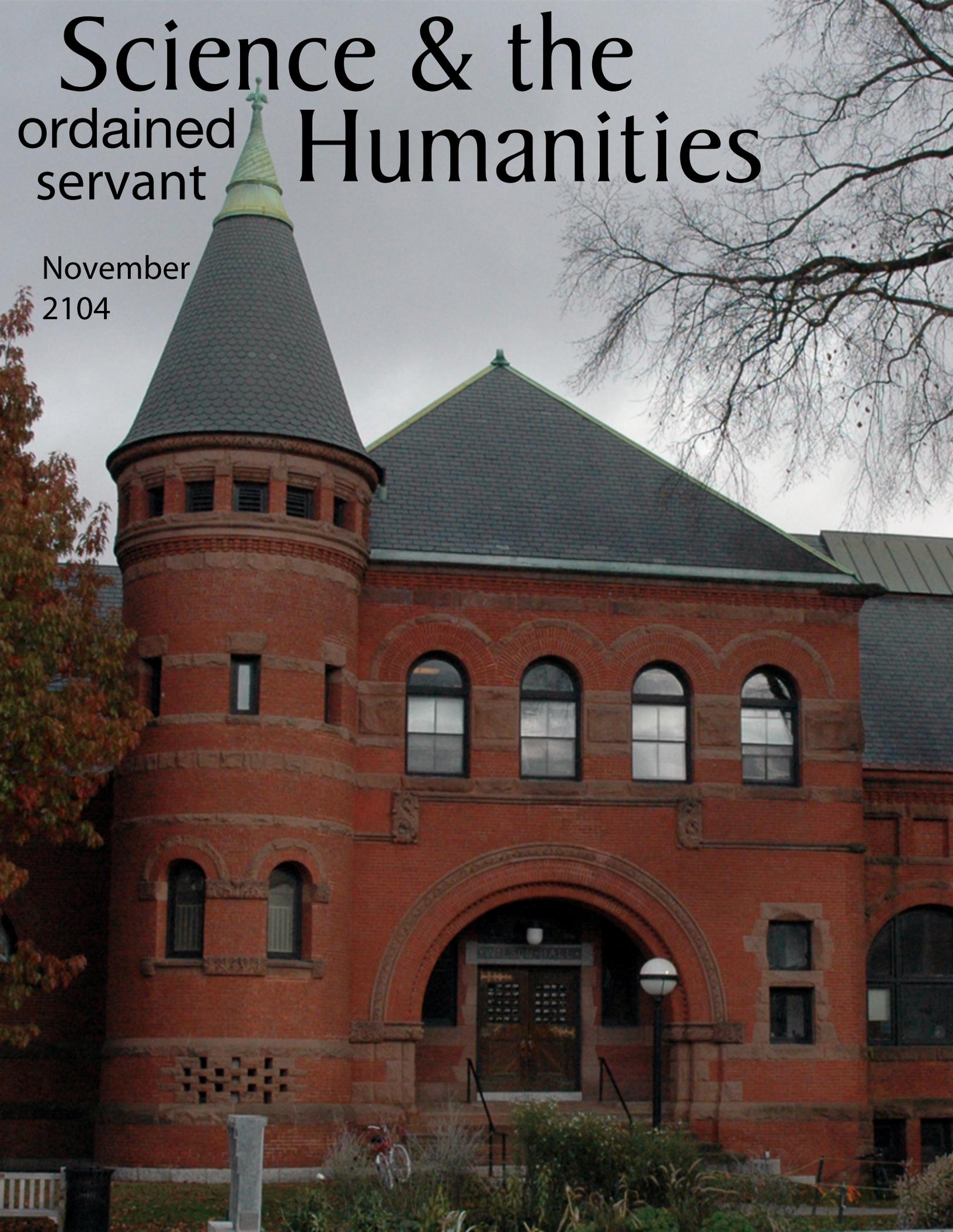


Science & the ordained servant Humanities

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From the Editor

Ever since the rise of modern science in the Enlightenment, the question of the relationship between science and the humanities has been on the minds of Western thinkers. Jim Gidley has devoted his career to teaching the sciences at a Christian liberal arts college. So this question is one to which he has paid considerable attention. Taking his cue from C. P. Snow's 1959 Cambridge lecture "The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution," Gidley analyses the problem and offers a very helpful Reformed perspective.

On the theme of culture more generally, Danny Olinger reviews Jan de Bruijn's new biography of Reformed polymath Abraham Kuyper in *Abraham Kuyper: A Pictorial Biography*, reminding us of the value of Kuyper's thinking about the Christian in culture. Along these lines, David VanDrunen reviews Roman Catholic theologian R. J. Snell, *The Perspective of Love: Natural Law in a New Mode*, showing some important differences between the Catholic and Reformed understandings of natural law. Finally, I review John Drury's *Music at Midnight: The Life and Poetry of George Herbert*. This new biography is a must-read for all fans of poetry, especially the poetry of this Anglican master of sacred verse.

Our poem this month is, of course, by Herbert, and appropriate for the month which we Americans celebrate Thanksgiving. Our family tradition has been to read Psalm 136 before our feast. This year Herbert will get a word in.

Blessings in the Lamb,
Gregory Edward Reynolds

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Ordained Servant exists to help encourage, inform, and equip church officers for faithful, effective, and God-glorifying ministry in the visible church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Its primary audience is ministers, elders, and deacons of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, as well as interested officers from other Presbyterian and Reformed churches. Through high-quality editorials, articles, and book reviews, we will endeavor to stimulate clear thinking and the consistent practice of historic, confessional Presbyterianism.

ServantWorld

The Two Cultures: A Lifetime Later

by James S. Gidley

In May 1959 C. P. Snow delivered a lecture at Cambridge University, later published as “The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution.” Snow made two main points: (1) scientists and humanists in the academy are two distinct cultures, each with its own language and concerns, and neither able to understand or to appreciate the other; (2) the world is impoverished by the decisions of a British ruling class drawn exclusively, or nearly so, from the humanist camp. Snow was not the first to comment on the two-cultures problem; Alan Jacobs¹ traces it back to the 1880s debate between Matthew Arnold, poet and humanist, and Thomas Henry Huxley, scientist and Darwinist. And Snow has certainly not been the last to comment on it. Herein follows my own humble attempt to say something about it.

The time since Snow’s lecture has spanned almost my entire life. Snow commented on a divide in his day in English institutions of higher education. How stands the academy a lifetime later? Having spent my entire adult life in higher education, I can testify that the divide is still with us. The sciences and the humanities are still at odds.

Having said that, I must immediately add that I have not said enough. It is not merely that the sciences and the humanities are divided from each other; they are also divided among themselves. Historians do not speak the same language as philosophers; musicologists and classicists have little in common. Chemists do not really know what biologists are doing, and physicists do not know—well, physicists know everything: just ask them. Then there is the host of other disciplines that were not even invited to the table for the original squabble: the social sciences and the various professions. The post-modern multiversity embodies the post-modern view of human discourse: everyone’s thoughts are culturally conditioned and therefore incommensurable across cultures. Each academic discipline is a subculture that cannot really communicate with the others.

The reward structure in academia reinforces the Balkanization of the disciplines. With few exceptions, the path to recognition and prestige in the academy is through specialization, often minute specialization. A well-rounded intellect is not much in demand. The well-rounded intellect is like the three-sport athlete in high school: he is unlikely to excel at the college level in all three, and the chances of multiple success at

¹ “The Two Cultures, Then and Now: The Sciences, the Humanities, and Their Common Enemy,” *Books and Culture* (March/April 2014): 11–14, <http://www.booksandculture.com/articles/2014/marapr/two-cultures-then-and-now.html?paging=off>.

the professional level are vanishingly small. The big money goes to the specialist. This may be a pervasive theme of our society. Specialization in medicine is another example.

Another change has occurred since Snow's original lecture. The playing field has tilted considerably in favor of the sciences (and the professions). In Snow's day, particularly in England, the humanities still had pride of place in the academy. Now, science has the greater prestige. In my view, there are two main reasons for this, one internal, and the other external.

The internal reason for the present pre-eminence of the sciences is epistemological. Science is still to a large extent based on the Enlightenment assumption that truth is universal and non-cultural. Therefore, when scientists teach their subject or make new discoveries, they do not hesitate to treat them as true. They know that theories change and that new discoveries will modify currently received explanations, but they still act as if what they are professing is objective truth. Humanists, on the other hand, are dominated by a postmodern epistemology, in which all truth-claims are regarded as assertions of power on behalf of some social group. Many natural scientists had already suspected that there was no truth-content in humanistic learning; when they hear humanists admitting it, they feel justified in ignoring what humanists say.

It is true that postmodernists have subjected the natural sciences to their cultural critique. The standard line is that scientific theories are the product of a scientific culture seeking to consolidate its power. The sciences greet such analyses with laughter or a shrug; the idea that there could be a feminist physics has generated zero traction among physicists.

The external reason for the current pre-eminence of the sciences is economic. For a generation or more, the cost of a college education has been rising faster than the general rate of inflation. Now that tuition and fees for four years of college routinely exceed \$100,000, parents and students have begun to consider the wisdom of the investment much more carefully. We have probably all heard some version of the following joke: "What did the liberal arts graduate say to the engineering graduate? 'Do you want fries with that?'" While the earning power of a liberal arts degree is not nearly as dismal as the joke suggests, there is still a substantial differential.² This appears to be a significant factor leading to declining enrollment in the humanities. College administrators faced with the need to control costs will almost always make the pragmatic decision to cut the humanities programs that are generating less revenue than science and professional programs.

The problem is exacerbated when humanists exhibit a lack of concern for the employment prospects of their graduates, arguing that employment is not the purpose of a humanistic education. Unfortunately, one of the current realities in higher education is the nearly universal belief that the purpose of a college degree *is* to get better employment and guarantee a higher lifetime earning potential. Scientists and professionals take this in stride and use it as a marketing device for their programs. Humanists often seem to be ambivalent about it or hostile to it.

² Melissa Korn, "Liberal Arts Salaries Are a Marathon Not a Sprint," *At Work* (blog), *Wall Street Journal*, January 22, 2014, <http://blogs.wsj.com/atwork/2014/01/22/liberal-arts-salaries-are-a-marathon-not-a-sprint/>.

So, a lifetime later, are we on the verge of a resolution to the two-cultures divide by way of the triumph of science and the withering away of the humanities? Some would greet such a development with indifference, others with satisfaction.

Before reaching such a conclusion, it would be well to consider what higher education might look like without the humanities, or what the sciences and the professions might look like without some grounding, however minimal, in the humanities. Loren Graham, in *The Ghost of the Executed Engineer*,³ has provided a vivid portrait of such a development in the Soviet Union. The executed engineer of the title was Peter Palchinsky, a Russian mining engineer and an ardent socialist, who had spent a number of years in self-imposed exile in Europe to avoid being exiled to Siberia by the Czar. Palchinsky willingly worked for the Communist regime, but fell afoul of the Party on at least two counts: (1) He insisted on healthy living conditions for laborers in any mining development; Stalin, on the other hand, insisted that technological development on a monumental scale was the only consideration. Stalin's priorities were to be brutally executed on projects like the White Sea Canal, produced by slave labor with appalling loss of life and dubious economic benefit. (2) Palchinsky insisted that there were technical, economic, and other limitations to what could be achieved by engineering, "saying, 'We are not magicians, we cannot do everything.' " Stalin, on the other hand, "maintained 'There are no fortresses that Bolsheviks cannot storm.'"⁴

The latter clash was to destroy a generation of engineers in the Soviet Union. Engineers who complained that the ambitious goals of the five-year plans were infeasible were accused of "wrecking," that is, deliberately sabotaging the success of the plan. On the other hand, engineers who remained quiet about the infeasibility of the plan were accused of "wrecking" when it became apparent that the goals of the plan would not be met. The crisis came with the Industrial Party Trial of 1930,⁵ a show trial in which eight prominent engineers were found guilty.

These events were only the beginning of a reign of terror among Soviet engineers, several thousand of whom were arrested. There were only about ten thousand engineers in the entire Soviet Union at the time. In the end, about 30 percent of Palchinsky's colleagues were arrested—most of them thrown into labor camps with little chance of survival.⁶

Palchinsky himself had already been secretly executed.⁷ As a dead man he made a convenient scapegoat and was labeled the ringleader of the imaginary conspiracy.

What might this have to do with higher education? Graham paints a vivid picture:

³ Loren Graham, *The Ghost of the Executed Engineer* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

⁴ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁵ Described by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn in *The Gulag Archipelago* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), as the Promparty Trial.

⁶ Graham, *The Ghost of the Executed Engineer*, 45.

⁷ Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, 375. Solzhenitsyn inferred that he was secretly executed because he had refused to sign a confession incriminating himself.

One of the ways in which the new Soviet engineers differed from engineers elsewhere first became apparent to me in 1960 when I came to Moscow as an exchange student at Moscow University. Five years earlier I had received a degree in chemical engineering from Purdue University. At Purdue I had been distressed by the narrowness of the curriculum. The few elective courses I had to take were inadequate windows on the large and complex world beyond thermodynamics and differential equations that I wanted to explore. . . . Finally, during a student excursion outside Moscow I met a young woman who said that she was an engineer. “What kind of engineer?” I asked. “A ball-bearing engineer for paper mills” was the reply. I responded, “Oh, you must be a mechanical engineer.” She rejoined, “No, I am a ball-bearing engineer for paper mills.” Incredulous, I countered, “Surely you do not have a degree in ‘ball-bearings for paper mills.’ ” She assured me that she did indeed have such a degree.⁸

Graham goes on to discuss Soviet education in more general terms, commenting along the way, “The humanities, as known in the West, played almost no role in Soviet education in the Stalinist and post-Stalinist periods.”⁹

One aspect of education, at least since Plato wrote *The Republic*, has been the interest of the state in the education of its subjects or citizens. Plato dilates on the education that would be necessary if the ideal republic were to be supplied with the required philosophical leaders. Whether the state undertakes the task of education directly or indirectly, it must insure that its content is not subversive. Humanistic education at its best addresses questions of ethics and the human good that must eventually be brought to bear upon the existing political and economic arrangements of the society. Such scrutiny may prove to be at least embarrassing to the wealthy and the politically powerful.

The Soviet education of the Stalinist era was designed to produce human automata that would fit as cogs into the machine of socialist planning directed from the top. Today’s nearly exclusive concern with employment as the only valid outcome of a college education has the potential to produce the same kind of education, if it is not already doing so. The only difference is that no force is required. The consumers of the education themselves demand to be narrowly “educated” to fit into some niche in the current economy. The grim story of Soviet-style education is a chilling warning that we should not desire this for our children and grandchildren.

How might we respond to the two-cultures issue and the challenges of higher education today? I do not have a specific plan, but I suggest that the following principles, among others, should guide Reformed Christians:

1. The purpose of education is the same as the purpose of life: “to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.”¹⁰ This requires not only grounding education on the Bible but also a full exploration of what it means to be human, which is to say what it means to be created in the image of God. The humanities are indispensable for this purpose.

2. Higher education ought to show an appreciation for the Reformation principle of calling and its concomitant elevation of the dignity of labor, even—or especially—manual labor. Some of the “two-cultures” problem is caused, or at least exacerbated, by

⁸ Graham, *The Ghost of the Executed Engineer*, 68–69.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 70.

¹⁰ Westminster Shorter Catechism 1.

the Greek legacy in the humanities. In the Greek view, labor is something for slaves. Liberal education is to provide *otium cum dignitate* (leisure with dignity) for those who do not have to work. Humanists should be cognizant of the fact that the vast majority of our graduates will have to earn a living and should be able to pay off their college loans some time before they die. According to philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff, “Whatever be the justification that a college in the Reformed tradition of Christianity offers for engaging in the liberal arts, that justification will abjure any suggestion that the life of the mind is nobler than the work of our hands.”¹¹

3. One specific biblical doctrine that has momentous implications for education is soul-body dualism. The reductionistic materialism of our time dismisses the idea of the soul as nothing but the discredited biological doctrine of vitalism. The humanities cannot thrive in a materialistic atmosphere. If everything is ultimately matter, then all explanation is ultimately physics. Biologist Edward O. Wilson argues for this at book length, not coincidentally praising the Enlightenment to the skies.¹²

4. While the academy is not the church, the biblical doctrine of the one body of Christ with many members is helpful by way of analogy. The scope of knowledge is too vast for us to avoid specialization. But we may aspire to view our specialties as gifts for the good of the entire body of the academy.

If another lifetime passes during which the Lord does not return, I think that it is safe to say that the two-cultures debate will still be with us in some form. If some scholar of a future generation should recover my words from the oblivion that they most likely deserve, I would say to her or him: you may or may not be better equipped to resolve the question than my generation has been, but in any case trust in Jesus, be humble, and be kind.

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¹¹ Nicholas Wolterstorff, “Should the Work of Our Hands Have Standing in the Christian College?” in *Educating for Shalom: Essays on Christian Higher Education*, ed. Clarence W. Joldersma (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 271.

¹² Edward O. Wilson, *Consilience* (New York: Vintage, 1999).

Servant Worship

The Sursum Corda and Biblically Shaped Worship

Part 2

by Jeffrey B. Wilson

Interest in historic Christian liturgies is increasing among some Christians and in certain churches.¹ One example of this is the *sursum corda* (lift up your hearts) which is showing up, more and more, in the worship of various Protestant churches. After a long period of being overlooked, or being intentionally ignored, the *sursum corda* is being rediscovered and included in worship where it once had been absent. Its location in today's liturgy, however, is not always the same as it was in the historic liturgies. One church I attended a couple of years ago included the *sursum corda* as a song set off by itself in the liturgy. The service ended without the Lord's Supper to which, in the past, the *sursum corda* was attached as the preface to the Eucharistic prayer. Perhaps the renewed interest in the *sursum corda* is because it is one of those elements of Christian worship that has an ancient and clear spiritual ring to it—"Lift up your hearts; we lift them to the Lord." However, to use something simply because it sounds more spiritual is not a satisfactory reason to include it in the worship of the church. The Reformed tradition has insisted that there must be a biblical warrant for what we do in worship. Therefore, the question arises: is the use of the *sursum corda* in worship according to Scripture, particularly in its historic location as the preface to the prayer of thanksgiving in the communion service.

Early Christian prayer grew out of the soil of Jewish prayer. Much work has been done on the Jewish background of the prayers in the church.² Within the vocabulary for worship and prayer in the Old Testament is the **נשא ידים** (*nasa yadim* lift up hands) phrase, as in the line "I will lift up my hands" to the Lord (Ps. 28:2).³ When Israel gathered in the temple they prayed to God with their arms raised in the air. Psalm 134 is a direct call to the people "in the house of the Lord" to "lift up your hands to the holy place, and bless the Lord." For the Jewish people, prayer incorporated the body with their hands outstretched to the God of Israel. Praying with hands raised up to God may seem like a strange position for prayer until

¹ Brett McCracken, "Hipster Faith," *Christianity Today* 54, no. 9 (September 2010): 24.

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2010/September/9.24.html>; Robert Webber and Lester Ruth, *Evangelicals on the Canterbury Trail* (New York: Morehouse, 2012); website of the Reformed Liturgical Institute, <http://www.liturgicalinstitute.wordpress.com/churches>.

² See Hughes Oliphant Old, *Worship, Guides to the Reformed Tradition*, ed. John H. Leith and John W. Kuykendall (Atlanta: John Knox, 1984), 87–96; R. T. Beckwith, "The Jewish Background to Christian Worship," *The Study of Liturgy*, ed. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 39–51; Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 53–108.

³ See also Psalms 63:4; 134:2 and Lamentations 2:19.

we remember we have our own prayerful postures. When we pray, we typically bow our head, close our eyes, and fold our hands. Bodily posture expresses something about our prayer. The bowing of the head communicates humility and deference before God. The closing of the eyes is a way of focusing our attention on our Heavenly Father. Similarly, the practice of lifting up the hands to God in the Old Testament communicated something about the act of prayer. For some Christians today this prayer posture of hands lifted up to God has been identified with a sense of closeness to God. It is understood as an expression of the desire to reach out to God and make contact with him in an intensely personal and spiritual connection, like a child reaching out her hand for her father to grasp it. What this amounts to is a psychological-emotional reinterpretation of Israel's practice of lifting up its hands to God. For Israel the lifting up of the hands in prayer was a profound, fully personal way of expressing their prayers as a plea or appeal to God. This God, Israel knew, is the God who created the heavens and the earth, who rules over the nations, who is infinitely sublime and beyond us, yet who entered into a covenant with the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and formed them into a holy nation. To this God, Israel brought its prayers. At Mount Sinai God had declared to the people through Moses, "You shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exod. 19:8). Everyone in Israel could participate in this offering of prayers to God. Therefore, the Psalms extend the summons to "lift up hands" to all of Israel, "Lift up your hands" (Ps. 134). There is evidence that churches mentioned in the New Testament continued the practice of lifting up their hands to God. The First Letter to Timothy instructs the men in the church to pray, "lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling" (1 Tim. 2:8). Instead of fighting with each other—which uses the hands in a threatening posture—the Christians were to raise their hands to God in thanksgiving, and petition him for what they needed. Since the first Christians were mostly Jewish, it was natural for them to associate prayer with lifting up of the hands to God.

From Scripture, then, we learn that the **נשא** (*nasa* lift up) language is often used for prayer, and the phrase "lift up your hands" is an expression of prayer. The *sursum corda* uses this language for prayer that is found in the Psalms. Accordingly, in the historic liturgies of the church, the *sursum corda* begins the prayer of thanksgiving during the celebration of the Lord's Supper. "Lift up your hearts" from the *sursum corda* accords well with the "lift up" phrase used in the Psalms for prayer and is entirely appropriate for the introduction to the Eucharistic prayer.

Another **נשא** (*nasa* lift up) phrase for prayer in the Psalms is **אליך יהוה נפשי אשא** ('*eleyka yahweh napshi 'esa* to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul). The word **נפש** (*nepesh* soul), in the Hebrew way of thinking, refers to the essential life of the person and the very core of his or her being.⁴ In Greek thinking the *λογος* (*logos* mind) was the essence of the person and that is why in some cases, in the early Christian Eastern liturgies (which tend to rely on the Greek language), the *sursum corda* is "lift up the mind" instead of "lift up the heart." Interestingly, the popular American way of referring to the inner, authentic part of a person is more in keeping with the Hebrew metaphor of the heart than the Greek metaphor of the mind, such as when people say, "I mean it from the bottom of my heart."

To lift up the hands is one thing. To lift up the soul is something more. Three psalms contain a form of the phrase **נפשי אשא** (*nepesh nasa* lift up soul), Psalms 25, 86, and 143. Let

⁴ Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, eds., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, based on the lexicon of William Gesenius as translated by Edward Robinson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1952), 659–60.

us consider Psalm 86 first. This psalm has been classified as an individual lament, which is evident in the first line, “Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me.”⁵ James Mays presents an insightful analysis of the psalm.⁶ He comments that one unusual feature about Psalm 86 is that many of its lines are found in other psalms. For example, the statement in verse 4 אֲלֵיךְ אֲשֵׁא אֲדֹנָי נַפְשִׁי (‘eleka ‘adonay napeshi ‘esa to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul) is taken from Psalm 25. Frequent borrowing notwithstanding, Psalm 86 has been arranged so that it has its own agenda which focuses on the one who prays the psalm and his relationship to God. The psalm identifies that relationship as a servant-Lord relationship, such as in verses 3–4: “Be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you do I cry all the day. Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.”

As one who is completely dependent upon God, the psalmist makes his prayer. Concerning the Lord-servant imagery, used with the “lift up my soul” phrase, Mays offers this keen observation, “Prayer not only seeks deliverance from trouble but as well helps in the formation of the self.”⁷ We call upon God and are thankful to God when the self, the core of our being, knows it is dependent on God. Mays comments that Psalm 86 goes so far as to pray that God would integrate the self so that the whole heart is undivided and is united in giving thanks. Note verses 11–12:

Teach me your way, O Lord,
that I may walk in your truth;
unite my heart to fear your name.

I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with
my whole heart,
and I will glorify your name forever.

Mays vividly explains this integration of the self using the אֲלֵיךְ אֲדֹנָי נַפְשִׁי אֲשֵׁא (‘eleka ‘adonay napeshi ‘esa to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul) imagery, “The metaphor portrays prayer as an act in which individuals hold their conscious identity, their life, in hands stretched out to God as a way of saying that their life depends completely and only on the help of God.”⁸

The *sursum corda* (lift up your hearts) carries this imagery and meaning into worship. The congregation lifts up its thanksgiving to God before the communion meal in total dependence upon God, giving thanks specifically for their redemption in Jesus Christ and the new life he gives to them. With the profound language of Scripture, the people pray with their whole being to their Heavenly Father because the fractured reality of their life, broken by sin, is healed and united by the abundant life of Jesus Christ.

These same three psalms (Psalms 25, 86, 143) join trust with the אֲלֵיךְ נַפְשִׁי אֲשֵׁא (‘eleka napeshi ‘esa to you I lift up my soul). Psalm 25 is arranged according to the Hebrew alphabet in the form of an acrostic. Much of the psalm is comprised of petitions and the opening verse sets it off as a prayer, “To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.” There is also instruction in this psalm. It can be argued that the purpose of the psalm is to give instruction

⁵ Marvin E. Tate, *Word Biblical Commentary, Psalms 51–100*, vol. 20, (Dallas: Word, 1990), 377.

⁶ James L. Mays, *Psalms, Interpretation Commentary* (Louisville: John Knox, 1994), 278–79.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 280.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 124. Mays says this in his comments on Psalm 25.

on prayer, yet the effect of the opening metaphor is to characterize the entire psalm as a lifting up of the soul to God.⁹ The psalm teaches while it prays. The result is a prayer that works back on those who pray it. Throughout the psalm—beginning, middle, and end—there is the assertion of trust, “O my God, in you I trust; let me not be put to shame” (v. 2), and “for you I wait” (vv. 5, 21). The reason for this trust is God’s **חסד** (*khesed* steadfast love) and **רחמים** (*rahamim* mercy) which is invoked in the middle of the psalm, “Remember your mercy, O Lord, and your steadfast love, for they have been from of old” (v. 6, see also vv. 7, 10). With Psalm 25 trust is included with the prayer, “To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.”

The same can be found in Psalms 86 and 143. A series of petitions are made at the beginning of Psalm 86, and here too there is a confidence in God because, “you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,” (v. 15). The other psalm, Psalm 143, petitions God to listen in his faithfulness and not in judgment. Asking for a quick answer to his prayer, the psalmist prays, “Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love” (v. 8). All three of these psalms bring their petitions to God in trust because of God’s character of faithfulness, mercy, and steadfast love.

Besides the Psalms, the **נשא** (*nasa* lift up) phrase is found in the book of Lamentations. The Lamentation’s reference needs some comment since it is often cited in worship bulletins as the biblical text for the *sursum corda* (lift up your hearts). The text found in Lamentations 3:41 is **נשא לבבנו אל כפים אל אל בשמים** (*nisa l’babenu ‘el-kappayim ‘el-el bashamayim* let us lift up our hearts and hands to God in the heavens). Here we find the two **נשא** (*nasa* lift up) phrases in the Psalms drawn together (let us lift up our hearts and hands) with some elaboration. The Hebrew word for “hands” in the Lamentations text is more specific than the word for “hands” used in the psalms reviewed above. The word in Lamentations means the hollow of the hand.¹⁰ The plural “our hearts” has replaced “my soul,” and the object of the lifted hands and hearts is “to God in the heavens.” The “heart” in Hebrew refers to the inner, the middle, the central part of the person and can also refer to the mind, the inclinations, the person himself, and the seat of the passions and emotions.¹¹ Given this range of meaning, there is considerable overlap between the connotations of the “heart” and the “soul” in Hebrew. With these changes to the psalmic **נשא** (*nasa* lift up) phrase, the Lamentations text appears to be a more direct Scripture reference for the *sursum corda* (lift up your hearts). This may explain why Lamentations 3:41 is the text some churches list beside the *sursum corda* in their order of worship.

The extraction of words and phrases from the Bible for use in worship has occurred since the beginning of Christian worship, and a liturgical use of Scripture does not always have regard for the biblical context of the phrase being used. However, to answer questions about the biblical warrant for the use of language in worship, such as “lift up your heart,” the context of that phrase in Scripture needs to be considered.

Lamentations is a writing filled with intense pain and outrage. One commentator describes it this way, “The poems emerge from a deep wound, a whirlpool of pain, toward which the images, metaphors, and voices of the poetry can only point.”¹² The tragedy of the Babylonian invasion of Judah is the proximate cause for the pain and outrage in

⁹ Ibid., 125.

¹⁰ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 496.

¹¹ Ibid., 523.

¹² Kathleen M. O’Connor, *The Book of Lamentations*, *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 6, (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), 1013.

Lamentations, and yet this book knows that the more ultimate cause is the anger of the Lord because of the sin of his people. The deep agony can be heard in each of the five poems that comprise the book, for example: “Look, O Lord, for I am in distress; my stomach churns; my heart is wrung within me; because I have been very rebellious. In the street the sword bereaves; in the house it is like death” (Lam. 1:20).

Chapter three is the third poem in Lamentations and it calls for a communal response of repentance. The people have sinned against the Lord, and together they must confess their sin. This is where the line *נשא לבבנו אל כפים אל אל בשמים* (*nisa lbabenu ‘el-kappayim ‘el-el bashamayim* let us lift up our hearts and hands to God in heaven), verse 41, appears. The stanza containing verses 40–42, begins, “Let us test and examine our ways, and return to the Lord!” And it ends with an accusation against God, “We have transgressed and rebelled, and you have not forgiven.” In between is the line, “Let us lift up our hearts and hands to God in heaven.” For a moment, the anger is turned to God, but then the poem moves on and becomes hopeful, imploring God with tears for vengeance against Judah’s enemies. In Lamentations, the “lift up your hearts and hands” phrase is in the context of repentance and indignation.

This does not fit well with the liturgical use of the *sursum corda* in its traditional location as the preface to the Eucharistic prayer during communion. The theme of the Eucharistic prayer is joy and gratitude for the mighty acts of God’s redemption in Jesus Christ. It calls upon the Lord, with thankfulness and confident trust, to send his Spirit “so the eating of this bread and drinking of this wine may be a communion in the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.” The setting of the “let us lift up our hearts and hands” in Lamentations is not thanksgiving. However, far from invalidating the *sursum corda* for use in worship, Lamentations indicates that the biblical language “lift up your hearts” may fit into other places in Christian worship, like the prayer of confession of sin. Still, the more common use of the “lift up” language in Scripture is found in Psalms where it is in the context of prayer with confident trust and expectant dependence upon God.

This study shows that the language of the *sursum corda* does have biblical warrant in Psalms and Lamentations. Even though it cannot be argued that the biblical warrant for the *sursum corda* only accords with the Eucharistic prayer in the communion service, the language in Psalms, *אליך נפשי אשא* (*‘aleyka napshi ‘esa* to you I lift up my soul), is well suited for the preface to the Eucharistic prayer before communion. Yet it is not merely a matter of quoting these words from Scripture in order to make the church’s liturgy “more biblical.” The use of biblical language has much more to do with shaping the imagery of worship. A church’s liturgy can have the basic elements of worship directed by Scripture and still be superficial and poorly constructed. Worship according to the Bible is also about imagery. In writing to ministers about leading in worship, Hughes Oliphant Old makes this point well:

Prayer does have its own language, its own vocabulary, and its own imagery. This language is not simply a matter of style. Prayer, particularly Christian prayer, uses biblical language. . . . The Bible contains a vast number of paradigms for prayer and a thesaurus of words to handle the unique experience of prayer.¹³

¹³ Hughes Oliphant Old, *Leading in Prayer, a Workbook for Worship* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 7.

The imagery of the language of Scripture draws the church into the reality of worshipping the God who is our creator and redeemer. Without such imagery worship loses that vibrancy and vividness of our encounter with the Holy and Almighty One. It is a matter of perspective—what we are doing in worship. Churches today would do well to incorporate the *sursum corda* with its biblical imagery into their worship. The Christian communities that came before us learned much about using biblical language and imagery in worship, and we have much we can learn from them. This is certainly true of the “lift up my soul” language from Psalms. As they saw it, this language is ideal for expressing our thanksgiving and communion with God. Those who led the Reformed churches during the Reformation, particularly John Calvin and Peter Vermigli, also appreciated the imagery of the *sursum corda*, and they recognized its deep and rich theological dimensions.

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ServantReading

Abraham Kuyper *by Jan de Bruijn*

A review article

by Danny E. Olinger

Abraham Kuyper: A Pictorial Biography, by Jan de Bruijn. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014, 418 pages, \$40.00.

In his biography of Abraham Kuyper, Jan de Bruijn, professor of political history at the Free University of Amsterdam, takes the unusual path of having pictures play a major part in his telling of the story of Kuyper's life. In each of his ten chapters de Bruijn provides an opening summary of one or two pages of that period of Kuyper's life. He then proceeds to the pictures not only of Kuyper, but also of the main people, places, brochures, and documents of that period of Kuyper's life. Each picture has an explanation that often runs one paragraph.

The strength of the book is the intimacy that comes through the art, particularly as it relates to Kuyper's personal life. Given this familial touch, one might think that de Bruijn would be light on interpretation, but that is the surprising aspect of this work. De Bruijn proves himself a first-rate biographer who persuasively shows how Kuyper increasingly gravitated towards politics.

The book starts with art that vividly portrays the sense of mid-nineteenth-century life in the Netherlands. Although Kuyper's father, the Rev. J. F. Kuyper, always had a call in the Dutch Reformed Church, the family had to live frugally in order to survive. Death was also common as four sisters of Kuyper died in childhood, and one picture shows a lock of hair from his younger sister Louise Susanna who died when she was nine years old.

De Bruijn then follows Kuyper from his home school education, to his *magna cum laude* graduation from the Leiden gymnasium, to receiving his Bachelor of Arts *summa cum laude* at the University of Leiden, often showing Kuyper's actual report cards. Kuyper proposed to sixteen-year-old Joanna Schaay on September 14, 1858, and her parents approved two weeks later on the condition that it would not be announced publicly until after her confession of faith at Easter. However, word of the engagement leaked to such an extent that Kuyper exclaimed that the news had even spread to Rotterdam. The two would be engaged for five years before their 1863 marriage, when as a new pastor Kuyper finally felt equipped financially to enter into the union. During the engagement period, Kuyper often gave advice to Jo on how she should develop herself so that she could move in academic circles. In one letter to her, Kuyper wrote:

If I enumerated all the grammatical mistakes you make in your letters I would frighten you—but alas, that’s an obstacle for all young girls. When you are here again we shall go over them together; it’s easier that way. (28)

Kuyper would pastor Dutch Reformed congregations from 1863–1874, the last being the Dutch Reformed congregation in Amsterdam. Here de Bruijn cleverly develops the outworking of Kuyper’s belief that the church has both a spiritual task and a secular task, emphasizing Kuyper’s close relationships with two men, one a politician and the other a theologian. Politically, Kuyper grew close to Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer, leader of the Anti-Revolutionary movement. Theologically, he turned for advice to Dr. H. F. Kohlbrügge, the Calvinist pastor of the Reformed congregation in Elberfeld, Germany. The question of whether to remain a pastor or become a politician dominated this period of Kuyper’s life and came to a head in 1871 when Groen Van Prinsterer threw his support behind the election of Kuyper to Parliament. Kuyper sought out Kohlbrügge’s advice on what to do. Kohlbrügge encouraged him to remain a pastor. Said Kohlbrügge, “I quietly made it quite clear to him that he was arguing too much with the world in mind.” However, Kuyper was already inclined towards government service and allowed his name to stand.

Kuyper would lose the 1871 election, but three years later he ran again for Parliament and this time was elected. On March 16, 1874, Kuyper not only resigned as pastor of the Dutch Reformed congregation in Amsterdam, but also gave up the office of minister, in accordance with the requirement of the law for serving in Parliament. On March 20 he was sworn in as a member of the second chamber of Parliament. De Bruijn makes the compelling case that, after this election to Parliament, Kuyper was primarily a politician for the rest of his life.

During the same period in which Kuyper was aspiring to Parliamentary office, he began writing articles for the weekly newspaper *De Heraut*, which eventually became the daily newspaper *De Standaard*. He became *De Standaard*’s editor-in-chief in 1871, a position that he would hold for the next half century. In line with Anti-Revolutionary principles, Kuyper continually argued in *De Standaard* that Calvinism was by nature democratic and progressive, and that if the people of the Netherlands wanted to be free, they should look to the principles of the Reformation and not the French Revolution. Although Kuyper gave up his seat in Parliament in 1877, he stayed in the political spotlight by organizing the national petition campaign that formed the basis for the establishment of the Anti-Revolutionary Party in 1879.

In 1877 Kuyper reinstated *De Heraut* as a weekly publication where church issues would be discussed in contrast to the political issues that were discussed in *De Standaard*. Although he never returned to the pastoral office, Kuyper used *De Heraut* to comment upon the Dutch Reformed Church and also to publish a weekly devotional.

One of Kuyper’s constant personal battles was with exhaustion from trying to do so much. In 1876 a nervous breakdown led to a prolonged rest. For the rest of his life he would keep to a very fixed schedule. He would write between nine and twelve in the morning, and then work on the newspapers. His afternoon included a daily two-mile walk. He also incorporated into his yearly schedule a two-month stay abroad in the summer, during which time he would climb mountains. Pictures of Kuyper as a

mountaineer in Switzerland and hiking with his adult sons in South Tyrol beautifully illustrate this side of Kuyper's life.

Disappointingly, and also somewhat shockingly, Kuyper also became infrequent in his church attendance from this time forward. Instead of attending the morning worship services on the Lord's Day, he would spend the time writing his devotions for *De Heraut*.

The pictures and commentary on the establishment of the Free University in 1880 display Kuyper's showmanship—he had a special bench for journalists up front while he delivered the inaugural address. He also had an official staff topped by Minerva created for the occasion. Seceders, members of the Christian Reformed Church that had broken away from the state church in 1834, characterized the staff as “heathen.” Kuyper replied that the image of Minerva had appeared in the works of the Reformed theologian Voetius. When others criticized the opening for its extravagance, which included serving wine at dinner, Kuyper commented that his enemies “said of the banquet that those Reformed were not the sort *to water down their wine*. That's true. From the chocolate kettle and the milk-and-water bottle one does not breed a race of bold Calvinists” (130).

After such fanfare, when the Free University opened with only eight students, a prominent political cartoon in the *Uilenspiegel* ridiculed the smallness of the student body by showing Kuyper teaching a single student. The reason for the low enrollment was twofold. On the one hand, the state did not recognize the institution. On the other hand, the Dutch Reformed synod, which was primarily modernist in orientation, had prohibited Free University graduates from becoming ministers within the Dutch Reformed Church.

This led to conflict between the consistory in Amsterdam where Kuyper had begun serving as an elder in 1882 and the classis and synod. The classis suspended eighty members (five ministers, forty-two elders, and thirty-three deacons) of the consistory on January 4, 1886, including Kuyper. Kuyper did not acknowledge the suspension, and with two others forced open the door of the Nieuwe Kirk to take control of the church archives and the safes containing the savings of the church. A picture of the door of the vestry of the *Nieuwe Kirk* with a missing panel shows that the events of January 1886 were not mere philosophical clashes but the actual struggle over physical control of the church property. Kuyper and his allies would hold the consistory room until December when the synod permanently discharged the suspended members from office.

As a result of these events, the discharged consistory members on December 16 formed the Dutch Gereformeerde Churches with the affix “Lamenting,” indicating their grievance over what happened. Here, de Bruijn reproduces a January 1887 political cartoon of Kuyper dressed as the Pope making a plea for the Lamenting congregation at Amsterdam to give generously to the new church. By 1889, two hundred congregations with 180,000 members had joined the Dutch Gereformeerde Churches. In 1892 the Lamenters would join with a majority from the Christian Reformed Church to form the *Gereformeerde* Churches in the Netherlands.

In 1898 Kuyper travelled across the Atlantic to receive an honorary doctorate in jurisprudence from Princeton University and to deliver the Stone Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary on the cultural importance of Calvinism. Although de Bruijn does not mention that Kuyper stayed with Geerhardus Vos and his family during this time, he does mention Vos's role in helping to get Kuyper's theological writings into English and includes a rare picture of Vos from that time. Kuyper's five lectures over a two-week

period at Princeton were met with great enthusiasm, and when Kuyper received his honorary degree, there was continuous applause. Kuyper would later tell his wife, Jo, that it was a perfect day.

Kuyper extended his stay in America with a tour to Grand Rapids and Holland, Michigan, Pella, Des Moines and Orange City, Iowa, Chicago, Cleveland, and Rochester, primarily addressing Dutch immigrants. His constant message was that in order for Calvinism to penetrate the social life of America, the Dutch people themselves would have to learn English.

He concluded his stay in America by visiting President William McKinley. Kuyper did not think much of McKinley as a statesman, but he held him in high admiration as a man of prayer.

In 1901 Kuyper's political ascent climaxed when the Confessional coalition, which included the Anti-Revolutionary Party, gained victory in the elections to Parliament. Kuyper was given the task of forming the new government, but before Queen Wilhelmina would appoint him as prime minister, he had to give his word that the Netherlands would remain neutral in the Boer conflict in South Africa. Kuyper would lose public support for his handling of the 1903 railroad strike. Liberals and Socialists, who had been split in 1901, successfully united to defeat Kuyper in the 1905 election.

The last years of Kuyper's life were spent initially trying to regain a place at the political table. He resumed leadership of the Anti-Revolutionary Party in 1907 from Herman Bavinck, then professor at the Free University. However, Kuyper's reputation suffered greatly from a decorations scandal (in which certain honors—decorations—were awarded to political donors) in 1909, and his political career was essentially over, although he returned to the first chamber of Parliament in 1913.

The end of the book features some of the best art in the entire volume with numerous pictures of Kuyper in old age. Among the interesting tidbits was his friendship with Kaiser Wilhelm. Although Kuyper took the stance of Dutch neutrality for the Great War in print, he was personally pro-German and visited Germany every summer during the War. In February 1917, the Kaiser even sent Kuyper a portrait of Martin Luther.

Pictures of Kuyper's funeral on November 12, 1920, show the streets lined with mourners. De Bruijn states that conservative estimates put 20,000–30,000 people lining the streets and 10,000 people at the churchyard. The book ends with a photo of Kuyper's grave in the cemetery in the Hague.

Overall, this is a fascinating book on Kuyper. It is a quick read, but de Bruijn's editorial skill in selecting the art and his accompanying commentary leaves a lasting impression about who Kuyper was and what he sought to accomplish politically, leading with a Calvinistic worldview.

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ServantReading

The Perspective of Love *by R. J. Snell*

by David VanDrunen

The Perspective of Love: Natural Law in a New Mode, by R. J. Snell. Eugene: Pickwick, 2014, xii + 207 pages, \$24.00, paper.

This is a very Roman Catholic book—written by a Roman Catholic philosopher (although he teaches at the historically Baptist Eastern University) mostly navigating intra-Roman Catholic discussions about moral philosophy and theology. *The Perspective of Love*, however, may be of interest to Reformed readers for several reasons. First, it provides insight into the state of contemporary Roman Catholic thought (albeit mostly of conservative stripe). Second, the author, R. J. Snell, addresses common Protestant objections to natural law theory, and not to critique them but to acknowledge their cogency and to try to incorporate their valid concerns into his natural law proposal. Finally, this book offers helpful illustration of why Roman Catholic theories of natural law fall short: not only because of a deficient view of sin but also because of an inaccurate understanding of salvation.

After discussing in his first chapter how natural law can be thought of, in a preliminary way, as a matter of *common sense*, Snell turns to discuss natural law as *theory* in chapter 2. This way of understanding natural law represents a classical approach to the subject, associated especially with Thomas Aquinas. In this approach, natural lawyers begin by developing a metaphysics and anthropology (usually wedded to Aristotelian philosophy) and, drawing upon this theoretical view of the world and especially human nature, derive moral conclusions which constitute the natural law. In chapter 3 Snell notes that most Protestant critics of natural law are responding to this classical approach, and he says that the classical approach is in fact not well equipped to answer Protestant objections. According to these objections, natural law theory makes nature autonomous, fails to recognize the necessity of grace, and especially fails to account for the noetic effects of sin.

Thus, Snell sets out in Part Two—what he refers to as “Natural Law in a New Mode”—to consider a number of contemporary Roman Catholic figures who offer a revised way of understanding natural law. Chapter 4 treats John Paul II and Martin Rhonheimer, a Swiss Roman Catholic moral philosopher, chapter 5 deals with several figures associated with the so-called “new natural law theory,” and chapter 6 discusses the intentionality analysis of the twentieth-century Canadian Jesuit Bernard Lonergan. Lonergan’s work is the most central for Snell’s project.

These different writers and schools of thought develop matters in distinct ways, yet share some common convictions that I will try to summarize briefly. These writers do not believe that natural law is derived from a metaphysics or anthropology; in fact, they do not believe natural law is *derived* from anything. Instead, natural law is *understood* by turning to the human subject, following what Snell calls the “mode of interiority” (73 and elsewhere). These writers look within and perceive how human beings actually think and act. By doing so they realize that we are creatures who act with purpose, pursuing certain kinds of goods. These goods are self-evident, not in the sense that everyone acknowledges

them but in the sense that they explain the coherence of human action. People are capable of denying these goods and the basic structure of human thought, but they ensnare themselves in self-contradiction when doing so, for they implicitly acknowledge the things they seek to deny in the very attempt to deny them. Snell pursues a kind of transcendental analysis here that may be of interest to practitioners of Van Tilian apologetics.

Snell strongly appreciates this approach to natural law “in a new mode.” In Part Three he attempts to defend and build upon it, in considerable part by showing how it can account for Protestant objections regarding sin and grace in ways that the classical approach to natural law cannot. Chapter 7, therefore, focuses upon how this new mode incorporates the noetic effects of sin into its understanding of natural law. Chapters 8 and 9 follow by discussing the gracious work of the Spirit in bringing redemption. Snell appeals to the classic Thomist formula: grace perfects nature. The natural law is not opposed to grace, he explains, because grace heals, elevates, and perfects nature, enabling nature to be what it’s supposed to be.

This book wrestles with far too many weighty issues for me to interact with in detail here. I offer only a few observations in conclusion.

First, I cannot avoid mentioning that this book presents several illustrations of the kind of butchery of English that can result from (presumably) trying to avoid sexist language. One horrific example: “While dialectic has an objective structure, it matters whether *the dialectician is themselves* converted or not” (179, italics added). Who am I to say, but that must be a violation of natural law in one mode or another.

Second, I note that Snell’s attempt to account for Protestant objections to natural law should not ultimately be convincing to Protestants—at least to Reformed Protestants—because it is not properly grounded in the dynamic of redemptive history or in a biblical doctrine of salvation. To mention a few specific matters: it does not treat natural law as a covenantal reality, its soteriology centers almost entirely around sanctification, and its view of nature-and-grace treats nature as something to be healed and elevated rather than as destined for eschatological consummation. While it is interesting, and in some ways encouraging, to see a Roman Catholic philosopher try to take modern Protestant objections to natural law theory seriously, the much better way to address them is not by refining traditional Roman Catholic theology but by explaining the critical role of natural law in a full-orbed Reformed theology, of which the biblical covenants, forensic justification, and the consummation of the present creation are essential features.

Finally, while I cannot recommend this book as providing a satisfactory way forward on the topic of natural law for people of Reformed conviction, it does provide useful insight into the state of contemporary conservative Roman Catholic moral theology. For all sorts of reasons, it is very important that Reformed pastors and theologians keep abreast of developments in recent Roman Catholic thought and not be satisfied with outdated views, and perhaps caricatures, about Rome. This book would be more useful in this regard if it also dealt with progressive Roman Catholic thought (which likewise is essential for understanding Rome), but as it is, readers wishing to get caught up on the dynamics of conservative Roman moral theology could do worse than reading this modestly sized volume.

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ServantReading

Music at Midnight *by John Drury*

A review article

by Gregory E. Reynolds

Music at Midnight: The Life and Poetry of George Herbert, by John Drury. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014, xx + 396 pages, \$35.00.

George Herbert is *the* poet. Reviewer Fram Dinshaw nicely sums up Herbert's attractiveness as a poet:

When John Drury, himself an Anglican divine, told James Fenton (the son of a canon of Christ Church) that he was writing about George Herbert, Fenton replied with gnomic brio "*The poet!*" adding "both in intention and execution." Herbert's authentic lightness and strength, pathos and wit, alertness and sympathy have long been as precious to poets as to fellow believers.¹ (321)

John Drury, author of *Music at Midnight*, is the chaplain of All Souls College, Oxford. This makes his assessment of Herbert all the more interesting. He labors throughout to convince the reader of the wrong-headedness of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's view that in order to truly appreciate Herbert's poetry one must be

a *Christian*, and both a zealous and an orthodox, both a devout and a *devotional* Christian. But even this will not quite suffice. He must be an affectionate and dutiful child of the Church. (318)

There is a grain of truth in Coleridge's view, since many believers have used Herbert's poetry in their devotional lives, according to Herbert's own intention in having them published after his death. Nonetheless, apart from devotional appreciation, there are many critics whose deep admiration for Herbert is not rooted in Christian faith.

Two examples will suffice. First, the Shakespearean scholar *par excellence*, Harold Bloom, no fan of Christianity in general or devotional poetry in particular, acknowledges that

there are only a few extraordinary devotional poets in the language, including Donne, and the Victorians Gerard Manley Hopkins and Christina Rossetti. By any standard, George Herbert is the devotional poet proper in English."²

¹ Fram Dinshaw, "Music at Midnight, by John Drury—Review" *The Spectator*, September 28, 2013, <http://www.spectator.co.uk/books/9032551/music-at-midnight-by-john-drury-review/>.

² Harold Bloom, *The Best Poems of the English Language: From Chaucer through Frost* (New York: Harper-Collins, 2004), 183.

My second example is extraordinary in a different way. Camille Paglia is a feminist lesbian who has made it her business to be an explosive critic of feminism and liberalism. Academically she is an extraordinary cultural and literary critic, a kind of female version of H. L. Mencken, sometimes even defending orthodox Christians, even if somewhat unwittingly. Her defense of the humanities and her literary criticism are of an unusually high quality, given the state of both in today's academy. In *Break, Blow, Burn*,³ (a phrase taken from a John Donne poem "Holy Sonnet 14") she devotes a dozen pages to Herbert. In her analysis of three of Herbert's poems, she demonstrates a remarkably accurate understanding of Herbert's orthodoxy, without a word of judgment, along with a true appreciation of his theology. Her analysis of the poetry's structure, craftsmanship, and influences, is simply brilliant. Drury is her equal in this regard. However, he lacks her accuracy in understanding Herbert's theology.

The problem this raises in Drury's literary biography is that he often blunts the sharp edges of Herbert's Anglican Calvinism in order, presumably, to make Herbert more palatable to non-Christian readers. In the introduction he maintains, "The primacy of love over theology and everything else is a major reason for the hold Herbert's Christian poetry has on modern readers" (15). I doubt that anyone will be reading his biography who is not already keenly interested in Herbert's poetry, Christian or not.

He goes on to set Herbert's poetic sensibilities over against orthodox doctrine, billing Herbert as "a mystic for whom the actuality of immediate religious experience mattered intensely, and more than orthodox doctrine" (4). A fair reading of Herbert shows that orthodoxy was his way into God's mysterious presence. Drury asserts that Herbert "put theology on a level with astronomy as a futile speculative exercise: otiose and subject to a certain officious absurdity" (108). The poem in question, "Affliction (I)", says:

Now I am here, what thou wilt do with me
None of my books will show

It is not demeaning theology, but rather asserting that we cannot predict our own earthly future by studying theology. Drury quotes Francis Bacon's assessment of Herbert's poetry as "divinity and poetry met" (135), although elsewhere he seems to portray the two at odds.

And then there is his usually subtle antipathy toward Puritan Calvinism. In analyzing "H. Baptism [II]" he sets Herbert's love for children and childhood over against the Puritans' attitude toward them.

For Calvinist puritans [*sic*] the Church was emphatically a fellowship of conscious and confessing believers. So they had a worry. Could an inarticulate infant be said to believe? (50)

The reader is left to draw his own negative conclusions. "Herbert yielded to no Calvinist in his enthusiasm for the Bible" (8). While Herbert would certainly have had differences with the Puritans (5), Drury exaggerates those differences (though he acknowledges Herbert's appreciation of their devotion (7)). In his review in *The Spectator*, Fram Dinshaw comments:

³ Camille Paglia, *Break, Blow, Burn* (New York: Pantheon, 2005), 134–46.

But mostly he [Drury] clings to a rather bland view of what he anachronistically calls “Jacobean Anglicanism,” to which Calvinism is as antipathetic as popery. It will be interesting to see how his forthcoming Penguin edition deals with Herbert’s poem “The Waterfall” (not mentioned here) with its uncompromising recitation of double predestination.⁴

In a number of places Drury suggests that Herbert is pushing the orthodoxy of the Church of England beyond its limits. Barton Swain, in his *Wall Street Journal* review observes:

In the poem “Discipline,” for example—“Throw away thy rod / Throw away thy wrath: O my God, / Take the gentle path”—Mr. Drury thinks that Herbert is saying that God “needs to behave himself, stop lashing about and learn to love.” In “Love (3),” Herbert’s most famous poem, the poet “steps gracefully over the regular encumbrances of religion” by calling God “Love” instead of “God.”⁵

Drury attributes these theological adventures to the influence of Herbert’s brother Edward, who was a Unitarian (105). But Drury demonstrates that *he* is under Edward’s rather than Herbert’s theological influence when he claims, “Everything we need to know to be saved is clearly put in two italicized lines: love, watchful prayer and doing as one would be done by” (108). The lines referred to, in “Divinity,” are followed by this remarkable quatrain:

But he doth bid us take his blood for wine.
Bid what he please; yet I am sure,
To take and taste what he doth there design,
Is all that saves and not obscure.

Drury attempts, unsuccessfully, to impose his moralism on Herbert (306–7).

I say all of this by way of alerting the reader to these weaknesses so that they will not distract from Drury’s superb literary criticism. And I should add that in so many places Drury shows a fine appreciation of Herbert’s theology (344). For example he emphasizes the centrality of the resurrection in New Testament theology in his analysis of Herbert’s Easter poetry (267).

Drury embeds his literary criticism in the details of Herbert’s life (322). Herbert was born into a noble family and thus received the best education available at Cambridge. His genius was recognized early and he rose quickly in the ranks of the university, eventually achieving the prized position of university orator. But with the death of James II his hopes of preferment in the king’s court were dashed. Meanwhile, the powerful influence of his pious and refined mother took hold as he wrestled with a call to the ministry. He pursued this call the last three years of his life, which ended prematurely just shy of age forty. Drury is no hagiographer as he describes the subtlety of some of Herbert’s dealings, especially in his seeking of the office of university orator (230). Nor does he shy away from criticizing Herbert’s poetry. Of “The Sinner” he opines, “The poem fails to ignite. The next, ‘Good Friday’, is a double poem and particularly disappointing” (271). Herbert had known worldly privilege and the refinements and enjoyment of high culture. It was in this context

⁴ Dinshaw, “Music at Midnight, by John Drury—Review.”

⁵ Cf. Barton Swain, “Book Review: Music at Midnight by John Drury,” *The Wall Street Journal*, May 7, 2014.

that he learned to humble himself before God. In turn, that fueled his poetic abilities so that he wrote some of the finest verse in the English language. How else could he have written:

Perhaps great places and thy praise
Do not so well agree.
("Submission," stanza 4)

or these words about God keeping Adam from entering into his rest:

Yet let him keep the rest
But keep them with repining restlessness:
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
 May toss him to my breast.
("The Pulley," stanza 4)

Drury is himself a wordsmith—a master of lively and interesting writing. In commenting on the moveable dates of Easter, and thus the number of Epiphany Sundays, he observes, "This calendrical conundrum having been solved by careful calculation, the Church was ready to enter on the five weeks of Lent in which it prepared itself, by prayer and fasting, for Easter itself" (266).

Another great strength of Drury's work is his meticulous research. This is especially evident in his chapter on the Williams manuscript (139–51). He is a scholar of the old-fashioned kind, making extensive use of original sources. He is also masterful in recreating historical context, as he does with the importance of Charles I's attempt to marry a Spanish princess (117–24).

Drury brilliantly analyses dozens of Herbert poems, without boring the novice with too much technical jargon, and yet with enough finesse to keep the diligent student interested. For example he interprets "Affliction (I)" in great detail (155–61). He excels in pointing to the subtle, intentional structural elements in each poem, enhancing the appreciation of even the most experienced Herbert reader. He often speculates on the influence of great writers of Herbert's time, such as his friend John Donne, or slightly before his time, Shakespeare. Drury has a penetrating analysis of several of Herbert's imitators (285ff), but at the same time demonstrates the value of imitation (291).

There is a very helpful index of works referred to and analyzed, as well as twenty-four colored plates, and numerous integrated illustrations. This book is essential Herbert reading.

Herbert's craft and wit were not for themselves alone. I say alone, because they are certainly there to be enjoyed as pure artistry, but not alone. Herbert's craftsmanship was conceived to serve a grand purpose: the glory of Herbert's God.

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ServantPoetry

George Herbert (1593–1633)

Gratefulness

Thou that hast given so much to me,
Give one thing more, a grateful heart.
See how thy beggar works on thee
By art.

He makes thy gifts occasion more,
And says, If he in this be crossed,
All thou hast given him heretofore
Is lost.

But thou didst reckon, when at first
Thy word our hearts and hands did crave,
What it would come to at the worst
To save.

Perpetual knockings at thy door,
Tears sullyng thy transparent rooms,
Gift upon gift, much would have more,
And comes.

This notwithstanding, thou wenst on,
And didst allow us all our noise:
Nay thou hast made a sigh and groan
Thy joys.

Not that thou hast not still above
Much better tunes, than groans can make;
But that these country-airs thy love
Did take.

Wherefore I cry, and cry again;
And in no quiet canst thou be,
Till I a thankful heart obtain
Of thee:

Not thankful, when it pleaseth me;
As if thy blessings had spare days:
But such a heart, whose pulse may be
Thy praise.