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Editorial: Continuing to Learn from Andrew Fuller (1754-1815)

Stephen J. Wellum

In this issue of *SBJT*, we continue and finish our investigation into various aspects of the life and ministry of the important pastor-theologian from eighteenth-century Baptist history, Andrew Fuller. As noted in the previous issue [see *SBJT* 17.1 (2013)], our reason for doing so is to follow Scripture's exhortation to learn lessons from those who have preceded us in the Christian life. Just as the apostle Paul served as a role model for Timothy and exhorted him to

emulate his life, ministry, and doctrine as he followed Christ (see e.g., 2 Tim 3:10-13), thus passing on the baton to the next generation of leaders so that they would become, by God's grace, more faithful gospel ministers, so we are to learn from godly leaders from the past. One reason why the study of church history is so important, not only in regard to ideas and theological doc-

trines but also people, is that it helps us learn from the positive examples of godly men and women who have lived their lives in faithfulness to Christ and the gospel (and sadly, we also learn what *not* to believe, be, and do from negative examples!). In the crucible of the real world, our Christian lives are tested and challenged, and learning how people in the past responded to various challenges, helps us today respond in a more biblically faithful manner.

In our last issue, our primary focus was on the life and ministry of Andrew Fuller as a husband, father, and pastor. After giving a biographical sketch of his life, Andrew Fuller, as a family man and pastor, was discussed with the goal of learning lessons from his life for us today. Fuller was no armchair theologian; instead he served, ministered, and lived in the real world, facing all of its difficulties and challenges, and faithfully discharging his responsibilities as a Christian man and pastor. In this issue of *SBJT*, our concentration is more on the theology of Fuller and how he serves as

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an excellent role model in his biblical fidelity, sound theology, courageous defender of the faith, and gospel visionary.

It is important to remember that Andrew Fuller lived at a crucial turning point in Western history. He was an heir of the Reformation and Reformation theology, but he lived during the Enlightenment period which experienced a growing secularization and disintegration of the Christian worldview on western culture, an impact which continues to our day. The challenges he faced were slightly different than previous eras. No doubt, it is true that “there is nothing new under the sun,” but it is also true that different eras pose distinctive challenges for the church and this is certainly true of the Enlightenment era. In the Reformation period for example, the debate was not over the Christian faith as the true faith; it was more over the issue of where God had spoken and thus *sola Scriptura* vs. the Bible’s authority plus the role of the church magisterium in constructing doctrinal beliefs.

However, with the rise of the Enlightenment, the very foundation of *sola Scriptura* and thus Christian theology was questioned as human autonomy and self-sufficiency was championed. It was for this reason that the church had to respond carefully to this new challenge. So, on the one hand, the church had to respond to the influence of such views as Socinianism which sought to undermine *all* sound doctrine, while, on the other hand, she had to respond to the rise of deism and Enlightenment epistemologies. Fuller was certainly not the only pastor-theologian to do so, but his response is significant and important in its own right, as Michael Haykin’s article in this issue nicely outlines and discusses. Even though Fuller was busy in his life and pastoral ministry, he knew it was necessary to respond to these unique challenges. He, unlike so many, did not retreat from the challenge and simply let the world go by. He knew that false ideas and denials of the truth would sooner than later impact the church. It was for this reason that he took it upon himself to respond to various theological errors both inside and outside the church

in order to make sure that his people, as well as the larger Christian church, would not be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine and taken captive by “hollow and deceptive philosophy” rooted in human, fallible thinking rather than on Christ (see Col 2:8). In Fuller’s biblical and theological response to these growing and serious attacks upon the Christian faith, we find a powerful example of a Christian leader who took seriously Scripture’s exhortation to contend for the faith (Jude 3) and one who was always able to give a reason for the hope and truth of the gospel message (1 Pet 3:15-16). We must learn to follow his example today. We must ever be vigilant in our proclamation and defense of the truth of God’s Word. Fuller realized, which we must never forget, that until Jesus comes, theological doctrines must be defended anew with biblical-theological fidelity, vigor, and vigilance.

Yet, what is so instructive about Fuller’s theological response to error is that he always does so, not as an end in itself, but as a means to the end of upholding the glory of our Triune God in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ. Tom Nettles’s very helpful discussion of Fuller’s famous, *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*, nicely illustrates this point. In responding to biblical and theological heresy, Fuller’s goal was always to exalt Christ and to proclaim him as the only Lord and Savior. In this way, Fuller is a “gospel-centered” man in the true sense of that expression. His life, ministry, and theological work—whether it was in his home, in the church, or in debate with those outside the church—was always done to hallow the name of our great Triune covenant Lord, to see Christ’s kingdom brought to this earth in a greater way, and to experience God’s will being done in his life and in the church in a greater way, as he eagerly waited for the coming of our Lord Jesus. It is my prayer that if one lesson is to be learned from the life and ministry of Andrew Fuller, it is this one, for God’s glory and the good of the church.

“To Devote Ourselves to the Blessed Trinity”: Andrew Fuller and the Defense of “Trinitarian Communities”¹

Michael A. G. Haykin

INTRODUCTION

It is a curious fact that although the concept of the encyclopedia has its origins within the ideological matrix of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, when it comes to conservative expressions of theology, this era was not really conducive to encyclopedic or systematic

summaries of the Christian Faith. In this regard, a work like John Gill’s (1697–1771) *A Complete Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity* (1769–1770) was definitely out of sync with conservative theological trends. The other great Baptist theologian of this era, Andrew Fuller (1754–1815), was more typical. Though he was entirely capable of drawing up a systematic theology, he resisted doing so until it was too late. When he finally began

to write something in this vein, he had about sixteen months to live, and he never got beyond writing down his thoughts on the prolegomena of theology, the being of God, the necessity of revelation along with the inspiration of the Bible, and the doctrine of the Trinity.² Fuller was well aware of his era’s aversion to systematizing theology, for as he noted in a sermon he gave at the annual meeting of the Baptist churches of the Northamptonshire Association in 1796: “systematic divinity ... has been of late years much decried,” and that because such a way of going about doing theology was regarded as “the mark of a contracted mind, and the grand obstruction to free inquiry.”³ In other words, the Enlightenment exaltation of rational inquiry unfettered by such external authorities as divine Writ or holy Church had made a significant imprint upon the world of Christian writing. Fuller went on to note, however, that only in the realm of religious thought was such an attitude acceptable. In other spheres of thought and action, such as philosophy, agricul-

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ture, or business, it would be regarded as folly to dispense with a foundational system of first principles.⁴ Fuller was convinced that there is a system of truth to be found in the Scriptures, even though that truth is not arranged systematically.⁵ But the same was true of the world of nature, Fuller argued. There one sees a “lovely variety but amidst all this variety, an observant eye will perceive unity, order, arrangement, and fullness of design.”⁶ Whatever difficulties might therefore attend the discovery of the systematic interlocking of biblical truths, it was vital to recognize that, from God’s perspective, there was a unified body of truth. As Fuller noted in another context, to simply abandon the idea of theological truth because key aspects of it were disputed is, at best, absurd and, at worst, “infinitely ... pernicious,” for “if all disputed subjects are to be reckoned matters of mere speculation, we shall have nothing of any real use left in religion.”⁷

Now, one of the most disputed theological *loci* in the eighteenth century was also one that had been absolutely central to the Christian tradition, namely, the doctrine of the Trinity. The Trinitarianism of the Ancient Church had remained basically unchallenged until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Even during the Reformation, a most tumultuous theological era, this vital area of Christian belief did not come into general dispute, though there were a few, like Michael Servetus (1511–1553) and the Italians, Lelio Francesco Sozzini (1525–1562) and his nephew Fausto Sozzini (1539–1604),⁸ who rejected Trinitarianism for a Unitarian perspective on the Godhead. However, as Sarah Mortimer has argued in her ground-breaking study of seventeenth-century English Socinianism, in the century after the Reformation the Socinian understanding of human beings as “inquiring, reasoning and active individuals who must take responsibility for their own spiritual lives” did come to play a critical role in

undermining the way that “Trinitarian communities” in England had established theological boundaries for themselves.⁹ This was part of a growing tide of rationalism in the seventeenth century and the one following that led to a “fading of the trinitarian imagination” and to the doctrine coming under heavy attack.¹⁰ Informed by the Enlightenment’s confidence in the “omnicompetence” of human reason, increasingly the intellectual *mentalité* of this era either dismissed the doctrine of the Trinity as a philosophical and unbiblical construct of the post-Apostolic Church, and turned to classical Arianism as an alternate, though admittedly odd, perspective, or simply ridiculed it as utterly illogical, and argued for Deism or Socinianism.¹¹ Of course, this re-tooling of theological perspectives did not happen without significant conflict. Contrary to the impression given by various historical overviews of the doctrine of the Trinity, the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were actually replete with critical battles over Trinitarianism. And some of these involved the Trinitarian community of which Andrew Fuller was a member, the Particular Baptists.

THE PARTICULAR BAPTISTS: A TRINITARIAN COMMUNITY

Through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Particular Baptists in the British Isles tenaciously confessed a Trinitarian understanding of the Godhead and so, while other communities, such as the Presbyterians and General Baptists largely ceased to be Trinitarian,¹² the Particular Baptists continued to regard themselves, and that rightly, as a Trinitarian community. Their earliest confessional document, *The First London Confession of Faith* (1644/1646), had declared this about God:

In [the] ... Godhead, there is the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; being every one of them one and the same God; and therefore not divided, but

distinguished one from another by their several properties; the Father being from himself, the Son of the Father from everlasting, the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son.¹³

B. R. White has argued that this confession gave these early Baptists an extremely clear and self-conscious sense of their community's distinct identity and *raison d'être*.¹⁴ And yet, as this specific paragraph also reveals, these Baptists were desirous of declaring their complete solidarity with the mainstream of classical Christianity that was rooted in the fourth-century Trinitarian creedal declarations and that also included the medieval Western Church's commitment to the *Filioque*. The other major Particular Baptist confession of the seventeenth century, *The Second London Confession of Faith* (1677/1689), was equally forthright in its Trinitarianism—in the words of Curtis Freeman, its “words ... resonate with Nicene orthodoxy”¹⁵—and firmly linked this core Christian doctrine to spirituality. The “doctrine of the Trinity,” it affirmed, “is the foundation of all our communion with God, and comfortable dependence on him.”¹⁶

Throughout the long eighteenth century this community unhesitatingly maintained that this doctrine is, in the words of Benjamin Wallin (1711–1782), the “first and grand principle of revealed truth and the gospel.”¹⁷ In 1690, the London Baptist layman Isaac Marlow (1649–1719), for example, published a treatise on the Trinity in which he stated his conviction that of those elements of divine truth that redound most to the glory of God and best further the fellowship of believers, “the blessed doctrine of the holy Trinity is the chiefest.”¹⁸ Nearly fifty years later, the renowned preacher Joseph Stennett II (1692–1758) similarly affirmed that “the doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, is of the greatest importance to his [that is, God's] glory.”¹⁹

Typical of the Particular Baptists' grip on the doctrine of the Trinity during this era was a major defense of this doctrine by the voluminous John

Gill. His *The Doctrine of the Trinity Stated and Vindicated*—first published in 1731 and then reissued in a second edition in 1752—proved to be an extremely effective defence of the fact that there is, as Gill put it, “but one God; that there is a plurality in the Godhead; that there are three divine Persons in it; that the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God; that these are distinct in Personality, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.”²⁰ Gill was especially concerned in this treatise to affirm the eternal sonship of the second person of the Godhead. As he explained in a letter he wrote to John Davis (1702–1778), the Welsh pastor of the Baptist Church in the Great Valley, Devon, Pennsylvania, in March of 1745:

Jesus Christ is the Son of God by nature and not office, ... he is the eternal Son of God by ineffable filiation and not by constitution or as mediator in which respect he is a servant, and not a Son. And of this mind are all our churches of the particular Baptist persuasion nor will they admit to communion, nor continue in communion [with] such as are of a different judgment. ... I have some years ago published a treatise upon the doctrine of the Trinity, in which I have particularly handled the point of Christ's sonship, have established the orthodox sense of it, and refuted the other notion, which tho' it may be held by some, as not downright *Sabeleanism* [*sic*], yet it tends to it.²¹

The heart of this treatise was later incorporated into Gill's *Body of Doctrinal Divinity* (1769), which, for most Baptist pastors of that day, was their major theological reference work. As John Rippon (1751–1836), Gill's successor at Carter Lane, noted in a biographical sketch of his predecessor:

The Doctor not only watched over his *people*, “with great affection, fidelity, and love;” but he also watched his *pulpit* also. He would not, if he knew it, admit any one to preach for him, who was either cold-hearted to the doctrine of the Trinity; or who *denied* the divine filiation of the Son

of God; or who *objected* to conclude his prayers with the usual *doxology* to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as three equal Persons in the one Jehovah. Sabellians, Arians, and Socinians, he considered as real enemies of the cross of Christ. They *dared* not ask him to preach, nor *could* he in conscience, permit them to officiate for him. He conceived that, by this uniformity of conduct, he adorned the pastoral office.²²

Gill's defence of the Trinity did far more than adorn the pastoral office; through it he played a key role in shepherding the English Particular Baptist community along the pathway of biblical orthodoxy.

Gill's concern to uphold the eternal sonship and reject Sabellianism was not misplaced. During the late 1740s and 1750s the influential Welsh Calvinistic Methodist leader, Howel Harris (1714–1773), was pushing Patripassianism and seemed to be veering towards Sabellian heterodoxy,²³ while Gill's fellow Baptist Anne Dutton (1692–1765) was sure that she detected Sabellianism in a tract by the popular Anglican Evangelical William Romaine (1714–1795).²⁴ Among the Baptists, John Allen (fl.1740s–1780s)—“a prickly and polemic character,”²⁵ and also something of a loner who emigrated to America where he helped inflame politically radical sentiments prior to the Revolution—publicly accused Gill in 1770 of undermining the salvific work of Christ in his affirmation of the eternal generation of the Son. As Allen put it in his own peculiar style:

I wonder for my part how the Doctor [Gill] dares to die with such an idea in his heart, that he who is the glory of God, the glory of heaven, the glory of the saints, has only his personal glory and existence by generation: does the Doctor think such stuff as this will pass in Israel? ... the Doctor teaches, that a first, second, and a third person existeth [in the Godhead], the one by nature, the other by being begotten,—and the other by procession; such an idea as this of the existence of

God, we think is unworthy his name, his nature, and perfection, and contrary to the declaration of the truth of Christ, who says, “I am, I am the first” [Revelation 1:17b]; as tho' he had said, “I am of myself, and derive neither essential nor personal glory from none”—therefore it is that we believe according to the sweet simplicity of the Scriptures, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the sacred three that bare record in heaven [see 1 John 5:7], self-exist in every glory and perfection of the divine nature, whether essential or personal as the Triune God. ... [So] if he [that is, Christ] is not self-existent in all the glories of his divine person, my soul, I think, can never be saved; for can that being (or to come close to the point) that divine person that has its highest existence by generation save another? And does not this idea cut through (as it were with the Arian and Socinian sword) all the glories of Christ's person, the merit of his blood, the conquest of his resurrection, and power of his intercession?²⁶

In other words, Gill's promotion of the eternal generation of the Son ultimately achieved what the Arians or Socinians aimed at—it fatally undermined the confession of the Son's essential deity!

THE CHALLENGE OF SOCINIANISM

Although the particular piece in which this critique of Gill appeared also contained drubbings of numerous other English Baptists,²⁷ Allen's rejection of the eternal generation of the Son gained a hearing in more than one Baptist quarter. Andrew Fuller, for instance, was given one of Allen's publications on this subject to read when he was a relatively young Christian in 1775. True to a life-long “determination to take up no principle at second-hand; but to search for everything at the pure fountain of [God's] word,”²⁸ Fuller tested Allen's views by Scripture and came to see that a number of biblical texts—namely, John 5:18; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 1:8, 5:8–9; and 1 John 3:8—provided clear evidence that Allen was mistaken and that Christ was indeed “the Son of God anteceded-

ently to his being born of a woman, and that in calling God his own Father, he made himself equal with God.”²⁹ In the long run, Fuller was glad that he wrestled with this issue among others early on in his Christian life. It gave him the deep conviction that “everything pertaining to the person of Christ is of more than ordinary importance.” And it also provided a kind of test run for his polemical responses to Socinianism in the 1790s.³⁰

Socinianism was the leading form of heterodoxy within English Dissent in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.³¹ In large part, this was due to the vigorous campaigning of Joseph Priestley (1733–1804), whom Michael R. Watts, in his study of the early history of British Nonconformity, has dubbed the “Leonardo da Vinci of Dissent.”³² By his early twenties, Priestley was proficient in physics, philosophy, and mathematics as well as a variety of modern and ancient Near Eastern languages. During the 1760s and 1770s his reputation as England’s foremost experimental scientist was established by his publication of a weighty history of electrical experimentation and his discovery of ten new gases, including oxygen, ammonia, and sulphur dioxide. Alongside this illustrious career as a scientist Priestley was also a prolific and profound theological author. In fact, he regarded his work as a theologian as his true vocation.

After his conversion to the Socinian cause, which probably took place in 1769,³³ Priestley devoted much of his time to theological writing “with no other view,” he baldly stated on one occasion, “than to make proselytes.”³⁴ “An unflagging and often pugnacious controversialist,” Priestley sought to establish his position not on nature and human reason, as did the Deists, but on a serious and rational investigation of the Scriptures and history.³⁵ As a Dissenter he had inherited the Protestant commitment to the Scriptures as a sufficient source of religious truth. “Revelation,” as Martin Fitzpatrick has noted, “lay at the core of his religion.”³⁶ This attachment to the Scriptures,

though, was yoked to a deep-rooted conviction that the “plainest and most obvious sense of the Scriptures is in favour of those doctrines which are most agreeable to reason.”³⁷ In other words, the Scriptures do indeed contain divine revelation, but their interpretation is to be determined by what is in accord with sound reason. Priestley did not deny that there were certain affirmations of Scripture which were beyond the grasp of human reason. He admitted, for example, the historicity of many of the miracles of the apostolic era, including the bodily resurrection of Christ.³⁸ What he refused to countenance, though, were interpretations of Scripture which, to his mind, entailed a logical contradiction. This explains why orthodox Trinitarianism bore the brunt of Priestley’s theological polemic.³⁹ Priestley was convinced that the doctrine of the Trinity not only had no scriptural foundation, but it was also a mathematical impossibility, “since three cannot be one, or one, three.”⁴⁰ From Priestley’s perspective, if there is one divine being, there must perforce be one person and thus one God; if there are three divine persons, then there must be three divine beings and so three gods.

In the *Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion*, Priestley’s earliest major theological work, Priestley thus maintained that God had instructed “the first parents of mankind” in the truth of his oneness and the fact that he alone is to be worshipped. “History,” Priestley told his readers, “informs us that the worship of one God, without images, was in all nations prior to polytheism.”⁴¹ This “primitive religion of mankind”, however, soon became corrupted, and idolatry gradually superseded the worship of the one true God. In order to free men and women from their idolatry God gave to human beings the Scriptures, a fact that Priestley regards as self-evident when one considers “how strongly this great article, the worship of one God only, is guarded in all the books of Scripture.”⁴² Yet, because of the human bent

towards idolatry, this article was subject to corruption both during the time of the Old Testament dispensation and after that of the New. Priestley was especially concerned with the latter period, for it was then that there was introduced into the life of the Church not only the worship of Mary and “innumerable other saints,” but also what he bluntly described as the “idolatrous worship of Jesus Christ.”⁴³

The Reformation had only partially rectified this state of affairs, for, while it had rejected prayers to the Virgin Mary and to the saints, “prayers to Christ, who is no more a proper object of worship than his mother, ... were retained.”⁴⁴ In arguing against the propriety of praying to Christ Priestley envisaged himself as completing therefore one aspect of the rediscovery of New Testament Christianity that had been left undone by the sixteenth-century Reformers. In fact, Alexander Gordon has pointed out that the major difference between the Socinianism promoted by Priestley along with friends like Theophilus Lindsey (1723–1808) and earlier English versions of this heterodoxy is that while the former categorically condemned the worship of Christ as idolatrous, the latter merely sought to keep it within due moderation. In Gordon’s words, Priestley and Lindsey made “reduction of worship to a strict Patrology ... central and distinguishing.”⁴⁵

From what he called “the general tenour of Scripture” Priestley argued that the early church knew nothing of Christ as “a proper object of worship” or prayer.⁴⁶ He found proof for this assertion in the fact, for instance, that Christ and his followers in the early church were in the habit of directing their prayers to God alone. As Priestley put it:

Our Saviour himself always prayed to his Father, and with as much humility and resignation as the most dependent being in the universe could possibly do; always addressing him as his Father, or the author of his being; and he directs his disciples to the same great Being, whom only, he says, we ought to serve.⁴⁷

Priestley appears to have in mind here such incidents in the life of Christ as his prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane (e.g. Luke 22:42) and his response to his disciples’ request to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1–2). The life of the early church as it is described in Acts provided Priestley with further examples. In Acts 4:24–30 there is recorded a “prayer of some length,” which is addressed solely to God. Later, when James, the brother of John, was martyred and Peter imprisoned, supplication was made on Peter’s behalf to God without any mention of Christ (Acts 12:5). Likewise, the Apostle Paul, in such passages as Ephesians 3:14, “speaks of himself as praying to God, and not to Christ.”⁴⁸

Not only did Priestley find no clear examples in the New Testament that provided a precedent for praying to Christ, he was also confident that the New Testament commanded us to pray to none but God alone. James, for instance, directed those of his readers who lacked wisdom to ask God for it (James 1:5). He did not, Priestley emphasizes, advise “them to apply to Christ or to the Trinity for direction in these circumstances.”⁴⁹ The same is true with regard to the Apostle Paul. In his *Notes on All the Books of Scripture* (1804), Priestley quotes with evident approval a comment by a fellow Socinian, Paul Cardale (1705–1775), on the Apostle’s instruction in Philippians 4:6 [“let your requests be made known unto God” (KJV)]: “had it been possible for St. Paul to entertain the doctrine of a Trinity, he would no doubt have directed his own prayers, and [those of] the Philippians, to the Sacred Three, as is the common language of the present age.”⁵⁰ As Stephen Ford has pointed out, the final clause of this quote obviously has in view the language of the Church of England’s *Book of Common Prayer*, in which prayers and collects are regularly concluded with a reference to the Trinity.⁵¹ An open letter that Priestley wrote to a Swedenborgian congregation in 1791 made a similar point regarding Christ’s instructions about prayer in John 16:23 [“In that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he

will give it you" (KJV)]. According to Priestley's reading of the text, Christ "plainly distinguishes between praying to the Father, and asking any thing of himself."⁵² His comments on this verse and its context in the *Notes on All the Books of Scripture* reiterated that "Christ is not to be the object of worship or prayer in any respect," and that, contrary to what Christ appears to teach by the phrase "whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name,"

the intercession of Christ with God for us is needless. We are to address our prayers to God himself immediately; and his affection for us is such as will always induce him to grant whatever is proper for us, without the intercession, or mediation, of any being whatever for us.⁵³

In his scientific enquiries Priestley was regularly guided by utilitarian considerations, since he believed that the "immediate use of natural science is the power it gives us over nature, by means of the knowledge we acquire of its laws; whereby human life is ... made more comfortable and happy."⁵⁴ Similarly, "the sound knowledge of Christianity is not of importance as a matter of speculation merely"; the theological convictions for which Priestley contended could not be believed without an impact on the "sentiments of our hearts, and our conduct in life."⁵⁵ In the case of his belief regarding the nature of God there were at least two practical consequences. First, God the Father alone should be the recipient of prayer and he alone worshipped. Then, Socinians must separate themselves from those who disagreed with them and they needed to form their own congregations. Addressing men and women of like mind, Priestley therefore raised the question that if

it was a sufficient justification of the first Reformers, that they considered the church from which they separated as worshipping saints and angels; will it not justify your separation from their partial reformatations, that you consider them as praying to and worshipping one whom you consider as a man like yourselves, though honoured and

distinguished by God above all other men? To join habitually in public worship with Trinitarians, is countenancing that worship, which you must consider as idolatrous; and which, however innocent in them, is highly criminal in you.⁵⁶

The society, however, in which Priestley was seeking to propagate his viewpoint and establish Socinian congregations was to a great extent still dominated by a powerful *ancien régime* whose political ideology and religious convictions were firmly interwoven.⁵⁷ Consequently, it is not at all surprising that his assertions regarding the person of Christ involved Priestley in a variety of heated and prolific debates during the 1780s and early 1790s, which fostered a widespread public perception of Priestley as an enemy to both church and state. Indeed this perception was the key factor in the violent Birmingham "Church-and-King" riots of 1791, which witnessed the destruction of Priestley's home, library and laboratory, as well as the meeting-house in which he regularly preached, and which eventually led to his emigration to the United States in 1794.⁵⁸

"ARDENT LOVE TO CHRIST"

Among Priestley's fellow Dissenters who publicly deplored these riots was Andrew Fuller. From Fuller's point of view the riots were an "iniquitous business," contrived and executed by "men of no principle."⁵⁹ Fuller's profound disapproval of the riots did not deter him, however, from publishing in 1793 an extensive critique of Priestley's position in *The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Examined and Compared, as to their Moral Tendency*.⁶⁰ Fuller was well aware that there had been numerous replies in response to the Socinian position by orthodox authors. What made his response unique was that it sought to determine which one of these two rival perspectives on the Christian Faith was most "aretegenic," that is, most conducive to the development of moral transformation and the creation of virtuous character.⁶¹

As has been noted, Socinians such as Priestley argued that the first-century church refused

to venerate Christ and thus worshipped God aright. Yet, Fuller asks, if this be so, how does one explain the fact that:

The primitive Christians ... worshipped Jesus Christ. Not only did the martyr Stephen close his life by committing his departing spirit into the hands of Jesus, but it was the common practice, in primitive times, to invoke his name. "He hath authority," said Ananias concerning Saul, to bind "all that call on thy name" [Acts 9:14]. One part of the Christian mission was to declare that "whosoever should call on the name of the Lord should be saved" [cf. Romans 10:13], even of that Lord of whom the Gentiles had not heard. Paul addressed himself "to all that in every place called upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" [cf. 1 Corinthians 1:2]. These modes of expression (which, if I be not greatly mistaken, always signify Divine worship) plainly inform us that it was not merely the practice of a few individuals, but of the great body of the primitive Christians, to invoke the name of Christ; nay, and that this was a mark by which they were distinguished as Christians.⁶²

In order to demonstrate that the worship of Christ was not unknown during the period covered by the New Testament, Fuller began with Acts 7:59, a text that was frequently raised during this controversy over the person of Christ. The Baptist author saw in Stephen's "calling upon" Christ an act of invocation and prayer, and thus worship.⁶³ Fuller observed that the verb "to call upon" is one that is used a number of times in a variety of contexts in the New Testament to designate Christians. Ananias, for instance, described the believers in Damascus as "all that call on thy name" (Acts 9:14). This description is found in the midst of an address to the "Lord" (Acts 9:10, 13), who, from the context, can be none other than Jesus (Acts 9:17; see also Acts 9:5). A similar phrase was used by the Apostle Paul when he characterized his ministry as a proclamation of God's desire to save "whosoever shall call

upon the name of the Lord" (Rom 10:13) and when he designated Christians as all those who "call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor 1:2). Since this phrase clearly depicts prayer in Acts 7:59, Fuller reasoned that it must have a similar meaning in the other New Testament texts where it appears. Thus, he stated that "these modes of expression ... always signify Divine worship."⁶⁴

Moreover, the early Christian writers, Fuller maintained, made the dignity and glory of Christ's person "their darling theme," for they "considered Christ as the All in All of their religion; and, as such, they loved him with their whole hearts."⁶⁵ Among the examples he adduced in support of this observation is Paul's depiction of Christ in Ephesians 1–3.

Feeling in himself an ardent love to Christ, he vehemently desired that others might love him too. For this cause he bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ [cf. Ephesians 3:14], in behalf of the Ephesians; praying that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith. He represented him to them as the medium of all spiritual blessings; of election, adoption, acceptance with God, redemption, and the forgiveness of sins; of a future inheritance, and of a present earnest of it; as Head over all things to the church, and as him that filleth all in all. He described him as the only way of access to God, and as the sole foundation of a sinner's hope; whose riches were unsearchable, and the dimensions of his love passing knowledge.⁶⁶

Priestley, as has been noted, regarded the fact that Paul directs his prayer in Ephesians 3:14 to God the Father, and not to Christ, to be a significant indication of the Apostle's convictions about the impropriety of prayer to Christ. Fuller, though, sought to relate this prayer to its immediate and larger context in the letter to the Ephesians. Central to the prayer in Ephesians 3 is Paul's request of the Father that Christ might indwell the hearts of his readers by faith. Who is this Christ, though, about whom Paul makes such a request? Well, in what precedes his prayer Paul has

described Christ, to use the words of Fuller, as “the medium of all spiritual blessings” (cf. Eph 1:3), the “only way of access to God” (cf. Eph 2:18), and the One “whose riches were unsearchable” (cf. Eph 3:8). Moreover, the Apostle finished his prayer by stating that “the dimensions of his [i.e. Christ’s] love” surpass knowledge (Eph 3:18–19). Could the love that is evident in such descriptions as these, Fuller justly asked, ever be bestowed on “a fellow creature”—“a fallible and peccable man” in Priestley’s perspective⁶⁷—without it being considered anything but “the height of extravagance, and essence of idolatry”? In other words, while Paul’s prayer may not actually be addressed to Christ, its content and that which it presupposes all point to a conviction of Christ’s deity.

The Socinians’ rejection of the propriety of praying to Christ or worshipping him led in turn to Fuller’s refusal to recognize them as Christian brothers and sisters.⁶⁸ As the Baptist theologian pointed out in an article on “The Deity of Christ”:

Calling on the name of the Lord Jesus is considered, in the New Testament, as of equal importance with believing in him, having the same promise of salvation annexed to it.—“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” [Romans 10:13]. And seeing it is asked, “How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?” [Romans 10:14], it is strongly intimated that all who truly believe in Christ do call upon him. This is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the primitive Christians. Paul’s Epistle to the Corinthians was addressed to them, in connexion with “all who in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord” [1 Corinthians 1:2]. Now as a rejection of the Divinity of Christ renders it idolatry to worship him, or call upon his name; so it must involve a rejection of that by which primitive Christians were distinguished, and which has the promise of salvation. ... [W]e have no warrant to acknowledge those as fellow Christians who come not under the description given of such in the New Testament; that is, who call not upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.⁶⁹

Romans 10:13–15a outlines the chain of events by which a person is saved. It begins with God sending forth someone to preach the gospel and concludes with a person responding in faith by calling upon the name of the Lord. Fuller noted how vital is the final link in this chain, the calling upon the name of the Lord, for it is this action which is determinant of the status of Christian. Unless a person has called upon the name of the Lord for salvation, he or she cannot consider himself or herself a Christian. This conclusion is further supported by 1 Corinthians 1:2, which describes Christians by means of the verb “to call upon” and where this verb is used in a similar fashion to Romans 10, namely the invoking of the Risen Christ in prayer. The Socinians, however, rejected the propriety of prayer to Christ on any occasion and for any reason. By so doing, Fuller can only conclude, they should not be regarded as Christians in the New Testament sense of the term.

Fuller thus was in full accord with Priestley that Socinians and Trinitarians should not worship together and that the former ought to have their own “separate communion”⁷⁰ or community.

Some of the grand ends of Christian society are, unitedly to worship God—to devote ourselves to the blessed Trinity by Christian baptism—and to acknowledge the atonement made by the Redeemer, by a participation of the ordinance of the Lord’s supper. But what union could there be in worship where the object worshipped is not the same—where one party believes the other to be an idolater, and the other believes him to be a degrader of Him who is “over all, God, blessed for ever” [Romans 9:5]? ... Either we are a company of idolaters, or they are enemies to the gospel—rendering the cross of Christ of none effect. Either they are unbelievers, or we are at least as bad—rendering to a creature that homage which is due only to the Creator; and, in either case, a union is the last degree of absurdity.⁷¹

FULLER'S TRINITARIANISM

Foundational to Fuller's response to Priestley was the former's deep conviction that Jesus is fully divine. For Fuller, Socinianism's denial of Christ's deity made it akin to Deism and this could only lead to the total ruination of the virtuous life.⁷² As he put it in a sermon he preached in 1801: "The person and work of Christ have ever been the corner-stone of the Christian fabric: take away his Divinity and atonement, and all will go to ruins."⁷³ Christ's deity and his atoning work are "the life-blood of Christianity"; deny them and there is only death.⁷⁴ Fuller thus frequently insisted that without the confession of the deity of Christ, one simply cannot be counted as a Christian, for "the proper Deity of Christ ... is a great and fundamental truth in Christianity."⁷⁵

Given this insistence about Christ's deity, it is noteworthy that when it came to the divinity of the Holy Spirit Fuller was nowhere near as emphatic, though he did believe that the Scriptures "expressly call ... the Holy Spirit God" in Acts 5:3–4 and he did not hesitate to assert that "every perfection of Godhead" has been ascribed to the Spirit.⁷⁶ This lacuna is somewhat surprising since Fuller, like others impacted by the Evangelical revivals of the eighteenth century, had a robust understanding of the Spirit's work and ministry.⁷⁷ In part, this is due to the fact that Priestley and the other apostles of Socinianism focused their attention overwhelmingly upon Christ and not the Holy Spirit. When Fuller on one occasion referred to the first principles of Christianity he believed were the focus of the Socinian controversy he listed the doctrine of the Trinity, the deity of Christ, and the atoning death of the Lord Jesus,⁷⁸ not the distinct deity of the Spirit. Fuller's defence of the deity of Christ and the propriety of worshipping him is therefore akin to the way that Athanasius argued in the fourth century. The Church Father also spent most of his time and energy defending the full and essential divinity of Christ in the face of the Arian onslaught against Christ's person. Only near the end of his life did Athana-

sius turn his attention to the Spirit.⁷⁹ However, Fuller was also aware that the Spirit's overarching new covenant ministry is the glorification of the Lord Jesus—the "Holy Spirit is not the grand object of ministerial exhibition; but Christ, in his person, work and offices"—and this is a key reason why "much less is said in the Sacred Scriptures on the Divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit."⁸⁰ And here Fuller seems to have followed Scripture.

Finally, with regard to statements about the Trinity, Fuller is certain that the Scriptures affirm the existence of three divine persons—the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.⁸¹ These three are never to be considered three separate beings, but one God. As Fuller put it: "in a mysterious manner, far above our comprehension, there are in the Divine unity three subsistences."⁸² How they are one has not been revealed—and so to believe it steadfastly requires faith and humility.⁸³ Moreover, this is a truth that must be regarded as being above reason, not against it nor a contradiction. As long as Christian theology does not make the mistake of the Socinians, which is to regard God as unipersonal, it can affirm this truth without fear of being irrational. In this Christians need to "regulate [their] ideas of the Divine Unity by what is taught us in the Scriptures of the Trinity; and not those of the Trinity by what we know, or think we know ... of the Unity."⁸⁴

In addition to the experience of worship, discussed at length above and which for Fuller was determinative for his understanding of the Godhead, Fuller's reflections upon baptism served to reinforce his Trinitarianism. His main piece on this ordinance is *The Practical Uses of Christian Baptism*, a highly significant tract on the meaning of baptism. Fuller argued that since baptism is to be carried out, according to Matthew 28:19, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," submission to the ordinance entails an avowal of the fact that God is a triune Being. Well acquainted with the history of the early Church at this point, Fuller rightly stated that this baptismal formula was

widely used in that era to argue for the doctrine of the Trinity.⁸⁵ To relinquish the doctrine of the Trinity is thus tantamount to the virtual renunciation of one's baptism.⁸⁶

Fuller tied baptism to the Trinity again, and also to worship, in a small piece entitled "The Manner in which Divine Truth is Communicated in the Holy Scriptures." He wrote:

The doctrine of the Trinity is never proposed to us as an object of speculation, but as a truth affecting our dearest interests. John introduces the sacred Three as witnesses to the truth of the gospel of Christ, as objects of instituted worship, into whose name we are baptized; and Paul exhibits them as the source of all spiritual good: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen." [2 Corinthians 13:14]. Again, "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." [2 Thessalonians 3:5].⁸⁷

What is noteworthy about this text is the refusal to see the Trinity as merely a "metaphysical mystery," or as Fuller put it, "an object of speculation."⁸⁸ Rather, Fuller emphasized that the doctrine has a bearing on our "dearest interests," namely, the truth as it is in the gospel, worship, and "all spiritual good." The first item, the truth of the gospel, is supported by an allusion to 1 John 5:7, the famous *Comma Johanneum*, which Fuller evidently regarded as genuine.⁸⁹ For the third point, "all spiritual good," Fuller has recourse to 2 Corinthians 13:14 and 2 Thessalonians 3:5. The use of the latter Pauline text is fascinating. Fuller's Trinitarian reading of it ultimately goes back to Basil of Caesarea (c. 329–379), who employs it in his argument for the Spirit's deity in his classic work, *On the Holy Spirit*.⁹⁰ Fuller most likely found this reading of the Pauline verse, however, in John Gill's commentary on 2 Thessalonians 3:5, where Gill follows Basil's interpretation.⁹¹

It is with regard to the second point, the Trinity as the object of adoration, that Fuller mentions baptism: "the sacred Three" are described "as objects of instituted worship, into whose name we are baptized." Fuller was presumably thinking of Matthew 28:19. The reason why doctrinal confession of the Triunity of God is vital is because it lies at the heart of Christian worship. Fuller clearly saw baptism into the name of the Triune God as not only the initiatory rite of the Church—what made it a "Trinitarian community"—but also the beginning of a life of worshipping the Trinity. Fuller made the same point in yet another text that has already been cited: among "the grand ends of Christian society are unitedly to worship God" and this meant nothing less than "to devote ourselves to the blessed Trinity by Christian baptism—and to acknowledge the atonement made by the Redeemer, by a participation of the ordinance of the Lord's supper."⁹² Fuller's choice of the verb "devote" here is noteworthy. Christian baptism is an act of dedicating oneself to the Triune God—an act that surely is to continue throughout the Christian life till it culminates in the beatific vision of the Trinity.

ENDNOTES

¹ The title comes from Andrew Fuller, *Strictures on Some of the Leading Sentiments of Mr. R. Robinson* (*The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (ed. Joseph Belcher [1845 ed.; repr. Harrisonburg, Virginia: Sprinkle Publications, 1988], III, 601). This standard collection of Fuller's works will be henceforth referred to as *Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*. For the term "Trinitarian communities," see Andrew Fuller, *Socinianism Indefensible on the Ground of its Moral Tendency* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 258). Portions of an earlier paper of the author—"A Socinian and Calvinist Compared: Joseph Priestley and Andrew Fuller on the Propriety of Prayer to Christ," *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis/Dutch Review of Church History* 73 (1993): 178–198—have been used in this essay with permission from E.

J. Brill, the publisher of this journal.

² See his *Letters on Systematic Divinity* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 684–711). Fuller was asked to draw up this “System of Divinity” at the request of his close friend John Ryland (1753–1825). He deals with the doctrine of the Trinity in the ninth, and final one, of these letters (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 707–711). He would have written this final letter no earlier than October 1814.

³ *The Nature and Importance of an Intimate Knowledge of Divine Truth* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 164).

⁴ *Ibid.*, 165.

⁵ “The Manner in which Divine Truth is Communicated in the Holy Scriptures” (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 537).

⁶ *Intimate Knowledge of Divine Truth* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 165).

⁷ *A Defence of a Treatise entitled The Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation containing A Reply to Mr. Button’s Remarks and The Observations of Philanthropos* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 511).

⁸ His surname is sometimes rendered Socinus, hence Socinianism.

⁹ *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution. The Challenge of Socinianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 240–241.

¹⁰ See especially William C. Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence. How Modern Thinking about God Went Wrong* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 164–178; Philip Dixon, ‘Nice and Hot Disputes’: *The Doctrine of the Trinity in the Seventeenth Century* (London/New York: T & T Clark, 2003). The quote is from Dixon, ‘Nice and Hot Disputes’, 212.

¹¹ G. L. Bray, “Trinity” in *New Dictionary of Theology* (eds. Sinclair B. Ferguson, David F. Wright, and J. I. Packer; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 694.

¹² For the loss of Trinitarianism among the General Baptists, see the very helpful discussion by Curtis W. Freeman, “God in Three Persons: Baptist Unitarianism and the Trinity,” *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 33 (Fall 2006): 324–328.

¹³ *The First London Confession of Faith* 2 in *Baptist Con-*

fessions of Faith (William L. Lumpkin; rev. Bill J. Leonard; Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2011), 144. The spelling has been modernized.

¹⁴ See, in particular, the following publications by White: “The Organisation of the Particular Baptists, 1644–1660,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 17 (1966): 209–226; “The Doctrine of the Church in the Particular Baptist Confession of 1644,” *The Journal of Theological Studies*, ns, 19 (1968): 570–590; “Thomas Patient in Ireland,” *Irish Baptist Historical Society Journal* 2 (1969–1970): 36–48, especially 40–41; “The Origins and Convictions of the First Calvinistic Baptists,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 25:4 (1990): 39–47; and *The English Baptists of the Seventeenth Century* (Rev. ed.; London: The Baptist Historical Society, 1996), 59–94.

¹⁵ Freeman, “God in Three Persons,” 331.

¹⁶ *The Second London Confession of Faith* 2.3 in *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 237.

¹⁷ *The eternal Existence of the Lord Jesus Christ considered and improved* (London, 1766), iv–v.

¹⁸ “To the Reader” in his *A Treatise of the Holy Trinity* [*sic*] (London, 1690), [i–ii]. For a brief discussion of this work, see Freeman, “God in Three Persons,” 332–333.

¹⁹ *The Christian Strife for the Faith of the Gospel* (London, 1738), 78, cited Roger Hayden, “The Contribution of Bernard Foskett” in *Pilgrim Pathways: Essays in Baptist History in Honour of B. R. White* (eds. William H. Brackney and Paul S. Fiddes with John H. Y. Briggs; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999), 197.

²⁰ *The Doctrine of the Trinity, stated and vindicated* (2nd ed.; London, 1752), 166–167.

²¹ Letter to John Davis, March 7, 1745 (transcribed Gerald Priest; ms. in The Baptist Church in the Great Valley, Devon, Pennsylvania; used by permission of the church). I am indebted to Dr. Priest, for many years Professor of Church History at the Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, for access to this letter.

²² John Rippon, *A Brief Memoir of the Life and Writings of the late Rev. John Gill, D.D.* (Repr. Harrisonburg, VA: Gano Books, 1992), 127–128.

²³ Eifion Evans, *Daniel Rowland and the Great Evangeli-*

cal Awakening in Wales (Edinburgh/Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1985), 273–274.

²⁴ For Dutton's concern about Romaine, see her *A Letter on the Divine Eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ* (London, 1757), now in JoAnn Ford Watson, ed., *Selected Spiritual Writings of Anne Dutton. Eighteenth-Century, British-Baptist, Woman Theologian* (Mercer, GA: Mercer University press, 2008), 5:1–13.

²⁵ The words of Hywel M. Davies, *Transatlantic Brethren: Rev. Samuel Jones (1735–1814) and His Friends: Baptists in Wales, Pennsylvania, and Beyond* (Bethlehem, PA: Leigh University Press/London: associated University Presses, 1995), 116. See Davies' account of Allen's career in *Transatlantic Brethren*, 115–119. See also Jim Benedict, "Allen, John (d. 1783)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., May 2007 [http://www.oxforddnb.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/view/article/380; accessed March 31, 2013]).

²⁶ *The Spirit of Liberty: or, Junius's Loyal Address* (London: n.p., 1770), 91, 91–92, 95. The capitals in this text have been altered to lower case in accord with modern practice.

²⁷ See *ibid.*, 95–104.

²⁸ Cited Andrew Gunton Fuller, "Memoir" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 20).

²⁹ Cited John Ryland, *The Work of Faith, the Labour of Love, and the Patience of Hope illustrated; in The Life and Death of the Reverend Andrew Fuller* (London: Button & Son, 1816), 62–63, 54.

³⁰ Ryland, *Life and Death of the Reverend Andrew Fuller*, 52, 54. See also John W. Eddins, Jr., "Andrew Fuller's Theology of Grace" (Th.D. thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, 1957), 123–130.

³¹ H. L. Short, "Presbyterians under a New Name" in C. G. Bolam, et al., *The English Presbyterians from Elizabethan Puritanism to Modern Unitarianism* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1968), 229–233.

³² *The Dissenters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 1:472. For the biographical details of Priestley's career, I am especially indebted to *The Memoirs of Dr. Joseph Priestley* (ed. John T. Boyer; Washington, DC: Barcroft Press, 1964); Robert D. Fiala, "Priestley,

Joseph (1733–1804)," *Biographical Dictionary of Modern British Radicals* (Hassocks, Sussex: Harvester Press/Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1979), 1:396–401; Erwin N. Hiebert, "The Integration of Revealed Religion and Scientific Materialism in the Thought of Joseph Priestley" in *Joseph Priestley: Scientist, Theologian, and Metaphysician* (eds. Lester Kieft and Bennett R. Willeford, Jr.; Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1980), 27–61.

³³ Robert E. Schofield, "Priestley, Joseph (1733–1804)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., May 2007. [http://www.oxforddnb.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/view/article/22788, accessed April 1, 2013]).

³⁴ *Defences of Unitarianism, for the Year 1786* (1787) (*The Theological and Miscellaneous Works of Joseph Priestley* (ed. J. T. Rutt; New York, NY: Klaus Reprint Co., 1972), 18:372. Later references to the corpus of Priestley will cite these works as *Works of Joseph Priestley*. In a lecture that Fuller's friend Robert Hall, Jr. (1764–1831) gave "On the Spirit of Socinianism" in 1823, the Baptist preacher took note of the Socinians' "zeal for proselytism" (*The Works of the Rev. Robert Hall* [eds. Olinthus Gregory and Joseph Belcher; New York, NY: Harper & Bros., 1854], 3:24).

³⁵ For Priestley's threefold appeal to reason, scripture, and history, see his *Defences of Unitarianism, for the Year 1786* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 18:350); *An History of Early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ* (1786) (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 6:7). The description of Priestley is that of Martin Fitzpatrick, "Toleration and Truth," *Enlightenment and Dissent*, 1 (1982), 25.

³⁶ "Toleration and Truth," 29, n. 119. On the commitment of Socinianism in general to Scripture, see Klaus Scholder, *The Birth of Modern Critical Theology. Origins and Problems of Biblical Criticism in the Seventeenth Century* (trans. John Bowden; London: SCM Press/Philadelphia, PA: Trinity Press International, 1990), 32–38.

³⁷ *An Appeal to the Serious and Candid Professors of Christianity* (1770) (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 2:385). See also J. G. McEvoy and J. E. McGuire, "God and Nature: Priestley's Way of Rational Dissent," *Histori-*

- cal Studies in the Physical Sciences 6 (1975): 325–326; Fitzpatrick, “Toleration and Truth,” 4–5.
- ³⁸ *An History of the Corruptions of Christianity* (1782 ed.; repr. New York, NY/London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1974), II, 440.
- ³⁹ Cf. Scholder, *Modern Critical Theology*, 40; Geoffrey Gorham, “Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Intellectual Life” in *The Routledge Companion to Theism* (eds. Charles Taliaferro, Victoria S. Harrison, and Stewart Goetz; New York, NY/London: Routledge, 2013), 129–130.
- ⁴⁰ *Defences of Unitarianism, for the Years 1788 and 1789* (1790) (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 19:108). See also his *Appeal to the Serious and Candid Professors of Christianity* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 2:395); *History of Early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 6:33–37); *Letters to the Members of the New Jerusalem Church* (Birmingham, 1791), 2.
- ⁴¹ *Works of Joseph Priestley*, 2:74.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, 2:280.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁴ *Familiar Letters, Addressed to the Inhabitants of Birmingham* (1790) (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 19:250).
- ⁴⁵ *Addresses Biographical and Historical* (London: The Lindsey Press, 1922), 276.
- ⁴⁶ *History of Early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 6:31–33).
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 6:28–29. See also *History of Early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 6:30); *Letters to Dr. Horsley* (1783) (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 18:95); *Familiar Letters, Addressed to the Inhabitants of Birmingham* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 19:249).
- ⁴⁸ *Letters to Dr. Horsley, Part II* (1784) (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 18:243–244); *Notes on All the Books of Scripture* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 14:274).
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 18:243.
- ⁵⁰ *Notes on All the Books of Scripture* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 14:320).
- ⁵¹ “Coleridge and Priestley on Prayer,” *Anglican Theological Review* 70 (1988): 353. Cf. Priestley, *Familiar Letters, Addressed to the Inhabitants of Birmingham* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 19:249–250).
- ⁵² *Letters to the Members of the New Jerusalem Church*, 21. See also *Notes on All the Books of Scripture* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 13:315).
- ⁵³ *Notes on All the Books of Scripture* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 13:328).
- ⁵⁴ Quoted John G. McEvoy, “Joseph Priestley, ‘Aerial Philosopher’: Metaphysics and Methodology in Priestley’s Chemical Thought, from 1762–1781. Part 1,” *Ambix* 25:1 (1978): 18.
- ⁵⁵ *Appeal to the Serious and Candid Professors of Christianity* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 2:402).
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 2:414.
- ⁵⁷ On this *ancien régime*, see especially J. C. D. Clark, *English Society 1688–1832. Ideology, social structure and political practice during the ancien régime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); idem, “England’s Ancien Regime as a Confessional State,” *Albion* 21 (1989): 450–474.
- ⁵⁸ On these riots, see Arthur Sheps, “Public Perception of Joseph Priestley, the Birmingham Dissenters, and the Church-and-King Riots of 1791,” *Eighteenth Century Life* 13 (1989): 46–64.
- ⁵⁹ *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Examined and Compared* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 111). See also the comments by Fuller in his *Memoirs of the Rev. Samuel Pearce* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 433).
- ⁶⁰ *Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 108–242. Fuller received advice from both Abraham Booth (1734–1806) and John Fawcett (1740–1817), fellow Baptist ministers, in drawing up this treatise. See J. W. Morris, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (London, 1816), 330–331.
- ⁶¹ *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 112). The term “aretegenic” is a neologism coined by Ellen T. Charry. See her important work *By the Renewing of Your Minds: The Pastoral Function of Christian Doctrine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- ⁶² *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 160).
- ⁶³ See also his interpretation of Acts 7:59 in *Socinianism Indefensible on the Ground of its Moral Tendency* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 260);

- "Defence of the Deity of Christ" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 698).
- ⁶⁴ *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 160).
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 189, 192.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 192.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 193.
- ⁶⁸ "Agreement in Sentiment the Bond of Christian Union" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 490, 491).
- ⁶⁹ "The Deity of Christ" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 696, 697).
- ⁷⁰ "Decline of the Dissenting Interest" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 487).
- ⁷¹ *Leading Sentiments of Mr. R. Robinson* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 601).
- ⁷² *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 220–233).
- ⁷³ *God's Approbation of our Labours Necessary to the Hope of Success* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 190). See also *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 183); *The Backslider* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 637).
- ⁷⁴ *Christian Steadfastness* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 527). See also *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 183, 191–192).
- ⁷⁵ *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 180); *Justification* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 284); *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 183, 191–192); *Defence of a Treatise entitled The Gospel of Christ* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 458); "Decline of the Dissenting Interest" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 487); "The Deity of Christ" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 693–697); *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 180).
- ⁷⁶ "Defence of the Deity of Christ" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 698); "Remarks on the Indwelling Scheme" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 700). See also *Letters on Systematic Divinity* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 711); "Mr. Bevan's Defence of the Christian Doctrines of the Society of Friends" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 758).
- ⁷⁷ See, for example, his *Causes of Declension in Religion, and Means of Revival* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 319–320, 324) and *The Promise of the Spirit the Grand Encouragement in Promoting the Gospel* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 359–363).
- ⁷⁸ *Socinianism Indefensible* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 249).
- ⁷⁹ See his *Letters to Serapion*, written in the late 350s. Athanasius died in 373. See further my *The Spirit of God: The Exegesis of 1 and 2 Corinthians in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994).
- ⁸⁰ *Letters on Systematic Divinity* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 711).
- ⁸¹ See *Jesus the True Messiah* (1809) (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 219); "Passages Apparently Contradictory" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 668); "Remarks on the Indwelling Scheme" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 700); "The Doctrine of the Trinity" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 707–708). In the last of these passages Fuller cites a catena of Trinitarian texts, including Matt 28:19; 1 John 5:7; Rom 15:30; Eph 2:18; Jude 20–21; 2 Thess 3:5; and 2 Cor 13:14.
- ⁸² "The Doctrine of the Trinity" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 708).
- ⁸³ *Nature and Importance of an Intimate Knowledge of Divine Truth* (1796) (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 163–164).
- ⁸⁴ *Letters on Systematic Divinity* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 708); "Remarks on the Indwelling Scheme" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 700). Cf. *Walking by Faith* (1784) (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 124–125): "It is one thing to say that Scripture is contrary to right reason, and another thing to say that it may exhibit truths too great for our reason to grasp."; "Trial of Spirits" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 654).
- ⁸⁵ *The Practical Uses of Christian Baptism* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 340). The very same point had been made a quarter of a century earlier by John Collett Ryland (1723–1792), the eccentric Baptist largely remembered today for his dampening rebuke of William Carey's zeal for overseas missions. Also writing in a circular letter for

the Northamptonshire Association, Ryland had observed that “the true doctrine of the Trinity” had been “kept up in the Christian church” by the ordinance of baptism “more than by any other means whatsoever” (*The Beauty of Social Religion; or, The Nature and Glory of a Gospel Church* [Northampton: T. Dicey, 1777], 10, footnote).

⁸⁶ *Christian Baptism* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 340). For other instances of Fuller’s Trinitarian exegesis of Matt 28:19, see *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 236); “On the Sonship of Christ” (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 705–706).

⁸⁷ “The Manner in which Divine Truth is Communicated in the Holy Scriptures” (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 539).

⁸⁸ For the phrase “metaphysical mystery,” I am indebted to Stephen Holmes. See “The Quest for the Trinity: An Interview with Stephen R. Holmes,” *Credo Magazine* 3:2 (2013): 49.

⁸⁹ See his extended argument in *Letters on Systematic Divinity* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 708–709).

⁹⁰ See Basil of Caesarea, *On the Holy Spirit* 21.52.

⁹¹ Here is the relevant section of Gill’s comments on this verse: “The phrase of directing the heart to God ... is not to be done by a believer himself, nor by the ministers of the Gospel: the apostle could not do it, and therefore he prays “the Lord” to do it; by whom is meant the Spirit of God, since he is distinguished from God the Father, into whose love the heart is to be directed, and from Christ, a patient waiting for whom ’tis also desired the heart may be directed into; and since it is his work to shed abroad the love of God in the heart, and to lead unto it, and make application of it; and which is a proof of his deity, for none has the direction, management, and government of the heart, but God, ... and in this passage of Scripture appear all the three Persons [of the Godhead]; for here is the love of the Father, patient waiting for Christ, and the Lord the Spirit.” (*An Exposition of the New Testament* [1809 ed.; repr. Paris, Arkansas: The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc., 1989], III, 265). See also John Gill, *The Doctrine of the Trinity, Stated and Vindicated* (London: Aaron Ward, 1731), 198–199.

⁹² *Leading Sentiments of Mr. R. Robinson* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 601).

The Passion and Doctrine of Andrew Fuller in *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*

Thomas J. Nettles

A BIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

Andrew Fuller (1754-1815) lived in the shade of the subject matter of *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* for virtually his entire life. He was born at Wicken in Cambridgeshire.

In 1761 the Fullers moved to Soham where Fuller stayed until he removed to Kettering in October 1782. His earliest religious impressions were in the context of the high Calvinism to which he sought to provide a corrective. His pastor, Mr. Eve, has been subjected to a good deal of condescending judgment based on Fuller's brief characterizations. As Fuller recalled his first religious impressions, he was devoid of conviction and did not consider himself at all concerned in the issue of faith for "the preaching I attended was not adapted to awaken my conscience."¹ Fuller

noted, nevertheless, that the light he had received, "I know not how," would not allow him to go into sin with the ease that he observed in other boys his age. The most likely source of his "light" was the preaching of his pastor, Mr. Eve, who, though he had little to say to the unconverted, evidently preached Scripture, which worked as silently and as unobtrusively as the morning dawn in awakening cases of conscience in Fuller. He revealed that he thought on "the doctrines of Christianity," which he must have learned, at least in part, from Eve. He also read books by Bunyan and Ralph Erskine.²

For some years he had extreme swings of conviction, depression, reform, impressions of being converted, backsliding, sin, coldness, and deadness.³ In November 1769, Fuller ventured his soul upon Christ not knowing if he had any warrant so to do, but felt its necessity even if his presumption meant rejection and perishing. This brought to resolution a period of wave after wave of severe conviction in which he knew he deserved to be a permanent citizen of hell and felt himself to be drowning in the whirlpool of

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his sinfulness and guilt.⁴ Some of these perceptions of his damnable state surely were received in the instructions of Eve on the doctrine of sin. He was baptized in the Spring of 1770, became actively engaged in the church, loved his pastor Mr. Eve, and made friends with Joseph Driver twenty-four years his senior, but who had been baptized on the same day as Fuller.⁵

A controversy over a case of discipline in the church, in which Fuller had taken an active role, led to a discussion on the nature of human inability, human sinfulness, and human responsibility. This led to Fuller's departure from Eve's opinions and Eve's departure from the church in October 1771.⁶ Fuller observed that those disputes turned his thoughts to "most of those subjects on which I have since written."⁷ The division and eventual re-formation of the church led to Driver's usefulness as an expositor and Fuller occasionally so between 1771 and 1774. In that year he began to preach regularly at the church in Soham and in May of 1775 was ordained as pastor.⁸

Fuller soon met Robert Hall of Arnesby who came to his ordination, John Sutcliff, and John Ryland, Jr., all of whom had the same theological interests as Fuller. His distance from them, however, prohibited much discussion and correspondence. In an independent manner, therefore, Fuller began his inquiries and "wrote out the substance of what I afterwards published under the title of *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*."⁹ The initial document, entitled "Some Thoughts on the Power of men to do the Will of God," was done in 1778 and did indeed contain the *substance* of the later work, though it does not have the same organizational structure.¹⁰

After seven years in Soham, Fuller moved to Kettering in October 1782 to preach, but was not finally settled as pastor until one year later in October 1783. This culminated an inquiry that Kettering had begun in 1779 leading to the exchange of 28 letters. Ryland remarked, "Men who fear not God would risk the welfare

of a nation with fewer searchings of heart, than it cost him to determine whether he should leave a little Dissenting church."¹¹ During his installation, in which several ministers took part, Fuller presented a confession of faith that demonstrated the maturity he had attained on this issue. It contains several statements that reflected the views that already were in manuscript form in what would become *The Gospel Worthy*. In article VII he wrote, "I believe that men are now born and grow up with a vile propensity to moral evil, and that herein lies their inability to keep God's law, and as such it is a moral and a criminal inability." In article XI he stated, "I believe that such is the excellence of this way of salvation, that every one who hears or has opportunity to hear it proclaimed in the gospel is bound to repent of his sin, believe, approve, and embrace it with all his heart." In article XII, Fuller affirmed, "I believe the pride, ignorance, enmity, and love to sin in men, is such that they will not come unto Christ for life; ... hence I believe arise the necessity of an almighty work of God the Spirit, to new model the whole soul." Article XV collected the implications of these ideas for his duty as a minister of the gospel.

I believe it is the duty of every minister of Christ plainly and faithfully to preach the gospel to all who will hear it; and as I believe the inability of men to spiritual things to be wholly of the moral, and therefore of the criminal kind, and that it is their duty to love the Lord Jesus Christ and trust in him for salvation though they do not; I therefore believe free and solemn addresses, invitations, calls, and warnings to them to be not only consistent but directly adapted, as means, in the hand of the Spirit of God, to bring them to Christ. I consider it as a part of my duty which I could not omit without being guilty of the blood of souls.¹²

One year later Fuller was in turmoil about the prospects of publishing his manuscript. The

spiritual gravity of writing so plainly about the duty of love to God consistently challenged his own awareness of sin's subtleties. On November 16 he confided in his diary, "Wrote some thoughts on 1 Cor. xvi. 22. but have great reason for shame and self reflection, While I write on love to Christ, I feel a world of unlawful self-love and self-seeking working in me."¹³ He had written ten pages on loving God both for his special gifts of grace and his intrinsic excellencies. The latter are universal and very great. When he mentioned 1 Corinthians 16:22 in this connection he appended a foot note, "This passage (1 Cor. xvi. 22) is a most awful, and yet just description of the final state of those who love not the Lord Jesus Christ."¹⁴ He felt the weight of publishing his views and expected much unhappiness through it as he would expose himself to a great deal of abuse. He did not want the cause of truth to suffer through him, but he was convinced that the cause in which he was engaged was, indeed, the cause of truth and righteousness. As he laid it before God he confessed, "Assuredly he knows my end is to vindicate the excellence of his character, and his worthiness of being loved and credited."¹⁵ On the twenty-second of November, Fuller walked to Northampton, manuscript in hand, to initiate the printing of his "manuscript of the duty of sinners to believe in Christ."¹⁶

STYLE AND SUBSTANCE

This first edition gave evidence throughout of this deeply felt and intense personal investment in the material. In the preface, Fuller used first person pronouns. When this preface was edited for the second edition, he called himself "the author" and used third person pronouns all the way through. Removed from the immediacy of his personal struggle through the issues and challenged to a more detached apologetic style by the multiplicity of engagements on other issues, Fuller developed a more formal style with tighter and more condensed thought patterns. His substance remained

intact, his style less emotive, more sophisticated, and, where possible, less elongated. In the first edition, he spoke of faith as "a hearty credit of whatever God hath said, be that what it may" and in the revised preface he said, "a persuasion of the truth of what God has said." He continued with the minimal phrase, "and, of course, to suspect his former views concerning its not being the duty of unconverted sinners"¹⁷ as a precise reduction of the more extended and rich explanation.

From hence by an easy transition, my mind was led farther to suspect my former sentiments concerning faith not being the duty of unconverted sinners. It was natural to argue after this sort—If true faith is nothing more nor less than an hearty or cordial belief of what God says, surely it must be every one's duty where the gospel is published, to do that. Surely no man ought to question or treat with indifference anything which Jehovah hath said!¹⁸

Sometimes, but rarely, in the second edition he increased the intensity of his point instead of aiming at conciseness. For example, "They appeared to me, in their addresses to those poor souls, to have none of the shackles with which I felt myself encumbered," was expanded to "They appeared, to him, in their addresses to those poor, benighted heathens, to have none of those difficulties with which he felt himself encumbered." While expanding in some ways, he shifted the intensity of the word "shackles" to a more sedate "difficulties." A "worthy minister" becomes a "minister whom he greatly respected," and "he suggested that he thought" became "it was thrown out as a matter of inquiry."¹⁹

For the most part, however, the changes are in the direction of a more streamlined style. While he was careful to maintain the thought, he reduced the passion and existential engagement of the narrative. If Fuller wanted to communicate something of the deeply troubling nature of this massive shift in theological and ministerial conviction, then the original lan-

guage of the first edition seems more alive and troubled in spirit than the more detached version of the preface edited for the second edition. The poignancy of the first compared to the second is never more obvious than in the opening paragraph of “Part First” completely omitted from the second edition.

“What shall I do to be saved?” is certainly a question of vast importance to a fallen creature. All the concerns of this temporary life compared with this, are less than nothing and vanity. The deliverance of our bodies from diseases and dangers frequently attracts our attention, and the salvation of states and kingdoms often fills the world with admiration: these are great, if viewed by themselves; but compared with the worth of a soul, there is less proportion than betwixt the drop of a bucket, and the vast ocean. What is their loss, if lost, to that which is irretrievable, and eternal? And of what importance is the news of their salvation, to that which brings life and immortality to light?²⁰

The next paragraph in edition 1 begins, “As God, of his sovereign grace, hath blessed our world with the glorious gospel of salvation by Jesus, so he hath spoken much in his word” etc. The second edition begins with that paragraph but begins the paragraph in this manner, “God having blessed mankind with the glorious gospel of his Son, hath spoken much in his word” etc. Such stylistic alterations extend throughout the work.

In the same manner he changed a phrase on Sandemanianism from “a cold assent to the doctrines of the gospel in general,” to “a general assent to the doctrines of revelation.” On this same point he asserted in the revision “He had no doubt but that such a notion of the subject ought to be rejected; and if this be the notion of Mr. Sandeman ... he has no scruple in saying, it is far from any thing which he intends to advance”²¹ as a replacement and a significant

reduction for a much more passionate narrative.

I had no doubt but that such a notion of the subject ought to be rejected. So far from thinking such a *cold assent* to be saving faith, it appeared to me, in some views, to be criminal. The assent, so far as it goes, is right; but the *coldness* of it is criminal, and even *detestable*. If Mr. Sandeman meant to call such a cold assent saving faith, or if the faith which he calls saving, be unaccompanied with a *dependence on Christ for salvation* ... I utterly disclaim his principles.²²

Both quotes carry the same theological concern, but one clearly has an emotional edge that has been subdued in the other. Such cold belief of the fact of the gospel is not biblical faith, for the gospel comes with an assumption of its excellency and that any belief of it must necessarily include an adoration of its beauty and its intrinsic excellence. So both editions affirm. Originally Fuller had made the point, “Yet, I found the scriptures as fully revealed *what* they are, namely their *real excellency*, as *that they are at all*, I concluded they that did not believe the one as well as the other, disbelieved a great part of the *report* of the gospel; yea the very essentials of it” and concluded, “Whatever faith a wicked man may have in it as a piece of news, he hath none in the goodness of it; he is therefore an unbeliever in the very essence of the gospel, or in that without which it would not be the gospel.”²³ More elegantly and less effusive, Fuller made the same point sixteen years later, “being blind to the glory of God, as it is displayed in the face of Jesus Christ, their belief of the gospel must be very superficial, extending only to a few facts, without any sense of their real, intrinsic excellency; which strictly speaking, is not faith.”²⁴

Two paragraphs appear in the first edition, omitted from the revised “Preface to the first Edition” of the second edition, that give insight into the soul struggle of Fuller as he wrote his ideas and was confronted with the possible obligation to publish them. The native feelings

of Fuller and the immediacy of the personal stake he had in this is obvious. We learn also of the importance of the “judicious friends” that would encourage him in the publication and that shared his theology as well as the practical implications arising from it.

At length I wrote my thoughts out, with a view to inform myself by endeavouring to place them in as explicit a light as I could, and to give myself an opportunity of conviction by lending the MS to a few judicious friends, who, if they saw me wrong, would, I hoped, point out my mistakes. Accordingly I lent it to several ministers, and other persons, who were of different opinions relative to the subject. It is at the request of the greater part of these that it now appears in print. They apprehended the subject to be of importance, as it is not a mere speculative point, but involves in it a great deal of practical religion; and, I suppose, might think the present performance calculated at least to excite a spirit of impartial enquiry.

I have often had discouraging thoughts concerning publishing. Though I verily believe the cause in which I engage is, in the main, the cause of God and truth; yet I am not wholly insensible of my own insufficiency to plead it. From a consciousness also of the prejudices of my own mind, and an observation of the same in others, where received opinions are called in question, I have been often ready to indulge despair, and to resign all hope of the principles here offered to consideration meeting with an impartial trial. I have likewise been ready sometimes to weep, from an expectation of hard thoughts, and perhaps hard words from several of those with whom I could rejoice to spend my days in cordial friendship. Indeed, every consideration, but that of a firm persuasion that the cause in which I engage is the cause of truth and righteousness, would induce me to desist.²⁵

From a viewpoint of sixteen years later, the immediate concerns expressed in those paragraphs did not seem quite as relevant, so they were omitted. From the situation described, however, in the first edition, one can discern the spiritual and mental energy invested in the first appearing of this work. Fuller did not want to make the mistake of many controversialists and assume excessive significance in his peculiar concerns, but he seriously thought that “the subject treated of in the following pages is of no small importance.”²⁶ The gravity of it is seen in that it gets to the root of the error of both Arminians and the false-Calvinist antinomians, and, as a sidelight, also sweeps away the error of the Sandemanians. God’s controversy with each of these can be summarized in the following proposal: “maintaining that *to him belongs all the glory*, and to them *shame and confusion of face*. Here lies the spirit of true religion, heartily to yield this point to God; and here lies the turn of a great part of the present controversy.”²⁷ Arminians contended that since they shouldered the blame, they must retain some element of the glory, that is, the right improvement of remaining, or restored, moral power; the antinomians wanted none of the glory, but excused their unbelief on the basis of the absence of moral ability; the Sandemanians eliminated the necessity of any moral power by making gospel belief the bare mental acceptance of gospel propositions, disconnected from a heart that approves holiness.

The Sandemanians responded so sharply to this and to other works of Fuller, that in his second edition he included a large appendix entitled, “On the Question, Whether the Existence of a Holy disposition of Heart be Necessary to Believing.”²⁸ Here he gave an extensive, highly nuanced, carefully constructed polemical argument for the necessity of regeneration as a moral, and thus logical, precedent to repentance and faith. “To me,” he proposed, “it appears, that the scriptures trace a change of heart to an

origin beyond either belief or perception, even to that divine influence which is the *cause* of both.” Stated another way, Fuller contended that the Spirit of God “imparts a holy susceptibility and relish for the truth, in consequence of which we discern its glory, and embrace it.”²⁹ Apart from the new birth, one cannot see the kingdom of God.

REMOVING DISTRACTIONS AND KEEPING FOCUS

In order to minimize the effect of arguments from red herrings, Fuller pointed to six doctrinal commonplaces that were not at stake in the discussion. First he made clear that election and the “discriminating doctrines of grace” were not an issue but were fully affirmed by “both sides,” meaning himself and the hyper-Calvinists. None will believe but those that are “chosen of God from eternity.” Nor is there any dispute about those that are “the proper objects of encouragement.” Only to those that are penitent does the gospel hold out “its golden sceptre.” A third issue is whether, in believing the gospel, men are bound to do any more than the Law requires. Central to the hyper-Calvinist argument, and implied in the Arminian concept of common prevenient grace, was the conviction that belief in the gospel demanded more ability than that which man in the unfallen condition was required to manifest in his obedience to the Law. Fuller deals more with the complementarity between obeying the Law and believing the gospel throughout the work as that idea is central to his repudiation of the antinomians.³⁰

Fourth, Fuller was careful to argue that in believing the gospel, men are not required “to believe *any more than the report of the gospel*, or *anything that is not true*.”³¹ This issue was raised because some described faith, both antinomians and Arminians, as including the conviction of one’s personal inclusion in the substitutionary death of Christ. That is, if I am

to have faith, must I not believe that Christ has died for me in particular? That would require one to believe more than is revealed in Scripture, Fuller contended, and goes beyond the gospel report. They must believe the gospel report of Christ’s death for sinners and his willingness to receive all that come to God by him; This will be saving faith if “they believe that report with all their hearts.”³²

Fifth, Fuller did not contest the received doctrine of the Calvinists concerning the inability of “fallen men to do things that are spiritually good.” His argument concerned the kind of inability this was and whether it was a sinful, criminal, inexcusable inability. He concluded, “Tis easy, one should think, to see that this inability is so far from excusing men, that it is the most criminal thing in the world; and therefore their obligations to the contrary ought to be particularly pointed out, if it might be to convict them of their sin.” Here, again, Fuller’s first edition has a more energetic and animated discussion than the more terse, streamlined summarized paragraph in the revised preface of the second edition. The second edition summary of about four lines states that the question does not doubt the inability of men to embrace the gospel, “but what kind of inability they lie under with respect to these exercises? Whether it consists in the want of natural powers and advantages, or merely in the want of a heart to make a right use of them? If the former, obligation, it is granted, would be set aside; but if the latter, it remains in full force.”³³ That summary replaced the following section:

We have a far worse opinion of human nature, in its present state, than to suppose them capable of any thing on this sort. To what purpose then, it has been asked, is the dispute? Of what use is it to talk of what men *ought* to do, when you allow they *cannot* do it? We answer, very great. Men are unable, in their present state, to keep God’s law; but it does not thence follow that it is of no use to

vindicate its authority, and ascertain its extent. It is by this, God's prerogative is maintained, the sinner convinced of his sin, and the grace of the gospel appears in its forgiveness.

Besides, the *nature* of this inability renders a just statement of men's obligations peculiarly necessary. We maintain with the apostle, that *the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them*; but then, we as well maintain, that his inability is no other than that of a man under the dominion of carelessness and prejudice, who, while he continues such, is unable to discern and embrace the truth. We grant that carnal men are unable, totally unable to do any thing acceptable to God; but then we maintain as well, that they are no otherwise unable than a man that is under the dominion of enmity to another is unable to love and please him.³⁴

The sixth non-issue for Fuller was whether preaching was done with the intent of provoking the carnally-minded to perform something spiritually good that would serve as the ground of their justification. Fuller believed that refusal, and this moral inability, to obey the Law arose from the same perversity of heart as refusal to believe the gospel. He had no delusion, therefore, that his attempt to persuade would render the unbeliever more pliable and likely to believe; like the Law, left without the operation of the Spirit of God such preaching would only increase resistance and reveal the fundamental hatred of the sinner toward God. "We hope," Fuller pled, "to be believed when we say the design of all our preaching and writing is not to persuade sinners that they can believe in Christ of their own accord." He knew they were too wicked for that. Rather, his purpose was "to convince them of their inability and utter depravity; and this we believe cannot be done but by dwelling upon their great obligations." Paul, indeed, became con-

vinced of his inability and depravity by a view of the spirituality of the Law. Fuller continued:

The only way that we know of to convince any man of sin, is to shew him *what he ought to be*, and compare that to *what he is*. We reckon faith in Christ one of those things required by the law of God of those where the gospel is preached, and we preach the obligations of men to it for the same ends with which others preach other branches of the law; namely, not with any hope that our carnal hearers, while such, will obey it; but with a view, if it please God to bless our endeavours, by shewing them what they ought to be, to convince them of what they are, and so to bring them to pray in the spirit of *Ephraim*, *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned*.³⁵

In the revised preface, Fuller made this issue more precisely to the point as to whether faith justified as a virtuous ground of acceptance with God. Such could never be the case, for faith was but a mean to declare one's submission to the righteousness of Jesus. Though justification is only by Christ's righteousness imputed, the Jews fell through lack of faith and "our judgments must be strangely warped by system, if we did not conclude it [their lack of faith] to be their sin, and that by which they fell and perished."³⁶

Fuller added a seventh caveat in the revised edition stating, "The question is not, whether unconverted sinners be the subjects of exhortation; but, whether they ought to be exhorted to perform spiritual duties?" He, of course, believing faith in Christ to be a duty, contended that the exhortation of every gospel minister in his preaching was only to spiritual duties. No other kind of duty to God exists except that which is spiritual, the performance of which arises from love to God; no duty that God requires may be performed by "a carnal heart destitute of love to God." Whether it be Law or gospel, "God requires the heart, the whole heart, and nothing but the heart."³⁷

He assured the reader that nothing personal

entered into his discussion of the various writings but only an attempt to get at the issues involved. The writings of the dead were mostly involved for that is “the likeliest way to have the subject considered in a dispassionate manner.” We examine the works of the dead for the benefit of the living, for “most people can bear to have their principles examined in the person of another better than in their own persons.”³⁸ He welcomed anyone to point out his mistakes but “let him not merely *call* them mistakes, but *prove* them so, by solid scriptural evidence.” In such a manner of engagement one would do no harm to Fuller but would be fully entitled “to every mark of honour and christian [sic] respect.”³⁹

THE THESIS AND THE PLAN

The basic thesis of Fuller is this: *Belief of the gospel is the greatest of all moral duties and the refusal to do so, for those that hear, is the most severe of crimes against the honor, righteousness, justice, and holiness of God. Following from this, the chief task of the gospel minister is to persuade and exhort his hearers to believe the gospel with the assurance that hearty compliance brings justification to eternal life and refusal brings an aggravated condemnation.*

Fuller developed this thesis in three parts of the book with amazing concentration on that central idea. Part one stated the subject and defined faith. Part two discussed six propositions proving that faith in Christ was the duty of all men “who hear the sound of the gospel.”⁴⁰ The revised edition stated “all Men who hear, or have Opportunity to hear, the Gospel.”⁴¹ The gospel itself, unlike the Law, is not originally written in the heart, and belief of it is not, therefore, by nature an obligation. Such belief in the absence of hearing it would be a natural and physical impossibility. Keeping the Law, however, is by nature an obligation, and, unkept, brings under condemnation all, whether or not they hear the gospel. Fuller’s driving concept in this book is to show how the gospel, though a manifestation of sovereign grace, nevertheless, speaks to the

same issues as the Law and calls for the same cordial compliance of mind; it carries, therefore, the same weight of obligation as the Law.

Though he had scattered a discussion of some objections to his doctrine throughout parts one and two, he reserved for part three an engagement with the most direct and substantial objections to his basic premise. Fuller opened this section with a lengthy discussion of the moral nature and capacities of Adam in the unfallen state. Since this idea constituted the keystone to the Hyper-Calvinist theological argument, we will unfold carefully its layers. He dealt also with objections arising from a belief in the sovereignty of God expressed in his decrees and the distinguishing doctrines of sovereign grace, belief in particular redemption (as a separate discussion), the nature of the covenant of works in focusing on perfect righteousness from personal obedience, the present necessity of an efficacious work of the Spirit, and the necessity of an internal spiritual principle as fundamental to a believing heart. Fuller believed in each of these but did not see any of them as rendering belief in the gospel as anything less than a moral duty.

A DEFINITION OF FAITH

Fuller set forth a relatively simple definition of faith. He then filled each part of the definition with all the content required by faithful biblical exposition. An examination of all the ways in which the word faith appeared in the biblical text yielded a summary idea, “But in all these, faith is the credit of some testimony.” Saving faith, Fuller, contended is no less so. Nothing is given the name of faith but “what is founded on substantial evidence.” Seeking, therefore, from Scripture, some pungent declaration of the word related to the enjoyment of the fullness of gospel salvation, Fuller settled on 1 Thessalonians 2:13, “The belief of the truth.”⁴² All other spheres in which truth may be asserted pale in comparison to this truth and, for sure, exist only to support this truth. In that phrase, “belief of the truth,” is

contained all that Scripture testifies about the gospel including the consonance of mind and heart in the grand presentation of the glory and beauty and intrinsic excellence of the Redeemer. Fuller expounded.

That was it that represented God in his *true* character, and men in *theirs*—that told them the *truth* without falsehood or flattery, concerning the evil of sin, and its just demerit—that gave them a *true* account of their miseries, and necessities, and as well exhibited the glorious *realities* of life and immortality to views. That was it which formed the subject matter of the apostles embassy, and in the reception of which he knew men’s everlasting interests were concerned. That was it of which the Son of God himself came down to *bear witness*. To acquiesce therein is to view things in measure as God views them, and as Christ viewed them when he offered himself a sacrifice for sin. Never was such *witness borne* to the excellence of God’s law and character, to the evil and demerit of sin, and to the worth of the everlasting enjoyment of God as he then bore! To view things then as he viewed them, is to view them as *they are*, and that is the same thing as the apostle calls *the belief of the truth*. It deserves also to be particularly noticed that what is here called the belief of the truth, is peculiar to the *elect*, accompanies *sanctification of the spirit*, and terminates in *salvation*.⁴³

In the second edition, Fuller’s concentration was not so tied to 2 Thessalonians but emerged as a summary of thirteen New Testament passages that he quoted in brief. “That the belief of the truth which God hath revealed in the scriptures concerning Christ, is saving faith,” Fuller reaffirmed, “is evident from the following passages.” The final of these thirteen brief quotations was 2 Thessalonians 2:13, from which catena he concluded, “It cannot be doubted, that, by the *belief of the truth*, is here meant, faith in Christ; and its being connected with sanctification of the Spirit and eternal salvation, proves it to be saving.”⁴⁴

Fuller had dismissed several common misperceptions of biblical faith prior to proposing his definition. Each of these erroneous conceptions inserted something of personal interest into the nature of faith: such as, faith involves necessarily the convictions that Christ’s graces already extend to me in particular, or an unshaken persuasion of my being is a state of salvation. Neither of these is an element revealed in Scripture or contained in the preaching of the Apostles. “The Scriptures always represent faith as terminating on something *without us*; namely on Christ, and the truths concerning him.”⁴⁵ Gratitude for the particular blessings of grace and confidence in our status as sons of God are desirable and should be sought, but only upon believing the gospel. Promises are not made of any personal connection with gospel blessings apart from general promises and conditions. Faith gains all advantages resident within the gospel, but those advantages are consequent upon believing and thus are not any part of what must be believed. “The grand object of that is, *what Christ is*, and not *the happy condition that I am in, as interested in him*.”⁴⁶ Faith, belief of the truth of all that is reported about Christ in his person and his redemptive work, concentrates on his sufficiency, his excellency, and his authoritative prerogative. In the most precise construction of the order of saving graces, Fuller set believing these things prior to the coming to him, the trusting in him, and the act of union with him; he is seen, at the first dawn of faith, as great and worthy irrespective of benefits that he may or may not sovereignly bestow.⁴⁷ The great examples of faith to which Jesus pointed were the woman of Canaan and the centurion. Both believed in Jesus’ intrinsic excellence, his authority, his absolute prerogative prior to any firm knowledge that he included them in any special advantages of his grace.⁴⁸

Even in the opening of the spiritual eyes to see the glory of Christ, “there is no new revelation made to the soul *of things not contained in the scripture*.” All the excellence, glory, and preciousness of Christ pressed on the mind and

inflamed in the heart, or to be discerned later by Christians, “is already reported in the sacred scriptures.” Since this is so, faith, the belief that culminates in union with Christ, inextricably connected with salvation, is belief of the truth. Such belief is the duty of all that hear the gospel. “If it is denied to be men’s duty to believe these *intrinsic excellencies* of religion, let it be proved that these are not a part of the *record which God hath given of his Son*.”⁴⁹

A DEFENSE OF THE ASSERTION THAT IT IS THE DUTY OF ALL MEN TO HAVE SUCH FAITH

Following the definition of faith, Fuller invoked six propositions to show that this faith was the duty of all men “who hear, or have opportunity to hear, the Gospel.” Though he already had given sufficient reason to state that as a truth, he did not want readers to think that he had exhausted the biblical network of ideas that supported his thesis. These six propositions, therefore, Fuller discussed with an abundance of biblical interpretation and doctrinal reasoning. First, the call to faith comes to unconverted sinners. Fuller shows with amplitude that the calls of the gospel with the command to believe were given to men while in their unconverted state. Both testaments demonstrate this to be so. Among the many passages employed, the command of Psalm 2, “Kiss the Son,” with its implications of love and recognition of worthiness carries weight for an Old Testament text. John 5:23, “men should honor the Son,” elicits this comment from Fuller, “This then cannot amount to less than a holy hearty love to him, and adoration of him, in all the manifestation by which he hath made himself known; and this evidently includes faith in him.”⁵⁰

Second every man must cordially receive and heartily approve whatever God reveals. This seems self-evident since God is a God of truth, holiness, and love. To assert otherwise

would be grotesque, “horrid and unworthy of a refutation!” If all men should love God because of the perfections revealed in creation, how much more should all men love God for the gospel and obey its required conditions for its enjoyment. As a revelation, the gospel is infused with all the glories of the Law and is a manifestation of the same excellencies, but in more powerful personal demonstrations. If all are obliged to obey the revelation of God’s Law, how much greater impetus rests upon the conscience to conform to all that is commanded and every act of worship that is implied in the revelation of the gospel.

Third, though the gospel is not strictly speaking a law, but a message of pure grace, nevertheless it requires such engagement with it as virtually requires obedience which includes saving faith. Passages that use the word “obey” in reference to the gospel and threaten punishment on those that do not obey (1 Thess 1:8, 9 and 1 Pet 4:17) certainly imply that the gospel’s connection with the Law is such as to require obedience. Fuller gave a lengthy paraphrase of 2 Corinthians 5:19 showing that the gospel preacher is under commission to command a belief of the gospel.⁵¹

Fourth, in Scripture the refusal of sinners to believe is ascribed to their depravity as arising from an evil heart, a heart captive to the devil, and is a manifestation of every work of the flesh which also is hostile to the Law of God. Fuller employed a long quote from John Gill in confirmation of his view. Also one of the operations of the Spirit in convicting the world of sin, perhaps the sin that is the sum of all others, specifically concerns their not believing on the Son.⁵²

Fifth, God has “threatened and inflicted the most awful punishments on men for their not believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.”⁵³ Among other passages, Fuller appealed to John 3:18 as securing the idea that unbelief is a procuring cause of damnation. To the same end he interpreted 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12. In both cases, the persons under question, unbelievers, were

presented with Christ as the sum and substance of the gospel, and, in both cases, they refused to come to the light or refused the love of the truth, and were thus given up to damnation. “How this can be accounted for,” Fuller queried, “but by allowing that they *ought* to have received the love of the truth, is difficult to say; and yet if this is allowed, it is the same thing as allowing saving faith to have been their duty.”⁵⁴

In the sixth proposition, Fuller gathered together all the other spiritual exercises incumbent on men in general, and showed that they have an inextricable connection with the gospel of Christ. That which bound all of these various elements together was the obligation of all men to conduct themselves before God with true spiritual holiness. That the Law is spiritual and implies this founded Fuller on the argument from which he extrapolated a number of qualities endemic to gospel repentance and characteristic of the fruit of the Spirit. This continuity between the spirituality of the Law and the effects of the gospel again proved Fuller’s contention that it is the duty of all men to believe the gospel. “If God’s law be spiritual, and remain in full force as a standard of obligation; if men, while unconverted, have no real conformity to it; if regeneration be the writing of it upon the heart, or the renewal of the mind to a right spirit; all these things are clear and consistent.”⁵⁵ In the original edition, Fuller included a lengthy exposition of the excellence of God as he is in Himself, and the excellence of Christ in his person and redemptive work. He included it in a pertinent but much diminished way in the second edition. He concluded this section in the second edition with the summary analytical statement, based on his observations of the Spirit’s work. “But if that which is bestowed by the Holy Spirit be something different in its nature from that which is required in the divine precepts, I see not what is to be made of the scriptures, nor how it is, that *righteousness, goodness* or anything else which is

required of me, should be accompanied, as it is, with the promise of eternal life.”⁵⁶

The first edition closed this section with a richer display of passion but with just as much confirmation of its thesis.

Scripture did I say? Surely it never ought to have been questioned, even though God had never told it us, whether loveliness ought to be loved, beauty admired, purity imitated, just authority feared and obeyed, sin lameted [sic], truth embraced, and a vile sinner lie humble before God!

O ye cold-hearted, frozen formalists!
On such a theme, ’tis impious to be calm;
Passion is reason, transport temper here!⁵⁷

DEALING WITH THE OBJECTIONS

Are the Powers of Adam under a Covenant of Works Consistent with a Call to Faith under a Covenant of Grace?

The core of what Fuller perceived to be the determinative error of hyper-Calvinism, or anti-nomianism, he exposed most thoroughly in part three in his discussion of objections to his principle of “duty-faith.” These objections all concerned “the inability of innocent Adam to believe in Christ as a saviour, or from the supposed inconsistency of this principle [“duty-faith”] with that of the divine decrees.”⁵⁸ The first objection dealing with “the nature of that divine principle which Adam possessed”⁵⁹ gave the substance of the argument that lay behind all the objections and formed the most characteristic element of hyper-Calvinism. As a preliminary caveat to his discussion, Fuller pointed out that “if by reason of our darkness we could not ascertain with precision the nature and extent of our first parents principles and abilities, is that to be wondered at?” The moral powers constituting a condition of innocence so foreign to our disordered souls would be extremely difficult to discern. The preceptive part of Scripture would, however, in Fuller’s viewpoint, create a trajectory of thought only consistent with the

duty of all men to consent to all that God reveals and commands—even the command to repent of sin and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

In addition, the appearance of inconsistency between divine decrees and human responsibility should offer no barrier to belief if both can be demonstrated to be clearly taught in Scripture; divinely revealed truth might certainly challenge the narrow limits of human rationality. Should it be demonstrated, however, by the “false-Calvinist” that the principle of moral action incumbent upon Adam in the unfallen state differed in some *essential* way from the exhibition of faith called for by the gospel, then the difficulty of claiming that believing the gospel is the moral duty of all fallen persons, elect and non-elect, increases.

The idea central to the objection is this: Adam possessed no need of turning from sin and placing trust, or belief, in a redeemer when in the innocent state, and had, therefore, no power for such actions of soul. That for which he had no necessity and thus no power in the innocent state cannot now become his duty until God, by special grace, bestows such power. The supernaturally induced state of faith comes only by an additional manifestation of divine energy unnecessary for and unavailable to the innocent man and, therefore, constituted no part of the obligation or power of the fallen man.

Fuller responded by dividing the concept of incapacity into two states; essential and circumstantial. Adam’s incapacity for the duty of repentance was merely circumstantial, not essential. Other possibilities not present in an innocent world might nevertheless become duties in the condition of a fallen world. Fuller illustrated:

So Adam while innocent though possessed of love to God and man in an high degreee [sic], was yet incapable of discovering that love by sighing for the abominations of the land, or pitying and relieving the miserable. The reason was, there were no abominations in the land to sigh for, nor miserable beings for him to pity.

But no one imagines that because Adam was not capable of sighing for the abominations of the land, therefore his descendents ought not: or that because he could not pity the miserable, therefore, they are not bound to do so. Adam could have done all this had he been *in circumstances which required it*. Why then should that *circumstantial* incapacity of Adam to repentance and faith, be brought as an argument against the present duty of his descendants?⁶⁰

Fuller argued, therefore, that the essence of those moral qualities that were necessary for repentance and faith resided within the originally created innocent man as constituent elements of the law written on the heart (“love to God and man in an high degreee” [sic]). The natural and moral perfections of God as perceived by Adam in innocence might be different, and in the context of creation and providence only appear less glorious, than those enjoyed by fallen men in contemplating the redemptive love of God in “sovereign saving grace,” but these differences “lie not in the *nature* of the principle, but are merely *circumstantial*, and so do not circumscribe present duty.”⁶¹ Fuller followed with three biblical reasons to consider “that the principle of Adam in innocence, and that in believers, notwithstanding these differences are *essentially*, or *for substance* the same.” First, Fuller proposed that “they are both formed after the same rule, and that rule is the holy law of God.” He showed this continuity by pointing out that the expectation upon Adam was that of “an entire conformity to the moral law of God.” That same expectation also described the mission of Christ in the salvation of sinners, “an entire conformity to the same moral law.” In addition, the restoration of the divine image in saved persons as they “are formed after the image of Christ, must be the same.” Thus, from creation in innocence to restoration in eternity “it is not any new law, but the same divine law

that is *written on their hearts* in regeneration, as was written on Adam's heart in his state of innocence."⁶² This argues that the difference in the duties of unfallen and fallen men relate solely to their circumstances and not to any essential principle of their moral nature.

Fuller's second reason points to the language of salvation employing such words as "returning," "washing," and "renewing." These words cannot refer to the natural faculties of the mind or heart, for then the fall would have been an entire destruction of human nature; instead this means the renewal of a right disposition, a washing from the pollution that has marred the original state, a return to those affections that guided the heart prior to its departure. Certain aspects of the circumstances of such restoration are different from the original circumstances, but the operating principle in the heart of man is the same. Fuller illustrated the point.

That the life we enjoy through Christ is *in many respects* different from that which was promised in the covenant of works, may for aught appears to the contrary, be allowed, without supposing our principles essentially different. 'Tis certain, we shall contemplate and enjoy God in a different character, and as exercising his attributes in a different way than what could have been, had man continued in innocency. And no doubt the bliss will be far more glorious than that which was lost in Adam. Christ came not only that we might have life, but that we might have it more abundantly. But this circumstantial difference in the object enjoyed makes nothing in proving his and our *principles* to be different in their *nature*. The joy of angels is greatly increased by man's redemption, but it does not thence follow that their *principles* are different from what they were prior to the revelation of that event. A life of joy in heaven is far more glorious than a life of communion with God on earth; yet the principles of saints on earth and saints in heaven are not therefore of a different *nature*.⁶³

A principle of heart certainly will operate in different ways and toward different objects given different circumstances, whether angels in heaven, innocent men on earth, fallen and unrestored men on earth, fallen and restored men on earth, fallen and unrestored men in hell, or fallen and restored men in heaven. The abiding principle is that the human heart had an original love of holiness as seen in the perfection of his creator and thus engaged in a pursuit of righteousness that he might reflect the loving actions and presence of his creator. The fall introduced a state of unrighteousness to which condemnation is the just response of God, and of corruption of heart which brings about the increasingly severe misery of a hatred of holiness. Salvation, in all of its dimensions and in all of the eternal glories connected with it, introduces no new principle in the moral nature of man nor any state of righteousness that was not originally anticipated as a result of unbroken obedience.

It is perfectly consistent, therefore, with the grace of God in the gospel to say that belief of the gospel is the duty of all men. This does not imply a present ability, however, for our indisposition toward God has made the conditions of repentance and faith so antagonistic to our present desires that we cannot conform to them. "And hence," Fuller concluded, "rises the necessity of the work of the Spirit. We need not only the gospel to be held forth to us, ... but an almighty power to accompany it, that our rebellious spirits may be so brought into subjection, as to embrace it."⁶⁴

This same principle of argumentation is suffused throughout Fuller's discussion of other objections. For example, on an objection from the covenant of works—faith in Christ is not included in the covenant of works and cannot therefore be the duty of those who are not under the covenant of grace—Fuller noted, "And though the law of God, as given to Adam, did not *formally* require faith in Christ, yet it

required *such a disposition of mind, as, if its subject were in a fallen state, and a mediator were revealed, would cordially embrace him*. Of this, it is hoped, proof sufficient has been given, in answer to the *first* objection.”⁶⁵

In addition he reasoned, “The law [under which Adam operated] required a disposition, which, if under fallen circumstances, and the revelation of a saviour, would operate the same way that evangelical graces now operate.”⁶⁶ Also in discussing the necessity of the work of the Spirit of God, that is the special grace of effectual calling, Fuller argued that we “need the Spirit of God to enable us to do our duty.” To those that believed this diminished the power and grace involved in regeneration, Fuller explained that grace finds its peculiar beauty in that it is given in spite of *demerit*. But if no obligation exists peculiar to the gospel, the bestowal of its blessings may magnify sovereignty but have little of what we normally recognize as grace. And further, if the bestowal of the gifts of the gospel comes in a way that overcomes a virtually invincible moral opposition to what is bestowed, then the power of that grace is highlighted more than if the bestowal had nothing to do with an opposition peculiar to those gospel blessings. So again, “The idea of a prior obligation to those things which are wrought in us in regeneration, appears plainly therefore to strengthen the evidence for the necessity of the Spirit’s work, rather than weaken it.”⁶⁷

The Decrees of God and the Will of Man

Fuller did not argue that any person is obligated *to be the recipient* of the sovereign acts of God. The decrees of God, in other words, do not nullify the moral precepts of God and the consequent culpability of men for their sinfulness in these determined events. The doctrine of decrees, election in particular, is designed to “teach those that are saved what cause to attribute their salvation to, and those that are yet

carnal what source salvation must arise from if ever they obtain it.”⁶⁸ If divine decrees are ever put to the use of excusing men in their sin, diminishing their obligations, or weakening the intensity of their necessary attention to the matters of salvation, they are put to ill use. He illustrated this with a large number of biblical events in which the divine determination of the outcome did not nullify or weaken the moral obligation of all the persons involved in the event. Pilate was wicked in releasing Jesus to the will of hostile men though God determined that it should be so. Pharaoh was wicked in refusing to release the Israelites from slavery though God had determined his refusal and would show the greatness of his power and his wrath in the demise of Pharaoh. Joseph’s brothers did wickedly in selling Joseph into slavery but God had determined the entire event for his own good purposes.

Fuller argued throughout for an intimate compatibilism between God’s sovereign decrees and unabated human responsibility. Though men have no responsibility in determining the content of the eternal decrees of God, yet their nature is such, and God’s decrees are such, that men as moral agents are responsible for every action and the character of every relation in which they are involved in all of these events. So has God wed together his decrees and our responsibility with absolute compatibility.

In one summary statement Fuller stated, “Election, redemption, and faith, are all blessings, but are not all dispositions, herein they differ; the former are God’s acts without us, but the latter is our act as by him enabled.”⁶⁹ Human response, therefore, even when divinely enabled, is in a different category from, though embedded within, the divinely ordained outcome of events. The consistency of Fuller’s perception of this is seen in the way he structures his statement of human responsibility where God has determined not to grant regeneration to an individual. Again he included an argument

from the continuity of moral duties between the innocent and the fallen state.

This, and whatever else is spiritually good, appears to us to have been his duty before God wrought this change in him, as well as at the time, and that his want of a disposedness to these things was a criminal defect.—But the term *regeneration* is not used to express any thing we *are* or *do*, but *what God does for us*. It is not used to express our *being of a right spirit*; if it were, we should say it was every man's duty; but God's sovereign and almighty work of *making us so*. It is not mens [sic] sin that *God does not* create in them a right spirit, and yet surely they ought to *be of a right spirit*. To make this matter still more plain and evident, if possible, let it be considered that God's not giving that holiness to fallen men which his law requires, and which they have lost, be that what it may, is not their sin; but yet all must allow it is their sin that they *have it not*: otherwise the want of holiness is not a criminal defect, and it is abusing mankind to call them *sinner*s. We do not say it is the duty of men to *give themselves special grace*; all we affirm is, that it is their duty to *be* that which nothing but special grace can make them; and he that will deny this, must deny that a bad man ought to be a good one.⁷⁰

Does, however, the *oughtness* of holiness as independent of the grace of regeneration imply the *oughtness* of a state of forgiveness in relation to the nature and/or intent of the death of Christ? Fuller sought to be sensitive to the character of this objection.

The Particularity of the death of Christ and The Universality of the call to Believe

One of the most discussed areas of Fuller's defense of divine determination focuses on his discussion of "Particular Redemption." While the burden of Fuller's theological discussion, and his personal investment of study, had always been the relation of human depravity to moral and natural ability and inability, the

connection of these issues to the atonement had not been far behind. In his discussion of the atonement in the first edition, subheaded as "Concerning Particular Redemption," Fuller pointed to an objection based on the supposed absurdity that "God can have made it the duty of any man to believe in Christ for the salvation of his soul, or that he can have promised salvation to him on his so believing, when all the while his salvation was not the end for which he died."⁷¹ The Table of Contents described his argument in these words: "If faith were a believing Chirst [sic] died for *me* in particular, this objection would be unanswerable." The second statement of the summary asserted, "No necessity for the party *knowing* his particular interest in Christ's death in order to believe in him, or for his *having* any such interest to render it his duty." Fuller's basic argument in the first edition is that, at the time of "his first coming to Christ," a person "knows of no particular interest" he has in the death of Christ, "or that he should have such an interest at all, in order to make it his duty."⁷²

None can conclude their interest in Christ while they remain an unbeliever; thus, belief does not include the persuasion that Christ has died with the intent of saving such a sinner in particular. When Fuller argued, "It appears equally evident, that there is no necessity, in the nature of the thing, for the party to *have* any interest in Christ's death, in order to make trusting in him his duty,"⁷³ he emphasized that the duty to believe the gospel is not dependent on a special provision of grace made for such and such a sinner in particular. The hypothetical situation posits as a condition of consideration that there are some, the non-elect, for whom the death of Christ includes nothing from which they could find forgiveness should they come to him for such; for them he was neither substitute, sacrifice, nor propitiation and provides nothing, therefore, for them to draw upon to any advantage. Given such a case, even

if a supplicating sinner could view the content of forgiveness procured by the death of Christ and upon such a view found that no investment for the forgiveness of his sins was made, still the only proper and dutiful posture for him is the supplication of mercy, for receiving mercy is the only path to a restoration of dutiful submission to the governing prerogative of God.

This particular part of his argument he abandoned upon being challenged by Dan Taylor. The supposition of *no-interest*, deemed in later writings as the “commercial” view, behind this argument was hypothetical for Fuller. His main contention was that *knowledge* of peculiar inclusion in the saving intent of God did not logically precede one’s duty to believe the gospel, or to fall at the feet of God as a suppliant for mercy. Though he does not explicitly argue the case, Fuller assumed a *quid pro quo* pattern for Christ’s substitutionary death for at least part of his argument that the sinner, nevertheless, had the duty to believe. His defense of duty allowed for this way of envisioning the particularity of Christ’s redemptive work. It is not at all certain that Fuller actually believed, at the time of the publication of the *Gospel Worthy*, what he later called the “commercial” view of the atonement, but it is clear that he did not reject it as inconsistent with the free offer of the gospel. In order to enforce the intrinsic morality of the commands of the gospel, he proposed that such a view, that is, the non-inclusion of some sinners in the objective procurement of forgiveness by Christ’s substitutionary death, was not inconsistent with the duty of sinners to apply to God for mercy through the gospel.

Fuller, in the second edition of *GWAA* written in 1801, no longer defended that particular hypothetical consideration, but said that the *commercial* view “might for all I know, be inconsistent with indefinite invitations.”⁷⁴ In the first edition, he earnestly contended that neither *knowing* one’s inclusion nor *having* inclusion in Christ’s death altered the pre-existing duty to believe, or

trust, in the Christ of the gospel. This language indicates two distinct options in the understanding of God’s purpose in limiting the efficacious results of Christ’s death.

Very quickly after the appearance of *Gospel Worthy*, Fuller was forced to limit his defense to only one of these implied options, and more clearly adopt that viewpoint as his personal theology. An immediate challenge from Dan Taylor, a General Baptist, to Fuller’s attempt at demonstrating the consistency of Calvinism with the duty to believe the gospel, brought Fuller’s response in a book entitled *Reply to Philanthropos*⁷⁵ published in 1787. Fuller, in 1803, recounted the impact that Taylor’s argument had on him. “I freely own that my views of particular redemption were altered by my engaging in that controversy.”⁷⁶ He sought to answer Taylor “without considering the sufficiency of the atonement in itself considered” as a sufficient ground for universal gospel invitations, but could not justify it. He found Taylor’s reasoning and Scripture itself blocking his way for that specific defense, and therefore adopted a view that omitted any justification of the “no interest” or “commercial” view as a ground for general exhortations to apply to Christ for forgiveness of sins.

His *Reply to Philanthropos* [1787] described his understanding of the Calvinist view of atonement, now focused only on one-half of the view he intended to defend in the first edition of *Gospel Worthy*.

I suppose P. [Philanthropos, aka Dan Taylor] is not ignorant that Calvinists in *general* have considered the particularity of redemption as consisting not in the *degree* of Christ’s sufferings, (as though he must have suffered more if more had been finally saved,) or in any *insufficiency* that attended them, but in the sovereign purpose and design of the Father and the Son, whereby they were constituted or appointed the price of redemption, the objects of that redemption ascertained, and the ends to be answered by the whole transaction determined. They suppose the

sufferings of Christ, in themselves considered, are of *infinite* value, sufficient to have saved all the world, and a thousand worlds, if it had pleased God to have so constituted them the price of their redemption, and to have made them effectual to that end. Further, whatever difficulties there may appear in these subjects, they in general suppose that there is in the death of Christ a sufficient ground for indefinite calls and universal invitations, and that there is no mockery or insincerity in the Holy One in any one of these things.⁷⁷

Given that, Fuller discussed a multiplicity of scripture passages and images under seven headings that demonstrated that “there was a certain, absolute, and consequently limited design in the death of Christ, securing the salvation of all those, and only those who are finally saved.”⁷⁸ He also pointed to Witsius, Du Moulin and Owen as supportive of this view point. Nevertheless, he interpreted such passages as 1 John 2:2 and 1 Timothy 2:6 (“propitiation for the whole world,” “ransom for all” and other passages that included such universal language) to be indefinite terms (that is, not indicative of an absolute inclusion of every individual persons in the world) designed to show that Christ ransomed Gentiles no less than Jews as well as all classes of men politically and socially. In detail, however, he maintained that the language “expressed what is true only of those who are finally saved,” that is, specifically efficient for those that God predestined for salvation.⁷⁹

In his next response to Taylor, *The Reality and Efficacy of Divine Grace*,⁸⁰ Fuller revisited this particular point. In letter IX, Fuller explained his view that Christ’s death, while sufficient by nature for the forgiveness of the sins of all persons in the world, was, at the same, specifically designated as an effectual remedy for the elect only. Such discrimination is entirely the prerogative of God and he cannot be accused of a lack of love in doing what he does out of pure grace, as long as his treatment of others is not inconsistent with holy justice. Fuller claimed that his

discussion was designed only to demonstrate “the consistency of a limitation of design in the death of Christ with the indefinite call of the gospel.”⁸¹ Should the whole world consent to return to God by submission to the gospel conditions, none need fear that any insufficiency in Christ’s death would render it unjust to receive him. “All the limitation I maintain in the death of Christ,” Fuller reminded Taylor, “arises from pure *sovereignty*; it is a limitation of *design*,”⁸² while any person bidden to come, will find, if he comes, a full and abundant provision for his reception.

The design, however, in the covenantal determination of those for whom Christ would actually die with the intent to save was limited to a certain people. “All I suppose,” Fuller continued to maintain, “is that provision was not made effectually to persuade every one to embrace it; and that, without such effectual persuasion, no one ever did, or will, embrace God’s way of salvation.”⁸³ Letter XII of the same work gives further insight on Fuller’s method of argument. He wrote, “Now admitting that I am mistaken in my supposition ... nothing follows from it but that I have misunderstood certain passages of Scripture, by considering them as conveying an indefinite, but not a universal idea.” That merely establishes what was already admitted “that a way is opened, by the death of Christ, for the salvation of sinners, without distinction; and that any man may be saved, if he is willing to come to Christ.” Other parts of Taylor’s argument Fuller flatly denied and again insisted, “All I contend for is that Christ, in his death, absolutely designed the salvation of all those who are finally saved; and that, besides the objects of such absolute design, such is the universal depravity of human nature, not one soul will ever believe and be saved.”⁸⁴ He then reaffirmed his original interpretation of the passages in question with their particular application to those that God determined to save and for whom he made “an effectual provision of grace.”⁸⁵

In every instance, Fuller reiterated an exegetical principle and specific interpretations that Taylor “has not sufficiently answered.”⁸⁶ For one

to point to this passage as showing that Fuller altered his understanding of the atonement so as to agree with Taylor, misses the nature of Fuller's argument and ignores his reaffirmation of the original position. Fuller's method of argument involved a hypothetical concession to show that nothing would be gained by the opposition in making the concession. "Letter XII" shows no further change in Fuller's view but a reaffirmation of it and a clarification of the purpose of his argument.

In the second edition of *GWAA*, when Fuller revisited the doctrine of atonement, he became much more specific in defending one view of the atonement and dropping any defense of the "principle of *pecuniary* satisfaction" as consistent with general invitations to reconciliation. He focused his defense on a position on the atonement that was consistent with the views of the synod of Dort, and that of "all the *old* Calvinists,"⁸⁷ only implied in edition one of *GWAA*, but made explicit in *Reply to Philanthropos* and in *The Reality and Efficacy of Divine Grace*.

Though Fuller asserted that Calvinists in general held his view, historically two views of particular redemption have dwelt side by side, as witnessed by his own implied duality in his first edition. One view, defended by John Spilsbury⁸⁸ (as far as we can discern the first Particular Baptist pastor), Abraham Booth,⁸⁹ and John L. Dagg,⁹⁰ contends that the suffering of Christ, as a matter of actual measurable justice set forth by the Father, must be commensurate with the degree of susceptibility to punishment for all those that the Father gave him and for whom he sanctified himself in his obedience to death. He thus is the victim of all that particular wrath that should be measured to them, and he does not suffer as a propitiation for others. They would point to such texts as "the church of God which he bought with his own blood" and "for you are bought with a price," and biblical indicators of discernible degrees of punishment as reflecting commercial analogies to insinuate that moral justice may, indeed must, also be measured.

A second view, represented by the Synod of Dort, Andrew Fuller, and to some degree by J. P. Boyce⁹¹ and John Owen,⁹² is that the intrinsic value of Christ's suffering, given the infinite dignity of his person, is sufficient for the sins of all people in the world. The specific work of Christ in the atonement could be no less for only one person, and no more for the whole world. Its particularity comes from the covenantal arrangement between Christ and the Father, that the Father would grant all the gifts and blessings gained by the Son in his suffering to those, and those exclusively, for whom Christ came to suffer.

Thus the articles of the Synod of Dort read, "The death of the Son of God is the only and most perfect sacrifice and satisfaction for sin; is of infinite worth and value, abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world." The document goes on to say, "And whereas many who are called by the gospel do not repent nor believe in Christ, but perish in unbelief; this is not owing to any defect or insufficiency in the sacrifice offered by Christ upon the cross, but is wholly to be imputed to themselves." It is in the pre-mundane determination that this price is given peculiarly for the elect that constitutes its particularity. The language of Dort is again instructive: "God willed that Christ, through the blood of the cross, (by which he confirmed the new covenant,) should effectually redeem out of every people, tribe, nation, and language, all those, and those only, who were from eternity chosen to salvation, and given to him by the Father; that he should confer upon them faith, (which together with all the other saving gifts of the Holy Spirit, he obtained by his death.)"⁹³

That is the view of Fuller.⁹⁴ He rejected the so-called "commercial" view with firm resolve; "I conclude, therefore, that an hypothesis which in so many important points is manifestly inconsistent with the Scriptures, cannot be true." He applied this idea much in the way that Dort does: "If it be in itself equal to the salvation of the whole world, were the whole world to embrace it; and if the peculiarity which attends it, consist not

in its insufficiency to save more than are saved, but in the sovereignty of its application, no such inconsistency can justly be ascribed to it.”⁹⁵ Since his concern was to reconcile the purposes of God with the free agency of man, Fuller felt strongly that the quantitative view of the atonement rendered it “naturally impossible” for some sinners to be saved and, therefore, inconsistent with general invitations. It represents God as “inviting sinners to partake of what has no existence, and which therefore is physically impossible.”⁹⁶

Christ’s death, however, renders the purpose of grace toward the elect both consistent with justice and a matter of sovereign grace. God has the prerogative, settled from eternity, to “apply his sacrifice to the salvation of some men, and not of others.”⁹⁷ Many never hear the gospel and the greater part that hear it disregard it. Those that do believe ascribe their salvation solely to the free gift of God. “And, as the application of redemption is solely directed by sovereign wisdom,” Fuller continued, “so, like every other event, it is the result of *previous design*. That which is actually done was *intended* to be done.” Thus it is that Christ’s intent in coming was to save his elect, to give Himself for them, purify them, and make them a peculiar people. In that “consists the peculiarity of redemption.”⁹⁸

On this basis free exhortations to all to comply with the gospel are perfectly consistent with particular redemption, Fuller reasoned. In 1803, He quoted Calvin’s commentary on John 3:16 that the preacher has warrant to call “all men without exception to the faith of Christ.” He also combined this universal warrant with particular intent in continuing his quotation of Calvin’s comment, “for though Christ lieth open to all men, yet God doth only open the eyes of the elect, that they may seek him by faith.”⁹⁹ The sufficiency is there, so a compliance with the gospel invitation on anyone’s part would be intrinsically and necessarily vain for none. God’s restricted purpose, though revealed in principle, is not in any case revealed in particular prior to a sinner’s closing with Christ by faith.

No person is called on to believe that Christ has died for them in particular as an element of genuine faith, but, so Fuller continued to argue, “must believe in him as he is revealed in the gospel; and that is as the Saviour of *sinners*.”¹⁰⁰

Fuller closed the section on particular redemption by quoting Elisha Coles (as he had in the first edition) as saying, “He that would know his own particular redemption, before he will believe, ... begins at the wrong end of his work, and is very unlikely to come that way to the knowledge of it.” No one may conclude himself excluded from redemption, unless he does so himself by his obstinate refusal to come as a sinner utterly dependent on the mercy of a sufficient savior. Again as he did in the first edition, Fuller quoted John Owen: “When God calleth upon men to believe, he doth not, in the first place call upon them to believe that Christ died for them; but that *There is none other name under given among men, whereby we must be saved, but only of Jesus Christ, through whom salvation is preached.*”¹⁰¹

Since the death of Christ by its nature, in Fuller’s construction, does not exclude the possibility of salvation for any sinner, the legal impediment from God’s standpoint has been removed leaving the only impediment as human unbelief. Any person invited to trust confronts now, not a body of sin for which he must pay in light of no sufficient provision of forgiveness existing, but a heart that hates even the imposition and assumption that his guilt demanded atonement. That he must repent of hell-deserving sin and look to a substitute for reconciliation with God is a truth for which an ungodly person feels repugnance. Atonement now falls back on the character of the human will for its actualization.

The Inability of Man to Believe

This condition naturally leads to a discussion of the distinction between moral ability and inability and natural ability and inability. Throughout this treatise, Fuller pointed to this

as germane to an understanding of the relation between Law and gospel. This was a primeval principle for Fuller. In his original musing on the subject when he was 23, he had proposed an answer to a question on human ability. "If the question was put to me whether Man since the Fall has any power to do the Will of God, I would endeavour to answer with 'meekness and Fear.' I think there is a sense in which he has and a sense in which he has not."¹⁰² He then explained the conundrum thus established with this proposal: "I cannot but think the Distinction made by some divines between Natural and Moral Ability sufficient to determine this Difficulty."¹⁰³

In the introduction to the first edition of *Gospel Worthy*, as in "Some Thoughts," Fuller described the impact that reading Jonathan Edwards's *Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will* had on his thinking on this issue. Edwards's discussion "disburdened the Calvinistic system of a number of calumnies with which its enemies have loaded it."¹⁰⁴ This led Fuller to see in the Scripture that the inability ascribed to man in the issue of repentance and faith was not of an excusable kind because of a lack of natural faculties, but was of a blameable kind, arising from a moral, or immoral, aversion of heart to divine holiness. Resistance to the call to faith was criminal and contrary to duty.

Though present in the introduction and implicit throughout, Fuller reserved his most extended discussion of the important theological subject, "some *additional observations* of this subject," for the final eleven pages. In the second edition, Fuller omitted this discussion and substituted some concluding reflections on the warrant to believe, the influence of faith on justification, the alarming situation of unbelievers, and the duty of ministers in dealing with the unconverted.¹⁰⁵ In the first edition, however, Fuller felt that the key to clinching his argument concerning faith being a duty of all that heard the report of the gospel depended on a clear demonstration that

unbelief was sinful and criminal, not merely the pitiable insufficiency of created powers.

In "Some Thoughts" Fuller defined natural ability as "*The enjoyment & exercise of the Faculties of our souls, & the members of our Bodies.*"¹⁰⁶ In the first edition he used the language "The enjoyment of rational faculties, bodily powers, and external advantages."¹⁰⁷ The lack of all of these things, or in certain instances, any one of them constitutes natural inability. Moral ability, originally, he defined as, "*An inclination, or disposition, of mind to exercise these Natural Powers, to good or holy purposes*"¹⁰⁸ condensed in the first edition to "A disposition to use our natural ability to right purpose."¹⁰⁹ At bottom, therefore, it involves a heart to know and love God and devote all the powers of soul and body as instruments of righteousness for him. The lack of these things, having no heart to know God, love God, to serve him, and to devote all natural capacities to him, renders a man unable to perform any truly spiritual good, but this inability is a wicked and perverse type of destitution.

As in many other places, Fuller revealed his gratitude to Jonathan Edwards for providing pivotal insights when he shows that this is not a new or contrived idea but quite thoroughly discussed in the Reformed literature of the past and present. "It is abundantly improved for this purpose by President Edwards, in his *Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will.*" Fuller further described this effort by Edwards as "a book which has been justly said to go further toward settling the main points in controversy between the Calvinists and Arminians, than any thing that has been wrote: and which the late Mr. Toplady highly recommends to all who wish to see the Arminian sophistry totally unravel'd and defeated."¹¹⁰

That men have remaining to them their natural powers, or ability, does not argue at all that they are good or that they may convert themselves apart from the effectual operations of the Holy Spirit. Their moral inability

is such that the impossibility of their so turning is as great as if the obstruction were established on the laws of mechanical physics. The will in such a condition naturally includes the affections, now perverse, and their reign over the understanding so that blindness of mind indicates a severe moral, and voluntary, rebellion against the plain and just claims of God on all his rational creatures. That the natural capacities are of such a nature that, apart from their captivity to moral perversity, they could be employed in the pursuit of God's glory, and, according to divine law, should be. Fuller asserted this oughtness in a remarkably exuberant passage affirming the distinctives between natural and moral abilities. We should be so exhorted.

Does not common sense, as well as common honesty, here require the distinction of natural and moral strength or ability? Do they not unite to determine that heart and strength are here to be understood of the former and not of the latter? If by strength here we understand all the natural powers of our souls, members of our bodies, and opportunities that are put into our hands; then the difficulty is removed, the meaning is plain, and the passage proves natural strength to be the measure of obligation. The purport of it appears to be this; 'You have a soul, consisting of wonderful powers, and a body fearfully and wonderfully made, consisting of many active members, with many opportunities wherein you will have occasion to call them forth to exercise, let them all be devoted to the glory of God. Particularly, you have the powers of perception and understanding; let them be wholly employed in contemplating his character, or in what shall subserve his glory. You have the powers of choice; chuse what he chuses and refuse what he forbids—let your will be lost in his. You are the subject of delight, let it regale itself in his excellence; of desire, let it centre in him as your portion; of joy, let it always be employed in his praise; of sorrow, let it open

its flood-gates for offending him; of zeal, let it burn always in his service; of hatred and revenge, let them spend their shafts against that which is inimical to his honour. Never sacrifice any of your senses or members to iniquitous purposes, but devote them all to God. Squander away none of your precious time, but grasp at every opportunity to promote his glory.'¹¹¹

ENDNOTES

¹ John Ryland, D.D., *Life and Death of the Reverend Andrew Fuller* (London: Published by Button and Son, 1816), 18. Noted in future references as L&D.

² *Ibid.*, 20.

³ *Ibid.*, 20-25.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 27-30.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 35, 37.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 37-41.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁰ The handwritten manuscript is in the Archives of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. It had been given to the Rochester Theological Seminary, received by Ezekiel G. Robinson, by Fuller's son in gratitude for the seminary's public tribute to Andrew Fuller. It was obtained by the J. P. Boyce Memorial Library with the assistance of Michael Haykin in 2012. This will be referred to as "Some Thoughts."

¹¹ L&D, 71.

¹² *Ibid.*, 101-106.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 207.

¹⁴ Andrew Fuller, *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* (Northampton: Printed by T. Dicey & Co., 1785), 108. Quotations will be taken from the original edition of *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*. It will be referred to simply as GW.

¹⁵ L&D, 205.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 207.

¹⁷ Quotations from the second edition will be from a three volume edition of the works of Andrew Fuller entitled simply *Fuller's Works*. It has neither publisher nor date but was printed by J. G. Fuller in Bristol. It will be referred to simply as FW. *The Gospel Worthy*

is in volume 1 so the notation normally will be FW 1:???. Other works of Fuller quoted in this paper are from *The Complete Works of Andrew Fuller* (ed. Joseph Belcher; 3 Vols.; Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1845). This will be referred to as CW. This quote is from FW, 9.

¹⁸ GW, 4.

¹⁹ GW, iii; FW, 8.

²⁰ GW, 1.

²¹ FW, 9.

²² GW, iv.

²³ Ibid., v.

²⁴ FW, 10.

²⁵ GW, vi.

²⁶ Ibid., vii.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ FW, 1:189-256.

²⁹ Ibid., 1:239-40.

³⁰ GW, vii, viii.

³¹ Ibid., ix.

³² Ibid.

³³ FW, 1:14.

³⁴ GW, ix.

³⁵ Ibid., x.

³⁶ FW, 1:15.

³⁷ Ibid., 1:16.

³⁸ GW, xi.

³⁹ Ibid., xii.

⁴⁰ Ibid., xiii.

⁴¹ FW, 1:5.

⁴² GW, 10.

⁴³ Ibid., 10, 11.

⁴⁴ FW, 1:36. Again the substance of conviction is the same but the style of presentation is condensed and omits some of the emotive immediacy of the first edition. Compare this sentence with the last one of the block quote just above, "It deserves also to be particularly noticed that what is here called the belief of the truth, is peculiar to the *elect*, accompanies *sanctification of the spirit*, and terminates in *salvation*."

⁴⁵ GW, 6.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 7, 8. For the difference between faith itself, and dependence on Christ, receiving Christ, coming to

Christ and trusting in him for salvation as flowing from faith see FW, 1:40-45. Fuller developed these precise distinctions, only implicit in the first edition, as a response to Abraham Booth's *Warrant and Nature of Faith*, which he published as a response to Fuller's first edition of *Gospel Worthy*. All of these are so intrinsically connected to biblical faith that they naturally flow from it so that Fuller could say, "And, from hence, it will follow, that trusting in Christ, no less than crediting his testimony, is the *duty* of every sinner to whom the revelation is made" (FW, 1:44).

⁴⁸ GW, 7, 8; FW, 1:25.

⁴⁹ GW, 35.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 43.

⁵¹ Ibid., 61-64.

⁵² Ibid., 73.

⁵³ Ibid., 74.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 79.

⁵⁵ FW, 1:113.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ GW, 108.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 109.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 112.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 114.

⁶¹ Ibid., 116.

⁶² Ibid., 117.

⁶³ Ibid., 119.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 123.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 140.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 143.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 149.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 128.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 130.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 131.

⁷¹ Ibid., 132.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., 133.

⁷⁴ FW, 1:134.

⁷⁵ Andrew Fuller, *Reply to Philanthropos* in FW, 1:378-528. Also see CW, 2:459-511.

⁷⁶ CW, 2:709.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 2:488f.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 2:494.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 2:496ff.

⁸⁰ Andrew Fuller, *The Reality and Efficacy of Divine Grace* in FW, 1:533-670; Also CW, 2:512-560.

⁸¹ CW, 2:541.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid., 2:542.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 2:550-51.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 2:556.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 2:555.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 2:710.

⁸⁸ John Spilsbury, *A Treatise Concerning the Lawfull Subject of Baptisme* (London, 1643), 40.

⁸⁹ Abraham Booth, "Divine Justice Essential to the Divine Character," in *The Works of Abraham Booth* (3 Vols.; London: J. Haddon, 1813), 3:60, 61. "Divine Justice" was originally published in 1803 as a response to Fullers' second edition.

⁹⁰ John L. Dagg, *Manual of Theology* (Harrisonburg, VA: Gano Books, 1982), 324-331.

⁹¹ James P. Boyce, *An Abstract of Systematic Theology* (Cape Coral FL: Founders Press, 2006), 312-314, 337-340.

⁹² John Owen, *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ* in *The Works of John Owen* (16 Vols.; Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1978), 10:295-96. Fuller himself quoted Owen in support of his position from this very part of Owen's *Death of Death*, CW 2:694. After Owen discussed the atonement's sufficiency on the basis of the dignity of the person making the offering and that he did "undergo the whole curse of the law and wrath of God due to sin," he wrote, "And this sets out the innate, real, true worth and value of the blood-shedding of Jesus Christ. This is its own true internal perfection and sufficiency. That it should be applied unto any, made a price for the, and become beneficial to the, according to the worth that is in it, is external to it, doth not arise from it, but merely depends upon the intention and will of God." [Fuller's quote ends here.]

Owen continued, "It was in itself of infinite value and sufficiency to *have been made a price* to have bought and purchased all and every man in the world. That it did formally become a price for any is solely to be ascribed to the purpose of God, intending their purchase and redemption by it."

⁹³ Thomas Scott, *The Articles of the Synod of Dort* (Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1993), 282-285.

⁹⁴ Fuller specifically identified his views as consistent with those of the "Calvinists who met at the Synod of Dort." After he had quoted many of the key phrases of the document on the atonement, Fuller confessed, "I would not wish for words more appropriate than the above to express my sentiments." CW, 2:712.

⁹⁵ FW, 1:135.

⁹⁶ CW, 2:692. See also his discussion of this in his letter to Dr. Ryland CW, 2:708-09. "If there were not a sufficiency in the atonement for the salvation of sinners, and yet they we invited to be reconciled to God, they must be invited to what is *naturally impossible*."

⁹⁷ FW, 1:135.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 1:136.

⁹⁹ CW, 2:712. Fuller is quoting from Calvin's comment on John 3:16 in his *New Testament Commentaries*.

¹⁰⁰ FW, 1:137.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 1:137-38.

¹⁰² "Some Thoughts," 1.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 2.

¹⁰⁴ GW, v.

¹⁰⁵ FW, 1:160-189.

¹⁰⁶ "Some Thoughts," 2.

¹⁰⁷ GW, 185.

¹⁰⁸ "Some Thoughts," 2.

¹⁰⁹ GW, 186.

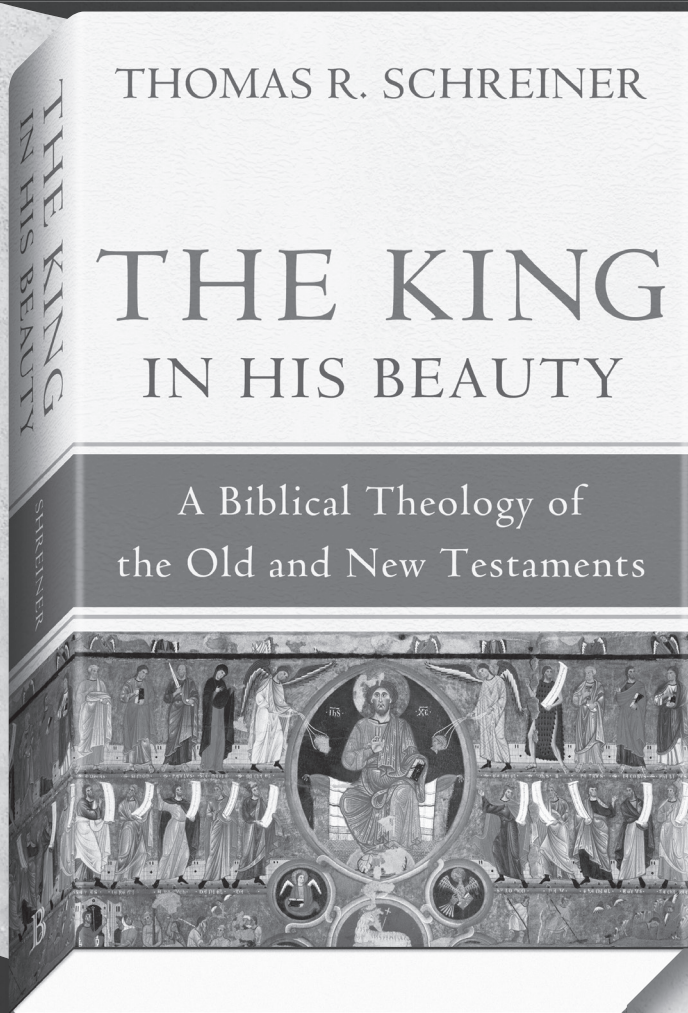
¹¹⁰ Ibid., 192.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 189-90.

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The Renaissance in Andrew Fuller Studies: A Bibliographic Essay

Nathan A. Finn

INTRODUCTION¹

In 2007, John Piper gave his customary biographical talk at the annual Desiring God Conference for Pastors. His topic that year was Andrew Fuller (1754–1815), a figure considerably less well-known

than previous subjects such as Athanasius, Augustine, Martin Luther, John Calvin, J. Gresham Machen, and Martyn Lloyd-Jones. In his talk, Piper argued that Fuller played a key role in bringing theological renewal to the British Particular Baptists in the late eighteenth century. That renewal, in turn, helped to launch the modern missions movement, led by Fuller's friend William Carey. For Piper, Fuller was a faithful pastor-theologian who espoused a missions-minded evangelical Calvinism and successfully challenged virtually every major theological

error of his day. In many ways, he was a Baptist version of Piper's personal theological hero, Jonathan Edwards. Piper's talk was subsequently published as *I Will Go Down If You Will Hold the Rope* (2012).² By all appearances, Fuller had finally arrived. The momentum had been building for years.

Andrew Fuller was the most important Baptist theologian in the years between the ministries of John Gill (1697–1771) and Charles Spurgeon (1834–1892). He was part of a group of like-minded friends that included John Ryland, Jr. (1753–1825), John Sutcliff (1752–1814), Samuel Pearce (1766–1799), Robert Hall, Jr. (1764–1831), and William Carey (1761–1834). These men, but especially Fuller himself, emerged as the fountainhead of a soteriological movement among the British Particular Baptists that came to be called “Fullerism.” Over the course of a generation, the so-called moderate Calvinism associated with Fuller became the mainstream understanding of salvation among a majority of Particular Baptists, as well as other broadly Calvinistic British evangelicals. Many Baptists in

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tury North America also drank deeply from Fullerism, which informed the development of early American Baptist denominationalism around the central theme of cooperation in missions.

Baptists have always appreciated the influence of Fuller within their tradition. Many Baptist leaders preached dedicatory sermons upon Fuller's death, some of which were published. Several book-length biographies appeared, all of which were written by men who had been closely associated with Fuller. Fuller received a lengthy entry in William Cathcart's *The Baptist Encyclopedia* (1881) and was referenced in numerous other entries. Several editions of Fuller's works were published, both in Britain and in North America. Baptist theologians interacted with Fuller's thought, especially his understanding of the atonement and his (unfinished) attempt at a Christocentric systematic divinity that ordered the theological loci around the work of Christ. Nevertheless, by the turn of the twentieth century, Fuller, though still appreciated, was pushed further to the margins of Baptist life, especially among Baptists in North America.

The trend toward downplaying Fuller's legacy can likely be attributed to a combination of factors. First, more Baptists began writing systematic theologies after the mid-nineteenth century. Fuller, who had been an occasional and polemical theologian, provided a less comprehensive source for many Baptists. Second, Baptist soteriology was increasingly carving out a niche between Dortian Calvinism and Classical Arminianism; though a creative thinker in this regard, Fuller always identified himself with Dort. Third, perhaps Fuller was being eclipsed as subsequent generations of Baptists looked to role models such as Charles Spurgeon, John Clifford, and F. B. Meyer in Britain and Adoniram Judson, James P. Boyce, Augustus Strong, and E. Y. Mullins in North America. Finally, Baptist systematicians engaged far more with contemporary theologians than they did with older thinkers such as Fuller. For these reasons

(and likely others), until relatively recently only a handful of significant studies related to Fuller had been written over the past century.

This bibliographic essay explores the most important works related to Fuller, with particular emphasis on the growing corpus of material that has been written since the early 1980s. I argue that the last three decades constitute a renaissance in Fuller Studies, the roots of which began in the mid-twentieth century. In the past dozen years, this renaissance has matured considerably. The rising generation of scholars and pastors interested in the study of Fuller and/or the *ressourcement* of his thought find themselves with a growing body of literature that includes published and unpublished scholarly studies, semi-popular writings, popular summaries, and reprinted primary source material. These writings are complemented by scholarly conferences that regularly focus upon Fuller and related topics and a wide variety of websites including blogs and online primary source repositories.

KEY EARLY STUDIES

Prior to 1980, most of the writings dedicated to Fuller fell into three categories. First, two short biographies were published. Andrew Fuller: *Pastor, Theologian, Ropeholder* (1942) by Gilbert Laws is the more significant study, while Arthur H. Kirkby's *Andrew Fuller* (1961) was published in a series of short biographies on leading English Nonconformists. Both volumes are now long out-of-print and difficult to acquire. Second, several studies highlight Fuller's role in the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) and the subsequent influence of the BMS upon Particular Baptists. Many of them discuss Fuller in relation to his friendships, especially his relationship with the better-known Carey. Fuller's role in the missions movement and its effect on British Baptists was also a regular topic of discussion in Baptist history textbooks.¹³ In an important

article (1973), W. R. Ward argues that the missions movement transformed Particular Baptist life by introducing new structures into a heretofore more decentralized movement.¹⁴

Third, and by far the most numerous, several unpublished dissertations and theses and published essays and journal articles focus upon Fuller's evangelical Calvinism and the challenge it mounted against the reigning High Calvinism of the era. Dissertations include Pope Duncan's (1917), A. H. Kirkby's (1956), and John Eddins's (1957) respective studies of Fuller's soteriology.¹⁵ Edwin Allen Reed's Th.M. thesis (1958) provides a comparative study of Fuller's atonement theology with that of John Gill, John Smyth, and Thomas Helwys.¹⁶ Though broader in its focus, Fuller's soteriology also received significant treatment in O. C. Robison's dissertation (1963) on Particular Baptist theology in England between 1760 and 1820.¹⁷ James Tull wrote a chapter on Fuller emphasizing the relationship between soteriology and missionary zeal for his book *Shapers of Baptist Thought* (1972).¹⁸

During the mid-twentieth century, the most significant Fuller scholarship was published by scholarly journals in the United Kingdom. A handful of articles from this period stand out as especially useful. In 1965, G. F. Nuttall wrote an important article on the "Modern Question" of whether or not the non-elect are under obligation to repent and believe the gospel message. This issue was at the center of the debates over High Calvinism. Fuller offered the most influential affirmative answer to the Modern Question in his *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* (1785; revised 1801).¹⁹ E. F. Clipsham wrote a series of four articles for *Baptist Quarterly* in 1963–1964 that represent the most significant published treatment of Fuller's soteriology prior to recent years. Contra Kirkby, Clipsham argues that John Calvin himself had minimal influence on Fuller, contending that Fuller's major theological influence was Jonathan Edwards.²⁰ Clipsham's views are widely affirmed by contemporary scholars.

FULLER REDISCOVERED, 1980–2000

The early 1980s witnessed a marked increase in interest in Fuller among both scholars and pastors. Most of the scholarship written during this period was in the form of unpublished dissertations and theses, journal articles, and book chapters. Some of this material was biographical in nature. Two of the book chapters summarize Fuller's life and thought: Phil Roberts's contribution to *Baptist Theologians* (1990) and an essay by Tom Nettles in the second volume of *The British Particular Baptists* (2000).²¹ Three short dictionary entries were also written during this period by E. F. Clipsham (1995), Brian Stanley (1999), and William Brackney (1999), respectively.²² These resources remain helpful starting places for those interested in Fuller Studies. Fuller also received increased attention in broader studies of Calvinism, missions, Baptist history, and English Dissent. The key themes among scholars remained Fuller's influence upon the missionary movement and his soteriological convictions, though gradually others topics emerged as well.

Fuller was regularly linked to the missions movement. Studies of the BMS and biographies of William Carey frequently discuss the role Fuller played in leading the BMS during its earliest decades. Brian Stanley's bicentennial history of the BMS (1992) gives extensive treatment to Fuller's role in the formation of the BMS and his term as secretary of the society.²³ Timothy George's biography of William Carey (1991) covers the same material.²⁴ That same year, Bruce Shelley wrote a short article for *Christianity Today* wherein he argues that Fuller was "the unsung hero" behind Carey's missions career.²⁵ In a 1992 journal article in *Baptist Quarterly*, William Brackney situates the early BMS in the context of the larger voluntary religious tradition. In the article, Brackney also examines Fuller's roll as secretary of the BMS during its first two decades.²⁶ Doyle Young wrote a key study of this topic during this period. His 1981 dissertation and a subsequent journal article published the following year give even greater attention to Fuller's role in the BMS. Young goes so far as to argue Fuller is a co-father of the modern missions movement in the English-speaking world.²⁷

Other studies look more at the fruit of the missions' movement in the British Isles. In a 1980 journal article, L. G. Champion challenges W. R. Ward's earlier argument that the restructuring of British Baptist life first introduced by the missionary movement were more social and organizational than theological in nature. Champion argues that Fullerism played a decisive role in the transformation of Particular Baptist life in the half century between 1775 and 1825.²⁸ In his monograph *Established Church, Sectarian People* (1988), Deryck Lovegrove demonstrates that Fuller and his friends also engaged in home missions via village preaching. The Fullerite Baptists were one part of a wider trend emphasizing itinerancy among Nonconformists around the turn of the nineteenth century.²⁹

Fuller's evangelical Calvinism remained a constant theme among scholars throughout the 1980s and 1990s. In his book *The Great Debate* (1982), Alan P. F. Sell recounts Fuller's role in the struggles between High Calvinists and evangelical Calvinists over the Modern Question in eighteenth-century Britain.³⁰ In his 1989 monograph devoted to the responses of London Calvinistic Baptists to the Evangelical Revival, Philip Roberts argues that Fullerism played a key role in breaking up the High Calvinist hold on London Baptists.³¹ Throughout the 1980s, Tom Nettles frequently wrote on Fuller's soteriology. In two articles published in *Reformation Today* in 1985, Nettles introduces Fuller as a missions-friendly evangelical Calvinist and apologist for a pure gospel who brought renewal to Particular Baptist life. Because Baptists in America had increasingly departed from their earlier Calvinistic roots, Nettles believes that Fuller holds out the promise for similar renewal among contemporary Baptists.³² Nettles's views about Baptists and Calvinism are further articulated in his book *By His Grace and For His Glory* (1986); he dedicates a chapter to Fuller, expanding on his earlier articles.³³

Several doctoral theses and monographs during this period addressed Fuller's views of Calvinism and their legacy among British Baptists. In 1986, Robert Oliver wrote a dissertation on the emergence of the

Strict and Particular Baptist movement in England. Oliver argues that Fullerism was considered a departure from Calvinistic orthodoxy among the Strict and Particular pastors, who preferred the views of John Gill.³⁴ Peter Naylor covers much of the same ground in his 1992 book examining Particular Baptist theology during the long eighteenth century.³⁵ In a 1989 dissertation, Thomas Ascol compares and contrasts the federal theologies of Fuller and John Gill. Ascol argues that Fuller's federalism was implicit rather than explicit, but was crucial to his soteriology, especially Fuller's view of the extent of the atonement.³⁶

In his 1991 dissertation, Roger Hayden argues against the notion that Particular Baptists were hopelessly captive to High Calvinism prior to Fuller's publication of the first edition of *Gospel Worthy* in 1785. Hayden demonstrates that an evangelical, Edwardsean Calvinism had long prevailed among the Particular Baptists of the West Counties, especially those affiliated with Bristol Baptist Academy. In fact, Fuller's circle of friends was first introduced to the writings of Edwards through the influence of pastors in the West.³⁷ In his 1996 monograph *John Newton and the English Evangelical Tradition*, Bruce Hindmarsh regularly references Fuller and (especially) Ryland. The latter was a close friend of Newton's. Hindmarsh situates Fuller's so-called Strict Calvinism along a spectrum of views advocated by various English evangelicals. He also recounts the story of the evangelical renewal within the Northamptonshire Association.³⁸

Frequently, scholars emphasized the discontinuity between Fullerism and other forms of Calvinism. Some suggest that Fuller's modified Calvinism was friendlier to the free offer of the gospel than traditional Calvinism. In his widely used textbook on Baptist History (1987), Leon McBeth argues that Fuller affirmed basic Calvinist orthodoxy but made room for evangelism and missions. The implication was that Calvinism, without the modifications associated with Fullerism, was less friendly toward these emphases.³⁹ In a 1991 monograph challenging the idea that Southern Baptists have deep theological roots in Calvinism, Wiley Richards was more explicit. He

argues that Fuller's views marked a departure from Calvinism and actually facilitated the decline of Reformed soteriology among heretofore Calvinistic Baptists.⁴⁰ In an assessment more apologetical than historical, High Calvinist George Ella argues that Fuller was not a Calvinist at all, but was in fact a crypto-Arminian and antinomian who rejected Calvinistic orthodoxy. Rather than bringing renewal, Fullerism was the source of a theological downgrade that infected the Particular Baptists and many other erstwhile evangelicals. Ella's *Law & Gospel in the Theology of Andrew Fuller* (1996) was the only published book-length study of Fuller during this period.⁴¹

Closely related to the theme of Calvinism is Fuller's critique of Sandemanianism. The Sandemans (or Glasites) were a Scottish movement that severed repentance from saving faith in an effort to guard against salvation by works. Many Baptists in Scotland had imbibed of Sandemanian views, provoking a response from Fuller. An address first delivered by Martyn Lloyd-Jones on Sandemanianism in 1967 was published in a 1987 anthology of Lloyd-Jones's writings titled *The Puritans: Their Origins and Successors*. Lloyd-Jones argues that Fuller provided the definitive answer to Sandemanian heterodoxy.⁴² In a 1993 dissertation, Thomas South explores Fuller's arguments against the Sandemans, comparing the Glasites with the so-called Free Grace movement that emerged among Zane Hodges and others in the 1980s.⁴³ In a 1998 article, Michael Haykin recounts Fuller's dispute with the Sandemans. Like South, Haykin makes practical application to contemporary evangelicalism.⁴⁴

While most scholars focused upon Calvinism and missions, some explored other aspects of Fuller's thought and influence. In their 1980 book *Baptists and the Bible*, Russ Bush and Tom Nettles examine Fuller's view of biblical inspiration and authority. They argue that Fuller affirmed the supernatural character of Scripture as a revelation from God, free from factual error and sufficient for Christian life and ministry.⁴⁵ Haykin comes to the same conclusion in a 1989 article contrasting Fuller's view of Scripture with that

of the famous Deist, Thomas Paine.⁴⁶ In two articles published in *Baptist Quarterly* (1996–1997), T. S. H. Elwyn discusses the circular letters written for the Northamptonshire Association between 1765–1820. Fuller wrote many of these circular letters, which serve as a window into the thought of the pastors in the association during this period.⁴⁷

Haykin emerged as the key scholar engaging a wider range of Fuller's theology and legacy. He devoted a 1986 article to Fuller's understanding of pneumatology, particularly in reference to revival and the proclamation of the gospel to the ends of the earth.⁴⁸ Three years later, he wrote a similar article on Fuller's contemporary John Ryland, Jr. The latter essay also makes frequent reference to Fuller's views of the subject.⁴⁹ In a 1993 article, Haykin compares the Socinian Joseph Priestly's and Andrew Fuller's respective views on praying to Christ.⁵⁰ A year later, he wrote a short article on the strategic friendship between Fuller and John Ryland Jr.⁵¹ In a 1995 article in *Evangelical Quarterly*, Haykin examines the transformation of Particular Baptist identity towards a more explicitly evangelical position between 1780 and 1820. Fuller played a key role in that evolution, along with friends such as John Sutcliff.⁵²

Also in 1995, Haykin wrote a short introduction to Fuller's early years for *Reformation Today*.⁵³ In 1996, Fuller was one of several figures examined in an article about Particular Baptist views of Matthew 5:39a. Like most of his British contemporaries, who were writing in the age of the French Revolution and subsequent Napoleonic Wars, Fuller believed in the legitimacy of war for the sake of self-defense.⁵⁴ In 2000, Haykin expounded upon Fuller's baptismal spirituality based upon a circular letter Fuller wrote on the topic in 1802.⁵⁵ In addition to these articles, Haykin wrote a 1994 biography of Fuller's contemporary John Sutcliff. Fuller factors heavily into the narrative, as do related themes such as Fullerism and the formation and early history of the BMS.⁵⁶

THE FULLER STUDIES RENAISSANCE SINCE 2001

The renewed interest in Fuller Studies that began circa 1980 entered into a new stage of maturity around the turn of the twenty-first century. Scholars have continued to write helpful dissertations, theses, and articles related to Fuller. Many of these writings address similar topics to studies from the previous two decades, though often in greater depth or with new layers of nuance. The new century has also witnessed the publication of an important collection of essays and several scholarly monographs; each of the latter is revised from an earlier thesis or dissertation. In addition to these publications, a new think tank related to Fuller has facilitated further scholarly interest in Fuller and has sponsored conferences that will bear fruit as the conference papers are published in the coming years. A new journal also promises to become a key venue for studies of Andrew Fuller, Fullerism, and related topics.

Five important book-length studies have been published since 2003. Peter Morden's *Offering Christ to the World: Andrew Fuller (1754-1815) and the Revival of Eighteenth Century Particular Baptist Life* (2003) is a revision of the author's M.Phil. thesis (2000).⁵⁷ The book is primarily biographical in nature, examining Fuller's life and ministry, but the author remains keenly sensitive to theological issues. Morden focuses upon Fuller's role in the theological and missiological revitalization of Particular Baptist life between about 1770 and 1820. *Offering Christ to the World* is presently the scholarly introduction to Fuller, at least until Morden finishes his anticipated critical biography of Fuller. The latter is currently scheduled to be published in 2015, in conjunction with the two hundredth anniversary of Fuller's death.

Michael Haykin has edited an important collection of essays titled *'At the Pure Fountain of Thy Word': Andrew Fuller as an Apologist* (2004).⁵⁸ A couple of the chapters were lightly revised from

previously published articles, but most were original essays.⁵⁹ Morden begins the book with a biographical chapter on Fuller and also contributes a second chapter on Fuller's apology for missions. Gerald Priest offers a chapter that advances a critical, revisionist interpretation of Fuller's debate with hyper-Calvinism and the Modern Question, while Curt Daniel looks at Fuller's quarrel with antinomianism, a common error among High Calvinists. Clint Sheehan discusses Fuller's controversy with Arminians, the genesis of which lies with the publication of *Gospel Worthy*. Haykin contributes two chapters addressing Fuller's responses to Deism and the Sandemanians, respectively. Tom Nettles examines Fuller's controversy with the Socinians while Barry Howson discusses Fuller's contest with the famous universalist William Vidler. Robert Oliver's chapter focuses upon Fuller's controversy with his fellow evangelical Calvinist Abraham Booth, the latter of whom was convinced Fuller's views of justification and the atonement were not sufficiently Calvinistic. Greg Meadows adds a helpful bibliography at the conclusion of the book.

Paul Brewster's *Andrew Fuller: Model Pastor-Theologian* (2010) is a revision of the author's doctoral dissertation (2007).⁶⁰ Brewster argues that Baptist theology has declined over the past century, especially in North America. He holds forth Fuller as a role model for contemporary pastor-theologians, especially in Fuller's theological method, his soteriological views, and his application of doctrine to practice. As a Southern Baptist pastor, Brewster is especially keen to demonstrate that Fuller's missions-minded, evangelical Calvinism offers a pathway to renewal in a denomination that frequently debates Reformed soteriology. This book serves as a fine introduction to Fuller for pastors and seminary students in particular.

A. Chadwick Mauldin's short monograph *Fullerism as Opposed to Calvinism: A Historical and Theological Comparison of the Missiology of Andrew Fuller and John Calvin* (2011) is a revision of the author's MA thesis (2010).⁶¹ Mauldin compares

the missiology of Fuller and John Calvin, arguing the latter is biblically and practically inferior to the former. Mauldin contends that Baptists should identify with Fuller more than Calvin and argues for a renewed use of the “Fullerite” descriptor for Calvinistic Baptists. Mauldin also includes a published interview on Fuller’s legacy with James Leo Garrett, the dean of Southern Baptist theologians and an expert on Baptist historical theology.

Chris Chun’s *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards in the Theology of Andrew Fuller* (2012), a revision of the author’s doctoral dissertation (2008), represents the most substantial work of scholarship yet published on Fuller.⁶² While scholars have long known that Edwards exercised a decisive influence on Fuller and his circle of friends, Chun carefully demonstrates the extent of this influence. Chun demonstrates where and how Fuller interacted with Edwards and later Edwardseans such as the New Divinity men. Fuller frequently cited Edwards in his works, though even in writings lacking direct citation, Fuller often used Edwardsean theological categories to make his point. On the issues of justification and atonement, Fuller has received considerable criticism from some quarters for his alleged modifications to popular Calvinist categories. Chun shows that Fuller was closer to the views of Edwards in these matters than to the New Divinity men whom Fuller is often accused of emulating.

In addition to these scholarly books and anthologies of essays, historians and theologians have continued to publish a variety of other works related to Fuller. Fuller’s soteriology and his contributions to the missionary movement continue to attract the attention of scholars. Haykin has written two articles for *Reformation Today* on Fuller’s defense of the free offer of the gospel (2001).⁶³ Haykin also authored an essay describing Fuller’s nuanced and oft-debated understanding of particular redemption (2002), a theme also addressed in an article by Jeremy Pittsley (2008).⁶⁴ Bart Box devoted his 2009 dissertation to the topic, arguing, like Haykin and

Pittsley, that Fuller affirmed penal substitution, but revised his view of the extent of the atonement so that the limitation was due to God’s covenantal purposes rather than the nature of propitiation.⁶⁵ In his constructive monograph on Baptist identity (2003), Paul Fiddes expresses appreciation for Fuller’s Edwardsean emphasis on a covenantal understanding of the atonement’s extent rather than a traditional limited atonement. Fiddes hopes that contemporary Baptist theologians of mission will further develop this view of the atonement, open the covenant of salvation to at least some non-Christians, and combine elements of *theosis* to conversionist understandings of salvation.⁶⁶

Morden has contributed a book chapter on *Gospel Worthy* (2009) that traces the development of Fullerism and emphasizes the movement’s debt to broader evangelical tendencies in Britain.⁶⁷ Fuller’s soteriology and its influence has also received helpful treatment in two important studies of Baptist historical theology written by William H. Brackney (2004) and James Leo Garrett (2009), respectively.⁶⁸ Clive Jarvis authored a revisionist essay challenging the prevailing thesis that High Calvinism had a widespread, spiritually deadening effect on Particular Baptists prior to the advent of Fullerism (2005).⁶⁹ In his history of the Strict and Particular Baptists (2001), Kenneth Dix frequently addresses the role that Fullerism played in the division among nineteenth-century Calvinistic Baptists.⁷⁰ In his study of English Calvinistic Baptists from John Gill to Charles Spurgeon (2006), Robert Oliver devotes considerable attention to Fuller’s engagement with High Calvinism, antinomianism, and Abraham Booth, among other topics.⁷¹ In his study of the relationship between Calvinism and the terms of communion, Peter Naylor argues that Fuller affirmed both evangelical Calvinism and closed communion, though later Fullerites such as Robert Hall, Jr. abandoned the latter practice.⁷²

The influence of Jonathan Edwards upon Fuller

and his colleagues in the Northamptonshire Association is an important sub-theme within studies of Fullerism. In addition to Chun's dissertation, he published two articles on Edwards and Fuller. The first demonstrated how the Edwardsean distinction between moral and natural ability provided impetus to Fullerism's missionary impulse (2006), while the second essay (2008) summarized the argument of Chun's dissertation.⁷³ Tom Nettles also authored an article that discusses the impact of Edwards upon Fuller (2008).⁷⁴ Peter Beck wrote an essay (2005) arguing for a close continuity between Edwards's view of justification and that of Fuller.⁷⁵ In 2012, Haykin and Daniel Weaver transcribed, edited, and published a previously unknown letter from John Ryland, Jr. to Samuel Hopkins that distanced Ryland and Fuller from the controversial New Divinity idea that one should be willing to be damned for God's glory.⁷⁶

Several studies describe how Edwards's ideas were disseminated among Fuller and his colleagues. In an essay on Edwards's reception among eighteenth-century British evangelicals (2003), Bruce Hindmarsh traces how Edwardsean thought took hold among Fuller and his friends.⁷⁷ Roger Hayden has published a revised version of his aforementioned doctoral dissertation on evangelical Calvinism at Bristol Baptist Academy (2006); the Bristol men were the initial means through which some of the Northamptonshire Baptists were first introduced to Edwardsean thought.⁷⁸ Nathan Finn has authored a journal article (2007) on Fuller's older contemporary, Robert Hall, Sr., arguing that Hall was a key mentor for Fuller and his friends and the individual responsible for introducing Fuller to Edwards's *Freedom of the Will* and popularizing the book within the Northamptonshire Association.⁷⁹ Jonathan Yeager's biography of John Erskine (2011) contends that Erskine was an inveterate sharer of books who played a key role in disseminating Edwardsean literature to Fuller and his colleagues, as well as promoting Fuller's works outside of Baptist circles.⁸⁰ Haykin has contributed a chapter (2012) to a collection of essays on Edwards's

theological legacy which demonstrates how Fullerism influenced the theological trajectory of British Baptists and many Baptists in North America, especially in the antebellum South.⁸¹

Fuller's relationship to missions has remained a key theme in recent years. Morden has authored an article for *Baptist Quarterly* (2005) that highlights Fuller's role in founding of the Baptist Missionary Society and his leadership of the BMS.⁸² Haykin has published a book chapter (2007) that focuses upon Fuller's theology of missions and demonstrates how it informed William Carey's *Enquiry*.⁸³ He has also written a series of four popular articles (2009–2010) that examined how theological renewal gave rise to missionary zeal among Fuller's generation of Particular Baptists.⁸⁴ Building upon the earlier work of Deryck Lovegrove, Paul Brewster has written a two-part article (2011–2012) that examined Fuller's role in home missions in Britain, especially through his own itinerant preaching ministry in remote villages without an evangelical witness.⁸⁵

Two chapters in a recent *festschrift* for Leon McBeth (2008) discuss Fuller's influence on Carey and, subsequently, Baptist missions and denominationalism.⁸⁶ Kelly Elliott frequently discusses Fuller and his Northamptonshire Association colleagues in her 2010 dissertation on nineteenth-century Baptist missions in the East and West Indies.⁸⁷ Haykin edited a short book (2012) on the life and piety of Samuel and Sarah Pearce. Haykin's introduction frequently highlights Fuller's friendship with Samuel and his editing of Pearce's *Memoirs*.⁸⁸ Short biographical treatments of Fuller in historical dictionaries and textbooks have continued to treat Fuller's role in the missionary movement, often linking this topic with Fuller's evangelical Calvinism and influence on Carey.⁸⁹

Besides these perennial themes, scholars have also engaged other aspects of Fuller's thought and legacy. Haykin has authored an essay (2006) that examines the relationship between faith and patriotism in Fuller's thought; when in tension, the former trumped the latter.⁹⁰ Haykin has also contributed a number of short articles about some of Fuller's contemporaries

for *Evangelical Times* (2001–2002), most of which discussed themes such as Fullerism, revival, modern missions, etc. These articles were later compiled and published as a short book (2006).⁹¹ Paul Brewster has authored a journal article (2006) describing Fuller's theological method.⁹² In a 2008 article, Nigel Wheeler examines Fuller's view of pastoral ministry through the lens of his ordination sermons.⁹³ The following year, Wheeler completed his dissertation (2009) on the same topic.⁹⁴ Keith Grant has written a Th.M. thesis (2007) on Fuller's theology of preaching, arguing Fuller offers an example of the sort of evangelical pastoral theology that took hold in Britain following the Evangelical Awakening of the eighteenth century.⁹⁵ A published version of Grant's thesis is forthcoming from Paternoster Press in 2013.

In addition to the aforementioned collection of essays on Fuller as an apologist, some scholars have continued to highlight Fuller's polemical ministry. Alan P. F. Sell has contributed two important articles on Fuller's polemical theology. In the first article (2003), he thoroughly examines Fuller's moral critique of Thomas Paine's Deism.⁹⁶ In his second article, a book chapter in a collection of his own historical theological essays (2005), Sell summarizes Fuller's arguments against the Socinians.⁹⁷ In 2008, Aaron Jason Timmons authored a Th.M. thesis on the defense of Christ's deity in the anti-Socinian writings of John Gill, Dan Taylor, and Andrew Fuller.⁹⁸ In his monograph history of Sandemanianism (2008), John Howard Smith makes periodic reference to Fuller's criticisms of the movement.⁹⁹

In 2008, the journal *Eusebia* dedicated an issue to the topic "Reading Andrew Fuller." Several of the articles in that issue have already been referenced in this essay. Other contributions include Michael Haykin's summary of Fuller's reading habits. Fuller drank deeply from the well of Puritans and later evangelical Dissenters, Jonathan Edwards and the New Divinity men, and other Baptist writers.¹⁰⁰ Jeffrey Jue's article examines continuities and discontinuities between Fuller's views of Scripture, justification, and eschatology compared to the various Reformation and post-Reformation authors he read.¹⁰¹ Carl

Trueman offers a provocative essay on Fuller's reading of John Owen, arguing that Fuller either misunderstood or misrepresented Owen's understanding of the atonement. This was done in an effort to protect the free offer of the gospel, which Fuller (wrongly, Trueman contends) was convinced was threatened by an Owenist construal of limited atonement.¹⁰² Barry Howson's essay looks at Fuller's reading of Gill, finding that Fuller makes both positive and negative references to his alleged High Calvinist predecessor, though not very many of either, despite Gill's influence among the Particular Baptists.¹⁰³

In addition to these various studies about Fuller and his thought, Fuller is often discussed in works focused primarily upon other figures of his era. Ken Manley regularly references Fuller in his biography (2004) of Fuller's contemporary John Rippon.¹⁰⁴ Frank Rinaldi periodically discusses Fuller in his monograph (2005) on Daniel Taylor and the New Connexion of General Baptists.¹⁰⁵ In his 2010 dissertation on John Gill's soteriology, Jonathan Anthony White frequently compares Gill's views with those of Fuller.¹⁰⁶ Michael Sciretti compares Fuller's evangelical Calvinism to Anne Dutton's soteriology in his 2009 dissertation on the latter.¹⁰⁷ Cody Heath McNutt regularly references Fuller in his 2012 dissertation on Robert Hall, Jr., as does John Jin Gill in his dissertation on Alexander Carson, also completed in 2012.¹⁰⁸

PRIMARY SOURCE REPRINTS

The renaissance in Fuller Studies has been blessed with increasingly available primary sources. In the quarter century since 1988, Fuller's written corpus has been republished for the first time since the mid-nineteenth century. These reprints are both a fruit of the growing interest in Fuller and fuel for further study of him. The more accessible primary source material has become, the more scholars have become interested in Fuller's life and doctrine. During the past twenty-five years, two different editions of Fuller's works have been published, in addition to a handful of individual works and collections of shorter writings.

In 1988, Sprinkle Publications reprinted a three-volume edition of *The Complete Works of Andrew*

Fuller, which had been previously edited by Fuller's son Andrew Gunton Fuller in and revised by Joseph Belcher for the American Baptist Publication Society in 1845. Tom Nettles contributed a short preface to the first volume titled "Why Andrew Fuller?" The volume begins with a memoir of Fuller's life written by the younger Fuller. The remainder of the volume includes sermons, shorter writings on Scripture, a series of letters on systematic divinity, and a series of letters on preaching. Volume two contains Fuller's "controversial publications" against Socinianism, universalism, High Calvinism, Arminianism, anti-nomianism, and Sandemanianism. It also includes shorter writings on imputation, penal substitution, particular redemption, the nature of Calvinism, and an apology for the Baptist mission in India. Volume III includes Fuller's sermons on Genesis and Revelation, his circular letters, his biography of Samuel Pearce, and a wide variety of miscellaneous shorter writings. These three volumes, often referred to as the "Sprinkle Edition," continue to serve as the key primary sources for scholars and others interested in Fuller Studies.¹⁰⁹ In 2007, Banner of Truth reprinted the same material from an 1841 English edition in one volume. Michael Haykin wrote a short introduction to the "Banner Edition" of Fuller's works.¹¹⁰

At the turn of the twenty-first century, publishers increasingly began reprinting individual works by Fuller, mostly for popular consumption by pastors and students. Michael Haykin has edited a collection of Fuller's letters titled *The Armies of the Lamb* (2001). The anthology includes an important introductory essay by Haykin that examines Fuller's spirituality. Haykin contends that Fuller's piety was cross-centered, revival-friendly, Calvinistic, and missionary.¹¹¹ Haykin has also written a short introduction to a reprint of Fuller's 1801 memoir of his friend Samuel Pearce (2005), a fellow Particular Baptist pastor who died at age thirty-three. Pearce is sometimes called "the Baptist Brainerd" because of his reformed piety, missionary zeal, and premature death.¹¹² That same year, Solid Ground Christian Books republished Fuller's 1801 tract *The Backslider*.¹¹³ In 2009,

the same publisher reprinted Fuller's *Expository Discourses on the Book of Genesis*, first published in 1806.¹¹⁴ With the advent of print-on-demand publishing, a number of others publishers have reprinted many of Fuller's writings and various nineteenth-century biographies of Fuller. Such companies include Forgotten Books, Nabu Press, Ulan Press, Kessinger Publishing, and BiblioLife.

THE ANDREW FULLER CENTER FOR BAPTIST STUDIES

Fuller Studies received a significant boost in 2007 when The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary established The Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies (AFCBS). The AFCBS, under the leadership of Michael Haykin, now generates much of the interest in the scholarly study of Fuller and Fullerism, particularly in North America. The AFCBS hosts a website (www.andrewfullercenter.org) where Haykin and Steve Weaver regularly contribute to a blog that focuses upon Fuller and other topics in Baptist history and historical theology. The website also includes book reviews, study guides, and audio resources related to a variety of topics. Several of Haykin's journal articles and unpublished papers dedicated to Fuller are also available at the Fuller Center website. His short essay "Why Read Andrew Fuller (1754–1815)?" is a helpful resource for students and pastors who are interested in learning more about Fuller's life and thought.¹¹⁵

In addition to its website, the Fuller Center hosts a Baptist Studies conference every fall, drawing scholars from North America and the British Isles. Audio files from the conferences are available at the AFCBS website. The proceedings from past conferences are due to be published by Pickwick Press beginning in 2013. Several of those books will include material related to Fuller, some exclusively so. These include volumes on the following topics: Andrew Fuller: The Reader (2007 conference); Baptists and the Cross (2010 conference); Baptists and War (2011 conference); and Andrew Fuller and His Friends (2012 conference).¹¹⁶ The Fuller Center also sponsors a scholarly journal. The former journal, *Eusebia*, pub-

lished several Fuller-related articles and dedicated one entire issue to the theologian. The Fuller Center's current journal, *The Andrew Fuller Review*, is transitioning into a refereed scholarly journal dedicated to Fuller Studies and similar topics.

The Fuller Center is also sponsoring the most significant undertaking by scholars of Fuller Studies to date. In 2012, the AFCBS announced the forthcoming publication of a scholarly edition of *The Works of Andrew Fuller*, a project that has been in the works since 2005.¹¹⁷ The "Works Project," which is projected to include approximately fifteen volumes, will be published by Walter de Gruyter. Each volume will include a critical edition of one or more of Fuller's writings, textual annotations, extensive indices, and a substantial scholarly introductory essay. The project is modeled after the widely acclaimed Yale University Press edition of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*. Michael Haykin serves as the general editor of *The Works of Andrew Fuller* and Ian H. Clary serves as associate editor. Individual volume editors include Haykin, Peter Mordey, Tom Nettles, Robert Oliver, Ryan West, Nathan Finn, Chris Chun, Crawford Gribben, Steve Weaver, Stephen Holmes, Timothy Whelan, and Michael McMullen. The first volumes are scheduled for publication in 2014.

CONCLUSION

The past quarter century has witnessed a renaissance in the study of Andrew Fuller's life, theology, and legacy. This renaissance has piggybacked on a number of scholarly trends, particularly ongoing interest in the legacies of Edwardsean theology and the spread of Global Christianity since the nineteenth century. Pastors in particular remain interested in Fuller because of his constructive contributions to Calvinistic soteriology, his stalwart commitment to evangelism and missions, and his role as a key pastor-theologian in the Baptist tradition. These topics and others have generated dozens of dissertations, theses, journal articles, book chapters, and monographs. Some of the most

helpful material will likely be published over the next decade or so, including at least one critical biography, a monographic study of Fuller's pastoral theology, a book-length treatment of Particular Baptists and the Evangelical Revival, several collections of essays, an edited companion to Fuller's thought, and the critical edition of *The Works of Andrew Fuller*.

There remains much work to be done in Fuller Studies. Current and would-be scholars should consider topics such as Fuller's theology of prayer, his ecclesiology, his exegesis, his influence upon Baptists in North America, and his controversies with Arminian and High Calvinistic critics in between the first and second editions of *Gospel Worthy*. Another worthy study would be a synthesis of Fuller's theology, much like Fred Zaspel's recent book on the theology of B. B. Warfield.¹¹⁸ Though much has been written on Fuller's view of the atonement, further investigation is needed into the continuities and discontinuities between Edwards's understanding of the cross and that of Fuller. A comparison of Fuller's evangelical Calvinism with the views of Richard Baxter, with whom Fuller was accused of sympathizing, would also be useful. (Fuller denied being a "Baxterian" in his soteriology.) Fuller's close friend John Ryland, Jr., another influential Baptist Edwardsean, still awaits a critical biography and any number of more focused studies on various aspects of his thought.

No doubt there are many other topics worth pursuing. Hopefully, a cadre of intrepid doctoral students will decide engage these topics and others, furthering the advancement of Fuller Studies for another generation. Hopefully, this bibliographic essay will help some of those scholars navigate the recent literature about Fuller's life and thought as they make their own contributions to the ongoing scholarly renaissance in Fuller Studies.

ENDNOTES

¹ I would like to thank my research assistant Josh Herring and the Inter-Library Loan department at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary for helping me to track down a number of obscure sources. Thanks also to Keith Grant and Paul Brewster for reading an earlier

draft of this essay and offering helpful suggestions.

² John Piper, *Andrew Fuller: I Will Go Down if You Will Hold the Rope!* (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God Foundation, 2012). An e-book edition can be downloaded for free from <http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/books/andrew-fuller> (accessed January 11, 2013).

³ The *Baptist Magazine* published extracts from sermons preached by John Ryland, Jr., William Newman, and Joseph Ivimey. See *Baptist Magazine* 7 (1815): 510–16, available online at <http://baptisthistoryhomepage.com/fuller.adw.tributes.death.html> (Accessed January 25, 2013). Ryland's sermon, preached at Fuller's memorial service, was subsequently published. See Ryland, *The Indwelling and Righteousness of Christ no Security against Corporeal Death, but the Source of Spiritual and Eternal Life* (London: W. Button & Son, 1815).

⁴ J. W. Morris, ed., *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Andrew Fuller, Late Pastor of the Baptist Church at Kettering, and First Secretary to the Baptist Missionary Society* (London: T. Hamilton, 1816); John Ryland, Jr., *The Work of Faith, the Labour of Love, and the Patience of Hope, Illustrated; In the Life and Death of the Rev. Andrew Fuller, Late Pastor of the Baptist Church at Kettering, and Secretary to the Baptist Missionary Society, From its Commencement, in 1792* (London: W. Button & Son, 1816); Andrew Gunton Fuller, *Men Worth Remembering: Andrew Fuller* (London: Houghton and Stoddard, 1882).

⁵ William Cathcart, "Rev. Andrew Fuller," in *The Baptist Encyclopedia* (Philadelphia: Louie H. Everts, 1881), 421–23.

⁶ For interactions with Fuller's soteriology, see Francis Wayland, *Notes on the Principles and Practices of Baptist Churches* (New York: Sheldon, Blakeman & Co., 1857), 18–19, and James P. Boyce, *Abstract of Systematic Theology* (1887; reprint, Cape Coral, FL: Founders Press, 2006), 312–17. For brief discussions of Fuller's Christocentric ordering of his systematic divinity, see Alvah Hovey, *Manual of Systematic Theology and Christian Ethics* (Boston: Henry A. Young & Co., 1877), 17, and Augustus Hopkins Strong, *Systematic Theology: A Compendium and Commonplace Book Designed for the Use of Theological Students* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1907), 1:50.

⁷ British Baptists tended to pay more attention to Andrew

Fuller than Baptists in North America. Probably the reason for this is due to provenance more than anything else.

⁸ I appreciate Keith Grant suggesting to me some of the factors discussed in this paragraph.

⁹ For example, three Southern Baptists wrote systematic theologies between 1917 and 1981. None of them mentioned Fuller in their respective works. See E. Y. Mullins, *The Christian Religion in Its Doctrinal Expression* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1917); W. T. Conner, *Christian Doctrine* (Nashville: Broadman, 1937); Dale Moody, *The Word of Truth: A Summary of Christian Doctrine Based Upon Biblical Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981).

¹⁰ Because the renaissance in Fuller Studies has been led by a combination of scholars and pastors, the growing body of Fuller-related literature includes scholarly, semi-scholarly, and popular works. This essay makes reference to works in each of these categories.

¹¹ Gilbert Laws, *Andrew Fuller: Pastor, Theologian, Ropeholder* (London: Carey Press, 1942); Arthur H. Kirkby, *Andrew Fuller* (London: Independent Press, 1961).

¹² Noteworthy works include Ernest A. Payne, *The Prayer Call of 1784* (London: Carey Press, 1941), and E. F. Clipsham, "Andrew Fuller and the Baptist Mission," *Foundations* 10.1 (1967): 4–18. The relationship between Fuller and Carey remained a constant theme in biographies of Carey. For example, see Basil Miller, *William Carey: Cobbler to Missionary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1952), and John Bailey Middlebrook, *William Carey* (London: Carey Kingsgate, 1961).

¹³ A. C. Underwood and Raymond Brown stand out among textbook writers in that they provided more significant treatment to Fuller's theology and ministry. See A. C. Underwood, *A History of the English Baptists* (London: Carey Kingsgate, 1947), 161–67, and Raymond Brown, *The English Baptists of the Eighteenth Century* (London: The Baptist Historical Society, 1986). See especially chapters 6 and 7.

¹⁴ W. R. Ward, "Baptists and the Transformation of the Church, 1780–1830," *Baptist Quarterly* 25.4 (1973): 167–84.

¹⁵ Pope Alexander Duncan, "The Influence of Andrew Fuller on Calvinism" (Th.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1917); A. H. Kirkby, "The Theol-

- ogy of Andrew Fuller in its Relation to Calvinism" (Ph.D. Thesis, Edinburgh University, 1956); John W. Eddins, Jr., "Andrew Fuller's Theology of Grace" (Th.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1957).
- ¹⁶ Edwin Allen Reed, "A Historical Study of Three Baptist Doctrines of Atonement as Seen in the Writings of John Smyth and Thomas Helwys, John Gill and Andrew Fuller" (Th.M. thesis, Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, 1958).
- ¹⁷ O. C. Robison, "The Particular Baptists in England, 1760–1820" (D.Phil. thesis, Oxford University, 1963).
- ¹⁸ James E. Tull, *Shapers of Baptist Thought* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1972; reprint, Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 79–100.
- ¹⁹ G. F. Nuttall, "Northamptonshire and The Modern Question: A Turning Point in Eighteenth-Century Dissent," *Journal of Theological Studies* 16.1 (1965): 101–23.
- ²⁰ E. F. Clipsham, "Andrew Fuller and Fullerism: A Study in Evangelical Calvinism: 1. The Development of Doctrine," *Baptist Quarterly* 20.3 (1963): 99–114; E. F. Clipsham, "Andrew Fuller and Fullerism: A Study in Evangelical Calvinism: 2. Fuller and John Calvin," *Baptist Quarterly* 20.4 (1963): 147–54; E. F. Clipsham, "Andrew Fuller and Fullerism: A Study in Evangelical Calvinism: 3. The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation," *Baptist Quarterly* 20.5 (1965): 215–25; E. F. Clipsham, "Andrew Fuller and Fullerism: A Study in Evangelical Calvinism: 4. Fuller as a Theologian," *Baptist Quarterly* 20.6 (1964): 269–76. For Kirkby's arguments about the influence of Calvin upon Fuller, see A. H. Kirkby, "Andrew Fuller: Evangelical Calvinist," *Baptist Quarterly* 15.5 (1954): 195–202.
- ²¹ Phil Roberts, "Andrew Fuller," in *Baptist Theologians* (eds. Timothy George and David S. Dockery; Nashville: Broadman, 1990), 121–39; Tom J. Nettles, "Andrew Fuller (1754–1815)," in *The British Particular Baptists, 1638–1910* (ed. Michael A. G. Haykin; Springfield, MO: Particular Baptist Press, 2000), 2:97–141. Roberts's chapter was later reprinted in Timothy George and David S. Dockery, *Theologians in the Baptist Tradition* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2001), 34–51.
- ²² E. F. Clipsham, "Fuller, Andrew," in *The Blackwell Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1730–1860* (ed. Donald M. Lewis; Vol 1: A–J; Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 414–15; Brian Stanley, "Fuller, Andrew," in *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* (ed. Gerald Anderson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 230–31; William H. Brackney, "Fuller, Andrew (1754–1815)," in *Historical Dictionary of the Baptists* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1999), 171.
- ²³ Brian Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society, 1792–1992* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992). See especially chapters 1 and 2. See also R.L. Greenall, ed., *The Kettering Connection: Northamptonshire Baptists and Overseas Mission* (Leicester, UK: Department of Adult Education, University of Leicester, 1993).
- ²⁴ Timothy George, *Faithful Witness: The Life and Mission of William Carey* (Birmingham: New Hope, 1991). See especially chapters 4 and 5.
- ²⁵ Bruce Shelley, "Where Would We Be Without Staupitz?" *Christianity Today* (December 16, 1991), 31.
- ²⁶ William H. Brackney, "The Baptist Missionary Society in Proper Context: Some Reflections on the Larger Voluntary Religious Tradition," *Baptist Quarterly* 34.8 (1992): 364–77.
- ²⁷ Doyle L. Young, "The Place of Andrew Fuller in the Developing Modern Missions Movement" (Ph.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1981); Doyle L. Young, "Andrew Fuller and the Modern Missions Movement," *Baptist History and Heritage* 17.4 (1982): 17–27.
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- ²⁹ Deryck W. Lovegrove, *Established Church, Secular People: Itinerancy and the Transformation of English Dissent, 1780–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
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- ³¹ R. Philip Roberts, *Continuity and Change: London Calvinistic Baptists and the Evangelical Revival, 1760–1820* (Wheaton: Richard Owen Roberts, 1989). See especially chapter 5.
- ³² Thomas Nettles, "Why Andrew Fuller?" *Reformation Today* 17 (January 1985): 3–6; Thomas Nettles, "Andrew Fuller and Free Grace," *Reformation Today* 17 (January 1985): 6–14.

- ³³ Thomas J. Nettles, *By His Grace and For His Glory: A Historical, Theological, and Practical Study of the Doctrines of Grace in Baptist Life* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986), 108–30.
- ³⁴ Robert W. Oliver, “The Emergence of a Strict and Particular Baptist Community among the English Calvinistic Baptists” (D.Phil. thesis, London Bible College, 1986).
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- ³⁸ D. Bruce Hindmarsh, *John Newton and the English Evangelical Tradition: Between the Conversions of Wesley and Wilberforce* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 122–25, 144–55.
- ³⁹ H. Leon McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage: Four Centuries of Baptist Witness* (Nashville: Broadman, 1987), 181–83.
- ⁴⁰ W. Wiley Richards, *Winds of Doctrine: The Origin and Development of Southern Baptist Theology* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991), 51–59.
- ⁴¹ George M. Ella, *Law & Gospel in the Theology of Andrew Fuller* (Durham, UK: Go Publications, 1996).
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- ⁴³ Thomas J. South, “The Response of Andrew Fuller to the Sandemanian View of Saving Faith” (Th.D. thesis, Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, 1993).
- ⁴⁴ Michael Haykin, “Andrew Fuller and the Sandemans,” *Evangelical Times* (September 1998), available online at <http://www.evangelical-times.org/archive/item/69/Historical/Defenders-of-the-faith/> (accessed January 11, 2013).
- ⁴⁵ L. Russ Bush and Tom J. Nettles, *Baptists and the Bible: The Baptist Doctrines of Biblical Inspiration and Religious Authority in Historical Perspective* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 109–19.
- ⁴⁶ Michael A. G. Haykin, “‘The Oracles of God’: Andrew Fuller and the Scriptures,” *Churchman* 103.1 (1989): 60–76.
- ⁴⁷ T. S. H. Elwyn, “Particular Baptists of the Northamptonshire Association, 1765–1820: Part 1,” *Baptist Quarterly* 36.8 (1996): 368–81; T. S. H. Elwyn, “Particular Baptists of the Northamptonshire Association, 1765–1820: Part 2,” *Baptist Quarterly* 37.1 (1997): 3–19.
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- ⁴⁹ Michael A. G. Haykin, “‘The Sum of All Good’: John Ryland Jr. and the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit,” *Churchman* 103.4 (1989): 332–53.
- ⁵⁰ Michael A. G. Haykin, “A Socinian and Calvinist Compared: Joseph Priestly and Andrew Fuller on the Propriety of Prayer to Christ,” *Nederlands Archief Voor Kerkgeschiedenis* [Dutch Review of Church History] 73.2 (1993): 178–98.
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- ⁵² Michael A. G. Haykin, “The Baptist Identity: A View from the Eighteenth Century,” *Evangelical Quarterly* 67.2 (April–June 1995): 137–52.
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- ⁵⁴ Michael A. G. Haykin, “‘Resisting Evil’: Civil Retaliation, Non-Resistance, and the Interpretation of Matthew 5:39a among Eighteenth-Century Calvinistic Baptists,” *Baptist Quarterly* 38.4 (1996): 212–27.
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- ⁵⁶ Michael A. G. Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul: John Sucliff of Olney, His Friends and His Times* (Darlington, UK: Evangelical Press, 1994). See especially chapter 7.
- ⁵⁷ Peter J. Morden, *Offering Christ to the World: Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and the Revival of Eighteenth Century Particular Baptist Life* (Studies in Baptist History and Thought; Vol. 8; Carlisle, Cumbria, UK, and Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2003). See also idem, “Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and the Revival of Par-

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⁵⁸ Michael A. G. Haykin, 'At the Pure Fountain of the Thy Word': Andrew Fuller as an Apologist (Studies in Baptist History and Thought; Vol. 6; Carlisle, Cumbria, UK, and Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2004). For the sake of space, I will not provide a separate bibliographic entry for each chapter.

⁵⁹ See Gerald L. Priest, "Andrew Fuller's Response to the 'Modern Question'—A Reappraisal of The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation," *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 6 (Fall 2001): 45–73, and Haykin, "The Oracles of God."

⁶⁰ Paul Brewster, *Andrew Fuller: Model Pastor-Theologian*, *Studies in Baptist Life and Thought* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010). See also idem, "Andrew Fuller (1754–1815): Model Pastor-Theologian" (Ph.D. diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2007).

⁶¹ A. Chadwick Mauldin, *Fullerism as Opposed to Calvinism: A Historical and Theological Comparison of the Missiology of Andrew Fuller and John Calvin* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011). See also idem, "Fullerism as Opposed to Calvinism: A Historical and Theological Comparison of the Missiology of Andrew Fuller and John Calvin" (M.A. thesis, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2010).

⁶² Chris Chun, *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards in the Theology of Andrew Fuller*, *Studies in the History of Christian Traditions* (Vol. 162; Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012). See also idem, "The Greatest Instruction Received from Human Writings: The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards in the Theology of Andrew Fuller" (Ph.D. diss., University of St. Andrews, 2008).

⁶³ Michael A. G. Haykin, "Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and the Free Offer of the Gospel. Part 1," *Reformation Today* 182 (July–August 2001): 19–26, idem, "Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and the Free Offer of the Gospel. Part 2," *Reformation Today* 182 (Sept–Oct 2001): 29–32.

⁶⁴ Michael A. G. Haykin, "Particular Redemption in the Writings of Andrew Fuller (1754–1815)," in *The Gospel in the World: International Baptist Studies*, *Studies in Baptist History and Thought* (ed. David Bebbington; Carlisle, Cumbria, UK, and Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2002), 1:107–28; Jeremy Pittsley,

"Christ's Absolute Determination to Save: Andrew Fuller and Particular Redemption," *Eusebia: The Bulletin of the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies* 9 (Spring 2008): 135–59.

⁶⁵ Bart D. Box, "The Atonement in the Thought of Andrew Fuller" (Ph.D. diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009). Stephen Holmes differs from Box and other similar interpreters in that he argues Fuller rejected penal substitution by rejecting the idea that guilt can be transferred from one person to another. Though Holmes notes that Fuller was an evangelical, he believes Fuller was a forerunner for more liberal views of the cross. See Stephen Holmes, *The Wondrous Cross: Atonement and Penal Substitution in the Bible and History* (Bletchley, Milton Keynes, UK and Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2007), 66.

⁶⁶ Paul Fiddes, *Tracks and Traces Baptist Identity in Church and Theology* (Studies in Baptist History and Thought; Vol. 13; Bletchley, Milton Keynes, UK and Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2003), 236–37, 255–59. Stephen Holmes carries on a more explicitly evangelical engagement with Fuller in his own constructive monograph on Baptist identity. See Stephen Holmes, *Baptist Theology* (Edinburgh, UK: T&T Clark, 2012), 25–27, 61–62, 76–77.

⁶⁷ P. J. Morden, "Andrew Fuller and *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*," in *Pulpit and People: Studies in Eighteenth-Century Baptist Life and Thought* (ed. John H.Y. Briggs; Studies in Baptist History and Thought; Vol. 28; Carlisle, Cumbria, UK, and Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2009), 128–51.

⁶⁸ William H. Brackney, *A Genetic History of Baptist Thought* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2004), especially 122–29; James Leo Garrett, *Baptist Theology: A Four-Century Study* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2009), 173–89. Though focusing on Fuller's evangelical Calvinism, both authors also addressed other aspects of Fuller's thought, particularly his arguments against Unitarianism, Universalism, and Sandemanianism.

⁶⁹ Clive Jarvis, "The Myth of High Calvinism?" In *Recycling the Past or Researching History? Studies in Baptist Historiography and Myths* (eds. Philip E. Thompson and Anthony R. Cross; Studies in Baptist History and Thought; Vol. 11; Carlisle, Cumbria, UK, and Waynes-

boro, GA: Paternoster, 2005), 231–63.

⁷⁰ Kenneth Dix, *Strict and Particular: English Strict and Particular Baptists in the Nineteenth Century* (Didcot, Oxfordshire, UK: Baptist Historical Society for the Strict Baptist Historical Society, 2001).

⁷¹ Robert W. Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists, 1771–1892: From John Gill to C.H. Spurgeon* (Edinburgh, UK and Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2006). See especially chapters 5–8 and appendix B.

⁷² Peter Naylor, *Calvinism, Communion and the Baptists: A Study of English Calvinistic Baptists from the Late 1600s to the Early 1800s* (Studies in Baptist History and Thought; Vol. 7; Bletchley, Milton Keynes, England, and Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2003). See especially chapters 9, 11, and 12.

⁷³ Chris Chun, “A Mainspring of Missionary Thought: Andrew Fuller on Natural and Moral Inability,” *American Baptist Quarterly* 25.4 (2006): 335–55; idem, “‘Sense of the Heart’: Jonathan Edwards’s Legacy in the Writing of Andrew Fuller,” *Eusebia: The Bulletin for the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies* 9 (Spring 2008): 117–34.

⁷⁴ Thomas J. Nettles, “The Influence of Jonathan Edwards on Andrew Fuller,” *Eusebia: The Bulletin for the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies* 9 (Spring 2008): 91–116.

⁷⁵ Peter Beck, “The Gospel According to Jonathan Edwards: Andrew Fuller’s appropriation of Jonathan Edwards’ *Justification by Faith Alone*,” *Eusebia: The Bulletin of The Jonathan Edwards Centre for Reformed Spirituality* (Spring 2005): 53–76.

⁷⁶ “A Significant Letter from John Ryland to Samuel Hopkins,” transcribed and edited by Daniel T. Weaver and Michael A. G. Haykin, *The Andrew Fuller Review* 3 (Summer 2012): 29–33.

⁷⁷ D. Bruce Hindmarsh, “The Reception of Jonathan Edwards by Early Evangelicals in England,” in *Jonathan Edwards at Home and Abroad: Historical Memories, Cultural Movements, Global Horizons* (eds. David William Kling and Douglas A. Sweeney; Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 201–21. This theme is also briefly touched upon in Mark Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield, and the Wesleys* (A History of Evangelicalism: People, Movements and Ideas in the

English-Speaking World; Vol. 1; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Academic, 2004), 207–08, 269.

⁷⁸ Roger Hayden, *Continuity and Change: Evangelical Calvinism among Eighteenth-Century Baptist Ministers Trained at Bristol Academy, 1690–1791* (Oxfordshire, UK: Nigel Lynn and the Baptist Historical Society, 2006).

⁷⁹ Nathan A. Finn, “Robert Hall’s Contributions to Evangelical Renewal in the Northamptonshire Baptist Association,” *Midwestern Journal of Theology* 6 (Fall 2007): 19–34. This article has been reprinted as the introduction to Robert Hall, Sr., *Help to Zion’s Travellers* (ed. Nathan A. Finn; Mountain Hope, AR: BorderStone Press, 2011).

⁸⁰ Jonathan M. Yeager, *Enlightened Evangelicalism: The Life and Thought of John Erskine: The Life and Thought of John Erskine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). See especially the Introduction and chapters 7 and 8.

⁸¹ Michael A. G. Haykin, “Great Admirers of the Transatlantic Divinity: Some Chapters in the Story of Baptist Edwardseanism,” in *After Jonathan Edwards: The Courses of the New England Theology* (eds. Oliver D. Crisp and Douglas A. Sweeney; New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 197–207. Edwards’s influence on Fuller is also referenced in the same volume’s introduction by the editors and the chapters written by David W. Kling and Michael J. McClymond, respectively.

⁸² Peter J. Morden, “Andrew Fuller and the Baptist Missionary Society,” *Baptist Quarterly* 41.3 (2005): 134–57.

⁸³ Michael A. G. Haykin, “Andrew Fuller on Mission: Text and Passion,” in *Baptists and Mission: Papers from the Fourth International Conference on Baptist Studies* (eds. Ian M. Randall and Anthony R. Cross; Studies in Baptist History and Thought, Vol. 29; Carlisle, Cumbria, UK and Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2007), 25–41.

⁸⁴ Michael A. G. Haykin, “The 18th Century Great Commission Resurgence,” *The Baptist Messenger* (December 7, 2009), available online at <http://baptistmessenger.com/the-18th-century-great-commission-resurgence/>; idem, “The 18th Century Great Commission Resurgence: Part 2. Praying for Revival,” *The Baptist Messenger* (December 21, 2009), available online at <http://baptistmessenger.com/the-18th-century-great-commission-resurgence/>.

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- ⁸⁷ Kelly R. Elliott, "'Chosen Race': Baptist Missions and Mission Churches in the East and West Indies, 1795–1875" (Ph.D. diss., Florida State University, 2010).
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- ⁹⁰ Michael A. G. Haykin, "Eighteenth-Century Calvinistic Baptists and the Political Realm, with Particular Reference to the Thought of Andrew Fuller," in *Recycling the Past or Researching History*, 264–78.
- ⁹¹ Michael A. G. Haykin, *A Cloud of Witnesses: Calvinistic Baptists in the 18th Century* (ET Perspectives No. 3; Darlington, UK: Evangelical Times, 2006). The original articles can be read at the *Evangelical Times* website (<http://www.evangelical-times.org/>).
- ⁹² Paul Brewster, "The Theological Method of Andrew Fuller," *Eusebia: The Bulletin of the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies* 6 (Spring 2006): 31–60.
- ⁹³ Nigel D. Wheeler, "Andrew Fuller's Ordination Sermons," *Eusebia: The Bulletin of the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies* 9 (Spring 2008): 167–82.
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Confession of Faith 1

Andrew Fuller, edited by Michael A. G. Haykin

I.

When I consider the heavens and the earth with their vast variety, it gives me reason to believe the existence of a God of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness that made and upholds them all. Had there been no written revelation of God given to us, I should have

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been without excuse, if I had denied a God or refused to glorify him as God.

II.

Yet, considering the present state of mankind, I believe we needed a revelation of the mind of God to inform us more fully of his and our own character, of his designs towards us, and will concerning us. And such a revelation I believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be, without excepting any one of

its books, and a perfect rule of faith and practice. When I acknowledge it as a perfect rule of faith and practice, I mean to disclaim all other rules as binding on my conscience, and as well to acknowledge that if I err, either in faith or practice, from the rule, it will be my crime. For I have ever considered all deviations from divine rules to be criminal.

III.

From this divine volume, I learn many things concerning God, which I could not have learned from the works of nature, and the same things in a more convincing light. Here I learn especially the infinitely amiable moral character of God. His holiness, justice, faithfulness, and goodness are here exhibited in such a light by his holy law and glorious gospel as is nowhere else to be seen.

Here, also, I learn that though God is one, yet he also is three—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The idea which I think the Scriptures give us of each of the sacred three

is that of person.

I believe the Son of God to be truly and properly God, equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Everything I see in this sacred mystery appears to me above reason, but nothing contrary to it.

IV.

I believe, from the same authority, that God created man in the image of his own glorious moral character, a proper subject of his moral government, with dispositions exactly suited to the law he was under and capacity equal to obey it to the uttermost against all temptations to the contrary. I believe if Adam, or any holy being, had had the making of a law for himself, he would have made just such an one as God's law is, for it would be the greatest of hardships to a holy being not to be allowed to love God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and all his mind.

V.

I believe the conduct of man, in breaking the law of God, was most unreasonable and wicked in itself, as well as fatal in its consequences to the transgressor, and that sin is of such a nature that it deserves all the wrath and misery with which it is threatened, in this world, and in that which is to come.

VI.

I believe the first sin of Adam was not merely personal, but that he stood as our representative. So that when he fell, we fell in him, and became liable to condemnation and death. And what is more, [we] are all born into the world with a vile propensity to sin against God.

I own there are some things in these subjects, which appear to me profound and awful. But seeing God hath so plainly revealed them in his Word, especially in the fifth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, I dare not but bow my shallow conceptions to the unerring testimony of God, not doubting but that he will clear his own character sufficiently at the last day. At the

same time, I know of no other system that represents these subjects in a more rational light.

VII.

I believe, as I before stated, that men are now born and grow up with a vile propensity to moral evil, and that herein lies their inability to keep God's law, and as such, it is a moral and a criminal inability. Were they but of a right disposition of mind, there is nothing now in the law of God but what they could perform; but, being wholly under the dominion of sin, they have no heart remaining for God, but are full of wicked aversion to him. Their very "mind and conscience are defiled."² Their ideas of the excellence of good and of the evil of sin are as it were obliterated.

These are subjects which seem to me of very great importance. I conceive that the whole Arminian, Socinian, and Antinomian systems, so far as I understand them, rest upon the supposition of these principles being false. So that, if it should be found, at last, that God is an infinitely excellent being, worthy of being loved with all the love which his law requires; that, as such, his law is entirely fair and equitable and that for God to have required less, would have been denying himself to be what he is; and if it should appear, at last, that man is utterly lost, and lies absolutely at the discretion of God; then, I think it is easy to prove, the whole of these systems must fall to the ground. If men, on account of sin, lie at the discretion of God, the equity, and even necessity, of predestination cannot be denied, and so the Arminian system falls. If the law of God is right and good, and arises from the very nature of God, Antinomianism cannot stand. And if we are such great sinners, we need a great Saviour, infinitely greater than the Socinian Saviour.

VIII.

From what I have said, it must be supposed that I believe the doctrine of eternal personal

election and predestination. However, I believe that though in the choice of the elect, God had no motive out of himself, yet it was not so in respect to punishing the rest. What has been usually, but perhaps, improperly, called the decree of reprobation, I consider as nothing more than the divine determination to punish sin, in certain cases, in the person of the sinner.

IX.

I believe that the fall of man did not at all disconcert the great Eternal, but that he had from eternity formed a plan upon the supposition of that event (as well knowing that so it would be) and that, in this everlasting covenant, as it is called, the Sacred Three (speaking after the manner of men) stipulated with each other for the bringing about their vast and glorious design.

X.

The unfolding of this glorious plan to view, I believe, has been a gradual work from the beginning. First, it was hinted to our first parents, in the promise of the woman's seed. Then, by the institution of sacrifices, by types, prophecies, and promises, it was carried on throughout the Mosaic dispensation. At length the Son of God appeared, took our nature, obeyed the law, and endured the curse, and hereby made full and proper atonement for the sins of his own elect, rose again from the dead, commissioned his apostles to go into all the world and preach his gospel, and then triumphantly ascended above all heavens, where he sitteth at the right hand of God, interceding for his people, and governing the world in subserviency to their welfare, till he shall come a second time to judge the world.

I cannot reflect upon this glorious procedure, with its all-glorious Author, without emotions of wonder and gratitude. As a workman, he might be truly said to have "his work before him!" At once he glorified the injured character of God, and confounded the devil—destroyed sin and saved the sinner.

XI.

I believe that such is the excellence of this way of salvation that every one who hears, or has opportunity to hear it proclaimed in the gospel, is bound to repent of his sin, believe, approve, and embrace it with all his heart; to consider himself, as he really is, a vile, lost sinner; to reject all pretensions to life in any other way; and to cast himself upon Christ that he may be saved in this way of God's devising. This I think to be true faith, which whoever have, I believe, will certainly be saved.

XII.

But, though the way of salvation is in itself so glorious, that a man must be an enemy to God, to mankind, and to himself, not to approve it, yet I believe the pride, ignorance, enmity, and love to sin in men, is such that they will not come to Christ for life; but, in spite of all the calls and threatenings of God, will go on, till they sink into eternal perdition. Hence, I believe, arises the necessity of an almighty work of God the Spirit, to new-model the whole soul, to form in us new principles or dispositions, or, as the Scriptures call it, to give us "a new heart and a right spirit."³ I think, had we not first degenerated, we had stood in no need of being regenerated. But as we are by nature depraved, we must be born again. The influence of the Spirit of God, in this work, I believe to be always effectual.

XIII.

I believe the change that takes place in a person at the time of his believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, is not only real, but relative. Before our believing in Christ, we are considered and treated by God, as a lawgiver, as under condemnation; but having fled to him for refuge, the law, as to its condemning power, hath no more dominion over us, but we are treated, even by God the judge, as in a state of justification. The subject-matter of justification, I

believe to be nothing of our own moral excellence, but the righteousness of Christ alone, imputed to us and received by faith.

Also, I believe that before we believe in Christ, notwithstanding the secret purpose of God in our favour, we are considered by the moral governor of the world as aliens, as children of wrath, even as others; but that, on our believing on his Son, we are considered as no more strangers and foreigners, but are admitted into his family and have power, or privilege, to become the sons of God.

XIV.

I believe that those who are effectually called of God never fall away so as to perish everlastingly, but persevere in holiness till they arrive at endless happiness.

XV.

I believe it is the duty of every minister of Christ plainly and faithfully to preach the gospel to all who will hear it. And, as I believe the inability of men to spiritual things to be wholly of the moral, and therefore of the criminal kind—and that it is their duty to love the Lord Jesus Christ and trust in him for salvation, though they do not—I, therefore, believe free and solemn addresses, invitations, calls, and warnings to them, to be not only consistent, but directly adapted, as means in the hands of the Spirit of God to bring them to Christ. I consider it as a part of my duty, which I could not omit without being guilty of the blood of souls.

XVI.

I believe the ordinances which Christ, as king of Zion, has instituted for his church to be found in, throughout the gospel day, are especially two, namely, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. I believe the subjects of both to be those who profess repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and on such I consider them as incumbent duties. I

believe that it is essential to Christian baptism that it be by immersion, or burying the person in water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. I likewise believe baptism as administered by the primitive church to be prerequisite to church communion. Hence I judge what is called strict communion to be consistent with the word of God.

XVII.

Although I disclaim personal holiness as having any share in our justification, I consider it absolutely necessary to salvation, for without it "no man shall see the Lord."⁴

XVIII.

I believe the soul of man is created immortal, and that, when the body dies, the soul returns to God who gave it and there receives an immediate sentence, either to a state of happiness or misery, there to remain till the resurrection of the dead.

XIX.

As I said that the development of God's plan has been gradual from the beginning, so I believe this graduation will be beautifully and gloriously carried on. I firmly and joyfully believe that the kingdom of Christ will yet be gloriously extended by the pouring out of God's Spirit upon the ministry of the Word. And I consider this as an event, for the arrival of which it becomes all God's servants and churches most ardently to pray! It is one of the chief springs of my joy in this "day of small things" that it will not be so always.

XX.

Finally, I believe that Christ will come a second time, not as before, to save the world, but to judge the world. There, in the presence of an assembled universe, every son and daughter of Adam shall appear at God's tremendous bar and give an account of the things done in the body. There sin-

ners, especially those who have rejected Christ, God's way of salvation, will be convicted, confounded, and righteously condemned! These shall go away into everlasting punishment. But the righteous, who through grace have embraced Christ and followed him whithersoever he went, shall follow him there likewise and enter with him into the eternal joy of their Lord. This solemn event, I own, on some accounts strikes me with trembling. Yet, on others, I cannot but look on it with a mixture of joy. When I consider it as the period when God will be vindicated from all the hard thoughts which ungodly sinners have indulged and the hard speeches which they have spoken against him; when all wrongs shall be made right, truth brought to light, and justice done where none here could be obtained; when the whole empire of sin, misery, and death shall sink like a mill-stone into the sea of

eternal oblivion and never rise more. When, I say, I consider it in this view, I cannot but look upon it as an object of joy and wish my time may be spent in this world in "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God."⁵

ENDNOTES

¹ From *The Last Remains of the Rev. Andrew Fuller: Sermons, Essays, Letters, and Other Miscellaneous Papers, not included in his Published Works* (ed. Joseph Belcher; Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1856), 209–217. This confession was delivered by Fuller on the occasion of his installation as pastor of the Baptist Church in Kettering on October 7, 1783.

² Titus 1:15.

³ Ezekiel 18:31. Cf. also Ezekiel 36:26.

⁴ Cp. Hebrews 12:14.

⁵ 2 Peter 3:12.

The Admission of unbaptized Persons to the Lord's Supper, inconsistent with the New Testament

Andrew Fuller, edited and introduced by Michael A. G. Haykin

INTRODUCTION

The issue of who may participate at the Lord's Supper was a matter about which the majority of English Particular Baptists, the community of Andrew Fuller, had been largely in agreement since their origins in the mid-17th century: only those who had been baptized as

believers should partake of the Lord's Table. However, there had always been a small stream of dissent from this perspective.¹ In the 17th century, Baptists like John Bunyan (1628–1688) and Henry Jessey (1601–1663) had maintained a position of both open communion and open membership. Bunyan himself had defended his position at length and with a certain vehemence in a major controversy with the London Baptist community in the 1670s and 1680s.² In the following

century, the debate was opened afresh when John Collett Ryland (1723–1792) and Daniel Turner (1710–1798) both published pleas for open communion in 1772, which were answered six years later by the doughty Abraham Booth (1734–1806), whom Fuller regarded as “the first counselor of our denomination.”³ Booth's answer was entitled *An Apology for the Baptists* and it settled the issue until the 1810s. By that time, Fuller was conscious that times were changing and there was a growing openness to an open communion position—one of his closest friends, John Ryland, Jr. (1753–1825), for instance, embraced such a position. He was also aware that Robert Hall, Jr. (1764–1831), the brilliant son of one of his mentors, was getting ready to publish a defence of open communion. So it was in 1814 that Fuller drew up the following tract. As it turned out, Hall did not publish on the issue until after Fuller's death in May, 1815. When Hall did so with his *Terms of Communion* (1815), it was with the conviction that his book was a reply to Booth's work. It actually launched

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another round of controversy, in which the main defender of closed communion was the scholarly Joseph Kinghorn (1766–1832).⁴

Fuller had been asked in 1814 by Kinghorn whether or not he would publish this manuscript at that time. He replied, “No; it would throw our churches into a flame.” Kinghorn interpreted this to mean that Fuller did not want to initiate a fresh round of controversy over the issue. But Fuller was prepared to defend closed communion publicly if something was written in defence of the open communion position.⁵ Since he died before anything was published on the issue and it was only after his death that Hall published his treatise, the following tract was published posthumously in July of 1815 in a small 29-page octavo edition.⁶

In the following edition of this small tract, Fuller’s mode of identifying biblical references has been modernized, some capitalization introduced, some modernization of punctuation and the use of italics employed, and a number of explanatory footnotes made.

THE ADMISSION OF UNBAPTIZED PERSONS TO THE LORD’S SUPPER, INCONSISTENT WITH THE NEW TESTAMENT. A LETTER TO A FRIEND, (IN 1814)

Dear Sir,

The long and intimate friendship that I have lived in, and hope to die in, with several who are differently minded from me on this subject, may acquit me of any other motive in what I write than a desire to vindicate what appears to me to be the mind of Christ.

So far have I been from indulging a sectarian or party spirit, that my desire for communion with all who were friendly to the Saviour has, in one instance, led me practically to deviate from my general sentiments on the subject; the reflection on which, however, having afforded me no satisfaction, I do not intend to repeat it.

You request me to state the grounds of my

objections to the practice in a letter, and I will endeavour to do so. I need not prove to you that it is not for want of esteem towards my Paedobaptist brethren, many of whom are dear to me. If I have anything like Christian love in me, I feel it towards all those in whom I perceive the image of Christ, whether they be Baptists or Paedobaptists; and my refusing to commune with them at the Lord’s Table is not because I consider them as improper subjects, but as attending to it in an improper manner. Many from Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, who partook of Hezekiah’s Passover, are supposed by that pious prince to have “prepared their hearts to seek the Lord God of their fathers;” but having eaten “otherwise than it was written,” he prayed the Lord to “pardon every one of them,” and therefore could not intend that the disorder should be repeated.⁷

I have been used to think that our conduct on such questions should not be governed by affection any more than by disaffection, but by a regard to the revealed will of Christ.

A brother who practises mixed communion lately acknowledged to me, that “he did not think it was a question of candour or charity, but simply this, Whether there was or was not an instituted connexion in the New Testament between baptism and the Lord’s Supper. If there was, we ought not, under a pretence of charity, to divide them; for surely Jesus Christ may be allowed to have had as much charity and candour as we!” Yet we hear a great outcry, not only from Paedobaptists, but Baptists, against our want of candour, liberality, etc., all which, if this concession be just, is mere declamation. To what purpose is it, too, that such characters as Owen, Watts, Doddridge, Edwards,⁸ etc., are brought forward in this dispute, unless it be to kindle prejudice? If it were a question of feeling, their names would doubtless have weight; but if it relate to the revealed will of Christ, they weigh nothing. Is there, or is there not, an instituted connexion between baptism and the Lord’s Supper as much as between faith and baptism? If there be, we might as well be asked, how we can refuse to

baptize the children of such excellent men, as how we can refuse to admit them to the Lord's Supper. If a man call me a bigot, I might in reply call him by some other name; but we should neither of us prove anything, except it were our want of something better to allege. The question respects not men, but things. It has been painful for me to "withdraw from a brother who has walked disorderly;" nevertheless I have felt it to be my duty to do so. I was not long since assured by a Paedobaptist friend, that, "If I could think free communion to be right, I should be much happier than I was;" and it is possible that in some respects I might. If I could think well of the conduct of a brother whom I at present consider as walking disorderly, or if I could pass it by without being partaker of it, I doubt not but I should be the happier; but if that in which he walks be disorder, and I cannot pass it by without being a partaker of it, I had better be without such happiness than possess it.

The question of free communion as maintained by Baptists is very different from that which is ordinarily maintained by Paedobaptists. There are very few of the latter who deny baptism to be a term of communion, or who would admit any man to the Lord's Supper *whom they consider as unbaptized*. Some few, I allow, have professed a willingness to receive any person whom they consider as a believer in Christ, whether he be baptized or not. But this is probably the effect of the practice, so prevalent of late among Paedobaptists, of decrying the importance of the subject. I have never known a Paedobaptist of any note, who conscientiously adheres to what he thinks the mind of Christ relative to this ordinance, who would thus lightly dispense with it. The ordinary ground on which a Paedobaptist would persuade us to practise free communion is that their baptism, whether we can allow it to be quite so primitive as ours or not, is nevertheless valid, and that we should allow it to be so, and consequently should treat them as baptized persons by admitting them to the Lord's Table. It is on this ground that Mr. Worcester, in his *Friendly*

Letter to Mr. Baldwin, pleads for open communion.⁹ He allows that if Mr. Baldwin could demonstrate that baptism is to be administered only in one mode and to one kind of subject, and that immersion is not a mere circumstance or mode of baptism, but essential to the ordinance, so that he that is not immersed is not baptized, his sentiment of close communion "would be sufficiently established."¹⁰ To the same purpose is the drift of the reviewer of Mr. Booth's *Apology* in *The Evangelical Magazine*.¹¹ But to admit the validity of paedobaptism would not overthrow strict communion only, but baptism itself as performed upon persons who have been previously baptized in their infancy. If infant baptism be valid, it ought not to be repeated; and he that repeats it is what his opponents have been used to call him, an Anabaptist. The ground of argument, therefore, does not belong to the subject at issue. Its language is, "Do acknowledge our baptism to be valid, and allow that whenever you baptize a person who has been sprinkled in his infancy you rebaptize him; that is, Do give up your principles as a Baptist, in order that we may have communion together at the Lord's Table!"

Very different from this are the grounds on which our Baptist brethren plead for free communion. As far as I am acquainted with them, they may be reduced to two questions. (1) Has baptism any such instituted connexion with the Lord's Supper as to be a prerequisite to it? (2) Supposing it has, yet if the candidate consider himself as having been baptized, ought not this to suffice for his being treated by a Christian church as a baptized person; and does not an error concerning the mode or subjects of Christian baptism come within the precepts of the New Testament which enjoin forbearance, and allow every man to be "fully persuaded in his own mind"?¹²

Let us calmly examine these questions in the order in which they are stated.

First, has baptism any such instituted connexion with the Lord's Supper as to be a prerequisite

to it? No Baptist will deny it to be a duty incumbent on believers, but he may consider it as having no more connexion with the Lord's Supper than other duties, and the omission of it, where it arises from error, as resembling other omissions of duty, which are allowed to be objects of forbearance.

If there be no instituted connexion between them, it must go far towards establishing the position of Mr. Bunyan, that "non-baptism [at least where it arises from error] is no bar to communion." If Mr. Bunyan's position be tenable, however, it is rather singular that it should have been so long undiscovered; for it does not appear that such a notion was ever advanced till he or his contemporaries advanced it. Whatever difference of opinion had subsisted among Christians concerning the mode and subjects of baptism, I have seen no evidence that baptism was considered by any one as unconnected with or unnecessary to the Supper. "It is certain," says Dr. Doddridge, "that as far as our knowledge of primitive antiquity reaches, no unbaptized person received the Lord's Supper."¹³ The practice of Christians having been uniformly against us, I acknowledge, does not prove us to be in the wrong; but an opinion so circumstanced certainly requires to be well established from the Scriptures.

To ascertain whether there be any instituted connexion between the two ordinances, it will be proper to observe the manner in which such connexions are ordinarily expressed in the New Testament. It is not unusual for persons engaged in argument to require that the principle which they opposed should, if true, have been so expressed in the Scriptures as to place it beyond dispute. This, however, is not the ordinary way in which any thing is there expressed. Nor is it for us to prescribe to the Holy Spirit in what manner he shall enjoin his will, but to inquire in what manner he has enjoined it. A Paedobaptist might say, if teaching be indispensably necessary to precede baptizing, why did not Christ expressly say so, and forbid his disciples to baptize any who were not previously taught? A Roman Catholic also, who

separates the bread from the wine, might insist on your proving from the New Testament that Christ expressly connected them together, and required the one before and in order to the other.

To the former of these objections you would answer, "Let us read the commission"—"Go, ... teach all nations ... baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ... Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ... and, lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."¹⁴ Is it not plainly the order of things as stated by our Lord Jesus Christ, you would add, that we are first to teach men, by imparting to them the gospel; then, on their believing it, to baptize them; and then to go on to instruct them in all the ordinances and commandments which are left by Christ for our direction. Thus also to the Roman Catholic you would answer: "Let us read the institution as repeated by the apostle Paul to the Corinthians,"—"I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." You would add, "How dare you put asunder the wine and the bread which Christ hath thus manifestly joined together?" The former of these answers must, I think, be approved by every Baptist, and the last by every Protestant. But the reasoning in both cases proceeds on the supposition, that the ordinary way in which the mind of Christ is enjoined in the New Testament, is by simply stating things in the order in which they were appointed and are to be practised; and that this is no less binding on us than if the connexion had been more fully expressed. It is as clear in the first

case as if it had been said, “Go, first teach them the gospel; and when they have received it, baptize them; and, after this, lead them on in a course of evangelical obedience.” And in the last case, it is no less clear than if it had been said, “First take the bread, then the cup, and never partake of the one without the other.”

But if this be just reasoning with a Paedobaptist and a Roman Catholic, why should it not be so in the present case? If the above be the ordinary mode of divine injunction, we can be at no loss to know what is enjoined respecting the duties in question. All the recorded facts in the New Testament place baptism before the celebration of the Lord’s Supper.

The first company who joined together at the Lord’s Table were all baptized. That Christ was so himself we are expressly informed; and of the disciples we are told that they baptized others¹⁵; which would not have been permitted had they, like the Pharisees and lawyers, refused to be baptized themselves.

The next mention of the celebration of the Supper is in the second chapter of the Acts. The account given is, that every one of them was exhorted to “repent and be baptized,” and that they who gladly received the word “were baptized”; after which they were “added to the church,” and “continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”¹⁶

The question put by the apostle Paul to certain disciples at Ephesus, who said they had not heard whether there were any Holy Ghost, “Unto what then were ye baptized?” clearly intimates that there were no Christians in those times who continued unbaptized.¹⁷ He does not ask whether they had been baptized, taking this for granted; but merely to what they had been baptized.

The nature and design of baptism, as given us in the New Testament, shows it to have been the initiatory ordinance of Christianity. It was not, indeed, an initiation into a particular church, seeing it was instituted prior to the formation of

churches, and administered in some cases, as that of the Ethiopian eunuch, in which there was no opportunity for joining to any one of them; but it was an initiation into the body of professing Christians. And if so, it must be necessary to an admission into a particular church, inasmuch as what is particular presupposes what is general. No man could with propriety occupy a place in the army, without having first avowed his loyalty, or taken the oath of allegiance. The oath of allegiance does not, indeed, initiate a person into the army, as one may take that oath who is no soldier; but it is a prerequisite to being a soldier. Though all who take the oath are not soldiers, yet all soldiers take the oath. Now baptism is that divine ordinance by which we are said to put on Christ, as the king’s livery is put on by those who enter his service; and, by universal consent throughout the Christian world, is considered as the badge of a Christian. To admit a person into a Christian church without it were equal to admitting one into a regiment who scrupled to wear the soldier’s uniform, or to take the oath of allegiance.

There are instances in the New Testament in which the word baptism does not mean the baptism by water, but yet manifestly alludes to it, and to the Lord’s Supper, as connected with it; e.g. 1 Corinthians 10:1–5: “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them: and that rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness.” The Corinthians had many amongst them who had polluted themselves with idolatrous practices, and yet presumed on being saved by Christ. The design of the apostle was to warn them from the examples of the Jewish fathers, not to rely upon their having been partakers of the Christian privileges of baptism and the Lord’s

Supper while they indulged in sin. The manner in which these allusions are introduced clearly shows the connexion between the two ordinances in the practice of the primitive churches.

Thus also in 1 Corinthians 12:13, we are said “by one Spirit” to be “all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and all made to drink into one spirit.” The design may be to illustrate the spiritual union of all true believers in one invisible body, as originating in the washing of regeneration, and as being continued by the renewing of the Holy Spirit: but the allusion is, I conceive, to the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper; by the first of which they were initiated into the body of professing Christians, and by the other had communion in it. See Poole, Henry, and Scott on the passage.¹⁸

From these instances, we have equal evidence that the two ordinances were connected in the practice of the first churches as we have of faith being connected with baptism, or of the bread being connected with the wine in the Supper. The only difference between these cases is that the one requires a part and the other the whole of a divine institution to be dispensed with. Is it for us to make light of the precepts of Christ, under the notion of profiting and edifying his people? If we have any ground to expect his presence and blessing, it is in “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded” us.¹⁹

But let us proceed to the second question, “Whether, if the candidate consider himself as having been baptized, this ought not to suffice for his being treated by a Christian church as a baptized person; and whether an error concerning the mode or subjects of baptism be not a subject of Christian forbearance, in which every one may be allowed to be fully persuaded in his own mind?”

That there are cases to which this principle will apply is certain. Concerning eating or not eating meats, and observing or not observing days, the apostle teaches that every man should “be fully persuaded in his own mind.” “Who art thou,” he asks, “that judgest another man’s ser-

vant? To his own master he standeth or falleth.” “Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.” “Every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” “Hast thou faith? have it to thyself.”²⁰

These passages have often been alleged in favour of free communion between Baptists and Paedobaptists; and if the principle laid down by the apostle applies to that subject, though originally he had no reference to it, the reasoning of our brethren is just and right.

The case, I conceive, must have referred to the prohibition of certain meats, and the observance of certain days, under the Jewish law; which being no longer binding on Christians, some would avail themselves of this liberty, and disregard them; others, not having sufficient light, would regard them. Had it referred to any customs of heathen origin, or which had never been, nor been understood to be, of divine appointment, it is not conceivable that those who regarded them should “regard them to the Lord.”²¹ In this case every man was allowed to judge and act for himself, and required to forbear with his brethren who might be otherwise minded.

That we are to apply this principle without restriction few will maintain. Should the first principles of the gospel, for example, be rejected by a candidate for communion, few who pretend to serious Christianity would think of receiving him. Yet he might allege the same arguments, and ask, “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why doth thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. Every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Hast thou faith? have it to thyself.” In this case, we should answer, that the language of the apostle was misapplied; and that it was not his design to affirm that Christians in a state of religious society had no right to judge of each other’s avowed principles: for if so, he

would not have desired some to have been cut off who troubled the Galatians.²² Nor would the church at Pergamos have been censured for having those amongst them that held pernicious doctrines.²³ Private judgment is every man's birthright, considered as an individual; but as a candidate for admission into a voluntary society, it is essential that there be an agreement, at least, in first principles: for "how can two walk together except they be agreed?"²⁴

And as we are not so to apply this forbearing principle in matters of doctrine as to raze the foundations of divine truth, neither shall we be justified in applying it to the dispensing with any of the commandments of Christ. The meats and days of which the Apostle speaks are represented as not affecting the kingdom of God. "The kingdom of God," he says, "is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."²⁵ But if they had required a positive commandment of Christ to be dispensed with, they would have affected the kingdom of God, and the Apostle would not have written concerning them as he did. In short, it is not just to argue from Jewish customs, which though once binding had ceased to be so, to Christian ordinances which continue in full force. The tone which the Apostle holds in respect of those Jewish rites which ceased to be obligatory is very different from that which respects commandments still in force: "Circumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God"²⁶—"I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered them unto you."²⁷

If to be baptized be a qualification requisite to Christian communion, (which under this second question I have a right to assume,) it is absurd to suppose that it belongs to the candidate exclusively to judge of it. It is contrary to the first principles of all society for a candidate to be the judge of his own qualifications. Apply it to any other qualification, as faith in Christ, for instance, or a consistency of character, and

you will instantly perceive its absurdity. We must return to the first question: Is baptism prerequisite to the Lord's Supper? If it be, it must belong to the Church to judge whether the candidate has been baptized or not. But the principle on which the Apostle enforces forbearance is often alleged as applicable to this question. "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, ... for God hath received him."²⁸ It is doubtful whether receiving here means admission to communion. Mr. Booth has shown that this is not the ordinary meaning of the term; but allowing this to be the meaning, and that God's having received a person furnishes the ground and rule of our receiving him, still there is nothing in our practice inconsistent with it. If receiving a brother here denote receiving him into Christian fellowship, the meaning is, receive him *to* the ordinances, and not to one of them without the other. We are willing to receive all who appear to have been received of God to the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper: if we object, it is because they wish to be received to the one without the other, of which there was no example in the first churches. Let it also be particularly noticed, that our brethren who plead for receiving Christians as Christians receive them *to the ordinances as understood and practised by them*, and this we do. If the prejudices of a pious Catholic would permit him to request to join with them at the Lord's Supper, they would, as we have often been told, receive him; but to what? Would they provide a wafer for him, and excuse him from drinking of the cup? No; they would say, We are willing to receive you to the Lord's Supper, in the way we understand and practise it; but we cannot divide the wine from the bread without dispensing with an essential part of the institution. Such is our answer to a pious Paedobaptist. We are willing to receive you to the ordinances of Christ, as we understand and practise them; but we cannot divide the one from the other without dispensing with an institution of Christ.

OBJECTIONS

It has been said that “we all practise a worse mixed communion than that with Paedobaptists; that we have covetous and other bad characters amongst us, etc.” If we “bear them that are evil”²⁹ in things of a moral nature, this is our sin, and we ought to repent of it, and not to argue that because we do wrong in one instance we ought to do so in another. If we omit to admonish and exclude manifestly wicked characters, it is of but little account that we are strict in regard to baptism; but in reproving us, our Lord would not complain of our not being alike lax in things positive as we are in things moral, but of our not being alike strict in both. “These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.”³⁰

There is, however, a wide difference between bearing with individuals, even in things which are evil, where that evil lies so much in the motive as to be very difficult of detection, and making it a rule to tolerate men in such vices. It was no reproach to Christ and his apostles to have had a Judas amongst them, though he was a “thief,” so long as his theft was not manifested; but had there been a rule laid down that covetousness and even theft should be no bar to communion, the reproach had been indelible.

It has been said, “If our practice of strict communion be right, it ought to be to us an act of self-denial, and not of pleasure, inasmuch as charity would be unable to take pleasure in excluding those from communion whom we consider as Christians.” And this so far as it relates to men is true, but it is no less true of many other duties, in which we may be called to act differently from our brethren, and to reprove them.

“But in thus denying ourselves,” it has been further said, “we deny some of the best feelings of the human heart.” This I cannot admit. The best feelings of the human heart are those of love and obedience to God; and if I deny myself of the pleasure which fellowship with a Christian brother would afford me, for the sake of acting up to the mind of Christ, or according to primitive example, I do not

deny the best feelings of the human heart, but, on the contrary, forego the less for the greater. It is a greater pleasure to obey the will of God than to associate with creatures in a way deviating from it.

We may act in this matter from temper or from prejudice, rather than from a conscientious regard to the mind of Christ; and they who oppose us may act from worldly policy, or a desire to court applause as candid and liberal men; but neither of these cases proves anything. The question is, whether, in admitting unbaptized persons to the Lord’s Table, we do not deviate from the mind of Christ.

I am willing to allow that open communion may be practised from a conscientious persuasion of its being the mind of Christ; and they ought to allow the same of strict communion; and thus, instead of reproaching one another with bigotry on the one hand, or carnal policy on the other, we should confine our inquiries to the precepts and examples of the New Testament.

ENDNOTES

¹ For the history that follows, see the brief overview by William Button, *Why are you A Strict Baptist? A Dialogue between Thomas and John* (London: W. Button and Son, 1816), v–viii.

² See the study of this controversy by Peter Naylor, *Calvinism, Communion and the Baptists: A Study of the English Calvinistic Baptists from the Late 1600s to the Early 1800s* (Studies in Baptist History and Thought, vol.7; Carlisle, Cumbria/Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster Press, 2003), 94–106; and Michael A. G. Haykin and C. Jeffrey Robinson, “Particular Baptist Debates about Communion and Hymn-Singing” in *‘Drawn into Controversie’: Reformed Theological Diversity and Debates Within Seventeenth-Century British Puritanism* (eds. Michael A. G. Haykin and Mark Jones; Reformed Historical Theology; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 17:284–308.

³ For the 18th century debate, see Naylor, *Calvinism, Communion and the Baptists*, 107–124; Robert W. Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists 1771–1892: From John Gill to C. H. Spurgeon* (Edinburgh/

Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 2006), 58–88, and Raymond Arthur Coppenger, *A Messenger of Grace: A Study of the Life and Thought of Abraham Booth* (Kitchener, ON: Joshua Press, 2009), 102–118. For Fuller’s remark about Booth, see Michael A. G. Haykin, “Foreword” to Coppenger, *Messenger of Grace*, ix.

⁴ For the 19th century controversy, see Michael Walker, *Baptists at the Table: The Theology of the Lord’s Supper amongst English Baptists in the Nineteenth Century* (Didcot, Oxfordshire: Baptist History Society, 1992), 32–83; Naylor, *Calvinism, Communion and the Baptists*, 125–163; and Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 231–259.

⁵ See Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 234–235 and the comments of William Newman, “Advertisement” in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (ed. Joseph Belcher; 1845 ed.; repr. Harrisonburg, Virginia: Sprinkle Publications, 1988), III, 508.

⁶ Andrew Fuller, *The Admission of unbaptized Persons to the Lord’s Supper, inconsistent with the New Testament. A Letter to a Friend, (in 1814)* (London: H. Teape, 1815), 29 pages. Princeton Theological Seminary and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary have copies of the first edition of this tract. The Princeton copy has served as the basis for this edition.

⁷ 2 Chronicles 30:17–19 [Fuller’s note].

⁸ These four figures are the Puritan John Owen (1616–1683), the Congregationalists Isaac Watts (1674–1748) and Philip Doddridge (1702–1753), and the New England theologian Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758). This list of names gives the reader a good idea of the men whose theology and piety were valued by the Baptist community of which Fuller was a part.

⁹ Noah Worcester (1758–1837) was a Unitarian minister in New England. His *A Friendly Letter to The Reverend Thomas Baldwin, containing An*

Answer to His Brief Defence of the Practice of the Close Communionists (Concord, 1791) was directed against Thomas Baldwin (1753–1825), the pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Boston.

¹⁰ Worcester, *Friendly Letter*, 8–9.

¹¹ This is a reference to a book review of an edition of Booth’s *An Apology for the Baptists*: see “Review of Religious Publications: *An Apology for the Baptists*”, *The Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle*, 21 (1813): 460–462.

¹² Romans 14:15.

¹³ Philip Doddridge, *A Course of Lectures On the Principal Subjects in Pneumatology, Ethics, and Divinity* (2nd ed.; London, 1776), 511. See Abraham Booth, *An Apology for the Baptists*, Section I. [Fuller’s note].

¹⁴ Matthew 28:19–20.

¹⁵ John 4:2 [Fuller’s note].

¹⁶ Acts 2:38, 41–42.

¹⁷ See Acts 19:3.

¹⁸ This is a reference to the commentaries of Matthew Poole (1624–1679), Matthew Henry (1662–1714), and Thomas Scott (1747–1821). Fuller’s interpretation of 1 Corinthians 12:13 was also maintained by William Kiffen (1616–1701) in his debate with John Bunyan in the 1670s and 1680s.

¹⁹ Matthew 28:20.

²⁰ Romans 14:5, 4, 10, 12, and 22.

²¹ See Romans 14:6.

²² Galatians 5:12 [Fuller’s note].

²³ Revelation 2:14–15.

²⁴ Cf. Amos 3:3.

²⁵ Romans 14:17 [Fuller’s note].

²⁶ 1 Corinthians 7:19 [Fuller’s note].

²⁷ 1 Corinthians 11:2 [Fuller’s note].

²⁸ Romans 14:1, 3.

²⁹ Revelation 2:2.

³⁰ Matthew 23:23.

The SBJT Forum

SBJT: Andrew Fuller is well-known as a model pastor and Christian minister. What can we learn from Andrew Fuller's view of the ministry and what it means to be a pastor?

Nigel D. Wheeler: In the year 1705, at the ordination of Rev. David Rees, Joseph Stennett explained that to "ordain" means "to constitute," "to create," or "to establish" a man in the pastoral office. The purpose of the pastoral office was for the edification of the saints mainly through teaching (Eph 4:11-16). Given

prosperity was tied directly to the appointment of God-called men to their pulpits.

An important component of an 18th century Particular Baptist ordination service was the "Charge" which was an admonition from one pastor to another pastor on how the office of elder should function effectively. These sermons represent a uniquely practical exposition of the goals, purposes, encouragements, challenges, and execution of the pastoral office. Beyond a systematic exposition of a Particular Baptist pastoral theology, they contain an exposition of pastoral theology purified in the crucible of practiced ministry. Pastors who learned to implement their inherited Particular Baptist theological convictions in their own unique context strove to transmit what they learned to a new generation of pastoral leadership. Therefore ordination sermons further shortened the gap between orthodoxy and orthopraxy by getting to the heart of what was really important to them.

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this understanding, among Particular Baptists of the 18th century, a primary function of the pastoral office was the preaching of God's word. And for Particular Baptists, ordination sermons were regarded as uniquely important and so they were frequently published. This was partly due to the fact that many Particular Baptists believed that the churches'

There are at least thirty-one extant ordination sermons of Andrew Fuller (1754-1815). Thirteen of them are charges to an ordinand, nine are addresses to churches, five are single sermons which both address the church and charge the new pastor, two are charges to students, and the last two represent charges to missionaries for India sent through the Baptist Missionary Society. Throughout each of these published ordination sermons one clearly discovers a sketch of Fuller as a man who can be summarized by the phrase, “eminent spirituality leads to eminent usefulness.” This is a phrase which I have sought to unpack at length in my dissertation on Andrew Fuller’s ordination sermons.

The preeminent sign of true spirituality, or piety, in a minister was the reality of a revealed love for God resulting in a corresponding love for souls. And this love must necessarily be shown through perceptible feelings. These feelings were cultivated through an intimate communion with God, which in turn would produce spiritual fruit in the pastor’s life. This communion was enhanced particularly through the study of scripture, through meditation, and through prayer which would affect the heart producing a godly character.

So for Fuller, and all of the Particular Baptists of his day, piety was a very practical thing in that spirituality was always purposeful. It involved the impartation of God’s power, producing the fruit of the Spirit, to make the minister spiritually effective in all his ministrations, but especially in evangelism. For Fuller and others, there was a direct connection between the minister’s personal holiness and his effectiveness in leading souls to repentance in Christ.

So what can we learn from reading Fuller’s ordination sermons today? Well we learn something about the heart of who Fuller was as a pastoral role model. If “success” in the church is measured by faithfulness to the Lord and

diligence in implementing the scripture in the church’s life, then Andrew Fuller is an incredible example of these traits. In my opinion, for us today within the church, and especially in pastoral leadership, one of the great needs of the hour is to have godly men like Fuller in the Christian ministry. By all accounts Fuller and those of his day experienced numerical as well as spiritual growth taking the gospel to the utter ends of the earth. In a word Fuller and others experienced the genuine revival of God in their midst. We have much to learn from Fuller today, and his ordination sermons in particular contain a concise practical theological summary of what has proven effective in pastoral ministry in the past. I believe our Lord still blesses fidelity to his word and by mimicking Fuller’s faithfulness and diligence as we read his ordination sermons we too *may* appropriate God’s grace in like manner and experience a similar out-pouring of the Spirit of God upon the church.

SBJT: A close study of the theology of C. H. Spurgeon will reveal that he was deeply indebted to Andrew Fuller. Did Spurgeon himself recognize this?

Brian Albert: Charles Spurgeon (1834–1892) testified that Andrew Fuller’s *Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* was a classic of the Christian faith and Spurgeon referred to Fuller as “the most notable theologian of the Baptists in the latter 1700’s” (see Bob Ross, *A Biography Pictorial of C. H. Spurgeon* [Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications/Ages Software, 2001], 17). Apparently, Fuller impressed Spurgeon at an early age. In his journal of April 17, 1850, at the vulnerable age of fifteen and approximately four months after his conversion, Spurgeon noted how Andrew Fuller’s treatise on Antinomianism had affected him positively as an

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important incentive in regard to holiness. Others also noticed Fuller's influence on the London pastor. Spurgeon recalled his early days at New Park Street Chapel, and how he was criticized for being a "Fullerite," a caricature he considered honorable (see Spurgeon, "The Raven's Cry," *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* [Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications/Ages Software, 2001], 12:68).

In a fitting act of providence, Spurgeon was baptized in the same river where Fuller sometimes baptized believers. Spurgeon shared Fuller's sincere conviction regarding believer's baptism and the inevitable scorn that came for this commitment. Like Fuller, "the Prince of Preachers" also believed that the health of a local church was linked to the church's fervor for the missionary enterprise. He was convinced that Baptists were blessed because of their commitment to global missions, which in part he traced to Fuller. "From the very day when Carey, Fuller, and [Samuel] Pearce went forth to send the gospel to the heathen, a blessing rested upon our denomination, I believe, and if we had done more for the heathen, we should have been stronger to do more at home" (see "The Waterer Watered," *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* [Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications/Ages Software, 2001], 11:295–296).

Another similarity with Fuller had to do with prayer. Spurgeon advocated that God does listen to the prayers of sinners, and that answered prayer was confirmation that God existed. This truth was the ground of his conversion. He recounted the negative reception he encountered when he taught this doctrine and was compared with Fuller. "They considered me to be as bad as Andrew Fuller, and to them he was, doctrinally, about the most horrible person that could be; so, outside the chapel gate, I was assailed with questions about God hearing the prayers of unregenerate people" (see "True and Not True," *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* [Pasadena, TX:

Pilgrim Publications/Ages Software, 2001], 51:539–40).

One of the greatest influences that Fuller had on Spurgeon had to do with the subject of conversion. Spurgeon, like Fuller, believed that the Bible warrants unbelievers to come to Christ even if they do not feel like it.

You have thought to yourself "Before I can come, I must feel my need aright." You think you do not feel your need, and you have been troubled a great deal lately because you have not that tenderness of heart that you ought to have. If you cannot come to Christ with a broken heart, come to Christ for a broken heart. He is ready to give it to you. Come and tell him that you want a broken heart. One of the best prayers you can pray is, "Lord, create a right spirit within me." You say, "Sir, I want more than a broken heart: I want even to learn to pray." I remember what Mr. Fuller once said to a young man who was trying to pray, and could not; he whispered to Mr. Fuller, who was kneeling by his side, "I cannot pray." "Tell the Lord so," said Mr. Fuller. Go and tell the Lord about that, and ask him to give you the desire which shall be necessary to make earnest prayer, that you may begin to pray, that you may have a broken heart (see "God's Mercy Going Before," *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* [Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications/Ages Software, 2001], 60:404).

While Spurgeon admired Fuller and understood in many ways how Baptists of his day were indebted to him, nevertheless he used Fuller's name to challenge his own generation.

Oh, the name of Carey, and Fuller! We Baptists think we have nothing to do now but to go upstairs and go to bed, for we have achieved eternal glory through the names of these good men... Thank God for them: they were grand men; but the right thing is to forget the past, and pray for another set of men to carry on the work (see "Onward," *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* [Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications/Ages Software, 2001], 19:382).

SBJT: Andrew Fuller was part of a prayer movement that led to revival. What was his personal thinking about the necessity of prayer?

Dustin W. Bengé: In 1784, a proposal was adopted at the annual meeting of the Northamptonshire Association to call all congregations within the Association to ardent prayer for the moving of the Holy Spirit in revival. During the same meeting, Andrew Fuller, who had been asked to deliver one of the sermons, encouraged his fellow ministers, “O brethren, let us pray much for an outpouring of God’s Spirit upon our ministers and churches” (see *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* [ed. Joseph Belcher, 1845 ed.; repr. Harrisonburg, Virginia: Sprinkle Publications, 1988], 1:131). The prayer call of 1784 had been the result of a strong theological framework that included the most basic of biblical instruction on the necessity of prayer.

Although Fuller never wrote a treatise on prayer, he demonstrates his understanding of the necessity of prayer in his lengthy exposition on “The Lord’s Prayer” in Matthew 6:9–15. Fuller interpreted this biblical text as Christ “putting words in their mouths” (see *Complete Works of Fuller*, 1:578), and thus saw clear pastoral implications of the teaching of Christ on the necessity of prayer within the life of a believer. Fuller begins his exegesis by establishing that prayer must be dependent upon the character of the one to whom we are allowed to draw near, namely, “Our Father” (Mt 6:9). The recognition of God as “Our Father” implies that sinners have become “adopted alien[s] put among the children” (*Complete Works of Fuller*, 1:578), and can therefore approach God as such. Within the words, “Our Father, who art in heaven” (Mt 6:9) there is an immediate consciousness that worship should be the main initiative of prayer. Fuller says, “As the endearing character of a father inspires us with confidence, this must have no less a tendency to excite our reverence; and both together are necessary to

acceptable worship” (*Complete Works of Fuller*, 1:578). It is not merely reverence to God that prayer warrants, but it also serves to encourage the one praying of the absolute supremacy and almighty power to which they bring their requests. Fuller distinguished prayer as the supreme doxological experience of the believer beholding God, not only as Father, but a Father who dwells in heaven fully capable of answering his children’s requests. A corporate element is observed within the words, “forgive us” (Matt 6:12). He affirms the catholicity of these words explaining, “the prayer of faith and love will embrace in its arms brethren at the greatest distance; and not only such as are known, but such as are unknown, even the whole family of God upon earth” (*Complete Works of Fuller*, 1:579).

After addressing the things of “first importance,” Fuller says, “We are allowed to ask for those things which pertain to our immediate wants, both temporal and spiritual” (*Complete Works of Fuller*, 1:579). Fuller outlines, “There are three petitions in respect of God’s name and cause in the world, so there are three which regard our own immediate wants; one of which concerns those which are temporal, and the other two those which are spiritual” (*Complete Works of Fuller*, 1:580). All three of these requests conclude with a doxology that grants great confidence to the one praying. Throughout his exposition, Fuller weaves the theme of confidence. Confidence within the one appealing to God in prayer that we could not, following the pattern of The Lord’s Prayer, ask for anything that would not be fully granted. Fuller’s theology of prayer serves to be the motivation through which he instructs others to pray and to experience the benefits thereof.

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SBJT: We have two sets of Andrew Fuller’s expository sermons, the one on Genesis and the other on Revelation, the first and last books of the Bible respectively. How would a contemporary preacher benefit from looking at Fuller’s sermons on the story of Joseph in Genesis 37-50, for instance?

Josh Monroe: When William Carey (1761–1834) first argued that British Christians should begin an effort to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to the people of India, he titled that argument, “*An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*.” His phrase, “the use of means,” may well seem curious in our own day, but in his day, it was downright controversial. By that phrase, Carey meant that Christians ought to engage those outside of Christ actually and persuasively in an effort to see them come to Christ. The primary Baptist progenitor of this argument was Andrew Fuller, who himself argued that the gospel was to be offered to any and all. This notion spoke directly against the prominent High Calvinism of his day by returning to the evangelical Calvinism of a century earlier. Carey, in arguing for the means of evangelism, was simply taking his cues from Fuller, such that if Carey is the father of modern missions; Fuller is the grandfather.

When we turn to Fuller’s advice on preaching, we do not need to look far to find an emphasis on evangelism. He argued that the first goal in the pulpit was that “*In every sermon*

we should have an errand; and one of such importance that if it be received or complied with it will issue in eternal salvation” (see Fuller, *The Works of Andrew Fuller* [Edinburgh; Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 2007], 752-759 italics original). In light of this, it is quite curious that his sermons

on Genesis, and on the Joseph cycle in particular, rarely if ever contained what we would today consider an evangelical or gospel call. But it is precisely at this point that Fuller’s sermons on Joseph are so beneficial to a contemporary preacher. Rather than funneling the text into his own points, themes, and final gospel crescendo, he preached the text on its own terms as a biblical narrative. He examined the motivations of the protagonists and antagonists, and he traced the design of the story’s Author in the lives of those characters. The superintending providence of God was the theme of his sermons, as it was the theme of the Joseph cycle to begin with.

Fuller considered the stories of Joseph to be true records of real persons with whom a real God had much to do. In his own words, “It is a history, perhaps, unequalled for displaying the various workings of the human mind, both good and bad, and the singular providence of God in making use of them for the accomplishment of his purposes” (see Fuller, *The Works of Andrew Fuller*, 411). When preaching through these stories, Fuller always had an eye to why the characters acted as they did and to what caused them to sin so villainously or walk so saintly; but his explanations were not those of the dry English teacher making silly supposition. They were instead the insight of a man who had inherited the Puritan tradition of being a physician of the soul. Through Fuller’s exegetical narration, the hearts and minds of Joseph, Israel, the brothers, Potiphar, Potiphar’s wife, and Pharaoh became very familiar in their similarity to the hearts and minds of Fuller’s audience. Consequently, God’s interaction with the characters in the narrative became God’s interaction with Fuller’s congregation, and their own hearts were impacted with what changed the hearts of Joseph and the rest. This is subtle evangelism, but it is suitable evangelism, which took Scripture’s story itself as the means by which conversion and eternal salvation were pursued from the pulpit.

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SBJT: Ellen Charry has coined the term “aretegenic” to describe the way that, up until the modern day, theological texts were designed to shape and form character. Is this an appropriate term by which to describe Andrew Fuller’s theological writings and if so, can you give an example?

Ryan Hoselton: Andrew Fuller’s conviction that Christian orthodoxy was conducive to moral excellence and happiness saturated his writings. According to Ellen Charry, when religious thought began to interact with Locke, Hume, and Kant, theologians resigned from their chief responsibility—to encourage virtue and happiness in God by instructing sinners in the knowledge and love of God (see Ellen Charry, *By The Renewing of Your Minds: The Pastoral Function of Christian Doctrine* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997]). Modern epistemology reduced truth to information and facts, eliminating its moral dimension. In contrast, Andrew Fuller perpetuated the “aretegenic” epistemology (i.e., conducive to producing virtue) of the classic theologians, insisting that virtue and knowledge were not only inseparable but also that one nurtured the other. He reasoned that any compromise of Christian truth ineluctably led to an ethical compromise: “the worst principles will ... be productive of the worst practices” (see Andrew Fuller, *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Examined and Compared as to their Moral Tendency*, in *The Complete Works of Rev. Andrew Fuller* [ed. Joseph Belcher; Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1845; repr. Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle, 1988], 2:149). Virtue was impossible without a correct knowledge and love of God.

Fuller applied his understanding of Christian truth as aretegenic to confront Thomas Paine’s deism in his work, *The Gospel Its Own Witness* (see *Works*, 2:3-107). For Fuller, the moral value of Christian doctrine attested to its veracity: “If Christianity can be proved to be a religion that inspires the love of God and man; if it endues the mind of him that embraces it with a principle of justice, meekness, chastity, and goodness, and even gives a tone to the morals of society at large; it will appear to carry its evidence along with it” (*Works*, 2:7).

Fuller argued that the Christian understanding of God’s character had a profound impact on human morality. He explained that God’s *natural* perfections—such as his power, immutability, and aseity—captivate admiration for his *greatness*. However, God’s *moral* perfections—including his justice, truthfulness, and holiness—attract love for his *goodness* (see *Works*, 2:9). God’s moral law for mankind is an extension of his moral perfections, and the law’s essence consists in the command to love God and your neighbor (see *Works*, 2:15). Love for God and man augments the desire to imitate God’s good and just ways, bringing glory to the Creator and happiness to the creature. The moral character of God “is displayed” most gloriously “in the doctrines and precepts of the gospel”—doctrines that summon man to renounce his evil and rely entirely upon God for virtue (see *Works*, 2:9).

Fuller’s contention with Paine’s deism was that it exalted God’s natural perfections but disregarded his moral perfections (see *Works*, 2:9). Deism declared nature normative for human morality and self-love the means for attaining virtue. Perhaps with an eye to the French Revolution, Fuller countered, “Instead of returning to God and virtue, those nations which have possessed the highest degrees of [the light of nature] have gone further and further into immorality” (*Works*, 2:19). Self-love—rather than inspiring benevolence—was “the source of all the mischief and misery in the universe” (*Works*, 2:17).

Fuller closely observed as evangelical social forces combated the ignominy of the slave trade in England, concluding that a society governed by self-love provided no motivation to love one’s neighbor: “theft, cruelty, and murder ... assume the names of wisdom and good policy” (*Works*, 2:8). In contrast, “Christianity is a living principle of virtue in good men,” it “is a tree of life whose fruit is immortality, and whose very leaves are for the healing of the nations” (*Works*, 2:49). The love and knowledge of the true God offers hope for virtue, happiness, and human flourishing in this world, and assurance for it in the next.

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Book Reviews

Mapping Modern Theology: A Thematic and Historical Introduction. Edited by Kelly M. Kapic and Bruce L. McCormack. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012, 421 pp., \$34.99 paper.

This is a unique book and one that has been needed for a long time. It is a survey of recent theology, which for this book is generally the last two hundred years. In the introduction McCormack states that modern theology began in Germany with its development of scientific models of understanding just about everything, though the rise of modern theology was precipitated by the development of critical philosophy primarily by Hume and Kant (3). Hume's critique of natural religion and Kant's delimitation of knowledge to the realm of phenomenological appearances set the stage for Schleiermacher and a host of others who would alter the game in theology and introduce a variety of versions of liberalism, mediating theology, neoorthodoxy, postliberalism, postconservatism, postmodernism,

and so forth. There are a number of books published in the last fifty years that chronicle this development, including books by Stan Grenz and Roger Olson, Alasdair Heron, and Hendrickus Berkhof, and a veritable library of volumes that examine individual figures or specific movements. What has not appeared, till now, is a thematic approach that looks at individual doctrines from the standard loci of systematic theology and surveys that development in somewhat brief overviews from an evangelical perspective. That is what makes this volume valuable.

A complete review would have to be a review article, but I do wish to summarize the outline of a few of the chapters and then to cite a few important points in the work. In the "Introduction" the author makes the point that the new approach to theology made its first inroads at the doctrine of creation (7). That is certainly understandable since the new understanding of science that grew out of the Enlightenment challenged many traditional claims of Christian theology.

In chapter two, Fred Sanders takes up the doctrine of the Trinity. Taking up first the point to the Trinity and history, he surveys the manner in which Hegel, Moltmann, Pannenberg, and Jenson have provided new lenses through which to understand the relationship of the Trinity to finite reality. He then has a section on the Trinity and experience, examining such thinkers as Schleiermacher, LaCugna, and Rahner. Then under the heading of the Trinity and retrieval, examining Barth as a renewed trinitarian theologian over against his detractors, such as Tillich. This essay really is a historical and theological treat.

Katherine Sonderegger penned chapter five, which deals with creation. She does a fine job of displaying the titanic battle between traditional interpretations of creation, held by Hodge and Warfield (she deals mainly with Hodge) and the new interpretations provoked by modern science put forth by Hegel, Schleiermacher, Rahner, and others. She notes that this conflict really was rooted in Hume's metaphysical skepticism, but that it took new theories about origins to cause a fundamental break.

Kevin Vanhoozer takes on the doctrine of the atonement in chapter eight. He indicates that it was the turn to the subjective in Romanticism that drove Schleiermacher's atonement theology (178). Ritschl rejected that subjectivism and put forgiveness and reconciliation at one point of the theological ellipse and the kingdom of God at the other point (179). He then examines a series of thinkers in the Reformed and Evangelical tradition who have moved from a penal substitution position, and have attempted to form mediating theologies: Edward Irving, Donald Macleod Campbell, T. F. Torrance, and Scot McKnight (180-85). This is a very helpful section of the essay. Then he takes on the "bloodless" proponents, such as Girard and Heim, moves to detail the return of Christus Victor, and then takes on the critics of penal substitution. He offers helpful cri-

tiques on those criticisms and seems at the end to come out defending the traditional view.

The chapter on providence by John Webster was, characteristically, dense and yet helpful. I recently wrote a chapter on creation and providence for another book due out next year and wish I had had this essay to use when I wrote that. Telford Work on pneumatology sagely walks through the twists and turns that doctrine has undergone in the last two centuries. Aside from creation, perhaps pneumatology has undergone more twists and turns than any doctrine.

The book concludes, helpfully, with two chapters that do not explore the loci, but take a look at how these things impinge on ethics and practical theology, and then the two final chapters are on ecclesiology and eschatology.

I found this to be a very helpful work that I will return to time and again in trying to understand this period. I teach a Ph.D. seminar on nineteenth-century Protestant theology—I already know what one of the new textbooks is going to be.

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Journey to Joy: The Psalms of Ascent. By Josh Moody. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013, 192 pp., \$14.99 paper.

Josh Moody (Ph.D., University of Cambridge) serves as senior pastor of College Church in Wheaton, Illinois, where *Journey to Joy* began as a sermon series in early 2011. Moody put forth these sermons, and this book, with the conviction that "there is a crying need for people to believe the Bible to feel it" (13). The Psalms are especially suited to stir up the affections, a "God-designed tool to help us feel truly the truth," particularly Psalms 120-134, the psalms of ascent (15). Moody mentions the four primary literary-historical-interpretive

approaches to these psalms, adopting the view that these compositions are “pilgrim psalms,” tied to Israel’s three great pilgrimages to Jerusalem (14-15). He encourages readers to approach these psalms as those beginning a journey to God (16). The theme of the journey of life binds (somewhat loosely) the chapters together.

Moody uses the psalms of ascent to address a variety of emotions that characterize the life journeys of Christian (and non-Christians): hostility, insecurity, injustice, suffering, and other “various difficulties and trials” which might prevent or hinder one’s journey to God (15). Each chapter generally addresses one theme arising from the text of a psalm. Throughout, Moody is careful to anchor his observations to the text he is considering, allowing scripture to define the problem and the remedy. One of the book’s unarticulated but recurring themes is the adoption of a biblically informed piety.

Moody describes prayer as genuine communication with God (22) and encourages Christians to pray for mercy, both for themselves and for others (56). He understands prayer to be a daily task requiring discipline, not merely a formal matter (82-83). By encouraging readers to focus on God’s attributes, Moody suggests that a genuinely theocentric perspective shapes one’s worldview (33) and revitalizes even potentially mundane tasks and relationships (87ff). God’s people rejoice and true joy comes from being restored by God (78), and genuine blessing comes from fearing God (100). Authentic godliness consists of humility, which “is not inadequacy or low self-esteem but being focused on God and so becoming who you were made to be” (142). Moody’s treatment of humility from Psalm 131 is one of the highlights of the book as he anchors his definition in a balanced biblical understanding of the “heart” as the root of both too low and too high self-estimations (137).

True spirituality engages difficult texts and hard truths, such as those of the mildly

imprecatory Psalm 129. How might Christians use such texts that call upon God to judge the psalmist’s enemies? Moody believes that Christians can neither ignore such texts nor try to mitigate their bite; rather, believers ought to read these passages in light of the cross-purchased redemption of Jesus (120).

Moody’s observations that Christians need to feel the truth of scripture and his conviction that the psalter is the best avenue for making this affective connection are on target. The psalms do encompass the scope of human emotional experience, and the psalms of ascent present a variety of these experiences, sometimes in shocking language (16). Moody’s desire that Christians would be deeply affected by the message of the psalms is the book’s unstated thesis. Without knowing that these chapters appeared originally as sermons (and they appear to retain the form of sermons for publication) the book at first appears to lack coherence beyond the inclusion of each of the fifteen ascent psalms. But when the reader approaches the chapters as sermons, united with the theme of a journey toward communion with God, the structure becomes clearer. Now, treating the chapters as sermons, readers may quibble with some of Moody’s uses of the texts, such as a watering down of injustice (54) or stretching the text of Psalm 127 to include “spiritual” children, but such instances are rare. The medium of print is more accessible but perhaps somewhat less effective than that of the pulpit for capturing the power and grittiness of these messages concerning the pains and balms of the Christian pilgrimage, but Moody’s *Journey to Joy* addresses these issues powerfully nevertheless—and from the profound perspective of the heart.

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Johnson, Timothy Jay. *Now My Eyes See You: Unveiling an Apocalyptic Job*. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009, 212 pp., \$85.00 paper.

This study of the book of Job is based in Johnson's Ph.D. dissertation at Marquette University completed in 2004 under the direction of John J. Schmitt. Essentially, Johnson argues that Job is an early example of apocalyptic literature and that this insight goes far in clearing up confusion about the meaning and message of the book. He asserts that the common attempt to make sense of the book as an example of wisdom literature is doomed to fail.

First, a matter of disclosure: Johnson mentions in his preface that I piqued his interest in this topic in a series of lectures that I gave at Bethel Seminary in 1998 (vii). But Johnson's work is no exposition or expansion of my views on Job. His research is original, and the views he expresses arise from his own considerable skill as an interpreter of the Hebrew Bible.

Johnson structures his book in a logical order and presents his argumentation in a clear and direct manner. In his introduction to the problem of Job (1-14), he examines the problem of defining the term "genre" and of applying a particular genre to a given book of the Old Testament. Here, as everywhere else in this study, Johnson demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the secondary literature, and he interacts with it skillfully. Although aware of the problems attendant to genre classification, he considers genre to be a valid concept and heuristically helpful, and in particular he follows E. D. Hirsch in asserting that verbal meaning is genre-bound and that the primary task of the interpreter is to determine the author's intended meaning.

In chapter 1 (15-38), Johnson examines the history of research into Job, focusing especially on scholarly attempts to assign the book to a genre. He naturally gives much attention to the standard view that Job is "wisdom," but

he also describes an array of other proposals. Among these are claims that Job is an imitation of Greek tragedy, that it is a dramatized lament, that it is a parody of wisdom, and that it is simply *sui generis*. He treats scholars fairly and presents their views clearly, but he also pointedly deflates each theory in turn.

In chapter 2 (39-77), Johnson examines various proposals for defining or describing apocalyptic literature. He focuses especially on the "Master Paradigm" of an apocalyptic text developed by the SBL Genre Project, but he does not claim this or any definition to be the last word on the subject. He does show, however, that one can reasonably and honestly claim that Job meets the various criteria scholars have proposed for classifying a text as apocalyptic. An especially important aspect of apocalyptic is that the hero of the text has a series of visions or heavenly journeys; these are often mediated by a heavenly guide. Johnson identifies three apocalyptic visions in Job: Eliphaz's account of an encounter with a "spirit" in 4:12-21, the wisdom poem of 28:1-28, and of course the appearance of YHWH to Job in 38:1-41:34. It is especially noteworthy that Johnson considers Job 28 to be an account of a vision given to Job. Readers may balk at this, but he makes a good case (see especially vv. 20-27, which are rich with apocalyptic material).

Chapter 3 (78-105) takes an unexpected turn. Johnson examines ancient interpretations of Job and demonstrates that they tended to view it as an eschatological or apocalyptic text. He examines the biblical allusions to Job (Ezek 14:14, 20; James 5:1-11) as well the LXX of Job, the paleo-Hebrew Joban fragments from Qumran, rabbinical lore, the Targums, the Testament of Job, and other sources. Early readers were far from classifying Job as wisdom literature.

Chapter 4 (106-158) is almost a mini-commentary on Job. Johnson works through the entire book and shows that recognition of its apocalyptic genre allows one to make sense of its flow and argument. Readers will appreciate

his many insightful comments. I felt that his treatment of the Elihu speeches (Job 32-35) were particularly helpful. He demonstrates that Elihu essentially supports Satan's position. This is in contrast to many modern evangelical readers, who regard Elihu's argument as a profoundly wise precursor to YHWH's speech. Ancient interpreters, Johnson notes, considered Elihu to be a satanic figure.

Chapter 5 (159-176) describes the further ramifications of this study. In particular, Johnson argues that Gerhard von Rad, who famously sought to demonstrate that apocalyptic literature grew out of wisdom literature rather than prophecy, would have done well to have treated Job as apocalyptic. Johnson regards Job as an exilic text written to encourage the Jewish exiles in Babylon to persevere in the face of their suffering. In a brief conclusion (177-180), he summarizes his study and its results.

Many readers will disagree with various specific proposals Johnson makes, but few will be able to claim that he has not made a strong case for reading Job as an apocalyptic text. At the very least, readers will benefit from many of his insights and will be aware of apocalyptic elements within Job. His book is also a marvelous window into contemporary interpretations of Job in Old Testament scholarship. He surveys the field carefully and clearly, and his book is essential reading for anyone doing a serious study of Job.

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Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews. By David M. Moffitt. Novum Testamentum Supplements, Vol. 141. Leiden: Brill, 2011, 338 pp., \$166.00.

Scholars of the epistle to the Hebrews have long concluded that the bodily resurrection of Christ is largely (or entirely) absent from the letter. The reasons for this absence vary among scholars, but it is generally assumed that if the author affirms the resurrection at all, it is not an important part of his larger purpose in writing. Instead the author chooses to emphasize the themes of Jesus' death and subsequent exaltation, either ignoring or conflating the idea of resurrection. David Moffitt, assistant professor of New Testament and Greek at Campbell University Divinity School, seeks to reconsider this "riddle" (1) through a thorough examination both of the text of Hebrews and other primary sources. He contends that scholars who minimize the role of the resurrection in Hebrews are mistaken—not only is the resurrection of Christ affirmed in the epistle, it is essential to understanding the author's emphases on the high priestly role of Christ and his offering of atonement.

Moffitt makes his argument through four chapters and a brief conclusion. First, he offers a survey and review of the various views of the resurrection in Hebrews. Some scholars argue that the author affirmed the resurrection, as seen in texts such as Hebrews 13:20, but chose not to focus on it. Others favor the idea of "spiritual ascension," contending that Jesus' spirit ascended to heaven immediately following his death where he presented his offering of atonement and then returned to his body at the resurrection, which is not mentioned in the epistle. Others argue that the author conflated the idea of the resurrection with the exaltation of Christ, but placed his focus on the exaltation. Some are agnostic on the issue, contending that there are simply too many inconsistencies throughout the epistle to

know how the author conceived of the resurrection. Finally, some outright deny that the resurrection is referred to or acknowledged at all in the epistle. After a brief evaluation of these views, Moffitt notes that all share the conclusion that the resurrection, if present in Hebrews, does not receive much emphasis. In contrast, he argues that the author does indeed affirm the resurrection and that it is important to his argument. He summarizes his position succinctly: “This study argues that the writer of Hebrews identifies Jesus’ death as the moment that puts into motion a sequence of events that ultimately results in his exaltation to the throne at God’s right hand. These events are the resurrection of Jesus’ human body, his ascension into heaven, his presentation of his atoning offering—that is, his very life—and his session at God’s right hand” (42).

Moffitt begins his argument by discussing the contrast made between Jesus and the angels in Hebrews 1-2. He contends that the *oikumene* in Hebrews 1-2 refers to the heavenly rather than the earthly realm. Further, Moffitt argues that Jesus is said to be greater than the angels in this heavenly realm because he is a human being: “God always intended that the world be ruled by humanity. The author’s exposition of Psalm 8 therefore enables him to claim that the *oikumene* was subjected to the rule of the Son precisely because he became a human being” (119). Thus it is important for the author to conceive of the resurrection of Christ, because only then can he possess this requisite human body to be exalted in this manner. Moffitt explains: “That is to say, in order for the Son to be the one elevated to the heavenly throne at God’s right hand, he had to have his humanity, i.e., his flesh and blood, with him in heaven” (143).

Next, Moffitt turns to various Second Temple writings to demonstrate that first century Judaism could conceive of a human body entering heaven in this manner. He argues that Jesus’ resurrection “marks the point at which he came into

possession of this glorified humanity—a human body fit to enter heaven and dwell in God’s presence” (146). Based on accounts of the ascension of both Moses and Enoch, he notes that Second Temple texts detail the bodily ascension of these characters, usually in conjunction with their glorification. Similarly, Jesus’ resurrection grants him the “indestructible life” (Heb 7:16) to stand before God in order to make his high-priestly offering. Moffitt then turns to various passages in Hebrews itself to demonstrate the presence of the resurrection in the letter. He notes several places that acknowledge this affirmation. Resurrection is listed as some of the basic doctrines (i.e., “milk”) in 6:1-2. Abraham supposed that God could raise the dead when he sacrificed Isaac (11:17-19). There is a “better resurrection” than the mere resuscitation of a human body, as seen in a woman who receives back her dead (11:35). Moffitt concludes the chapter by examining the theme of perfection throughout Hebrews: “Perfection is not something inclusive of Jesus’ priestly ministry and heavenly exaltation to the throne at God’s right hand. It is something he first had to possess in order to then become the heavenly high priest who, after making a cleansing for sin, was invited to sit on the throne at God’s right hand” (195). Accordingly, Moffitt contends that Jesus received this perfection once his sufferings were completed at the cross. Only then was he fit to serve as an eternal high priest before God. “Every high priest, according to the author, is called by God and can sympathize with those for whom they minister (5:1-2). What makes Jesus different, and fit for a different priesthood, is the fact that, unlike the other priests, he is no longer subject to mortality; rather, like Melchizedek, he ‘remains’ and ‘lives’ (7:3, 8)” (197).

Finally, Moffitt turns his attention to an examination of the Old Testament backgrounds to the argument of Hebrews. Specifically, Moffitt challenges the assumption that Jesus’ death effected atonement for sins. “In the author’s schema, Jesus’ death is therefore

necessary, though not by itself sufficient, for the atonement he procured" (285). The reasons for this are two-fold. First, the author always envisions heaven as the place of Jesus' offering of atonement, rather than earth. Second, Levitical sacrifices were not focused on the death of the animal but on the presentation of its blood (258). Moffitt argues that the blood connotes life rather than death. Thus when Jesus offers his blood before God in heaven, he is offering his resurrected and perfected life. He writes: "In keeping with the emphasis in Leviticus on the offering of blood as the presentation of life to God, the unifying point behind each of these terms is the indestructible life Jesus came to possess after the crucifixion. Jesus' indestructible, human life is what he brings into God's presence and offers as his sacrifice" (218). Thus Jesus' death on the cross "fits in a larger process" (293). "The argument of this study is that he does not conflate that event with the atoning moment. Rather, he locates Jesus' death at the front end of a process that culminates in the atoning moment" (293). Without the resurrection, then, there is no atonement for sins. Therefore, far from being unimportant for the author, "Jesus' resurrection holds a central place in the explanation of Jesus' atoning work in Hebrews" (296).

Though Moffitt's thesis is directly opposed to virtually all modern scholarship on Hebrews, he presents his arguments both forcefully and convincingly. The seeming absence of such an important doctrine as the resurrection in Hebrews is puzzling, especially for evangelical scholars who wish to demonstrate the consistency of scripture. Moffitt's work is an important contribution in that it establishes not only the presence, but also the necessity of the resurrection in the argument of Hebrews. While there is much to commend his thesis, some of his conclusions raise some important and potentially problematic questions and issues for larger areas of theology.

Positively, Moffitt presents his arguments clearly and persuasively. His discussion in chapter 2 of the comparison of Jesus and the angels presents a fresh take on a difficult text. The text of Hebrews 1:6 reads, "And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, 'Let all God's angels worship him'" (ESV). This text has been interpreted to say that once Jesus entered the world (via incarnation), the angels worshipped him, perhaps echoing Luke 2:13-14. However, Moffitt shows convincingly that the "world" (*oikoumenē*) of v. 6 is not earth, but heaven. Thus, when Jesus entered heaven (via ascension), all God's angels worshipped him. But why? Many have assumed that it is because of Jesus' divine nature. After all, v. 3 contains such a lofty description of the Son, "He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power." However, Moffitt again bucks the traditional understanding. He contends that it is the humanity of Jesus that makes him superior to the angels, rather than his divinity (50).

While this may seem counterintuitive, his analysis makes sense with the rest of the passage. Hebrews 1:3 does contain a high christology, but the following verse begins, "having become as much superior to angels" (emphasis added), implying that he was not always viewed as superior to the angels. Of course, ontologically Jesus as the second person of the Trinity is superior to all of his creation, but the emphasis here is on exaltation. Further, the author's quotation of Psalm 8 in 2:5-8 is striking, as the psalmist describes one "made ... for a little while lower than the angels" (v. 7). This quotation would further suggest that the author is describing a time before Jesus is worshipped as superior to the angels. Given that Psalm 8 originally was a reference to mankind in general, Moffitt argues that it is therefore the humanity of Jesus that grants him this exalted status in heaven. If Jesus were

not bodily resurrected at his presentation in heaven (as in the “spiritual ascension” view described above), he would have no claim to be greater than the angels, since he would be a *pneuma* like them. Moffitt’s comparisons to Second Temple accounts of the ascension of Moses and Enoch show a similar pattern. The human being, once glorified in some way by God, is acknowledged as worthy and receives the praise of the angels.

This robust anthropology accords well with the larger teaching of scripture. Paul writes that humans will “judge angels” (1 Cor 6:3), implying along with Psalm 8 that while mankind is made for “a little while” lower than the angels, they will not always be so. Multiple passages teach that humanity will reign with Christ. 1 Timothy 2:2 states, “if we endure, we will also reign with him.” Revelation 5:10 says that mankind “shall reign on the earth,” and Revelation 22:5 promises that mankind will reign “forever.”

However, while the motif of mankind as the intended rulers of the earth is surely accurate, Moffitt perhaps places too much emphasis on this point. If he is correct in saying that Jesus’ divinity is not cause for the angels to worship him, is it correct to say that God the Son never received worship from the angels until his resurrection from the dead and bodily ascension into heaven? How is it that the one who is “the radiance of the glory of God” was not worthy of the worship of the angels until he was presented before them in flesh and blood? Further, why then would the seraphim in Isaiah’s vision cry out “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts” (Isa 6:4)? God the Father, after all, is *pneuma*. While Moffitt’s argument is helpful in emphasizing the humanity of Christ, his conclusions do not give ample weight to his divinity.

Second, and more important, is his main conclusion regarding the presence and importance of the resurrection in Hebrews. Moffitt’s main thesis has two elements. First, the author of Hebrews acknowledges and refers to the bodily

resurrection of Christ. Second, the resurrection plays a critical role in Jesus’ high-priestly ministry in effecting atonement. The first point can be celebrated and embraced by evangelical scholars puzzled by the apparent lack of emphasis Hebrews places on the resurrection. The second point is both well supported and logically sound. However, some of the implications of this view can be problematic. By emphasizing that the act of atonement occurred in heaven after the resurrection, Moffitt implies (and explicitly states) that the death of Christ does not bring about atonement, but rather is merely “at the front end of a process that culminates in the atoning moment” (293).

Moffitt’s proposal flows from his insistence on the importance of the resurrection for the argument of Hebrews and is well supported in Levitical sacrifice. Moffitt argues that sacrifices as prescribed under the Old Covenant required an animal to die; but more important than simply the death of the victim was the presentation of its blood in the Holy of Holies. He further insists that the blood of the animal did not indicate its death, but its life. Thus when the author of Hebrews emphasizes the sacrifice of Jesus’ blood, it should not be viewed as a reference to the cross, but the presentation of Jesus’ resurrected life before God in heaven. By entering the *oikoumenē* with his perfected and glorified body as a result of the resurrection, Jesus was able to provide atonement for the world. Therefore what should receive the emphasis for the act of atonement is not Jesus’ death, Moffitt argues, but his resurrection and ascension to heaven. The cross then becomes a starting point—a necessary event but not an efficacious one.

Regardless of the internal consistency and the parallels to Levitical sacrifice, this is a startling conclusion. No evangelical scholar would wish to diminish the importance of the resurrection, but to shift the focus of atonement entirely off the cross is an unscriptural development. The implications for biblical theology are significant. Does

not such a view exclude a penal and substitutionary view of atonement? If the death of Christ did not actually make atonement, is it proper to speak even of the imputation of sin to Christ?

Further, how is such a conclusion consistent with the rest of scripture, particularly with Paul's writings? While it is not fair to force the theology of Hebrews to fit the Pauline mold, how are they not inconsistent, if Moffitt is correct? Paul considered it of "first importance" that "Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures" (1 Cor 15:3). Especially given the widespread belief that this particular passage of 1 Corinthians reflects a very early church creed, the emphasis that Christ died for sins is important to note. Also, Paul states, "we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (Rom 5:10, emphasis added). In Galatians, the apostle argues that "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us," linking this act of sacrifice with being "hanged on a tree" (Gal 3:13). Paul is not alone in this emphasis, as Peter also states, "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree ... By his wounds you have been healed" (1 Pet 2:24).

Moffitt attempts to explain these objections by appealing to passages such as 1 Corinthians 15:17, "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins" (292, n. 159). However, Paul's point is not that the resurrection plays no role in atonement, but that the death of Christ on the cross is the moment where atonement is secured rather than after the resurrection in heaven. The resurrection is of course crucial to atonement because by it Christ conquered sin and death and broke their power over the human race. Therefore those that are "in Christ" can share this same power over sin by virtue of his victory both on the cross and in his resurrection. Paul emphasizes the critical nature of the resurrection without displacing the atoning work of the cross.

Moffitt also points to Romans 4:25 for support, where Paul states the Christ was "delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification." This passage, too, cannot bear the weight placed upon it. The parallel nature of the text argues against seeing the latter phrase as support for Moffitt's thesis. By interpreting the last half of the verse (*dia tēn dikaiōsin*

hēmōn) to mean that Christ's resurrection resulted or effected justification would imply that the first half (*dia tēn paraptōma hēmōn*) means that Christ's being "delivered up" resulted in or effected trespasses. Surely Moffitt would not argue along such a line. Though he does not explicitly say so, one would assume he would interpret the former clause to mean "because of our trespasses." However, it would be very unlikely for Paul to use an identical and parallel construction and intend such different meanings.

Moffitt's proposal is an intriguing one and, within the context of Hebrews, is largely persuasive. However, it is not clear that the text of Hebrews can bear the weight of Moffitt's logic. By seeking to establish the primacy of the resurrection by inferring it from other themes explicitly stated in the epistle, Moffitt has difficulty establishing such a bold thesis. In addition, by bringing a commendable emphasis on the resurrection, he has deemphasized the equally important doctrine of the cross. In seeking to patch an alleged hole in the theology of Hebrews, Moffitt has made the hole larger—he has only shifted the problem from one doctrine to another.

David Moffitt has delivered an important and groundbreaking contribution to the field of scholarship in Hebrews. His thesis for the presence and importance of the resurrection in the epistle is well formed and provides clarity to many difficult passages. Even the objections raised in this review are a testament to the soundness of much of his argumentation, given that they are mostly concerned with the implications of his conclusions to texts and authors outside of Hebrews. Nevertheless, the proposal that Moffitt raises should be a cause for reexamination of the crucial doctrines of the atonement, the cross, and the resurrection. By offering a clear and convincing proposal for the theology of the author of Hebrews, Moffitt brings to light an important and often neglected theme. For that his work should be welcomed by all.

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Rediscovering the Church Fathers: Who They Were and How They Shaped the Church. By Michael A. G. Haykin. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011, 176 pp., \$16.99 paper.

In recent years there seems to be a renewed interest in Patristic literature. Developing creeds, modeling astute theological thinking, dwelling in community, and more, the Patristic fathers offer the modern church insight into early Christian thought, piety, hermeneutics, and more. Michael Haykin, professor of Church History and Biblical Spirituality at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, successfully serves as an evangelist for the study of Patristics by calling the modern reader to take great interest in the early church fathers. In *Rediscovering the Church Fathers*, Haykin whets the appetite of Christian readers and demonstrates the courage, the intellectual abilities, and the faithful suffering of selected fathers with winsome prose and an ability to navigate the boundless waters of stimulating and complex ancient ideas.

Haykin sets out with a five reasons for taking interest in Patristic literature: (1) Reading the Church Fathers for Freedom and Wisdom (17–18), (2) Reading the Church Fathers So As to Understand the New Testament (19–20), (3) Reading the Church Fathers Because of Bad Press about the Fathers (20–22), (4) Reading the Church Fathers as an Aid in Defending the Faith (22–27), and (5) Reading the Church Fathers for Spiritual Nurture (27–28).

Haykin does not cover nor discuss the whole range of Patristic literature or of early church fathers. Rather, he provides a snapshot of various kinds of fathers within the Patristic tradition. He focuses on Ignatius, who is rich for understanding Christianity after the apostles; the Letter to Diognetus, which contains an early form of apologetics; Origen, who still shapes hermeneutical discussions today; Cyprian and Ambrose, who give us insight

into the Latin Fathers; Basil of Caesarea, who has more extant material than any other father during early Christendom besides Augustine and who has shaped pneumatological discussions; and finally, Patrick, who was a British Christian captured by Irishmen and served as a great missionary to Ireland.

One particularly helpful portion of this book is Haykin's interaction with Origen. Origen was a man of stature and was a "pioneer of biblical studies." The Hexapla, still valuable for linguistic studies, involved extraordinary learning and labor to produce. It places the Hebrew Old Testament, its Greek transliteration, and four Greek translations of the Hebrew in parallel columns. Furthermore, Origen wrote a plethora of commentaries on the Bible as well: thirteen volumes on Genesis, thirty-six on Isaiah, twenty-five on Ezekiel, twenty-five on the Minor Prophets, thirty-five on the Psalms, three on Proverbs, ten on Song of Songs, five on Lamentations, and close to three hundred volumes of commentaries in all (77).

Modern interpreters of Origen frequently dismiss his hermeneutics without careful analysis. Emphasis on single-meaning and negative reactions to allegory have created an environment prejudicial to Origen's ideas. Influenced by Alexandria's intellectual milieu, he employed allegorization when interpreting the scriptures in ways similar to Hellenistic Jews. However, that is not the only method he uses. Historical "passages which are historically true are far more numerous than those which are composed with purely spiritual meanings" (Origen, *On First Principles*, 4.3.4). Therefore, allegorical interpretation is not primary nor the majority of Origen's foci. For Origen, unlike pagan allegorists, saw real value in literal interpretation: (1) The Bible contains true and important history; (2) there are "simple" believers in the church edified by

literal interpretation; (3) it has apologetical value (84–85). Rabbinic interpretation, Origen thought, with its emphasis on “literalism,” would lead to unbelief (88).

Haykin helpfully explains Origen’s three-fold principles for interpretation. First, all scripture has a present meaning and application. Second, scripture should be interpreted within the “rule of faith.” There are other men interpreting the scriptures by means of an indwelling Spirit and he wants to live within the bounds of theological community. Lastly, any exegete must be indwelt by the Holy Spirit to understand the scriptures (85–86). Ultimately, Origen’s hermeneutics are shaped by three different types of interpreters: the simple, who interpret the text literally; the more advanced; and, the perfect (89). But all interpretation “had the goal of spiritual formation” (90).

Haykin accomplished what he set out to do—to captivate and interest of the reader in early Patristic thought. It is necessarily a limited sampling. His final chapter, “Walking with the Church Fathers: My First Steps on a Lifelong Journey,” is a powerful inducement to delve deeper into the writings of the early church fathers.

Whether you are a layperson, a student, or a pastor, if you are intrigued by Patristic literature, I heartily encourage you to read this book, follow the recommended reading list of early church literature, and begin exploring. Its readability, winsome prose, and erudite insights captivate the mind and heart of the reader to read more and to read profitably among the early church fathers.

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The Didache: A Window on the Earliest Christians. By Thomas O’Loughlin. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010, xvii + 185 pp., \$24.99 paper.

The Didache is an early Christian document that is rich with ethical direction, affords ecclesiological insights into the early church, and provides continuity with primitive Christian apocalypticism. Thomas O’Loughlin, professor of historical theology at the University of Nottingham, presents a wonderful contribution to Didache literature after twenty-five years of academic teaching and study of its contents. This introduction provides a fresh discussion of important issues concerning the Didache, such as the history and discovery of the extant manuscripts, why the absence of evidence of the Didache throughout church history, types of ecclesiastical groups hostile to the Didache (both Catholic or Protestant), the importance of the Didache, in addition to the place, date, and theological issues. Though he is reluctant to suggest a geographical locale for the Didache’s origins (24–27), O’Loughlin dates the Didache between AD 50 and AD 80. He suggests however that the synoptic gospels antedated the Didache (47).

Chapters two through seven focus upon the theological message of the book. O’Loughlin masterfully provides a quaint backdrop of biblical imagery to set the stage of the Didachist’s message. For example, a brief yet quite informative, retelling of Lukan table-meal theology directs the reader’s frame of reference to a communal, discipleship framework of Christian meals. By providing a cultural description of meals and the Eucharist, he creates a helpful history of interpretation, illustrates early church practice, and brings the Didache into a historical perspective congruent with early church orthodoxy. Each chapter is similar in form when describing the bifurcating “two-ways” ethic, prayer and fasting, communal gatherings and

meals, ecclesiology, and the brief apocalypse of the Didache. O'Loughlin concludes with his translation of the Didache (161–71).

This volume is very well done. Unfortunately no footnotes and endnotes are provided, hindering readers from consulting O'Loughlin's sources and pursuing related subject matter. The discussion at times lacks cohesion. For example in chapter three on baptism only the last three of twenty pages discuss baptism in the Didache, whereas the first seventeen pages are secondary to the overall argument.

O'Loughlin has provided a valuable contribution to Didache scholarship, carefully attending to the book's background and theological message while neglecting scholastic jargon. This book is accessible to students while simultaneously satisfying the needs of scholars.

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Synopsis of the Pauline Letters in Greek and English.
By James P. Ware. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010, 352 pp., \$49.99.

In James P. Ware's *Synopsis of the Pauline Letters in Greek and English*, the reader is presented with a helpful resource for the study of the Pauline texts. The author claims that he has provided a resource that will allow a "fuller" and "richer understanding" of the writings of the apostle Paul (xiv). He further asserts that the way in which the Pauline texts are presented will "almost always yield fresh insights, new connections, and an enriched grasp of Paul's thought as a whole" (xiv). James P. Ware is a graduate of Yale University, and he holds the title of Associate Professor of Religion at the University of Evansville in

Evansville, Indiana. He is also the author of *The Mission of the Church in Paul's Letter to the Philippians*.

In this work, the Greek and English texts are placed on opposite pages, with the Greek text on the left page and the English text on the right. The Greek text employed is the Nestle-Aland 27th edition, and the English version used is the New Revised Standard Version. The work also includes a condensed textual apparatus that can be used to evaluate major textual variants. The body of the text is arranged around 177 groups of related passages. The synopsis includes all of Paul's epistles, both disputed and undisputed, as well as passages in Acts that contain his teaching and ministry. The primary way in which these groups of passages are to be utilized is through the table of parallels, which enables the reader first to reference any passage and then find a section number, leading to the particular passage and its parallels grouped together under a specific topic label. Secondly, the reader may look up an individual topic or theme in the table of topics.

In comparison to the other major works of this type (Walter T. Wilson's *Pauline Parallels: A Comprehensive Guide* and Patricia Elyse Terrell's *Paul's Parallels: An Echoes Synopsis*), Ware's book is unique in that it is the only one to include the Greek text in addition to the English. Further, his work arranges the parallels thematically, whereas Wilson and Terrell organize them book by book. One advantage of these similar works is that they not only gather the parallels within the Pauline corpus and Acts, but they also catalog instances from the Old Testament and extra-biblical texts that parallel Paul's epistles. However, although Ware's book is not as comprehensive, it has an advantage over the comparable works in that he includes the Greek text, which, as Ware notes, allows recognition of parallels that may not be obvious in English translations (xiii).

A critique of this work is that the categories selected by the author are in part theologically derived and are thus, to some extent, subjective. Ware admits that there is a level of subjectivity in his grouping and labeling of topics (xii), but he asserts that, as much as possible, these groups of topics reflect Paul's categories of thought as suggested by modern Pauline scholarship. One issue concerning this rationale is that the scholars who influenced Ware's categories reflect a certain theological stance that may not be upheld by all evangelical scholars. For instance, some of the scholars who influenced his thematic classifications include Richard B. Hays, N. T. Wright, J. D. G. Dunn, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Abraham J. Malherbe, among others. While these scholars have offered many helpful contributions to the field of Pauline studies, they also advance certain positions that are contested by others.

One example in which Ware's thematic categorization may be disputable is demonstrated in his theme, "The Revelation of God's Righteousness." In this section, he groups together several passages that may not fit within the spectrum of his label. While many of the passages may use a form of the Greek word *dikaio-sune*, they do not necessarily relate to category title. For instance, he lists Galatians 2:15-21, in which righteousness is not clearly connected with God, but rather seems to be more about one being made righteous or being justified through faith in Jesus Christ as opposed to the law. This is also the case in other passages in this section: 1 Corinthians 1:29-31 and Titus 3:4-7. Further, he even lists passages such as Ephesians 2:8-10 and Acts 13:38-39 which do not even contain a form of the word *dikaio-sune*. Thus, it seems as though the grouping of these passages has more to do with a theological than thematic understanding. By grouping these passages with texts like Romans 3:21-31, it appears he may be insinuating that God's righteousness has more to do with the revela-

tion of Jesus Christ than the perfect standard of God, which could lead to a nontraditional way of reading such texts.

Since the intent of this work is to be a tool for theological and exegetical purposes, as opposed to a monograph designed to convince the reader of a certain theological position, it is important for readers to be aware of this as they use this book in their studies. Nonetheless, James P. Ware's *Synopsis of the Pauline Letters in Greek and English* is a much needed contribution, and it has filled a gap in Pauline studies in many ways. Thus, although there is need for some caution when employing this work, it is certain that all students of scripture would greatly benefit from its use in their study of the Pauline texts.

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Was America Founded as a Christian Nation? A Historical Introduction. By John Fea. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011, 287 pp., \$30.00 paper.

John Fea, associate professor and chair of the history department at Messiah College, examines the historical evidence for the claim that America was founded as a Christian nation. He concludes that the modern advocates of the notion that America was founded as a Christian nation are partly right, and so are the advocates of the view that America was founded as a secular nation. He rightly portrays the modern advocates of a Christian America as frequently muddled and inaccurate in their historical judgments. At the same time however he correctly argues that in many respects America was founded as Christian nation. Fea does an excellent job uncovering the historical complexity of this issue.

Fea's main arguments reflect the complexity of the real history and represent the mixed character of his assessment of the issue. Fea's main points are: 1) Americans have generally taken it for granted that the United States is a Christian nation. 2) The leaders of the American Revolution were not motivated by specifically Christian arguments and the war was not in fact justified from the standpoint of Christian morality. 3) The Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution were not Christian documents but most state constitutions on the other hand were. 4) The founders were professed Christians whose faith and practice varied from orthodox to heterodox, but who all agreed that Christianity was necessary to sustain the nation.

The book has three distinct sections. The first part looks at how Americans throughout their history have viewed the matter of the nation's Christian identity. The second addresses the question of whether the movement for American independence was Christian. The third examines the religious beliefs of seven of the founders.

The first part is in some respects the most interesting and illuminating section of the book, and contributes significantly to this discussion. Fea argues that for the first one hundred years of the nation's existence, most Americans took it for granted that theirs was a Christian nation. If it is true that the United States was not founded on the Christian religion, Fea argues, then "someone forgot to tell the American people" (4). "The idea that the United States was a 'Christian nation,'" Fea explains, "was central to American identity in the years between the Revolution and the Civil War" (4). Americans based the notion on three basic premises: 1) God's providential care of the nation demonstrated that he had chosen the nation for special purposes; 2) the founders of the nation were Christians; and 3) the founding documents and character of the gov-

ernment were rooted in Christian ideas.

Fea demonstrates also that from the Civil War until the late twentieth century most Americans maintained their belief in the Christian identity of the nation. America's Christian identity however seemed increasingly in peril as many Americans drifted from Christian values and commitments, and as such forces as immigration and communism seemed to many Americans to threaten the nation's religion and morality.

Fea insightfully explains between the Civil War and the 1920s liberal Protestants defended the idea of Christian America with greater zeal than fundamentalists. Liberal Christians sought the "complete Christianization of all life" (37). At the organization of the Federal Council of Churches in 1908, one leader summarized well one of the council's leading objects: "The essential spirit of our nation is thus that of Jesus Christ, and it is the duty of the American churches to make that spirit more Christian" (38). Liberal church leaders urged Woodrow Wilson to abandon his peace platform and enter World War I in order to advance the cause of Christian civilization.

In chapter four Fea helpfully explains the main arguments and ideas of such current defenders of Christian America as David Barton, Peter Marshall, and Gary DeMar, who argue that the rejection of the nation's Christian identity is destroying its moral fabric, weakening education, fostering a rise in crime, and undermining social progress and prosperity. A recognition of the Christian identity of the nation's founding, the Christian America advocates argue, would provide the only sound basis for solving our nation's social problems.

Fea also explains some of the peculiarities of the arguments of the modern Christian America advocates: They ignore or misconstrue the vices of Puritan New England; they recast the colonial history into a simple story of the growth of American freedom and virtue

in order to create by God's clear and evident choosing the American nation, interpreted through the grid of the Revolutionary War; and they argue that the founders intended the First Amendment to provide for a general establishment of the Christian religion while prohibiting the establishing of only one denomination as the national church.

Fea's second part, chapters five through ten, examines the Christian character of the origins and founding of the United States. In chapter five Fea argues that the origins of the American nation were anything but a golden age of Christian society. The colonists at Jamestown exhibited more greed and selfishness than Christian piety, and finally achieved stability and prosperity only when enriched by slave-labor tobacco. And the Puritan-governed society in Massachusetts, Fea argued, was soon populated by a majority of lukewarm adherents. Few achieved the standards required for full membership and full civil rights, and dissenters from the Puritan orthodoxy received harsh treatment. Many of the Indians in New England furthermore suffered death or displacement as a result of their interaction with the Puritan colonies.

Fea correctly judges New England Puritans for their unchristian treatment of Roger Williams and the Baptists, and of Anne Hutchinson and other heterodox persons, and of their unjust treatment of the Indians in many instances. It does not however help his case or human understanding that the book oversimplifies and at times misrepresents the character of the disputes and difficulties between the Puritan leaders and these groups.

In chapter six Fea argues correctly that Americans based their resistance to British tyranny on the colonists' traditional rights under English law and not on appeals to the Bible. The real issue however is whether or not colonial resistance to the Stamp Act, the Townshend Acts, and the Coercive Acts was morally justifiable

for Christians. Fea suggests that the resistance was not justified, since the real tyranny was the mob violence and destruction of property perpetrated by patriots. "The mobs responded to a mild Parliamentary revenue-raising scheme with violence that was well out of proportion to the tax levied against them" (100). He suggests further that the Coercive Acts equitably punished the people of Boston for the violence and destruction of property in the tea party matter, and that the real motivation behind the destruction of the tea was economic rather than concern to defend civil liberty (105).

Liberty and economics are inextricably linked however. The British closure of the Boston port was designed to smash the economy and impoverish the citizens sufficiently to make them submit to parliament's right to rule them directly without the benefit representation in the colonial assembly or parliament. Indeed, the British government had revoked all the Townshend duties except the tax on tea, retaining it against the wishes of the East India Company specifically to assert parliament's right to tax the colonies directly. (It is beside the point to ask whether a "coercive act" designed to bring economic ruin to an entire population was an equitable and proportional response to the destruction of tea by a small group of men.)

The principal concern of the colonists remained the same from their resistance to the enforcement of the Stamp Act to their resistance to the Coercive Acts—the defense of their rights and liberties, which protected their lives and property, and which had been established by constitution, royal charter, and long usage. The British government now abolished these rights. Resistance to the loss of such fundamental rights was unscriptural only if the right to resist injustice is unscriptural.

In chapter seven Fea argues that Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2 required Christian colonists to submit to the king and to the loss of their rights. But if the king must always be obeyed, then

surely the rebellion against James II in 1688 was unscriptural and Christians owed their obedience to the lineage of the Stuart monarchs, and not to the Hanoverian kings who ruled in succession to the rebels William and Mary. But more pointedly, Fea's analysis ignores the question of determining Christian duty when the ruling authorities themselves are divided. The colonists' legislative assemblies had long exercised governing authority—they ruled by divine appointment no less than the king did. The king refused to recognize the authority of the colonial legislatures and they ultimately refused to recognize his. Which authority should colonial Christians have obeyed? Fea makes no argument for why they should submit to the authority of the king rather than to the authority of their colonial governments.

Fea's argument means of course that when Americans resisted the king's claims, they rebelled against God. He suggests that the patriotic clergy went astray in supporting the rebellion because they followed John Locke rather than the Bible (119). Fea argues that by contrast Martin Luther and John Calvin represented the biblical view, for they prohibited rebellion against even the worst tyrants. The Protestant tradition therefore offered little support for the American Revolution (118).

This however is a misreading of Luther and Calvin. Luther and Calvin indeed taught that individuals sinned if they rebelled against the governing authority. In part this was because anarchy produced greater evils than tyranny. Luther nevertheless urged the German people in 1531 to disobey their emperor, Charles V, in support of their princes in the Schmalkald league's resistance to the emperor's commands. Calvin taught that Christians had no right to rebel against unjust rulers, and that their duty in that case was only to obey and suffer. But, he said, "I am speaking all the while of private individuals." In many nations, Calvin explained, other magistrates, such as the "three estates,"

(representative assemblies), stood appointed "to restrain the willfulness of kings." They had a duty to resist the "fierce licentiousness of kings," for they were appointed "by God's ordinance" to protect the people (Institutes, iv.xx.31).

Fea argues also that taking up arms against the British government contradicted Christian just war theory. The war was not a last resort, Fea suggests, and the taxes did not justify "military rebellion against the government," and English government provided the greatest freedom in Europe and could not be justly deemed "tyrannical" (120).

This argument presumes that the colonists decided from the start that they would resist the unjust levies by a violent overthrow of the government. In actual fact their object was continued union on the basis of a just and peaceful resolution of differences. The men who concluded in favor of independence at the Second Continental Congress in 1776 did not aim at independence when the controversy with England began in 1765. The colonists in the 1760s did not appeal to rebellion and military force but resisted by the lawful means of petitions, resolutions, and boycotts. When the government dispatched soldiers and warships to coerce the colonists into submission by the threat of violence, the colonists faced the awful decision of whether or not they must resist violent coercion by appeal to arms. Most finally judged that if England intended to coerce the colonists by violence to submit to the loss of their liberties, then solemn duty required their legislatures protect the people and to resist the king. Most Americans judged it their duty to submit to their legislatures rather than to the king.

Chapters eight through ten make the point that Christian character of the nation's early constitutions presented a mixed picture. The Declaration of Independence and the federal constitution were consistent with Christian beliefs but were not in any substantive sense

Christian. That is, they did not establish Christianity, they did not appeal to Christ or the Bible, and they prohibited religious tests for federal offices. At the same time, however, the constitutions of the most of the state governments either established the Christian church in some way, or required office holders to hold explicitly Christian beliefs, or declared that their government was a Christian government.

The book's third part examines the religious beliefs and practices of seven influential founders. George Washington, Fea concludes, was a devout Christian who nevertheless was no evangelical—he was uninterested “in the divinity of Jesus Christ or his salvific death for humankind” (190), and he pointedly refused to participate in the Lord's Supper. His religion was for producing morality in individuals, and for strengthening the virtue of the nation in order to secure America's free government. John Adams, Fea concludes, was a devout Unitarian Christian. Thomas Jefferson was a heterodox and inconsistent “follower of Jesus” (205). Benjamin Franklin, even more than Jefferson, was heterodox and inconsistent. Finally, John Witherspoon, John Jay, and Samuel Adams were devout and orthodox Christians. Despite their manifold differences, all believed one thing in common: Christianity should be promoted because of its power to produce moral character among the people, for morality was necessary to sustain the American nation.

In a peculiar turn, Fea claims that none of them were deists because they all believed in the providence of God. He asserts that deists did not believe “that God intervened in the lives of human beings—God “did not perform miracles, answer prayer, or sustain the world by his providence” (175, 218). Fea does not indicate the sources upon which he based this definition, but it is unhistorical. Many of the influential writers usually associated with deism, Lord Herbert of Cherbury and John

Toland, for example, affirmed answered prayer, providence, and miracles.

It is also an unhelpful definition, for it misses the point of that historical movement of which deism was a prominent part—a movement toward a more “rational” or “natural” religion. Such “rational” Christians magnified the reasonableness of Christianity in order to provide a basis for uniting the various Protestant groups, for discrediting dogmatic and superstitious Catholicism, marginalizing dogmatic and “enthusiastic” Protestantism, and preventing violence spurred by religious differences. Some rational Christians magnified rationalism to the point of undermining everything distinctively Christian and so rejected prayer, miracles, and providence, but many who magnified rational religion did not reject these.

Despite my disagreements with parts of Fea's argument, this book makes it plain that the plea for Christian America has too often been an unscriptural plea because it rests on an unscriptural definition of Christianity. It is satisfied with a Christianity that affirms religion in its outward forms—in official declarations and constitutions, in mottoes and pledges, in membership rolls and service attendance—but without any power to produce the religion of the heart that alone can please God. And so the agenda of the promoters of Christian America has generally aimed to establish outward forms of Christianity in symbols, sayings, and ceremonies.

Fea is correct that the Christian origins of America are of a mixed and complex character. What consensus there was stood for the establishment of a nation whose Christianity was a civil religion. This of course was the sense in which so many of the founders promoted Christianity. They valued it because it would serve powerfully to bolster the laws and government of the new American republic. A free and democratic nation could survive only if its citizens were moral, and religion alone

could sustain the morality of the citizens, and Christianity above all produced moral citizens. Christianity, most of the leading founders held, was for making good citizens. It was a civil religion.

And that seems to be precisely what many of the contemporary advocates of Christian American in the religious right today seek. For if we can reestablish America as a Christian nation, we will save our nation from its civil woes.

Christ did not commission his church to establish a civil religion. He did not suffer on the cross to redeem us from the perils of communism, crime, and national malaise. When sinners respond to gospel preaching in repentance and faith, and follow Christ, it transforms culture powerfully. But if we promote Christianity for the purpose of having a more agreeable society in which to live, we corrupt the gospel itself and so overturn the very religion that we claim to promote.

Fea's volume has its shortcomings, but this is an excellent introduction to the main issues at stake in discussions of the Christian origins and Christian character of the United States. For breadth of treatment and insight, it has few rivals.

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