit looks through things upward; in the modern and postmodern attitude, it looks from its exalted height down on things. Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Explorations in Theology, III: Creator Spirit* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993), 300–2.
- ¹¹ N. T. Wright, *Acts for Everyone, Part 2* (London: Westminster, 2008), 137–8. Von Balthasar, himself a brilliant theologian, noted that “Theologians have the bad habit of interrupting the Word before it has finished speaking; on the basis of some fragment they begin putting forward their own speculations, importing principles which may seem evident to man but which, from the perspective of God’s Word, are by no means evident.” Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory, Vol II* (San Francisco, Ignatius Press), 124–125.
- ¹² The term heresy is from the Greek αἵρεσις, originally meaning “choice” or “thing chosen,” but it came to mean “the party or school of a man’s choice and also referred to that process whereby a young person would examine

various philosophies to determine how to live. It is easy here to see how the term indicates a self-selected reality that has lost its connection with total truth.” See F. L. Cross; E. A. Livingstone, eds. “Heresy,” *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (2nd ed.) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), and F. F. Bruce, *The Spreading Flame* (Exeter: Paternoster 1964), 249. The founder or leader of a heretical movement is called a heresiarch, while individuals who espouse heresy or commit heresy are known as heretics.

¹³ Mawlana Jalal-al-Din Rumi.

¹⁴ Walter Brueggemann warns that “if our technical reason does not manage to pervert the truth of the gospel in relative naïveté, our unwitting embrace of social ideology [very effectively] distorts the news so that it can be accommodated to a variety of social ideologies, of the right and of the left. [...] Any ideology—by which I mean closed, managed, useful truth—destroys the power and claim of the gospel. When we embrace ideology uncritically, it is assumed that the Bible squares easily with capitalist ideology, or narcissistic psychology, or revolutionary politics, or conformist morality, or romantic liberalism. There is then no danger, no energy, no possibility, no opening for newness!” Brueggemann, *Finally Comes The Poet*, Kindle Edition, Kindle Location 44.

¹⁵ E. F. Schumacher, *A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 5.

¹⁶ Walter Brueggemann, “Walter Brueggemann: Jesus Acted Out the Alternative to Empire,” *Sojo*, June 22, 2018, <https://sojo.net/articles/walter-brueggemann-jesus-acted-out-alternative-empire>.

¹⁷ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Creator Spirit*, 363ff. Earlier on von Balthasar says that even reform movements can become heretical when they make their emphases the main thing. “The indivisible unity is shown in the fact that every individual mystery, which becomes alienated when it is isolated, receives its light from the totality and takes on its theological ‘necessity’ (as Anselm calls it) within this totality; if one dislikes the term ‘necessity’, one can also call this the ‘highest appropriateness’. To the extent that the individual mystery can be illuminated by the central light, it is shown to belong to the fundamental substance of the faith; but to the extent that it resists such an illumination, it will belong to what is ordained by the Church in a purely positive and disciplinary sense and must then be understood, and if necessary accepted, by the believer from this point of view. The fact that today much of what belongs to the fundamental substance of the Faith is given a place in the second category by believers, who consequently marginalize it and leave it on one side as something irrelevant, is the aftereffect of an atomism in catechisms and sermons over a long period in which propositions of the Faith were drawn up in a list but produced no self-evident figure when taken together.” *Creator Spirit*, III, 75–6.

¹⁸ Whether we like it or not, Western Christianity (both Protestant and Catholic and everything in between) has some pretty serious reductions in its core theology. Whether it be in our narrow understandings of God’s ways and purposes in the world; a selective Christology where Jesus is understood as effectively limited to being my personal Savior but not my effective Lord nor the ideal human exemplar; a seriously diminished understanding of the missional purposes of the church; or a reduction of its ministry down from the fivefold of the New Testament to Christendom’s option of the shepherd and the teacher, among many others, *Christian tradition has seriously narrowed the doors of our missional perception*. In this book we are simply going to highlight *again* something of the mysterious ways of God and how he is always surprisingly involved in the redemption of the world. We don’t have God in our back pocket ... we never will. He is always infinitely more than we think he is. We will also try to highlight some of the dangerous reductions in our understanding of God’s gospel, which limit the way in which we understand God can save the world. We will show that the gospel is always bigger and way more potent than we have made it to be. And we will also look into ways in which we—perhaps especially evangelicals—have reduced our understanding of the human person into narrow legal and forensic categories, thereby limiting our understanding of how God can, and clearly does, touch people’s everyday lives in a myriad of ways.

¹⁹ Darrell Guder, *The Continuing Conversion of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 77.

²⁰ Moses is told in reply to his question: “*Ehyeh asher ehyeh*.” Buber interprets this to mean: “I will be there as I will be there”; that is, in whatever appearance I choose to be there, I will be there. Israel’s God is, above all, the God who is present: “I am and remain present.” And God is present as God chooses to be present, not as Israel desires this presence. “Thus YHH does not say that He exists absolutely or eternally, but—without pledging Himself to any particular way of revelation (‘as I will be there’)—that He wants to remain with His people, to go with them, to lead them ... The Biblical verb does not include this shade of meaning of pure being. It means happening, coming into being, being there, being present ... but not being in an abstract sense. God promises that He will always be present, but not in any known or expected form. He identifies Himself only as the Presence which comes and departs, as the imageless God who hides and reveals Himself ... Thus Moses at the burning bush clearly experiences the identity of the God whom he meets in the full and timeless present with the God of tradition revealed in time. He recognizes the God of the fathers as the eternal Thou, and he understands the present revelation of God as the assurance of His future presence.” Maurice Friedman, *Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue* (Forgotten Books, 2018), 179–180.

- ²¹ Guder quoting Blauw. *The Continuing Conversion of the Church*, Kindle Edition, Kindle Location 937.
- ²² *Ibid.*, Kindle Location 1067.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, Kindle Location 894. Guder advises us that “The missional purpose of all faith communities, Christ’s definition of the church as his witnesses, must guide the formation of every Christian church in every culture. When other criteria and interests replace this priority of God’s mission, then gospel reductionism is at work.” Kindle Location 1060.
- ²⁴ L. Callid Keefe-Perry, *Way to Water: A Theopoetics Primer* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2014), 7.
- ²⁵ Brad Brisco, Facebook post, 8.55 a.m. February 14, 2019.
- ²⁶ Matthew Skinner, *Intrusive God, Disruptive Gospel: Encountering the Divine in the Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2015), 48–9. And we do well to remember that the book of Acts, given its connection to the Gospel of Luke, always keeps our attention on Jesus and the example he set for us. Here we see not a high-octane, butt-kicking Messiah, but rather one who is not only almost always surprising, but one who is willing to risk vulnerability, a Savior who knows the dynamics of aggression and coercion up close, having suffered from them himself. And it is because of this, or perhaps despite it, that he nevertheless remains committed to delivering us from our worst proclivities—even from our very violent selves.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, 50.
- ²⁸ *A Grief Observed*, chap. IV, para. 15–16, pp. 76–77. Quoted in Wayne Martindale and Jerry Root, *The Quotable Lewis* (Tyndale House Publishers, 2012), Kindle edition, Kindle Locations 6349–6356.
- ²⁹ Richard Bucher, “Luther’s Anfechtungen: Setting for the Reformation,” *Ev. Trinity Lutheran Church*, <http://www.trinitylutheranms.org/MartinLuther/Anfechtungen.html>.
- ³⁰ This so often happens with far-reaching ideas that have transformative impact on people and culture. For evangelicals particularly, “the gospel” has come to be almost solely understood as the way in which God forensically justifies and saves guilty sinners by forgiving our sins through what Jesus did on the cross.
- ³¹ Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 227.
- ³² Let’s apply this to a tough urban context like New York City, for instance. Using Luther’s experience as the missional lens to view the city, ask yourself how many people do you think are having *anfechtungen* today in New York City when they think about this holy God—i.e. how many experience overwhelming times of spiritual fear, despair and religious crisis? Obviously

- we cannot know for sure, but it would be hard to imagine many. Would they consider themselves guilty before a holy God? Generally, no. Westerners just don’t live in that religious universe anymore. Do they consider and reflect on the idea of God? As has been stated earlier in the book, we believe all have a depth of divine longing (whether conscious or subconscious), so the answer is yes. Do they struggle with various aspects of the world’s brokenness, including their own? Again, yes, but they are framing it in different language—for instance, the struggle with life-controlling forces that seem to dominate their lives. In other words, while they would not likely call their struggle with the capricious lures of money, power, success, and lust as a struggle with false gods, that is precisely what they are dealing with. They are enslaved to ideas and forces that promise the world but, in the end, deliver nothing but disappointment, hopelessness and meaninglessness.
- ³³ Debra Hirsch, *Redeeming Sex* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press), 170.
- ³⁴ Richard Rohr, “Beginning with Blessing,” *Center for Action and Contemplation*, October 6, 2015, <https://cac.org/beginning-with-blessing-2015-10-06/>.
- ³⁵ Abraham Kaplan, *The Conduct of Inquiry: Methodology for Behavioral Science* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1964), 28. Similarly, people have a tendency to construct stories around facts to the point where the story obscures the facts and distorts them. Of course, stories may well serve the purpose of illustrating the facts. This is all good and well, but problems occur when people begin to believe the stories themselves rather than the facts that the stories are meant to illustrate. This is called “the narrative fallacy” or “the illusory correlation”: it happens when people accommodate facts to the stories and not the other way around. We construct a narrative without any inherent explanation and then subsequently believe in it. Sound familiar? Marketers, politicians, and televangelists use this technique all the time to obscure facts, to gain adherence, or to sell you something. In other words, beware of the too compelling narrative.
- ³⁶ Abraham H. Maslow, *The Psychology of Science* (Maurice Bassett Publishing, 2002), 15. Ironically, the English slang for a hammer is a “Birmingham Screwdriver.” Apparently Birmingham industry gave the impression that everything should be pounded.
- ³⁷ *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, film, directed by Joel Zwick, USA: Gold Circle Films, HBO Films, MPH Entertainment, and Playtone, 2002.
- ³⁸ Von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama: Vol II*, 124–125.
- ³⁹ The Crusades and The Inquisition were particularly violent manifestations of the reductionist disease. The church authorities settled on a very specific and authoritarian form of the church, which came along with a set of highly prescriptive beliefs (magisterium and canon law) that were used as a

measure (imprimatur) of what was to be considered to be acceptable belief and behavior. For methods of torture used, see for instance Shanna Freeman, “How the Spanish Inquisition Worked,” *How Stuff Works*, <https://history.howstuffworks.com/historical-figures/spanish-inquisition3.htm> .

- ⁴⁰ See article “The Facts and Stats on ‘33,000 Denominations’ The 20,000 30,000 numbers and David Barrett’s statistics Part II.” <http://www.philvaz.com/apologetics/a106.htm> . For a list of the larger and more discernible denominations, see “List of Christian denominations,” Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Christian_denominations .

2 A CURD MADE FROM MASHED SOYBEANS

- ¹ Walter Brueggemann, *Finally Comes the Poet* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1989), 1.
- ² Don Everts, in a sermon given at Ivy Jungle Conference, approximately 2001.
- ³ Timothy Keller, (@timkellernyc) Twitter post, 4:11 a.m., December 10, 2018, <https://twitter.com/timkellernyc/status/1072101373410451456> .
- ⁴ Jonathan Gottschall, in his book *The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human* (Mariner Books, 2013), describes this as a “story instinct.” It is this story instinct in children that produces a natural ability to “make up stories, to tell stories, to live inside stories, to make believe.” TEDx Talks, 2014. *The Storytelling Animal: Jonathan Gottschall at TEDxFurmanU*, online video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vhd0XdedLpY> .
- ⁵ Mike Melia, “Conversation: Jonathan Gottschall, Author of ‘The Storytelling Animal’,” *PBS News Hour*, June 13, 2012, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/arts/the-storytelling-animal> .
- ⁶ Richard Kearney, *On Stories* (London: Routledge, 2002), 3.
- ⁷ Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press), 216.
- ⁸ Buechner, *Telling the Truth*, 79–80.
- ⁹ From a dialogue with Jeff Wischkaemper, used with permission.
- ¹⁰ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Prolegomena: Theo-Drama, Vol. I* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988), 15. Von Balthasar wrote five solid volumes on what he called “the theo-dramatic” in which he explored in detail the dramatic events of salvation and the unfolding of the goodness of God. While he is by no means the only theologian to explore this (and the narrative/story-based aspects of biblical revelation), he is credited as having taken the conversation to a whole new level.

- ¹¹ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976) Kindle Edition, 20–21.
- ¹² See Thomas Cahill’s fascinating book on how a relatively insignificant tribe in an insignificant part of the world changed the way we experience our world: *The Gifts of the Jews: How a Tribe of Desert Nomads Changed the Way Everyone Thinks and Feels* (Anchor, 2010).
- ¹³ We are indebted to various thinkers who have explored the nature and reasons for this “disenchantment” of the Western mind. C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, Charles Taylor, Hans Urs von Balthasar, and Morris Berman come to mind.
- ¹⁴ Throughout the last few decades, there have been many who have written and spoken on the place of myth in our world, including theologians Reinhold Niebuhr, Paul Tillich, and Paul Ricœur as well as psychologists Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung and Rollo May. In addition, writers such as J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis are especially known for their work on myth. All these scholars submit that a myth is so much more than how the word is used in common parlance: as a false belief, “an intentional misrepresentation of the truth,” or “a fabrication,” or “an exaggeration containing no truth.”
- ¹⁵ But there is another reason in our day for the mistaken definition of myths as falsehood. Most of us have been taught to think only in rationalistic terms. We seem to be victims of the prejudice that the more rationalistic our statements, the more true they are ... This monopoly on the part of left brain activity expresses not real science but pseudo-science. Gregory Bateson rightly reminds us that “mere purposive rationality unaided by such phenomena as art, religion, dream, and the like, is necessarily pathogenic and destructive of life.” As we have said earlier, our first reaction when the myths have not sufficed is mythoclasm; we attack the very concept of myth. The denial of myths is itself part of our refusal to confront our own reality and that of our society.
- ¹⁶ Myth is that form of story that “gives an interpretation of the human in his relationship to the divine and thus gives him his being and his self-understanding.” C. S. Lewis, “Myth Became Fact” in *C. S. Lewis Essay Collection: Faith, Christianity and the Church*, ed. Lesley Walmsley (London: HarperCollins, 2002), 138–42 and “Reflections on the Psalms” in *C. S. Lewis Selected Books* (London: HarperCollins, 2002), 363–68.
- ¹⁷ James W. Menzies, *True Myth: C. S. Lewis and Joseph Campbell on the Veracity of Christianity* (Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2014), ibook, location 09–25. The seminal Christian psychologist Rollo May says that “A myth is a way of making sense in a senseless world. Myths are narrative patterns that give significance to our existence. Myths are like the beams in a house: not exposed to outside view, they are the structure which holds the house

together so people can live in it. They are narrations by which our society is unified. Myths are essential to the process of keeping our souls alive and bringing us new meaning in a difficult and often meaningless world.” Rollo May, *The Cry for Myth* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1991), 20.

¹⁸ Dusty Gates, “Reality & Imagination: When Myth is Truer than Matter,” *Eighth Day Institute*, June 21, 2015. https://www.eighthdayinstitute.org/reality_imagination_when_myth_is_truer_than_matter.

¹⁹ “Balthasar does not conceive of humanity as ever bereft of knowledge of God. Man was created to know God—in the words of Acts which he is fond of quoting (the Areopagrede), man was created to seek God ‘if maybe he might find Him’: [...] Religion is the longing for a fulfilment in a way that the world cannot give. In this sense, there really is a general concept of religion, no matter how varied the types of religion may be. On one point, all religions are interchangeable. This presupposes that there is a level in the human which penetrates its entire essence. The locus classicus of this is found in St Paul’s speech on the Areopagus. Beginning with the altar to the Unknown God, he speaks to the pagans of the God of Heaven and Earth who ‘has caused the entire human race to proceed from one person [...] They should seek God, to see if they could touch and perhaps find Him, the One who is indeed not far from each one of us (Acts 17:23ff).’

“What the religions have in common is not at first bluish any answer, but rather a question, a searching implanted in the human heart. Thus, humanity does, in fact, come trailing clouds of ‘glory,’ as it were. In his typically nuanced manner, Balthasar writes that the religious creations of the human imagination are certainly understandable, for man has a hunger for God which must be satisfied, and should God not speak to man, man must yet strive on his own to ascend—yet he hastens to add that in fact God has been revealing Himself to man from the beginning. ‘Student of the Alexandrines that he was, Balthasar certainly does not deny the notion of a “logos spermatikos,” seeing traces of knowledge of God throughout humanity. It is in the Christian dispensation that these logoi come “openly to light”: man is “graced” not only since the time of Christ, but “in a hidden, but effective, way ‘before the foundation of the world’ (Eph. 1:4).” That which came to light in Christ was hidden ‘in myths and conjectures concerning the beginning, end, and meaning of life.’” See Raymond Gawronski, *Word and Silence: Hans Urs von Balthasar and the Spiritual Encounter Between East and West* (Kettering: Angelico Press, 2015), 15–16.

²⁰ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: The Realm of Metaphysics in Antiquity. Vol. IV* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 21.

²¹ Krystal Alexandria Pothier, *The True Myth: C. S. Lewis and Remythologization* (Honors thesis Baylor University, 2014), 1. See also Jacob J. Pralow, “C. S. Lewis, Myth, and Fact,” *Pursuing Veritas*, May 7, 2014, <https://pursuingveritas.com/2014/05/07/c-s-lewis-myth-and-fact/>.

²² Lewis is here referring to Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings*. See C. S. Lewis, “Tolkien’s Lord of the Rings,” in *Essay Collection and Other Short Pieces* (London: HarperCollins, 2000), 525–26. Tolkien, himself one of the greatest mythic writers of all time, used myth throughout his writings to steep his story with a mysterious “otherness,” a sense of mystery and magic that hints at a reality beyond that which human reason can fathom.

²³ In many ways, even the various “searches for the historical Jesus” were manifestations of an attempt to move beyond the crude faith in Christ and describe the Jesus of history. This anti-supernatural bias, while it is not limited to theological liberalism, remains a cornerstone of the liberal Protestant theology of the past century. And it’s still very much with us today, both in the academy and the sciences but also in the church. In fact, the irony is that evangelicals—who claim to be theists and have a high view of Scripture—pretty much build their house on the selfsame modernist principles of interpretation (historical, grammatical, literary, critical) and are themselves profoundly anti-supernatural in bias. Witness the severe reaction of fundamentalism to the charismatic movement.

²⁴ Browsing the standard Bible commentaries quickly proves the point—in our experience, the majority of the commentaries produced are products of modernist (reductionist) scholarship. They inevitably lack artfulness and poetry, and are largely dry and technical, dealing mainly with textual, grammatical, and historical factors. Few are they that have mythic *resonance* in that they seldom speak to the heart because they have effectively extracted the story. And from our experience, they rarely seek to truly grapple existentially with the purposes of God in the text or to submit to the Word of God pulsating throughout.

²⁵ Demythologizing has a long and successful history in Western culture. The roots are generally traced from the seminal modern philosophers Spinoza, Descartes, Kant, who provided the basic outlines for what is called the modern or enlightenment worldview. In terms of Christianity, which has been deeply influenced by this philosophical process in Western culture, demythologization finds its most thoroughgoing expression in the influential New Testament scholar Rudolf Bultmann and the various interpretative movements that emerged from him. “Bultmann suggested that, in order to make the gospel acceptable and relevant to the modern thinker, the New Testament must be demythologized. In other words, the mythical (i.e. miraculous) components must be removed, and the universal truth underlying the stories can then be seen. For Bultmann, the universal truth was that, in Christ, God had acted for the good of humanity. However, the New Testament accounts of the virgin birth, walking on water, multiplying bread and fish, giving sight to the blind, and even Jesus’ resurrection must be removed as mythical additions to the essential message. Today, there are many expressions of Christianity that follow this line of thinking, whether they attribute it to Bultmann or not. What may be called

‘mainline liberalism’ relies on a demythologized Bible. Classical theological liberalism teaches a vague goodness of God and brotherhood of man with an emphasis on following the example of Christ while downplaying or denying the miraculous.” “What is Liberal Christian theology?”, *Got Questions*, <https://www.gotquestions.org/demythologization.html> .

²⁶ Thankful for some of Preston Pouteaux’s insights here: “Plesionology is theology’s long lost twin, and why it’s renewing my faith,” January 23, 2019. <https://medium.com/@pouteaux/plesionology-is-theologys-long-lost-twin-and-why-it-s-renewing-my-faith-a3c14bc6ad85> .

²⁷ Rollo May quotes Max Muller: “Depend upon it, there is mythology now as there was in the time of Homer, only we do not perceive it, because we ourselves live in the very shadow of it, and because we all shrink from the full meridian light of truth from.” *The Cry for Myth* (W. W. Norton & Company, 1991), Kindle Edition, Kindle Locations 269–271.

²⁸ “They saw the overwhelming order of the world, the shining mathematical harmony that blazed out most purely [...] in the world of the constellations; and so the small human understanding was not the measure of all things but had to look upward to a higher, divine reason that rules all things in providence and shows itself in an epiphany in the order of the world.” Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Explorations*, III, 300 ff.

²⁹ Or as the philosopher Paul Ricoeur put it: “Modern persons no longer have a sacred space, a center, a *templum*, a holy mountain, or an *axis mundi*. Our existence therefore is decentered, eccentric, a-centered. We lack holy festivals, and therefore our time is as homogenous as our sense of space.” Johan Cilliers, *Mysterium Tremendum et Fascinans. Liturgical Perspectives on the Approach to God*, 3, <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download;jsessionid=4D2EA6526297EA2198E0CA324E6E93B1?doi=10.1.1.514.929&rep=rep1&type=pdf> .

³⁰ Gerard Manley Hopkins, “God’s Grandeur.”

³¹ Taylor, *The Christlike God*, (London: SCM, 2004), 117.

³² C. S. Lewis described the numinous experience as follows: “Suppose you were told there was a tiger in the next room: you would know that you were in danger and would probably feel fear. But if you were told ‘There is a ghost in the next room,’ and believed it, you would feel, indeed, what is often called fear, but of a different kind. It would not be based on the knowledge of danger, for no one is primarily afraid of what a ghost may do to him, but of the mere fact that it is a ghost. It is ‘uncanny’ rather than dangerous, and the special kind of fear it excites may be called Dread. With the Uncanny one has reached the fringes of the Numinous. Now suppose that you were told simply ‘There is a mighty spirit in the room,’ and believed it. Your feelings would then be even less like the mere fear of

danger: but the disturbance would be profound. You would feel wonder and a certain shrinking—a sense of inadequacy to cope with such a visitant and of prostration before it [...] This feeling may be described as awe, and the object which excites it as the *Numinous*.” *The Problem of Pain* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996), 6–7.

³³ In many ways, the experience of the “trembling” is the quintessential religious experience, one that touches the believers directly and makes them perceive their identity as creatures without any introduction of rational reasoning. “Otto felt that in the religious experience, the three elements of mystery, awe, and fascination (or attraction) are so intimately related as to form an irreducible synthetic whole. The paradoxical tension between the fear inspired by the otherworldly Sacred and the irresistible attraction it exerts at the same time on the believer was the very essence of religious consciousness. Since human reason is unable to break its code, the numinous also appears as the mystery.” “Rudolf Otto,” *New World Encyclopedia*, http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Rudolf_Otto .

³⁴ All authentic encounters with God must maintain some admixture of these elements or else it is not the biblical God that one is encountering. So for instance, in every encounter with the Holy, with God, one experiences something of the divine comfort/succor of being loved and accepted at the most profound level, but at the same time there must also be some element of being humbled, or what the Scriptures call “the fear of God,” a sense of feeling overawed simply by being in the presence of a Being who is wholly other than myself.

³⁵ “Rudolf Otto,” *New World Encyclopedia*. With regards to mystery, with Norman Geisler we can say that “a mystery is not something that can be attained by unaided human reason (see Faith and Reason). A mystery is known only by special divine revelation (see Revelation, Special). Hence, mysteries are not the subject of natural theology but only of revealed theology [...] Another characteristic of a mystery is that while we know that both elements making up the mystery are true and ultimately fit together, nevertheless, we do not know how they are compatible. For example, we know that Christ is both God and human, but it is a mystery just how these two natures unite in one person [...] Finally, a mystery is distinguished from a problem. A problem has a solution; a mystery is the object of meditation. A problem calls for extensive knowledge; a mystery for intensive concentration. Like a missing word in a crossword puzzle, a problem can be solved by more knowledge; a mystery cannot. If it could, it would not be a mystery. Mysteries do not call for answers, but for insights.” N. L. Geisler, “Mystery” in *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Books, 1999), 515.

³⁶ “The ineffable is not a synonym for the unknown or the nondescript; its essence is not in its being an enigma, in its being hidden behind the

curtain. What we encounter in our perception of the sublime, in our radical amazement, is a spiritual suggestiveness of reality, an allusiveness to transcendent meaning.” Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Man Is Not Alone: A Philosophy of Religion* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976), Kindle Edition, Kindle Locations 385–389.

³⁷ Richard T. Hughes, Thomas H. Olbricht, *Scholarship, Pepperdine University, and the Legacy of the Churches of Christ* (Pepperdine University Center for Faith and Learning, 2004), no page numbers supplied, <https://community.pepperdine.edu/cfl/content/scholarship-booklet.pdf> .

³⁸ Ibid., no page numbers supplied.

³⁹ Donald Davie, “The Translatability of Poetry,” *The Poet in the Imaginary Museum: Essays of Two Decades*, ed. Barry Alpert (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1977), 153.

⁴⁰ John Piper, “Obey God with Your Creativity,” *Desiring God*, October 8, 2018, <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/obey-god-with-your-creativity> .

⁴¹ Eugene Peterson, “The Bible Poetry and Active Imagination,” August 30, 2018, in *On Being*, by Krista Tippett, podcast, <https://onbeing.org/programs/eugene-peterson-the-bible-poetry-and-active-imagination-aug2018/> .

⁴² Think for a moment about the songs (Psalms) found in the Hebrew Scriptures. In what belongs among the greatest of any poetry, in any culture, in any time period, anywhere in the world, the Psalms are not systematized theologies or ordered doctrines but instances of language that are full of the very stuff of life—of misery and joy, love and hate, power and passion, which speak to the personal experiences of this mystery. These songs do not seek to contain or simply comprehend God; rather they convey beautiful and heart-wrenching expressions of the human experience. They are songs and poems, and their function is not to explain but to offer images, stories, and emotions that expand our vision of reality.

⁴³ As told in the Christians in Theatre Arts Conference, Chicago, date and speaker unknown.

3 STRANDED IN GREY TOWN

¹ *Stranger Than Fiction*, film, directed by March Forster. USA: Mandate Pictures, Three Strange Angels, 2006.

² Jn 10:10.

³ Jerry Walls in Robert MacSwain and Michael Ward (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to C. S. Lewis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 254.

⁴ Louis A. Markos, *A to Z with C. S. Lewis* (Lampion Press, 2012), Kindle Edition, Kindle Locations 302–305.

⁵ C. S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 70. Lewis continues “But Heaven is not a state of mind. Heaven is reality itself. All that is fully real is Heavenly. For all that can be shaken will be shaken and only the unshakeable remains.”

⁶ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Harper One, 1980), 92.

⁷ “There is always something [those in hell] insist on keeping even at the price of misery. There is always something they prefer to joy—that is, to reality.” *The Great Divorce*, 64; “there are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, ‘Thy will be done,’ and those to whom God says, in the end, ‘Thy will be done.’ All that are in Hell choose it. Without that self-choice, there could be no Hell. No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it,” 66–67; and again, “Hell is a state of mind [...] And every state of mind, left to itself, every shutting up of the creature within the dungeon of its own mind— is, in the end, Hell,” 68; “There is always something [those in hell] insist on keeping even at the price of misery. There is always something they prefer to joy—that is, to reality,” 68. “So if heaven is reality, and reality is joy, then hell is the loss of reality and consequently the loss of joy,” 69. In Robert MacSwain and Michael Ward (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to C. S. Lewis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁸ “‘both good and evil, when they are full grown, become retrospective. Not only this valley but all this earthly past will have been Heaven to those who are saved. Not only the twilight in that town, but all their life on earth too, will then be seen by the damned to have been Hell. That is what mortals misunderstand. They say of some temporal suffering, ‘No future bliss can make up for it,’ not knowing that Heaven, once attained, will work backwards and turn even that agony into a glory. And of some sinful pleasure they say ‘Let me but have this and I’ll take the consequences’: little dreaming how damnation will spread back and back into their past and contaminate the pleasure of the sin ... And that is why, at the end of all things, when the sun rises here and the twilight turns to blackness down there, the Blessed will say, ‘We have never lived anywhere except in Heaven,’ and the Lost, ‘We were always in Hell.’ And both will speak truly.’ ‘Is not that very hard, Sir?’ ‘I mean, that is the real sense of what they will say. In the actual language of the Lost, the words will be different, no doubt. One will say he has always served his country right or wrong; and another that he has sacrificed everything to his Art; and some that they’ve never been taken in, and some that, thank God, they’ve always looked after Number One, and nearly all, that, at least they’ve been true to themselves.’” Lewis, *The Great Divorce*, 69.

- ⁹ Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions: A Trinitarian Missiology for the Twenty-first Century* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010), 22–23.
- ¹⁰ David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in the Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2011), 466.
- ¹¹ *Rocky III*, film, directed by Sylvester Stallone. USA: United Artists, 1982.
- ¹² From a conversation with Lonny Davis. Used with permission.
- ¹³ Melinda Lundquist Denton and Christian Smith, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (Oxford: University Press, 2005).
- ¹⁴ See Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating Apostolic Movements Second Edition* (Grand Rapids, Brazos, 2016), 35, 116–118, 161, 172 for further analysis on middle-class consumerism and how it attenuates biblical faithfulness. Also see Alan Hirsch and Deb Hirsch, *Untamed: Reactivating a Missional Form of Discipleship* (Grand Rapids, Baker, 2010) chapters 4, 5, 6.
- ¹⁵ C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1988), 121.
- ¹⁶ Brené Brown, *Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent and Lead* (Avery, 2012), 35.
- ¹⁷ Gregory Boyle, *Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2017), 2.
- ¹⁸ C. S. Lewis, “First and Second Things,” *God in the Dock* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970), 278–280.
- ¹⁹ “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (Jn 10:10).
- ²⁰ Walker Percy, *The Moviegoer* (New York: Random House, 1961), 223.
- ²¹ Gregory A. Boyd, *Benefit of the Doubt: Breaking the Idol of Certainty* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 62–5
- ²² The sin of idolatry appears on almost every page of the Old Testament and is coded into the monotheistic worldview that generated the entire Bible, including of course the New Testament: in the Bible itself it is variously associated with the sovereignty or the reign (kingdom) of God—clearly the central aspect of Jesus’ teaching. Furthermore, Jesus affirms that the central, defining confession of the people of God is the shema: “Hear o’ Israel, Yahweh is our God, Yahweh is One! And you shall love Yahweh your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind, and all your strength.” And just in case we try to reduce religion to that of a private affair between God and our souls, Jesus adds, “‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these” (Mk 12:29–31). See Alan Hirsch and Michael Frost, *ReJesus: A Wild Messiah for a Missional Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), chapter 5 for a deeper analysis of monotheism and its implications.
- ²³ John P. Dourley, C. G. Jung and Paul Tillich: *The Psyche as Sacrament* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Inner City Books, 1981) 14.
- ²⁴ Paul S. Minear, *Eyes of Faith* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1946), 17. See the section 17–22.
- ²⁵ Boyd, *Benefit of the Doubt*, 64. He adds “Augustine spoke a profound truth when he said our hearts are restless until we rest in God. So long as we try to meet our core needs with idols, we experience disappointment, frustration, and a host of other negative emotions. Yet we find ourselves unable to discontinue our searching, for our hunger never dissipates. We may try to numb it with the novocaine of alcohol, drugs, or pornography. Or we may try to forget about it by distracting ourselves with work, television, movies, sports, politics, and the like. But the novocaine eventually wears off and the distractions are only momentary.” *Ibid.*, 64.
- ²⁶ Biblical faith is exclusive. It disallows all that intrudes into, or dilutes, the exclusive claim that God makes over our lives ... and thus it forbids all idolatry. “The sole sovereignty of God is realized only by stern struggle with other gods, with all the forces that oppose his will. This is to say that, to the biblical writers themselves, monotheism begins, not as a stage of metaphysical speculation, not as a final step in the development out of polytheism, not as a merging of all gods into one (as in Hinduism), but when the One God becomes the decisive reality for a particular man and thereby calls for the dethronement of all his other gods.” Paul S. Minear, *Eyes of Faith* (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1966), 25–26. Christian belief does not consist in merely believing that there is one God ... even the devil knows that. No, Christians respond to God by faith in what he has done, trust in his power, hope in his promise, along with a passionate abandonment of self to do his will. “Only within the context of such a passionate vocation does the knowledge of the one Lord live” (Minear). And this knowledge necessitates rather than eliminates the struggle with the devil and all his works. Only in unconditional obedience, spurred on by passion and surrender is the rule of God rightly manifested in human existence, as for example, in Jesus.
- ²⁷ David Foster Wallace, “This is Water by David Foster Wallace,” *Farnham Street*, April, 2012, <https://fs.blog/2012/04/david-foster-wallace-this-is-water/>.
- ²⁸ Buber, *Eclipse of God*, 158.
- ²⁹ Jacques Ellul, *False Presence of the Kingdom*, (Seabury Press, 1972).
- ³⁰ Truth is, when we look at the type of faith lived out in the various heroes throughout the Scriptures and history—the so called “cloud of witnesses” of Hebrews 11—we *can* talk about biblical faithfulness as a kind of

receptivity which, consistent with the name YHWH (“I will appear as I will appear”), involves a radical openness to the present moment in which God calls us to respond. The kingdom of God does involve exposure to a kind of holy danger and risk, of new beginnings and of ever new becoming, and it requires an opened spirit and a willingness to live life “on the narrow ridge” (Martin Buber’s favored image for the authentic life of responsive faith). *Ibid.*, 158

³¹ Buber, *Eclipse of God*, 158. “The kingdom of God is a kingdom of danger and risk, a kingdom of eternal beginnings and eternal becomings, of open spirit and deep realization, a kingdom of holy insecurity,” 73.

³² Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord Volume VI* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 163.

³³ “So, if we remain open and attentive and *responsible* to God, we will lose a [false] sense of security but we *will* gain a sense of direction and meaning. As all our saints and heroes have attested to this...God will be near us at all times. And by being radically open and attentive to God we will actually attain to a much more authentic and true comprehension of the world. We will be able to discern the voice of God addressing us; and we will answer responsibly and strive for the hallowing of all things in the everyday. Here we will find our true task; we will be participating in God’s work of creating and redeeming the world.” *Ibid.*, 157.

³⁴ Albert Einstein, *Ideas and Opinions* (New York: Crown, 1982) 11.

³⁵ Donald J. Moore, *The Human and the Holy: The Spirituality of Abraham Joshua Heschel* (Fordham University Press, 1989), 37–41.

³⁶ *Ibid.*,

³⁷ Claire Danes, Ellen Burstyn, Tracy K. Smith, et al., “Stories About Mystery,” December 28, 2017, in *On Being*, by Krista Tippett, podcast, <https://onbeing.org/programs/claire-danes-ellen-burstyn-tracy-k-smith-et-al-stories-about-mystery-dec2017/>.

4 THE HUMMING OF UNSEEN HARPS

¹ The London Underground is the public rapid transit system serving London, England and some of its adjacent counties.

² David Brooks, “The Subtle Sensations of Faith,” *The New York Times*, December 23, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/23/opinion/david-brooks-the-subtle-sensations-of-faith.html?smid=tw-share>.

³ Albert Einstein, *Physique, Philosophie, Politique* (English and French Edition), (Mass Market Paperback, 2002).

⁴ Clotilde Rapaille, *The Culture Code: An Ingenious Way to Understand Why People Around the World Buy and Live As They Do* (New York: Broadway Books, 2007), 1.

⁵ For a brilliant exploration of the implications of Bourdieu’s ideas for spiritual and theological formation, see James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), and the subsequent *Imagining The Kingdom: How Worship Works* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013).

⁶ Rapaille, *The Culture Code*, 5.

⁷ The concept of a cultural code supports the notion that the stories we have grown up in are *the* determining factor of our understanding and perception of a thing, an idea, a belief, etc. Our stories, all so obviously different, establish a foundation for us that, of course, leads us to processing the same information in so many different ways.

⁸ Rapaille, *The Culture Code*, 2.

⁹ Redeemer CFW, 2012, James K. A. Smith, *Culture as Liturgy*, online video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdVxKk3NADE>. Smith develops this approach in his more recent, *You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2016). See also Gregory E. Ganssle, *Our Deepest Desires: How the Christian Story Fulfills Human Aspirations* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2017).

¹⁰ *Ibid.* If we allow people to define themselves by what they know, or what they think or what they believe, we are still a far distance from understanding *who* someone is. As much as we’d like to think that someone can know us by knowing what it is we believe about the latest issue, or by reading our latest Facebook post, or hearing our rational explanation of “my system of thought and approach to life”, these do not tell others *who* we are.

¹¹ Our future depends on our citizenship, on the direction of our will and the object of our loves ...We are called out of our loyalty to the earthly city and its account of where we belong and what gives us hope of eternal life, so that we can transfer our loyalty to the heavenly city “whose builder and maker is God” (Heb 11:10).

¹² Saint Augustine, *The Confessions of Saint Augustine* (Mount Vernon: Peter Pauper Press, 354–430), 1.

¹³ “The concept of yearning (desiderium) is central for Augustine; thus, while pointing to the innermost dynamism of finite freedom, he also makes it clear that such movement cannot in any way force the divine self-disclosure. Yearning is ‘the soul’s thirst ... for God’, and it is by thirsting that the soul becomes able to seize him: ‘The whole life of a proper Christian is holy yearning. You yearn for what you do not yet see, but the yearning itself makes you ready for being filled by it when it eventually presents itself to

your sight.” Yearning is not a demand: it is a plea: ‘Your yearning is your prayer; if it is constant, so is your prayer. You will fall dumb if you stop loving. If love remains awake, you will always be crying out; and as long as you thus cry out, your yearning remains.’ And in order to show that genuine yearning is always directed toward a divinely planned and divinely willed encounter with God’s free grace in the world, Augustine stresses that the saints of all ages, even before Christ, yearned for the advent of the Son in the flesh.” Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory, IV: The Action* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1994), 372.

- ¹⁴ Alan Watts, “Stillness Speaks”. <https://www.stillnessspeaks.com/teacher/alan-watts/> .
- ¹⁵ Alan Watts, *Behold the Spirit: A Study in the Necessity of Mystical Religion* (New York: Random House, 1971), 65.
- ¹⁶ James K. A. Smith, *How (Not) to Be Secular: Reading Charles Taylor* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 131.
- ¹⁷ Alistair E. McGrath, *Intellectuals Don’t Need God and Other Modern Myths: Building Bridges to Faith Through Apologetics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) iBooks, 48.
- ¹⁸ Quoted in, *Ibid.*, 48.
- ¹⁹ “It is the sad realization that one is yet separated from what is desired ... a ceaseless longing which always points beyond.” Corbin S. Carnell, *Bright Shadow of Reality* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), 22–23.
- Simone Weil writes “When we possess a beautiful thing, we still desire something. We do not in the least know what it is. We want to get behind the beauty, but it ... like a mirror sends back our own desire for goodness. It is a ... mystery that is painfully tantalizing.” Quoted in Corbin S. Carnell, *Bright Shadow of Reality* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), 28–29.
- ²⁰ Susan Scheibe and Alexandra Freund, “Approaching Sehnsucht (Life Longings) from a Life-Span Perspective: The Role of Personal Utopias in Development,” *Research in Human Development, Journal of Research in Personality* 5(2), (2018): 121–133.
- ²¹ C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy* (London: Collins, 1959), 19.
- ²² C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996), 153.
- ²³ C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life* (New York: Harper and Collins, 1955), 86. Elsewhere he notes, “We are born helpless. As soon as we are fully conscious we discover loneliness. Our whole being by its very nature is one vast need; incomplete, preparatory, empty yet

cluttered, crying out for Him who can untie things that are knotted together and tie up things that are still dangling loose.” C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (New York: Harper Collins, 1960), 2.

- ²⁴ See Corbin Scott Carnell’s outstanding exploration of sehnsucht in Lewis, *Bright Shadow of Reality: C. S. Lewis and the Feeling Intellect* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 163. “It is Sehnsucht which both expresses and helps satisfy longing and the desire for mystery. It has been present in every age, but it seems to be far more obvious in our time than in any previous period. It defies any final definition or analysis, and yet if we avoid considering it on these grounds, we fail to deal with an exciting and crucial concept.” 157–158.
- ²⁵ C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 42.
- ²⁶ It is worth quoting Lewis here more fully as it makes room for the poetic yearnings. “Our lifelong nostalgia, our longing to be reunited with something in the universe from which we now feel cut off, to be on the inside of some door which we have always seen from the outside, is no mere neurotic fancy, but the truest index of our real situation. ... Ah, but we want something so much more—something the books on aesthetics take little notice of. But the poets and mythologies know all about it. We do not want merely to see beauty, though, God knows, even that is bounty enough. We want something else which can hardly be put into words—to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it.” C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*, 42.
- ²⁷ Jeffrey Hocking, *Liberating Language: Rubem Alves, Theopoetics, and the Democratization of God-Talk*, 17. https://www.academia.edu/1395368/Liberating_Language_Rubem_Alves_Theopoetics_and_the_Democratization_of_God-Talk .
- ²⁸ Frederick Buechner, *Whistling in the Dark* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 20.
- ²⁹ Robert Sibley, *A Rumour of God: Rekindling Belief in an Age of Disenchantment* (Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Novalis, 2010), 51.

5 THRO’ NARROW CHINKS IN THE CAVERN

- ¹ William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), verse 115.
- ² “So with us. ‘We know not what we shall be;’ but we may be sure we shall be more, not less, than we were on earth. Our natural experiences (sensory, emotional, imaginative) are only like the drawing, like penciled lines on flat

paper. If they vanish in the risen life, they will vanish only as pencil lines vanish from the real landscape; not as a candle flame that is put out but as a candle flame which becomes invisible because someone has pulled up the blind, thrown open the shutters, and let in the blaze of the risen sun.” C. S. Lewis, *The Business of Heaven* (San Diego: Harcourt, 1984), 114–115.

³ Interestingly, the Christian philosopher Soren Kierkegaard believed that one of the main causes of human angst (anxiety) arose from the failure to ground oneself in the ground of all existence [God] and that this refusal that lies at the very roots of consciousness caused huge problems of despair in soul and psyche. “In his *The Sickness unto Death* (1849), Kierkegaard has given a peerless description of this state of affairs [...] Man, he says, is a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, of the eternal and the temporal, of the possible and the necessary (that is, he is the locus of possible decisions, but he is also constrained by facts and earthly necessities). This objective relationship ‘relates to itself’, that is, it is subjective, reflex, and thus it provides a first definition of man as ‘spirit’ or ‘self’. On the basis of this definition, this relation-to-itself is free: ‘The self is freedom.’ But the self, in its free self-consciousness, recognizes that the entire relationship is not something it has created: it has been established ‘by another’, in whom alone it can reach ‘equilibrium and rest’. This ‘other’ is ‘an infinite self’, namely, God. And, in the presence of God, the self is given its second definition: it is a ‘theological self’. The only ontological attitude appropriate to the self is this: ‘In relating itself to itself and in willing to be itself, the self rests transparently in the power that established it. Kierkegaard calls every other attitude ‘despair’, whether man despairs and refuses to be himself or despairs and resolves to be himself [...] In the Christian perspective, all these forms of despair constitute a sickness of the spirit, the sickness unto death, in which man endeavors to destroy himself. As such, they are sin.” Von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*, 371.

⁴ Martin Buber, *The Way of Man* (Wallingford: Pendle Hill Publications, 1960), 10–11.

⁵ Moore, *The Human and the Holy: The Spirituality of Abraham Joshua Heschel* (Fordham University Press, 1989), 95–6. As children of Adam, humans are born fleeing from an encounter with God, fleeing into the abstractions of the spirit or into the dulled exile of the cave. But we cannot escape the pursuing God whose grace from the outset has tracked us down and ejected us from our respective hideouts. We cannot, it seems, hide ourselves from the face of God.

⁶ See Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Spirit and Institution: Explorations in Theology* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1995), 445.

⁷ Huw Twiston Davis, “Sir Anthony Hopkins: I couldn’t be an atheist,” *Catholic Herald*, February 11, 2011, <https://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2011/02/11/sir-anthony-hopkins-i-couldnt-be-an-atheist/>.

⁸ “Perhaps even the actual eating of the forbidden fruit by Adam might actually be less serious than his hiding from God after he had eaten it. Adam represents each one of us; his hiding from God is thus our hiding from God. The will of God is to be present in our midst and to be manifest to the world, but by betraying His trust and defying His will we have turned our back on Him and walked away.” Moore, *The Human and the Holy*, 95–6.

⁹ A. C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 119. See also *Dianoia* in D. Mangum, *Lexham Theological Wordbook* (Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2014).

¹⁰ Consider that image of the old and young woman. You can only view one at a time. Seeing the one means deselecting the other.

¹¹ Theologians have long pondered the so-called “noetic effects of the fall”—the darkening of the human mind. But we will also want to note that the Holy Spirit, who makes God real to the believer, brings about a renewal of the nous in ways that enable the disciple to come to genuine illumination and knowledge of God.

¹² *The Great Divorce*, 70. In this book, Lewis describes his unique vision of heaven and hell in terms strikingly similar to Blake’s. He shows us a heaven in which things are so real that in fact they are too real for the cave-adjusted senses of Grey Town, at least at first. The light is so bright it hurts the eyes. The grass so real that upon viewing it, one is forced to realize that we have never really seen grass before, but rather something of a dull, obscure vision of it, as if through grimy glass. To walk on this grass would at first hurt the feet because it’s so much more real than the grass we are used to on earth. Through this imagery, Lewis is forcing us to realize that our perceptions of everything have been severely impaired. And now, for the first time, we are seeing things as they were meant to be. But the effect is so overwhelming that it takes us considerable time to acclimate ourselves to it.

¹³ Mk 10:13–16; Mt 18:2–5, 10.

¹⁴ George Bernanos, quoted in Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Bernanos: An Ecclesial Experience* (San Francisco: Communio, 1996), e-book.

¹⁵ According to Morris Berman, this disenchantment of the nous is a recent phenomenon. “For more than 99 percent of human history, the world was enchanted and man saw himself as an integral part of it. The complete reversal of this perception in a mere four hundred years or so has destroyed the continuity of the human experience and the integrity of the human psyche. It has very nearly wrecked the planet as well. We have, as Dante wrote in the *Divine Comedy*, awoken to find ourselves in a dark woods.” Morris Berman, *The Reenchantment of the World* (Cornell, New York: Cornell University Press, 1981), 23.

- ¹⁶ See Appendix three, “Having the Mind of Christ” at the end of this book.
- ¹⁷ George Orwell, *Why I Write* (New York: Penguin, 1946), 52.
- ¹⁸ This phenomenon (variously called *sustained inattention* or *inattentional blindness*) is not as unusual as it might sound. In fact it happens all the time: consider the experience of Laotian refugees brought to the United States in the 1970s from a remote mountainous region in which there were virtually none of the ordinary things that make up the modern American world. They described how, when they were first brought to Seattle and saw its tall buildings from the airplane windows, they perceived them as mountains. Their only experience with anything so high were the mountains that their village nestled among. It took sometimes painful effort for them to learn to interpret the objects in their new world as they actually were, not as they perceived them. Eugene Webb, *Worldview and Mind Religious Thought and Psychological Development*, (Columbia: Missouri University Press, 2009), 18.
- ¹⁹ Another example involves the classic experiment on visual processing, which asks people to watch a film clip of six people passing a basketball back and forth, and to press a button every time they notice a particular team has possession. While the players are passing the ball back and forth, a woman dressed in a gorilla suit walks directly through the players, looks into the camera, beats her chest and walks off the screen. Invariably only about half the people tested ever notice the gorilla, the others saying they saw nothing unusual or surprising during the video. Carina Kreitz, Robert Schnuerch, Henning Gibbons, Daniel Memmert, “Some See It, Some Don’t: Exploring the Relation between Inattentional Blindness and Personality Factors,” *Plos One* (May 26, 2015). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0128158>. It is worth noting that highly open people are less susceptible to inattentional blindness: they tend to see the things that others screen out. Inattentional blindness is a phenomenon in just about every arena in life, from the university to the kitchen—it involves the screening-out of visual information that is beyond our immediate attentional focus. This is similar to the term “not seeing the forest amid the trees” or “not seeing the trees amid the forest”, depending on discussion, and it’s related to the glass walls phenomenon. See Hmolpedia *Ships Not Seen* <http://www.eoht.info/page/Ships+not+seen>, and Carina Kreitz, et al., “Some See It, Some Don’t: Exploring the Relation between Inattentional Blindness and Personality Factors.”
- ²⁰ Webb, *Worldview*, 18.
- ²¹ The mind thinks in categories ... by being able to separate what is different from other categorization. It’s one of the bases of brain function and rationality. Therefore if a person does not have the intellectual categories for something, they cannot recognize the categories and distinctions as they present themselves to the perceiver in the phenomenal world. One needs a subjective mental model (along with an appropriate language) to be able to name what is real in the objective world.
- ²² “For people who are stumbling toward ruin, the message of the cross is nothing but a tall tale for fools by a fool. But for those of us who are already experiencing the reality of being rescued *and made right*, it is nothing short of God’s power” (1 Cor 1:18 The Voice).
- ²³ N. T. Wright, *Simply Good News: Why the Gospel Is News and What Makes It Good* (New York: HarperCollins, 2015), 61.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, 85.
- ²⁵ Maurice Friedman, *A Heart of Wisdom: Religion and Human Wholeness* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1992), 19.
- ²⁶ See Jean Daniélou, *God and the Ways of Knowing* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1957), 91–98, and Matthew A. Moser, *Love Itself is Understanding: Balthasar, Truth, and the Saints* (PhD thesis, submitted at Baylor University, 2013), 70ff.
- ²⁷ *The Truman Show*, film, directed by Peter Weir. USA: Scott Rudin Productions, 1998.
- ²⁸ John Bowen, “The Gospel according to The Truman Show,” *Institute of Evangelism*, February 10, 2001. <https://institute.wycliffecollege.ca/2001/02/the-gospel-according-to-the-truman-show/>.
- ²⁹ William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007), see especially lectures VI–VII.
- ³⁰ Mt 13:14–15; Mk 4:12, 8:18; Jn 12:40, Acts 28:26–27; Rom 11:8.
- ³¹ Abraham Heschel, *Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity: Essays* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Kindle Edition), 20.
- ³² According to some experts, this mentality is only getting worse. “The gap between what we know and what we think we know is widening every day,” says Nate Silver, founder and editor-in-chief of website *FiveThirtyEight*, which uses statistical analysis to tell compelling stories about our world, especially in forecasting what is to come. Most people, especially the so-called experts, tend to focus on “signals that reinforce their view of reality” while ignoring the presence of anything beyond their known experience. The problem intensifies when those who are “in the know” fail to disclose how uncertain they actually are. Sanjay Bhatt, “Nate Silver lives by data, whether on politicians or burritos,” *The Seattle Times*, May 11, 2014. <http://www.seattletimes.com/business/nate-silver-lives-by-data-whether-on-politicians-or-burritos/>.
- ³³ From a dialogue with Dr. Mark Weedman, September 11, 2015. Used with permission.

- ³⁴ Frederick Buechner, *Secrets in the Dark: A Life in Sermons* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006), 67.
- ³⁵ Murray Rae, *Kierkegaard's Vision of the Incarnation: By Faith Transformed* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), xi.
- ³⁶ Ibid., xi.
- ³⁷ The Inklings was an informal literary discussion group that included C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and Charles Williams.
- ³⁸ Owen Barfield, *History, Guilt and Habit* (London: Barfield Press, 2012), 74.
- ³⁹ Don Everts and Doug Shaupp, *Pathways to Jesus: Crossing the Thresholds of Faith* (Nottingham: IVP, 2009), 71.
- ⁴⁰ From a dialogue with Anna Robinson. Used with permission.
- ⁴¹ “limabeen03,” “Dante, Sin, Repentance, and Desire,” December 17, 2008. <https://trinitypastor.wordpress.com/2008/12/17/dante-sin-repentance-and-desire/>.
- ⁴² Ibid.
- ⁴³ Hans Urs von Balthasar in Aidan Nichols, *Divine Fruitfulness: A Guide Through Balthasar's Theology Beyond the Trilogy* (London: T & T Clark, 1997), 97.
- ⁴⁴ Martin Buber, *Israel and the World* (New York: Schocken Books, 1963), 163.

6 THE ART OF SEEING

- ¹ Aldous Huxley, *The Art of Seeing* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1942), vii–x. This illustration about Huxley is drawn from Phillip Vannini, Dennis Waskul, and Simon Gottschalk, *The Senses in Self, Society, and Culture: A Sociology of the Senses* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 17–18.
- ² Ibid., ix.
- ³ Ibid., x.
- ⁴ Ibid., 42. For the balance of his book, Huxley offers scathing criticism of standard medical approaches to eye treatment. By rejecting the facile assumption that vision is merely a passive product of properly functioning organs, he goes on to detail various techniques and practices for visual re-education.
- ⁵ F. Scott Fitzgerald pointed out, “The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function.” Quoted in Jim Collins, “Genius of the And.” <https://www.jimcollins.com/concepts/genius-of-the-and.html>. Also

- his book with Jerri Porras, *Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies* (New York: Harper Collins, 2004).
- ⁶ I (Alan) am convinced that almost all the problems we face as the church are the result of fragmentations of a once-greater truth, that the church by and large is a victim of its own rationalistic, formulaic, and reductionist thinking. In my book *5Q*, I spend a whole chapter on the difference between analytic and synthetic thinking on the understanding that we have reduced ministry down to unbiblical proportions—that of the Shepherd/Pastor and Teacher alone. The only way to heal a broken ministry is to reset it into its biblical whole as APEST, which includes the ministry of the Apostle, Prophet, and Evangelist. See Alan Hirsch, *5Q (100Movements Publishing, 2017)*, preface and introduction.
- ⁷ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* (Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2015), eBooks, 19.
- ⁸ Frederick Buechner, *The Longing for Home* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996), 109–110.
- ⁹ In the Scriptures, this capacity to see things from the view of the whole and not just the parts is called *pleroma* or fullness. It is found and attained in Jesus, and it is what all of creation is aiming toward (Ephesians 1:10; 1:23; 3:19; 4:13; Colossians 1:19; 2:9).
- The believer’s innate instinct for truth is called “the illative sense” by various theologians and philosophers...especially John Henry Newman in his *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Ascent* (Assumption Press, 2013).
- ¹⁰ This idea that God is always greater than we can conceive has always been an intrinsic part of how the church has understood faith. For instance, we can see it in the works of St. Anselm of Canterbury: nothing greater than God can be conceived of, and human beings can only understand God in a way that recognizes they can never fully comprehend him. St. Anselm, *Works of St. Anselm: Proslogium, Monologium, An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool, and Cur Deus Homo* (Forgotten Books, 2007).
- ¹¹ Krish Kandiah, *Paradoxology: Why Christianity Was Never Meant to Be Simple* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2014), 4–5. The back cover says: “As we search the Scriptures we find that even the most heroic figures, the models of courageous faith in the Bible, those to whom we habitually look for strength, struggled with the conundrums of God’s character. Their struggles illuminate and validate our struggles, and their faith and worship in the midst of despair can help us in our faith and worship too.”
- ¹² From an audio recording at Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Italy.
- ¹³ *Finding Neverland*, film, directed by Marc Forster. USA|UK: Miramax Pictures, FilmColony, Key Light Productions, 2004.

¹⁴ Hans Urs von Balthasar maintains that theology, like aesthetics, is a matter of “learning to see,” requiring an attitude of service to the object of perception, identical to the way in which a work of art reveals itself and inspires transformation in the perceiver: we are, for von Balthasar, “enraptured” by our contemplation of these depths and are ‘transported’ to them,” *The Glory of the Lord, Vol. I*, 119. This in turn reintroduces wonder into theology, where we approach the world with a sense of reverence, and in appreciation that it is a free gift of God. The proper attitude for the Christian, then, is not fulfillment but awe, and von Balthasar therefore describes his theology as a “kneeling theology,” in which “God’s truth has ascendancy over our own truth,” and one must attempt to live one’s life from that perspective. A theological aesthetics, therefore, is a means of expressing the primacy of God’s revelation over abstract theological systems and forms of natural theology that strive to “deduce” God’s revelation; for von Balthasar, a theological aesthetics does not look to get a secure place to stand, but rather attempts to get sight of what cannot be securely grasped. See David Liptay, *Beauty And/As Theology: The Theological Aesthetics of Hans Urs von Balthasar* (PhD thesis, Syracuse University, 2010), 12–13.

¹⁵ Max Planck, *Scientific Autobiography* (New York: Citadel, 1949), 91–93.

¹⁶ Kallistos Ware, *The Orthodox Way* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Press, 1979), 157–8.

¹⁷ From Elizabeth Barrett Browning, “Aurora Leigh.”

¹⁸ From William Blake, “Auguries of Innocence.”

¹⁹ Cited in Basil De Selincourt, *William Blake* (London: Duckworth, 1909), 70.

²⁰ “In natural knowledge, the quicker and more penetrating the mind is, the more effectively a slight clue suffices to lead it to a certain conclusion. The same happens in the case of supernatural knowledge. The more responsive the mind is to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, the more easily it will come to assent to the Christian faith by means of signs that are ordinary, everyday signs, in no way ‘extraordinary’ or ‘miraculous.’ That is why an incontrovertible tradition, going back to the Gospel itself, praises those who have no need of wonders. They are not praised for having believed without reasons; that would only be reprehensible. But we see in them truly illuminated souls, capable of grasping a vast truth through a tiny clue. Does not experience show that, when the Holy Spirit visits the soul with His consolation, the soul is no longer capable of doubting, as it were, and glimpses manifest signs of the truth in everything. ‘Think of anything you wish,’ says the author of *L’Aiguillon d’amour*, ‘and you will find in it many reasons for loving your Creator.’ Some saints went into ecstasy on viewing a blade of grass. So, too, when it comes to faith. When responding to the divine light, the believer sees all of world history as proving the Church’s mission; the most commonplace word or fact floods the soul with certitude

and peace [...] But the lover recognizes the Spouse ‘by a single hair of her neck.’” Pierre Rosoulett, *The Eyes of Faith* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1990), 35.

²¹ Barbara Brown Taylor, *The Preaching Life: A Memoir of Faith* (New York: HarperOne, 2009), 16.

²² J. B. Phillips, *Your God Is Too Small: A Guide for Believers and Skeptics Alike* (New York: Touchstone, 1952).

²³ “The more a great work of art is known and grasped, the more concretely are we dazzled by its ‘ungraspable’ genius. We never outgrow something which we acknowledge to stand above us by its very nature. And this will in no way be different for us even when we contemplate God in the beatific vision, since then we will see that God is forever the greater. Even the figure of a person whom we love and know well permanently remains for us too wonderful to exhaust by description, and, if we truly are lovers, we would be incensed if someone offered an account of the loved person which resolved all mysteries about him.” Von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord, Vol. I*, 181.

One of the “rules” for enlarging one’s experience of God, one used by all the early church Fathers and Mothers, was that *the more you think you know about God, the more you realize you don’t know* (the antithesis of *all I know is all there is*); if you think you comprehend it, then it is not God that you comprehend. We will always be seeking God, even when we have found him—and particularly then. This is not only because of the limitations of our all too finite intellects and vision, but because of the superabundant vitality of infinite life itself.

Actually, Christianity has well developed resources within it that can help us in our effort to encounter God in a larger frame. As prayerful seekers after God, the early church Fathers and Mothers modelled a way of seeing the world as a living metaphor that was only truly understood with the eyes of wonder. They saw the world as a sacred cosmic ecology where all things are related to the triune God who not only created the world, but who continually redeems, restores, and orders it according to his own purposes. Driven by an innate motivation towards transcendence, their passion to know and love God led them to the very frontiers of human thought and experience.

One of the reasons why they achieved so much is because they believed in (and lived) what was later called the “analogy of being” by Thomas Aquinas. Without getting too technical and metaphysical, to believe in the analogy of being claims that all created things have some analogue or proportion to that which created them, that in some way there is an ongoing corresponding relation between God and cosmos. The only way that anybody can say that “God is like this or that” is through the analogy of being. This opened the world up in ways that were indeed spiritual and

revelatory, but it also opened people up to all sorts of errors of idolatrous thinking, as Karl Barth so passionately pointed out. But the Fourth Lateran Council settled the parameters in the way that we think, opening up the power of analogy for us today, which states, “And since, being as an essence is inconceivable, whatever similarity the creature has with the Creator, the dissimilarity is always greater.” Which, simply stated, means that the more you think that you have got God all worked out, you will find a greater incomprehensibility occurs at the same time. The closer you zoom in on an aspect of God, you will find that God zooms out in infinite proportion. You can never get a bead on him.

- ²⁴ “This direct and wholly realized union with God itself continues to bear the implication of the ‘ever-moreness’ of the Divine Other’s infinite unbounded—ever gracious and unanticipatable—personal love.” David Schindler, “On Trivializing the Lives of ‘Ordinary People’ in Liberal Societies,” *Communio*, Spring, 2017, Vol. 44, 1, 109. “In these and all other Biblical experiences of God, the element that impels the subject forward lies, precisely, in the superabundance of their content, as compared with man’s limited capacity to grasp it; and the longing which they awaken and leave behind is not the yearning for something more which would be something different, but the longing for the Always-More that resides in what has already been bestowed.” Von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord, Vol I*, 312.
- ²⁵ Augustine, Sermon 170.9. And also “If he who is sought can be found, why was it said Seek his face evermore (Ps 105:4)? Perhaps because he should still be sought even when found? For this is how we ought to seek incomprehensible things.” Cf. also Sermon 125.11; *De Trinitate* 15.2.2: quoted in Schindler, “On Trivializing,” 109.
- ²⁶ Raymond Gawronski, *Word and Silence: Hans Urs von Balthasar and the Spiritual Encounter Between East and West* (Kettering: Angelico Press, 2015), 16. Or consider this from von Balthasar, “Even in eternity itself God will not cease, in the freest self-giving, to be our fulfillment; so that even when we enjoy the vision of God we shall always be hanging on his every word, we shall always be listening to him. Here on earth, conversely, the word need not be apprehended as something alien, something ‘other’: it can be understood to be what is most our own, what is most intimate and close to us; it is my truth, the truth of me and about me; the word which reveals me and gives me to myself. For we have been created in this word, and so it contains our entire truth, the whole concept of each of us, a concept so unimaginably great and beatific that we would never have thought it possible. But this concept is something we only encounter in the word of God. And we cannot lift it out of the word of God and take it home with us. We are only true so long as we are in him, so long as we are branches of his vine, allowing ourselves to be shaped and governed by his sovereignly free

- life. He alone can tell us what, in truth, we are; one word sufficed for Mary Magdalen, blinded with tears at the tomb: ‘Mary!’ This personal name, uttered by the lips of him who is Eternal Life, is a person’s true concept. In it the believer is given his true I in God on the basis of pure grace and the forgiveness of sins; but it comes with all the compelling force of a love which, of its very nature, demands and appropriates everything. Nothing in man can be understood apart from this love.” Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Prayer*, (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1986), 25–6.
- ²⁷ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Moment of Christian Witness* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1969), 101.
- ²⁸ E.g., “In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food!” (Heb 5:12). cf. 1 Cor 3:2.
- ²⁹ David Bentley Hart, *The Experience of God: Being, Consciousness, Bliss* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 9–10.
- ³⁰ We are indebted to the brilliant and pioneering work done by missiologists Jackson Wu, Jason Georges, Werner Mischke, and others who form part of the HonorShame.com and the associated movement and conference. These theologians ought to be read widely.
- ³¹ Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001). See short article by Ransomed Heart, “A Gospel of Sin Management,” January 14, 2018. <https://www.ransomedheart.com/daily-reading/gospel-sin-management> .
- ³² Jayson Georges, “Honor/Shame Sub-Cultures in the U.S.,” *Mission Frontiers*, January–February, 2015. <http://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/honor-shame-sub-cultures-in-the-u-s> .
- ³³ Jackson Wu, “Why has the Church Lost ‘Face’?,” *Mission Frontiers*, January–February, 2015. <http://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/why-has-the-church-lost-face> .
- ³⁴ Georges, “Honor/Shame Sub-Cultures in the U.S.” Further, Georges writes, “Western theology leads us to read Paul’s epistle to the Romans as a legal letter explaining heavenly acquittal of our individual transgressions. But Romans rarely uses courtroom terms like guilt (0x), forgiveness (1x), or innocence (1x). Rather it places much greater emphasis on shame (6x), honor (15x), and glory (20x). In Romans, Paul addresses the corrosive ethnic divisions between Roman Christians (Jew-Gentile and Roman-barbarian) by replacing their false claims to honor with their new basis for true honor in God, equally available to all who trust in God’s honored Messiah. In other words, Romans confronts “group righteousness” (claims to superiority over other groups), not just “works righteousness” (pride in one’s moral goodness). In this context, Paul reveals sin as the shameful

manipulation of cultural systems that dishonors God (1:23–24, 2:23–24, 3:23). The trajectory of “The Romans Road” leads to a salvation of divine honor, eternal glory, and membership into God’s family (Rom 2:7, ch 4; 8:18, 10:10–11).”

³⁵ <http://honorshame.com/about/> .

³⁶ Brené Brown, “Listening to Shame,” March 16, 2012, TED Talk. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psN1DORYYV0> ; and Werner Mischke, *The Global Gospel: Achieving Missional Impact in our Global World* (Scottsdale: Mission One, 2015), section 1.5.

³⁷ Dan DeWitt, “The Difference between Guilt and Shame,” *The Gospel Coalition*, February 19, 2018. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/difference-between-guilt-shame/> .

³⁸ Two other key differences between this Eastern frame (shame culture) and the Western approach (guilt culture) are that: - In a guilt culture, God is Lawgiver and Judge; in a shame culture, God is Father. - In a guilt culture, Jesus’ death on a cross satisfies divine justice and makes forgiveness possible; in a shame culture, his shameful death covers our shame and his faithfulness to God restores our honor with the Father.

³⁹ Wu, “Why has the Church Lost ‘Face’?”

⁴⁰ This is one of the assumptions of the various conferences and forums that are highlighting the shame and honor dimensions of the gospel, e.g., <http://honorshame.com/> .

⁴¹ By the way, many world religions have their own versions of the Prodigal Son story, but Christianity is the only one where the person of God “runs” to the son. The others have him waiting on the porch and impose hoops for the son to jump through before the love of the father is given.

⁴² See Scott McKnight, *A Community Called Atonement* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007) and Douglas John Hall, *Professing the Faith: Christian Theology in North American Context* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993), 413ff, for excellent theological analysis of the ways in which God addresses discreet issues of human sin. In a nutshell, Hall categorizes the various theories of atonement into three groups, and correlates them with three types of anxiety. The correlation is as follows:

- 1) Rescue/deliverance atonement—Anxiety of fate and death;
- 2) Sacrifice atonement—Anxiety of guilt and condemnation;
- 3) Demonstration/revelation atonement—Anxiety of meaninglessness and despair.

⁴³ Georges, “Why has nobody told me this before?,” *Mission Frontiers*, January–February 2015. <http://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/honor-shame-sub-cultures-in-the-u.s> .

⁴⁴ Hirsch, 5Q, xxiii.

⁴⁵ Richard Rohr, “Life as Participation,” *Center for Action and Contemplation*, April 1, 2015. <https://cac.org/life-as-participation-2015-04-01/> .

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Hirsch, 5Q, xxiii–xxiv.

⁴⁸ Adrienne von Speyr, *The Letter to the Ephesians* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996), ebook [no page numbers in ebook].

7 THE GREAT RE[FRAMATION]

¹ C. S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (New York: Harper Collins, 1950), 163.

² Walter Hooper, *The Narnian Chronicles of C.S. Lewis: Past Watchful Dragons* (New York: Collier Books, 1971), ix.

³ Ibid., ix.

⁴ G. K. Chesterton suggested that fairy tales “make rivers run with wine only to make us remember, for one wild moment, that they run with water.” They increase our wonder and enhance our reality. G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy* (New York: John Lane, 1908), 96.

⁵ Dave Radford, “Stealing Past the Watchful Dragons: The Power of Story and Song,” in *CCM Magazine*, February 15, 2015. <https://www.ccmagazine.com/news/stealing-past-the-watchful-dragons-the-power-of-story-and-song/> .

⁶ Emily Dickinson, “Tell all the truth but tell it slant.”

⁷ Eugene H. Peterson, *The Word Made Flesh* (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 2010), 13.

⁸ See Dan DeWitt, “Why C. S. Lewis Didn’t Write for Christianity Today: Carl Henry wanted more ‘Mere Christianity’ and direct theology. Lewis didn’t,” *Christianity Today*, December 27, 2012. <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2012/december-web-only/why-cs-lewis-didnt-write-for-christianity-today> .

⁹ Frederick Buechner, *Telling the Truth*, 62–63.

¹⁰ Strangely enough, the words unravel and ravel mean the same thing. Unravel (ənˈrævəl); to become undone: part of the crew neck had unraveled. Ravel (ˈrævəl); to untangle or unravel something: he finished raveling out his fishing net.

¹¹ See Mt 5:17–20.

- ¹² N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 132.
- ¹³ In Scott Nelson, *Mission: Living for the Purposes of God* (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 2013), 39.
- ¹⁴ Richard Velkley, *Freedom and the Human Person* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 13.
- ¹⁵ Moore, *The Human and the Holy*, 39.
- ¹⁶ Donald Miller, *Searching for God Knows What* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 155.
- ¹⁷ Dr. Mary Catherine Bateson, “Composing a Life,” October 1, 2015, in *On Being*, by Krista Tippett, podcast, <https://onbeing.org/programs/mary-catherine-bateson-composing-a-life/>.
- ¹⁸ Ronald V. Evans, *Making Sense of the Old Testament* (Victoria, BC: Friesen Press, 2018), 119.
- ¹⁹ Dr. Mary Catherine Bateson, “Composing a Life.”
- ²⁰ Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *Prayer*, 157–8.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, 159.
- ²² Don Everts, *Jesus with Dirty Feet* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1999), cover.
- ²³ See Don Everts and Doug Schaupp, *I Once was Lost* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 2008), 63–64.
- ²⁴ Moore, *The Human and the Holy*, 37–41.
- ²⁵ Amos N. Wilder, *Theopoetic: Theology and the Religious Imagination* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 1.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.
- ²⁷ Walter Brueggemann, “The Prophetic Imagination,” December 19, 2013, in *On Being*, by Krista Tippett, podcast, <https://onbeing.org/programs/walter-brueggemann-the-prophetic-imagination/>. Coleridge wrote that poetry exists to “awaken the mind’s attention from the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us”; to remove “the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude; we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand”. We need to be awakened. Coleridge, *Biographica Literaria*, chapter fourteen.
- ²⁸ Eugene Peterson, *Answering God* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), 11–12.
- ²⁹ Eugene Peterson, *Subversive Spirituality* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 126.

- ³⁰ Brueggemann, *Finally Comes the Poet*, 3.
- ³¹ See Walter Brueggemann, “The Prophetic Imagination,” podcast.
- ³² Percy Bysshe Shelley, “A Defence of Poetry,” *Poetry Foundation*. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/69388/a-defence-of-poetry>.
- ³³ David Jeffrey, *Houses of the Interpreter: Reading Scripture, Reading Culture* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2003), 186.
- ³⁴ Krystal Alexandria Pothier, *The True Myth: C. S. Lewis and Remythologization*, 1.
- ³⁵ Tolkien, himself one of the greatest mythic writers of all time, used myth throughout his writings to steep his stories with a mysterious “otherness”, a sense of mystery and magic that hints at a reality beyond that which human reason can fathom.
- ³⁶ Alister McGrath, *C. S. Lewis—A Life: Eccentric Genius, Reluctant Prophet* (Carol Stream, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.), 149.
- ³⁷ Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, 279.
- ³⁸ McGrath, *C. S. Lewis*, 149.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, 149.
- ⁴⁰ Louis A. Markos, “Myth Matters: Why C.S. Lewis’s books remain models for Christian apologists in the 21st century,” *Christianity Today*, April 23, 2001.
- ⁴¹ McGrath, *C. S. Lewis*, 150.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, 148.
- ⁴³ Ed. Lesley Walmsley, “Myth Became Fact,” *C. S. Lewis Essay Collection: Faith, Christianity and the Church* (London: HarperCollins, 2002), 138–42.
- ⁴⁴ Adrienne von Speyr, *The Letter to the Ephesians* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1996), no page numbers provided.
- ⁴⁵ We must make every effort to try to read Paul beyond his captivity by the scholastic-rationalists—the forensic accountants of religion—of various denominational hues, who have effectively imprisoned him in the scholastic formula.
- ⁴⁶ Gen 26:15.
- ⁴⁷ Lin-Manuel Miranda, “Lin-Manuel Miranda,” January 3, 2014, in *The Dramatists Guild’s In the Room Series*, podcast, <https://www.dramatistsguild.com/education-category/in-the-room/>.
- ⁴⁸ McGrath, *C. S. Lewis*, 277.
- ⁴⁹ Dickinson, “Tell all the truth but tell it slant.”

⁵⁰ Walter Hooper, “Walter Hooper Part 5,” 2016, in *The Eric Metaxas Show*, podcast, <https://soundcloud.com/the-eric-metaxas-show/walter-hooper-part-6>.

8 I’LL HAVE WHAT SHE’S HAVING

¹ Ann M. Trousdale, *Cotton Patch Rebel: The Story of Clarence Jordan* (Eugene, Oregon: Resource Publications, 2015), Kindle edition, 98.

² Jordan was a student of biblical language (a PhD in New Testament Greek from Southern Baptist Seminary) and published the *Cotton Patch Bible* in 1969. Jordan’s take on the Gospels and a few of Paul’s letters was his attempt to not only translate individual words and phrases but to contextualize the Scripture to the southern United States during the time of the Civil Rights Movement. It was a radical reframing. He believed the Bible related directly to his own life and time, and he wanted other people to see it that way too, not simply as a history of some remote time and place. So he began translating the stories of Scripture as if they had taken place in rural Georgia in the twentieth century.

Jesus wasn’t born in Bethlehem, but in Gainesville, Georgia.

Jerusalem became Atlanta; Rome was translated as Washington, DC.

When Herod killed the newborns at the time of Jesus’ birth, the tragedy was a result of a bomb being thrown into the nursery of the big church downtown.

“Jew and Gentile” became “white man and Negro.”

Jesus wasn’t “crucified”—he was “lynched,” as Jordan believed that no other term could adequately communicate the horrific nature into a current context.

It was said that Jordan was “a witty storyteller, who could literally keep an audience of two or two thousand captivated for hours. His humor could have you rolling one minute and gasping for breath the next.” Trousdale, *Cotton Patch Rebel*, xi.

³ Greg Carey, “Recalling Clarence Jordan, Radical Disciple,” *Huffington Post*, June 3, 2012, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/greg-carey/clarence-jordan-radical-disciple_b_1548373.html.

⁴ *Briars in the Cotton Patch: The Story of Koinonia Farms*, film, directed by Faith Fuller. USA: Vision Video/Gateway Films, 2012.

⁵ Trousdale, *Cotton Patch Rebel*, 44; 86.

⁶ Gen 4:1.

⁷ Callid Keefe-Perry, *Way to Water*, 125.

⁸ Søren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

⁹ David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (New York, 1991 edition), 77–78. See the whole of chapter two: “A theological portrait of the theologian.” And consider this from von Balthasar: “Just as God does not show an abstract, theoretical, lifeless and ‘dead’ faithfulness toward man, concealing his divine truth in mere ‘propositions’ and ‘laws’, but causes his truth to become real, pulsating life and flesh in terms of living history, so he cannot be satisfied with a ‘dead’ faith as man’s response. He is the living God, ‘bodily’ present with and for man, and so he calls for an ‘embodied’ response: man, in the entirety of his existence as a hearer and answerer of the word.” Von Balthasar, *Prayer*, 36.

¹⁰ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Word Made Flesh: Explorations in Theology Vol. 1* (San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 1964), 182.

¹¹ We are now more aware that theology is always founded upon and sustained by spiritual experience. Theology needs to be lived as well as studied. Theology as a whole, not merely spirituality, demands a practical dimension. A theologian is a theological person, not merely someone who uses theological tools. Personal faith is inextricably bound up with theological investigation. Being a theological person involves more than intellectual capacities. “A ‘theological person’ is someone whose self-consciousness is fully impregnated, without any residual space, by a sense of a proper belonging to Christ and to his history. This belonging is not to a Christ reduced to a personality, or to an ideal, or an enunciator of values, or pretext for social causes but, to the risen Christ, a person living and precious, loved with all the force of one’s being.” Antonio Sicari, “Mission, Ascesis, Crisis,” *Communio* 17 (1990), 339.

¹² “The ‘perfect’ Christian is also the perfect proof of the truth of Christianity: in the Christian’s existential transparency, Christianity becomes comprehensible both in itself and to the world and itself exhibits a spiritual transparency. The saint [that is, the holy human being] is the apology for the Christian religion.” von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, 229.

¹³ Martin Buber, *Hasidism* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1948), 74. To the truly devout believer in Judaism, “the man who lives solely by his mind is further from the divine than the simple man, so long as he had not brought to unity the manifoldness of his life. Therefore, the Baal Shem Tov taught that man should do what he does with his whole being. Only that which one does with all his might is the truth, and only when one acts with his whole being does he begin to love. Thus to the Hasid it is not the specific character of the action that is important but the inner dedication and intention that is brought to it. [...] Rabbi Leib, the son of Sarah, said of those rabbis who expound the Torah: ‘What does it amount to—their expounding the Torah? A man

should see to it that all his actions are a Torah and that he himself becomes so entirely a Torah that one can learn from his habits and his motions and his motionless clinging to God.’ In Hasidism ‘the holiest teaching is rejected, if it is found in someone only as a content of his thinking.’ If the soul is dissociated it is at the mercy of its organic life, but to the degree that it has attained wholeness and unity, to that degree it is the master of its body and saves and guards its health.” Maurice Friedman, *Martin Buber: Mystic, Existentialist, Social Prophet: A Study in the Redemption of Evil* (PhD thesis, University of Chicago, 1950), 360.

¹⁴ “There is simply no real truth which does not have to be incarnated in an act or in some action.” This is the logic behind von Balthasar’s theology of the heroic form of discipleship—that of the exemplary saint. “They know the truth by participating in it; their theology, philosophy, and metaphysics arise from the action of their lives, their receptivity and obedience, and their prayer. It is through their prayers that the saints perform the truth of Being, knowing it and making it known.” Of course, von Balthasar realizes that such a level of integration is an ideal which is perhaps seldom realized in practice. Nonetheless, that does not deter him from making the further claim that unless the possibility of such an integration is presupposed, the activity of Christian theologians is unintelligible. Moser, *Love Itself is Understanding*, 38.

¹⁵ “Love, therefore, shows itself more in works than in words: because works are the gravity of its words. Without proof through the deed, not only would love’s word be not fully credible, but the lover himself would not really have exhibited or uttered his love. He would not have had the chance to unveil his own hidden mystery and to make visible its power, depth, and fullness.” Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Logic: The Truth of the World Vol. 1* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2001), 177–8.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 494.

¹⁷ It is by observing the lives of holy people that one becomes personally compelled by what they do and then begins to imitate them as models of what human holiness ought to look like. Hence, the living out of a holy lifestyle is what performs the essential role in moving others towards Christian faith. And here, imitation is crucial—for it is by imitating what holy people can be seen to do—for example in acts of selfless love and service of the poor, in the prayer-filled following of Jesus, and so on—that one is able to come to live the holy life oneself; and this then enables one to see God’s reality in its fullness. It is their capacity to hear the Word and respond in obedience that sheds new light on the faith and makes it credible. See Gawronski, *Word and Silence*, iBook, no page numbers provided.

¹⁸ Taylor, *The Go-Between God*, 71.

¹⁹ Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 227.

²⁰ Hugh Halter and Matt Smay, *The Tangible Kingdom: Creating Incarnational Community* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 81.

²¹ We were introduced to the idea of *hiddur mitzvah* through Lauren Winner’s chapter in *For the Beauty of the Church*. W. David O. Taylor, *For the Beauty of the Church* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2010), 74–76.

²² *Masechet Shabbat*, 133b. The rabbis go on to theorize about the ways to a beautiful tabernacle, a beautiful scroll, how to celebrate festivals, how to celebrate Sabbath, etc. This thinking finds its origins in Exodus 15:2. After God miraculously rescues the Israelites from Egypt, the people sing: “This is my God and I will *navah* him with praises.” The Hebrew word *navah*, in verb form, translates as *to make beautiful*, or *to adorn*. In defining *hiddur mitzvah*, the rabbis wrestle with the idea of *just what does it mean to beautify God?* Their answer: “Adorn yourself before him by a truly elegant fulfillment of your religious duties.”

²³ Markus Barth, *Ephesians: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on Chapters 1–3* (New York: Doubleday, 1974), 114–115.

²⁴ Fred Rogers, “Revisiting Fred Rogers’ 2002 Commencement Address,” *Dartmouth News*, March 27, 2017. <https://news.dartmouth.edu/news/2018/03/revisiting-fred-rogers-2002-commencement-address> .

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Chris Horst, “Gardening While the World Burns,” *Values & Capitalism*, 2015. <http://www.valuesandcapitalism.com/gardening-world-burns/> .

²⁷ McGrath, *C. S. Lewis*, 134.

²⁸ “Julian was concerned that the Christians’ acts of hospitality and philanthropy were winning too many of his subjects. He decided to launch an offensive against them by mobilizing his officials and the pagan priesthood to *out-love* the Christians. He decreed that a system of food distribution be started and that hostels be built for poor travellers. He wrote:

‘Why do we not observe that it is their benevolence to strangers, their care for the graves of the dead and the pretended holiness of their lives that have done most to increase atheism? I believe that we ought really and truly to practice every one of those virtues [...] For it is disgraceful that when the impious Galileans support not only their own poor but ours as well, all men see that our people lack aid from us.’

Perhaps not surprisingly, Julian’s new social program utterly failed. He couldn’t motivate pagan priests or Roman officials to care that much for the poor. He failed to realize that the Christians were filled with the Holy Spirit of love and motivated by his grace. The message they shared—that

God loved the world—was patently absurd to the average Roman. The pagan gods cared nothing for humankind. And yet in the miserable world of the Roman Empire, the Christians not only proclaimed the mercy of God, they demonstrated it.” Michael Frost, *The Five Habits of Highly Missional People: Taking the BELLS challenge to Fulfill the Mission of God* (Exponential Resources), 12–13.

- ²⁹ *When Harry Met Sally*, film, directed by Rob Reiner. USA: Castle Rock Entertainment and Nelson Entertainment, 1989.
- ³⁰ Maria Popova, “Ursula K. Le Guin on Art, Storytelling, and the Power of Language to Transform and Redeem”, *Brain Pickings* January 30, 2018. <https://www.brainpickings.org/2018/01/30/ursula-k-le-guin-walking-on-the-water/> .
- ³¹ James K. A. Smith, @james_ka_smith, Twitter post, 2.49 p.m., June 6, 2016.
- ³² James K. A. Smith, “An Announcement from Image,” *Image*. <https://imagejournal.org/editorial-announcement/> .
- ³³ G. K. Chesterton, *Manalive* (London: Forgotten Books, 1912), 142.
- ³⁴ Eugene Peterson, *Practice Resurrection: A Conversation on Growing Up in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 139.
- ³⁵ W. David O. Taylor, Taylor Worley (eds.), *Contemporary Art and the Church: A Conversation Between Two Worlds* (Downer’s Grove: IVP Academic, 2017), 211.
- ³⁶ Dickinson, “Tell all the truth but tell it slant.”
- ³⁷ The poet and writer George Bernanos exemplifies this radical prophetic openness to God when he cries: “Shall we die a wretched little death having ventured nothing, when the wind that comes from another universe is already striking us in the face? [...] I lie down on the bed of the waves and of the wind—I get my direction. Once we bring order into our thought, it overflows even in the heart.” Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Bernanos: An Ecclesial Existence* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996), no page numbers provided.
- ³⁸ The great southern writer Walker Percy described the calling of an artist this way: “My theory is that the purpose of art is to transmit universal truths of a sort, but of a particular sort, that in art, whether it’s poetry, fiction or painting, you are telling the reader or listener or viewer something he already knows but which he doesn’t quite know that he knows, so that in the action of communication he experiences a recognition, a feeling that he has been there before, a shock of recognition. And so, what the artist does, or tries to do, is simply to validate the human experience and to tell people the deep human truths which they already unconsciously know.” In David Zahl, “What Else Is There? A Few From Walker Percy’s *Signposts*

in a Strange Land,” *Mockingbird*, February 5, 2008, <https://www.mbird.com/2008/02/walker-percy-quote/> .

- ³⁹ Allen Verhey and Joseph S. Harvard, *Ephesians: A Theological Commentary on the Bible* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 86.
- ⁴⁰ *Brothers Bloom*, motion picture, produced by R. Bergman, W. Japhet, J. D. Stern. Written and directed by R. Johnson, United States: Endgame Entertainment, 2008.
- ⁴¹ N. T. Wright, “How Can the Bible be Authoritative?” *NTWrightPage*. <http://ntwrightpage.com/2016/07/12/how-can-the-bible-be-authoritative/> .
- ⁴² Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (1892) (public domain). Or as von Balthasar says, “the good which God does to us can only be experienced as the truth if we share in performing it [...] and this is possible because God has already taken the drama of existence which plays on the world stage and inserted it into his quite different ‘play’ which, nonetheless, he wishes to play on our stage. It is a case of the play within the play: our play ‘plays’ in his play.” Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theodrama: Theological Dramatic Theory, Vol. 1* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1983), 20.

9 SHARDS OF HEAVEN’S KALEIDOSCOPE

- ¹ Willa Cather, *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 216.
- ² Eric von Däniken, *Chariots of the Gods: Was God an Astronaut?* (Souvenir Press:1990).
- ³ Von Balthasar, *Prayer*, 23.
- ⁴ Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch, *Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st-Century Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013), 134.
- ⁵ Bruxy Cavey, @Bruxy, Twitter post, 6.12 a.m., June 5, 2018. <https://twitter.com/Bruxy/status/1003987963976577025> .
- ⁶ *Criminal Minds*, “Compulsion,” 2005. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0550487/characters/nm0001597> .
- ⁷ Tim Keller, *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power, and the Only Hope that Matters* (New York: Penguin, 2001). See also James Edders, “20 Idol Crushing Questions by Tim Keller,” March 5, 2018, <http://jamedders.com/heart-idols/> for a list of questions that expose idolatry.
- ⁸ We note at this point that his methodology was entirely different when he engaged in Jerusalem. In Jerusalem he is among God’s chosen people with

a long heritage in the biblical story and instruction. His preaching there is in effect a reinterpretation of the nation's story in light of the coming of the Messiah. He is exegeting the Scriptures. It is as if he has his huge King James Version out and he is preachin' in the Bible belt, "line-by-line, precept-by-precept." In Athens, he reverses the process; he does not exegete the Scriptures; rather, he starts with art, poetry, religion, and philosophy, and ends with the gospel. Two different starting points, same goal. If the point is not obvious, we suggest that we are now more in Athens than we are in Jerusalem. We need to adopt a missionary stance in relation to our culture.

- ⁹ "In any given situation theology should relate itself not only to the philosophical ideas of the time but to its symbolic life and creative impulses [...] In our time when the theological tradition has lost so much of its cogency it is particularly important that it should redefine itself in relation to the dominant myths, dreams, images of the age, that is, with the contemporary quest-patterns of a changing world." Wilder, *Theopoetics*, 25.
- ¹⁰ TEDx Talks, 2010. *The Power of Vulnerability: Brené Brown at TEDxHouston*, online video. https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_on_vulnerability?language=en .
- ¹¹ "This is America": Childish Gambino, online video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYOjWnS4cMY> .
- ¹² Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of Lord: A Theological Aesthetics, Vol. IV* (San Francisco: Ignatius), 12–13. He takes his cue here from the great poet Goethe who said that, "men are productive in poetry and art only as long as they remain religious."
- ¹³ Rapaille, *The Culture Code*, 8, 9.
- ¹⁴ See for example, Mt 9:14–15, 15:1–3; Mk 2: 1–11, 4:10,13; Lk 6:1–3, 12:41–43; Jn 8:3–10, 18:22–23.
- ¹⁵ In looking for the subtext, we are trying to identify the motivation and rationale that is behind the presenting issue. Both Jesus (e.g., Matthew 15: 17–20) and Paul (e.g., Colossians 1:20–21) characterized the basic mind or disposition of a person as evil, and the evidence was to be seen in their evil works. The cause of their sinfulness was not their evil deeds; rather their evil deeds came from their sinfulness. Evil works are simply evidence of the heart of the matter, which is the mind or disposition. An axiom of Scripture is that "by their fruit you will recognize them" (Matthew 7:16); it is "the mind," therefore, that produces the fruit of actions.
- ¹⁶ This will form the basis of a book that Deb is working on. Used with permission.

- ¹⁷ Wanda Mallette, Bob Morrison and Patti Ryan, "Lookin' For Love," Full Moon, 1980.
- ¹⁸ *Looking for par'Mach in All the Wrong Places, Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, television, directed by Andrew J. Robinson. USA: Paramount Studios, 1996.
- ¹⁹ Redeemer CFS, 2012. James K. A. Smith, *Culture as Liturgy*, online video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdVkXk3NADE> .
- ²⁰ According to Marion, some phenomena are "saturated" with intention and exceed any concepts or limiting horizons that a constituting subject could impose upon them. Marion describes phenomena which are saturated according to quality as dazzling (*éblouissant*). The intensity of the intuition given by them exceeds our capacity to see and prevents us from perceiving them as objects. He discusses these phenomena exclusively in terms of visual perception, and proposes the idol as the paradigm of a phenomenon saturated according to quality, describing the way in which paintings can function as idols. See Jean-Luc Marion, *In Excess: Studies of Saturated Phenomena* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002). For some brilliant analyses of the inner dynamics of idolatry, Jean-Luc Marion, *God Without Being* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012). And his key interpreter Shane Mackinlay, *Interpreting Excess: Jean-Luc Marion, Saturated Phenomena, and Hermeneutics* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010). Also see Owen Barfield, *Saving the Appearances: A Study in Idolatry* (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1988).
- ²¹ C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*, 30–31. Created objects, as Lewis explains, turn into idols when we mistake them for ultimate realities. Or, as he memorably expresses it elsewhere: "You can't get second things by putting them first; you can get second things only by putting first things first." C. S. Lewis, "First and Second Things," *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970), 278–280.
- ²² Even the types of drugs indicate something of these categorizations. For instance, there are the so-called "downers" (opiates/opioids, sedative-hypnotics, and alcohol), which are largely ways to escape through invoking a careless sense of the world. And then there are the "uppers" (cocaine, amphetamines, ecstasy, etc.), which are the party drugs.
- ²³ For Augustine, the difference between enjoying (*frui*) something and using (*uti*) it is that "to enjoy something is to hold fast to it in love for its own sake." Accordingly, while we may use this good created order, only the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is to be enjoyed. Only he can be loved strictly for his own sake. The temporal, created order may only be used with an eye to the eternal purpose of the enjoyment of God. (Needless to say, for Augustine, the word "use" did not have the negative connotation of "abuse," which it often carries today.) This point is important because it is precisely

by celebrating created realities for their own sake that we unhinge them from their grounding in the eternal Word or *Logos* of God. Unhinged from their transcendent source, created objects lose their source of meaning; they become the unsuspecting victims of the objectifying human gaze and turn into the manageable playthings of the totalizing human grasp. The irony of a misunderstood focus on the goodness of creation is that it results in its mirror image: a Gnostic-type of devaluation of created life. Hans Boersma, *Heavenly Participation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 30. C. S. Lewis elaborated on this in his essays on ethics called *God in the Dock*.

²⁴ Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*, 27.

10 ROMANCING THE CITY

¹ iLovePrincessDiana, 2010, “Princess Diana’s engagement interview”, online video. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wg_fib2gQaU .

² Much of the “romancing” language and thinking comes from Michael Frost, Exponential Conference, main session, 2011. Also here: Michael Frost, “Romancing the City,” August 27, 2012, in Exponential Podcast. <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/exponential/id194168324> .

³ This story was also used in Alan’s book with Michael Frost, *The Shaping of Things to Come*, 198–200. Used with permission of John Smith.

⁴ Actually, mission is something that God is always (eternally) doing and precedes the work of the church, individual or corporate. This was precisely the key point of David Bosch’s seminal book *Transforming Mission*, that missiology is an intrinsic dimension of the doctrine of God *proper*, and not the doctrine of the church. The missiology precedes and informs ecclesiology and not the other way around. See *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in the Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2011).

⁵ In a conversation, used with permission.

⁶ Lesslie Newbigin, *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 56. “Prevenience” here is a now defunct English word that simply means “preparatory”—a grace that goes before and prepares the way for faith and discipleship. It is particularly significant in all Wesleyan theology.

⁷ John Drane, *The McDonaldization of the Church: Consumer Culture and the Church’s Future* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2000), 63.

⁸ Darrell Guder, *The Continuing Conversion of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), Kindle Edition, Kindle Locations 1094–1098.

⁹ “St Paul says: ‘I find within myself an eternal struggle. My inner nature contends with the eternal hunt of the spirit, and I do what I do not want,

and I do not do what I do want.’ So these two hunt one another, and in between them comes God from above and hunts them both, and likewise grace, and where this hunt is truly understood, it is a very good thing, for ‘all those hunted by the Spirit of God are children of God.’” *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics, Vol. V* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991), 56.

¹⁰ Lawrence Kushner, *God Was in This Place and I, I Did Not Know it: Finding Self, Spirituality and Ultimate Meaning* (Jewish Lights Publishing, 2016), 27.

¹¹ Buechner, *Secrets in the Dark*, 183.

¹² Mike Breen story, told by Mike Frost at Exponential Conference, main session, 2011.

¹³ Josh Packard and Ashleigh Hope, *Church Refugees* (Loveland, Colorado: Group, 2015), 6.

¹⁴ Packard and Hope, *Church Refugees*, 28, 29.

¹⁵ Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird* (New York: Popular Library, 1960), 34.

¹⁶ Frost and Hirsch, *Shaping*, 88.

¹⁷ Similar to empathy (which takes place between people) we can learn from psychology in this matter. Drawing on his half-century practice as a therapist, Eric Fromm offers six guidelines for mastering the art of empathetic listening:

The basic rule for practicing this art is the complete concentration of the listener.

Nothing of importance must be on their mind, they must be optimally free from anxiety as well as from greed.

They must possess a freely-working imagination which is sufficiently concrete to be expressed in words.

They must be endowed with a capacity for empathy with another person and strong enough to feel the experience of the other as if it were his own (com-passion).

The condition for such empathy is a crucial facet of the capacity for love. To understand another means to love that person—not in the erotic sense but in the sense of reaching out to him and of overcoming the fear of losing oneself.

Understanding and loving are inseparable. If they are separate, it is a cerebral process and the door to essential understanding remains closed.

Eric Fromm, *The Art of Listening* (New York: Continuum International, 1994), 192–193.

- ¹⁸ David W. Augsburger, *Pastoral Counseling Across Cultures* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1986), 31.
- ¹⁹ Emmanuel Y. Lartey, *In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counseling* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2003), 93–94.
- ²⁰ John Wood, “David Ogilvy’s Copywriting Technique That Made a Homeless Man’s Cup Runneth Over...”, *American Writers & Artists Inc.*, February 2013. <https://www.awai.com/2013/02/david-ogilvys-copywriting-technique/> .
- ²¹ Rich Gorman, *Just Step In* (Exponential Resources, 2014), 17, Ebook.
- ²² Steve Hollinghurst, *Mission Shaped Evangelism: The Gospel in Contemporary Culture* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2010), 168.
- ²³ Richard Beck has written brilliantly, contrasting Freud in a world of “new apologetics” in *The Authenticity of Faith* (Abilene, Texas: Abilene Christian University Press, 2012).
- ²⁴ For example an inscription celebrating the birth of Octavian reads, “The birthday of the god was for the world the beginning of ‘joyful tidings.’” Michael Card, *Mark: The Gospel of Passion* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 27–28.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 27–28.
- ²⁶ Wright, *Simply Good News*, 154.

AFTERWORD

- ¹ Byron Williams, “The Dangers of Oversimplification,” *Huffington Post*, August 22, 2016, updated August 23, 2017. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/byron-williams/the-danger-of-oversimplif_b_11650440.html sited 2/11/18 .
- ² Brueggemann, *Finally Comes the Poet*, 1–2.
- ³ G. K. Chesterton, *The Romance of Orthodoxy*, on *Page by Page Books*, 5. https://www.pagebypagebooks.com/Gilbert_K_Chesterton/Orthodoxy/The_Romance_of_Orthodoxy_p5.html .

APPENDIX 1

- ¹ Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus’s Essential Teachings on Discipleship* (New York: HarperOne, 2014)

- ² Dallas Willard, “How Does the Disciple Live?” <http://www.dwillard.org/articles/individual/how-does-the-disciple-live> .
- ³ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Touchstone, 1995), 43ff.
- ⁴ He continues ... “Because the Son of God became Man, because he is the Mediator, for that reason alone the only true relation we can have with him is to follow him. Discipleship is bound to Christ as the Mediator, and where it is properly understood, it necessarily implies faith in the Son of God as the Mediator. Only the Mediator, the God-Man, can call men to follow him [...] Discipleship without Jesus Christ is a way of our own choosing. It may be the ideal way. It may even lead to martyrdom, but it is devoid of all promise. Jesus will certainly reject it.” Bonhoeffer, *Cost*, 59.
- ⁵ See also Jaques Ellul, *The Subversion of Christianity* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2011), for detailed analysis of Christ-less Christian religion.

APPENDIX 2

- ¹ Many reading this book would be aware of the distinctive meaning of the Hebrew word for knowledge, a word that is used for sexual intercourse, as well as for knowledge of God. “The original meaning of the Hebrew verb ‘to recognize, to know,’ in distinction from Western languages, belongs not to the sphere of reflection but to that of personal contact. In biblical Hebrew, in order to know something, one doesn’t observe it, but one must come into contact with it. This basic difference is developed in the realm of a relation of the soul to other beings, where the fact of mutuality changes everything. At the center is not a perceiving of one another but a contact of being—intercourse. This theme of knowing rises to a remarkable and incomparable height in the relation of God to those he has chosen.
- “Closely allied to this way of knowing is the role played by passion or affection in spirituality. Passion requires participation, involvement, faith. Søren Kierkegaard can say, ‘If passion is eliminated, faith no longer exists.’ The truth of God can be found only by such a passionate search and by applying one’s whole personality existentially. The criterion of the genuine search for truth is what Kierkegaard called *inwardness*, which requires an intense personal concern with it to be able to understand and assimilate it.” Hirsch and Frost, *ReJesus*, 151.
- ² John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1987), I. 6.2.
- ³ Bonhoeffer, *Cost*, 69.
- ⁴ “The only way that we become convinced of our own sense of power, dignity, and the power of God is by actually doing it—by crossing a line, a line that

has a certain degree of nonsensicalness and unprovability to it—and that’s why we call it faith. In the crossing of that line, and acting in a new way, then and only then, can we really believe what we say we believe in the first place. We do not think ourselves into a new way of living as much as we live ourselves into new ways of thinking. Lifestyle issues ask much more of us than mere belief systems.” Richard Rohr, *Preparing for Christmas: Daily Meditations for Advent* (Franciscan Media, 2012), 48.

⁵ James Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark: The Pillar New Testament Commentary Series* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 261.

⁶ Bonhoeffer, *Cost*, 92.

⁷ It is the same in the Hebrew *shema* and the Greek *hupakouo*. So, for instance, von Balthasar equates “hearing” with possessing Christian faith: “Believing and hearing the word of God are one and the same. Faith is the power to transcend one’s own personal ‘truth’, merely human and of this world, and to attain the absolute truth of the God who unveils and offers himself to us, to let it be decisive in our regard and prevail. The person who believes, who declares himself a believer, thereby proclaims that he is ready to hear the word of God.” In Victoria Harrison, *The Apologetic Value of Human Holiness: Von Balthasar’s Christocentric Philosophical Anthropology* (Springer Science and Business Media, 2000), 27.

⁸ Bonhoeffer, *Cost*, 3, 219.

APPENDIX 3

¹ This becomes still more evident when we recall that the word *mind* (νοῦς) constitutes “not an instrument of thought” but “a mode of thought” or “mind-set.” Similarly, νοῦς denotes “a constellation of thoughts and beliefs which provides the criteria for judgments and actions.” It speaks of character or disposition. It is because Christ lives in those who have received the Spirit that their stance and outlook can be those of Christ, and in this sense they are “spiritual.” The Hebrew represented by the LXX in any case has רוּחַ (*ruach*) of God, and Paul uses πνεῦμα θεοῦ, *Spirit of God*, and πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ, *Spirit of Christ*, in ways that are at times virtually interchangeable. Rom 8:9 offers one example: “The Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.” Hanson argues that Paul is aware of this background in 1 Cor 2:16. Thus, when he prays that Christians may reflect “the mind of Christ,” Paul cites the self-humiliation of Christ in the existence of a “slave” and the cross (Phil 2:5). “The change of expression from ‘Lord’ in 16a to ‘Christ’ in 16b binds the true divine wisdom to the crucified Christ, and thereby excludes the gnostic gospel of a transcendent wisdom.” Paul will expound practical entailments of this in 3:1–4. A. Thiselton, *The New International*

Greek Testament Commentary: The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 278 (in logos).

² For explorations on the idea of nous/mind see D. R. Brown and E. T. Twist, *1 Corinthians* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), and also P. H. Towner, “Mind/Reason” In *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1996) electronic ed., 529 as well as O. Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest: Selections for the Year* (Grand Rapids, MI: Oswald Chambers Publications; Marshall Pickering, 1986).



100 Movements Publishing is a hybrid publisher, offering the benefits of both traditional and self-publishing.

OUR AUTHORS ARE **RISK-TAKERS,**
PARADIGM-SHIFTERS, INCARNATIONAL
MISSIONARIES, AND INFLUENTIAL LEADERS
WHO LOVE THE BODY OF CHRIST AND
WANT TO SPUR HER ON FOR MORE.

Our books aim to inspire and equip disciples to take hold of their God-given call to make disciples and to see kingdom impact in every sphere of society.

Changing the Conversation

OUR BOOKS SHIFT PARADIGMS, EQUIP
LEADERS, AND INSPIRE MISSIONAL
DISCIPLES TO PLAY THEIR PART
IN CATALYZING MISSIONAL MOVEMENTS.



For more information please visit us at 100Mpublishing.com