

---

# THE GENEVA REVIEW

---

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF GENEVA MINISTRIES

---

No. 20

JULY, 1985

---

## Words and Society

by GEORGE GRANT

Words, words, words. Ah, the stunning splendor of words. "A rose is a rose is a rose," or so the poet has inscribed, but no one yet has of a word, its place, power, and beauty described. The irrepressible John Selden once quipped, "Syllables govern the world." Thus, definers of words must be the most powerful of men.

Such truisms have perhaps never been more germane than in our own day. Our language is under assault. A new breed of powerful men has arisen. Through their guidance old words, with comfortable familiar meanings, either have fallen into disuse or are redefined to fit the pernicious present perspective. They are either slyly sidled or are emptied of their common significance only to be filled with an alien denotation. Taking his cue from Hitler's Germany, Mussolini's Italy, Franco's Spain, and Stalin's Russia, George Orwell opened our eyes to the dangers of such linguistic manipulation with 1984's "Newspeak." But it appears that

simply having our eyes open has not been enough. We are presently witnessing, at the hands of these men of power, the emergence of our own Newspeak.

According to Christian psychologist, William Kirk Kilpatrick, in his book *Psychological Seduction* (Thomas Nelson, 1983), "The manipulation of words . . . is also the manipulation of reality." And he is right. Newspeak is no harmless banter. The twisting and reshaping of our language by the social scientists, the media spokesmen, the educational collectivists, and the tenured bureaucrats of humanism's cultural catterlob is radically transforming our society.

"If you call a certain deed 'murder,' it summons up one reality to the mind," says Kilpatrick. "Call it 'pro-choice' and the reality seems different." And don't ever suppose that the radical triagians in NOW, the ACLU, and Planned Parenthood are unaware of that. They deliberately manipulate language in order to implement their programs of social change. To them, "The man who assaults you is called a 'victim.' A woman who leaves her family is called 'courageous.' A couple who commit adultery are said to have an 'open' marriage." According to this new Newspeak, the butchery of abortion is reclassified "the elimination of fetal tissue." The theft of private property, the repression of private enterprise, and the redistribution of private assets is called "social security." Moral purity has become "victorian prudishness." Political conservatives have become "right-wing reactionaries," while liberals are called "moderates."

Bible believers have become "fundamentalists." First Amendment protection has become "separation of church and state." Theonomy has become "Nazism in religious drag." Anti-gays have become "repressive hate-mongers and homophobiacs." While concerned parents and teachers have become "censors."

According to Orwell's original definition, "The purpose of Newspeak . . . is to make all other modes of thought impossible." And that is the plain intention of this new lexicographic molestation by the humanists. They comprehend full well the truth of Rudyard Kipling's sally, "Words are the

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Words and Society</b> by George Grant . . . . .	1
<b>Who Says "Rights" are Right?</b> by Gary DeMar . . . . .	2
<b>Studies in Genesis One: Six Days</b> by James B. Jordan . . . . .	3
<b>Reformed _____?</b> by Ray R. Sutton . . . . .	4
<b>Optimistic Amillennialism</b> by David Chilton . . . . .	5
<b>Books in Review:</b> Catholics and Protestants Liturgical Renewal Resources Reviewed by James B. Jordan . . . . .	6
<b>The Doctrine of the Word of God (No. 2)</b> by John M. Frame . . . . .	7

most powerful drug used by mankind." Whosoever controls the language controls the culture. Whoever defines the words defines the world.

Evangelicalism's proud propensity for reducing itself to the lowest common denominator is thus a tragedy of staggering proportions. Our good ol' boy vocabulary, our down-home euphemisms, our bottom-rung cant, and our unadorned and unapologetic slang have not only made Christian communication terribly boring, but ineffective and unproductive as well. And while we've revelled in the muck of cacography and dithyramb, the humanists, knowing no such embolalia, have become society's logogogues, ruling language and, thus, ruling culture.

The reclamation of our civilization will require a tough and comprehensive agenda. But political acumen, economic proficiency, scholastic integrity, and media adroitness, as essential as they are, will not be sufficient if we do not recapture mastery over our language as well. "A truer verse n'ere

quoth he fore, the pen is mightier far than the sword."

Mark Twain once asserted that "the difference between the right word and the almost right word is like the difference between lightning and the lightning bug." Considering the present crisis, we might well rephrase that to say that the difference between the words of the humanists and the words of the Christians is like the difference between lightning and the lightning bug. We may say it with tears, but honesty requires us to say it nonetheless. Our sloth, our laxity, and our obtuseness have cost us control of our language and control of our culture.

(George Grant is one of the pastors of Believer's Fellowship Reformed Bible Church, Humble, Texas. This essay is a transcript from Rev. Grant's daily radio broadcast, "The Christian Worldview." For information concerning this program and how you might get it broadcast in your area, write to the Christian Worldview, 410 South Ave. D, Humble, TX 77338.)

## Who Says "Rights" are Right?

by GARY DEMAR

The study of "human rights" is a prominent feature of our modern era. While it is true that in the history of our nation the talk about "rights" was a constant one, very little confusion arose with the discussion. Colonial America was overwhelmingly Christian and Christianity was the dominant ideology in society. Today, the human rights emphasis seems to be purposely misunderstood. Everybody talks about rights but no one seems to know what they are. A definition is hard to come by. The reason for this is not always obvious to the proponents of a human rights doctrine.

Confusion over human rights arises out of moral relativism. If it is assumed that no real absolute law exists then it follows that an individual's rights are just as relative. The reason debate continues on what is a right is that no one really understands what is right. In fact, many maintain that to speak about what is "right" is to speak in absolute terms and that does not fit the evolving nature of ethics. As long as moral relativism prevails, human rights will always be elusive. How does the West approach the leaders in the Soviet Union and ask them to grant the "right" to private property when one of the basic tenets of Marxism is the "abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes?" There is no common ground to discuss "liberty" as a right without a biblical definition of liberty. The Soviet system places law in the hands of the State. "Human rights" are defined by the Soviet State. Who are we to say that "human rights" are being violated in the Soviet Union? Without an unchangeable law there is nothing to criticize.

When a nation moves away from the absolutes of God's law we can expect an immediate substitute to fill the gap. The "human rights" idea has become the alternative to biblical law; it is the foundation for all spheres of life. Human rights has sand as its foundation because man is the determiner of what is a right. T. Robert Ingram comments: "The distortion in human rights comes from assigning law-making power to men as men, rather than seeing it as that by which God rules all things consummately. The difference is total. Every truly lawful right becomes twisted and its source a mysterious, unknown and impossible "state of nature" in which there was no law, and were no laws. The former implies stability, righteousness, and an unchanging nature; the latter speaks of nothing but change, indeterminateness, and fickleness" (*What's Wrong With Human Rights*, p. 21f.). The modern doctrine of human rights has no one to answer to but man. Man, therefore, cannot be held responsible to anyone greater than himself. Responsibility is denied because there is no one to whom responsibility must be shown. Where there is no responsibility there is no accountability. The prevailing "law" is every man doing what is right in his own eyes (Judges 17:6). Instead of working for justice (defined according to the specifics of God's Law), the disgruntled demand individual or class rights based upon their own distorted views of justice. The most powerful, those who speak the loudest and carry the most political clout, are the ones who gain the greatest number of rights, usually for themselves. Human rights become a declaration of self-law. Responsibility and answerability are abandoned for self-declaration.

# Studies in Genesis One: Six Days

by JAMES B. JORDAN

A couple of years ago I taught through the book of Genesis for Geneva Study Center. (These lectures are available; 37 tapes for \$110 from Geneva Ministries.) I found that there was very little theological material on the early chapters of Genesis, surprisingly. Liberal scholars, of course, spent most of their time discussing the sources that supposedly lie behind these verses. Evangelical scholars generally spent most of their time discussing whether or not the events recorded happened in six days. While there is some good comment here and there, it seems that the actual teaching of Genesis One has been obscured by all the polemic surrounding it.

Of course, it is important at the outset for the Christian believer to confess that the events recorded in the Bible happened as the Bible records them. God made the world, we are told, in 144 hours, roughly 6000 years ago. It is utterly impossible to get gaps into the chronologies of Genesis 5 and 11, and attempts by evangelicals to de-chronologize these chapters have only compromised the intellectual credibility of the faith. James Barr, in his book *Fundamentalism* (1978) had a field day with evangelical writers who profess to believe in the inerrancy of Scripture, but who whittle away at that profession with fantastic subterfuges designed to evade the clear teaching of the text. (I have dealt with the chronology question at length in an article, "The Biblical Chronology Question: An Analysis," available from Geneva Ministries for a donation. In this essay, I interact with W. H. Green, B. B. Warfield, and Francis Schaeffer.)

The same problems surround six-day creationism. God did not have to build the world in six days; He could have spoken it into fully-developed existence instantly. The Bible clearly states that God developed the creation over a six-day span of time, and there is absolutely no hermeneutical criterion that can be used to evade this. Scripture everywhere affirms the simple fact of six-day creation (Ex. 20:11), and nowhere provides a canon that might be used to take a purely symbolic view of the text.

The motive for escaping Biblical chronology and six-day creationism is the (honorable) desire to make the faith relevant and credible to its intellectual despisers. There is no way, we are confidently told, to reconcile a "literal" interpretation of Genesis with the "certainties" of "modern science." Those who know the history of science, however, will not be so sure of these "certainties." Indeed, those aware of recent research in morphogenetic fields (see *The Geneva Review*, No. 2), or of the quantum quandaries of the "new physics," will be aware that the interpretation of scientific data is in-

creasingly up for grabs within "modern science" circles. The current paradigm shuffle looks increasingly like a kid's game of "52 Pick Up."

We gain no intellectual credibility by using dodges that don't work. Moses, educated in all the learning of the Egyptians (Acts 7:22) — which learning was thoroughly "evolutionary" in its commitment to a "scale-of-being" philosophy — was doubtless as surprised at the personalistic activism of Genesis One as any modern philosopher would be. No impersonal forces here! No gradual shades of being from animals to man with all sorts of things (satyrs, sphinxes, etc.) in between. No huge cycles of time. Just a series of immediate personal acts, in a brief span of time, initiating linear time. Not what Moses was taught by his Egyptian tutors.

Six days meant then what it means now. The text even tells us that God defined the meaning of His term, "day." "And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night" (Gen. 1:5). Day is "lighttime." That is its fundamental meaning. The use of the word "day" for the whole 24-hour period (see the second half of verse 5) is an extended meaning, and shows that day (light) is the more basic component of the period. The (24-hour) day begins in dark, and moves (eschatologically) to light (day). Moreover, the use of "day" for an age or eon of time is also an extended meaning.

Some have argued that the first three days might have been longer than 24 hours, since the sun was not made to measure days until the fourth day. This, however, puts the cart before the horse. The day as a period of time already existed, and the sun was made to fit it. The book of Revelation shows us that even after the sun is gone, the daylight of God's glory will continue to be (Rev. 22:5).

What about the "framework hypothesis"? Some have called attention to the structure of the six days, as six panels in a larger picture. They argue that the days are not spans of time, but only a literary convention for presenting a six-fold creation. The problem with this view is that it needlessly opposes a theological interpretation to a literal one. The observations about the interrelations among the six panels or days are valid, but that does not change the fact that the Bible presents the events as taking place over the course of a normal week. There is no Biblical evidence for such a literary form (days = panels). Moreover, if we apply such a hermeneutic, we get into real trouble. Shall we deny the physical resurrection of Christ just because we have come to understand its theological meaning? No indeed, and the same is true here. We dare not pit the historical aspect against the theological aspect.

Moreover, and to me this is the important

point, the theological dimension of creation in six days lies precisely in its being a temporal sequence. God had no reason to make the world in six days, except as a pattern for His image, man, to follow. Where the Bible later uses a three-day, or six-day, or seven-day pattern theologically, it is always in terms of the flow of time from a beginning to an end. The "framework hypothesis" platonizes the time sequence into a mere set of ideas. In its attempt to be theological, the "framework hypothesis" misses the whole theological point!

Having confessed my commitment to six-day

creationism here, and argued briefly for it, I shall not be returning to it. My purpose in this series is to provide a theological interpretation of the text, not to defend it against its critics, and perhaps a strong offense is the best defense. Those who wish to read further in the area of defending six-day creationism might consult the following studies: Gary North, *Symposium on Creationism* (Journal of Christian Reconstruction 1:1); Edward J. Young, *Studies in Genesis One* (Craig Press); John C. Whitcomb, *The Early Earth* (Craig Press); and R. J. Rushdoony, *The Mythology of Science* (Craig Press).

## Reformed \_\_\_\_\_?

by RAY R. SUTTON

The *Geneva Review* represents the "reformed" tradition. I know there are those who would differ. Since I wear a collar and the Church I pastor (Westminster Presbyterian) is liturgical, we're often accused of the worst of profanities in the reformed tradition, "smacking of Rome!" We're "Roman smackers." Sounds like a tasty cracker doesn't it?

We also believe in the re-institution of paedocommunion. The only Church that has continued this practice in unbroken succession (to my knowledge) is the Eastern Church. So, some might accuse us of "smacking of Eastern Orthodoxy." We're "Eastern smackers." Sorry, it doesn't sound like anything very catchy, or tasty.

The liturgy we use is Lutheran because Luther not only reformed the Mass, stripping away the icons, he brought a "folksy" flavor to it. He combined "folk" and "fine" art to produce what has become in the West the most widely accepted Protestant tradition of liturgy. We make only a slight modification. Lutherans believe that the law leads men to Christ, whereas the reformed tradition believes Christ leads men to the law. Our adjustment reflects this emphasis by putting the reading of the law after confession of sin.

In my opinion, this combination is the best of all possible liturgical worlds. The Episcopal liturgy, although fairly close, is too complicated; modern Presbyterianism is too rationalistic; the Baptist tradition is too irrational.

But this semi-Lutheran liturgy brings the accusation that we're reformed "Lutherans." Technically speaking, we're not because of our view of the sacrament. Calvin believed Christ to be "really" present, but not in any physical sense. Here was the great dispute between Calvin and Luther. Luther still wanted to maintain some sort of modified "transubstantiation" (Consubstantiation).

So, where does this discussion leave us? Some would obviously conclude that this "eclectic" approach to Presbyterianism leaves us outside the pale of the reformed faith. Others would not want

to go that far, but say we're "on the road to Rome, or Constantinople (Istanbul), or Wittenberg." If we push it any further though, we're going to fall off into one of these groups.

Well I say, "No." I say we're right in the middle of the reformed tradition. I say that the work we're doing at Geneva has captured the true "spirit" of what the Reformation was all about. I say we're attempting to pick up where the Enlightenment's detouring effects on historic Calvinism left off. I say we are trying to recover a thoroughgoing Biblicism that John Calvin was noted for. I don't mean to imply that the "think-tank" associated with Tyler is the *only* place doing this kind of work, but we're definitely in the mainstream of Reformational thought.

How can this be? Think back to the beginning of this essay. The title is actually a fill-in-the-blank question. It raises the question "Reformed what?" In the "reformed" camp I have noticed that everyone uses that word like a *noun*. Ask any self-conscious Presbyterian what he is and he'll respond, "I'm reformed."

But technically and theologically speaking, the word "reformed" was never intended to be a noun. I can easily illustrate. Use this description outside a reformed community (Grand Rapids, etc., etc.) and watch a person's reaction. It's always, "Reformed What?" Reformed Alcoholic? Reformed convict? Or, Reformed Jew maybe?

This response is quite natural because "reformed" is an *adjective*. It needs a modifier. It needs to refer to something else. So, my question is simply, "Reformed What?"

I believe the Reformers viewed themselves as reformed *Catholics*. Notice that I capitalized the word "Catholic." I know "Reformed" people are never supposed to do such a thing, but any serious study of the Reformation will demonstrate that there's nothing wrong with capitalizing "Catholic." The Reformers never wanted to break totally with Rome. They really did not even want to change its complete theology. They only wanted to reform it.

Most Presbyterian and Reformed Churches have lost sight of this fact. They no longer think of themselves as "Reformed Catholics." Somewhere in time the adjective lost its modifier. So, when someone makes proposals that "smack of Rome," he's quick to argue along the lines of a syllogism that runs something like the following. "That's what Rome does. Rome is wrong. We don't do what Rome does. So, your point can't possibly be right."

Wrong. The Reformers wanted to reform the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church. They wanted to revive the historic Christian "Old Catholic Church." They wanted to return the Roman Catholic Church to the Bible, the whole Bible and not just the New Testament.

Geneva Ministries continues the truly "Reformed Catholic" tradition. We strive to restore the Catholic faith. This statement is not to imply that the Reformers would have agreed with every point coming out of Geneva Ministries. For example, paedocommunion did not become part of the agenda in some places. It did among the Hussites. But we contend that a magical, transubstantiating view of the sacraments destroyed full-family communion.

This development eventually broke down the family structure of the Church and led to radical individualistic views expressed in the Anabaptists. So, any full-scale attack on transubstantiation is bound eventually to restore the practice of paedocommunion, and the family along with it. Now, after 400 years of reformation, paedocommunion is being considered more than ever since it was removed 800 years ago.

This tension between the 400-year-old tradition of reformed churches and the 1200-year-old tradition of the historic Catholic Church leads to my point. The Reformed Church grows out of a Reformed Catholic tradition. Liturgy and paedocommunion, along with triumphalism (optimistic eschatology) and theocracy (rule by Biblical Law), are very much a part and at the heart of the Historic Catholic faith. Any true reform, therefore, is bound to end up restoring these. We have returned to these important distinctives, not because we are veering from the Reformed Faith, but because we are truly *Reformed Catholics*.

(Next time: "Who's Got the Canterbury Trail?" If we are Reformed Catholics, then why not go back to a post Vatican II Rome?)

## Optimistic Amillennialism

by DAVID CHILTON

As we saw in the preceding issue, the orthodox Christian eschatology can historically be described as both amillennial and postmillennial. First, "post-millennial" is *objectively* accurate; that is, the church has generally believed that Christ's return will take place *after* (*post-*) the millennium (regardless of how the "millennium" is conceived). Thus all "amils" are, in this sense, "postmils."

Second, the Church also has been generally *non-millennarian*; millennarian sects, perceiving the "millennium" as an age of perfection to be ushered in by a great cosmic cataclysm (either the Second Coming or a violent, revolutionary overthrow of civil government), have always been on the heretical fringes of Christianity. Thus the position of the orthodox Christian Church can be described, *in this sense*, as amillennial (or, if you prefer, non-millennarian, or anti-chiliasm). So orthodoxy is both postmil and amil, in these two objective senses. No *orthodox* "postmil" is a millennarian.

Third, however, the Church has been generally *optimistic* in her view of the power of the Gospel to convert the nations. In my book *Paradise Restored*, I opened each chapter with a quotation from the great Church Father Athanasius on the subject of the victory of the Gospel throughout the world and the inevitable conversion of all nations to Christianity. The point was not to single out St. Athanasius as such (although I readily admit that

his little classic, *On the Incarnation of the Word of God*, is one of my favorite books.) Numerous statements expressing the Hope of the Church for the worldwide triumph of the Gospel can be found throughout the writings of the catholic Fathers and teachers, in every age of Christianity. Even more significantly, the universal belief in the coming victory can be seen in the *action* of the Church in history. Christians never supposed that their high calling was to work for some sort of détente with the Enemy. "Pluralism" was never regarded by the orthodox as a worthy goal. The Church has always recognized that God sent His only begotten Son in order to redeem the world, and that He will be satisfied with nothing less than what He paid for.

When the early missionaries from the East first ventured into the demonized lands of our pagan forefathers, they had not the slightest intention of developing peaceful coexistence with warlocks and their terrorizing deities. When St. Boniface came up against Thor's sacred oak tree in his mission to the heathen Germans, he simply chopped it down and built a chapel out of the wood. Thousands of Thor-worshippers, seeing that their god had failed to strike Boniface with lightning, converted to Christianity on the spot. As for Boniface, he was unruffled by the incident. He knew that there was only one true God of thunder—the Triune Jehovah.

There is nothing strange about this. The attitude of Hope, the expectation of victory, is an absolutely fundamental characteristic of Christianity. The advance of the Church through the ages is inexplicable apart from it—just as it is also inexplicable apart from the fact that the Hope is *true*, the fact that Jesus Christ *has* defeated the powers and *shall* reign “from the River to the ends of the earth.” W. G. T. Shedd wrote: “Apart from the power and promise of God, the preaching of such a religion as Christianity, to such a population as that of paganism, is the sheerest Quixotism. It crosses all the inclinations, and condemns all the pleasures of guilty man. The preaching of the Gospel finds its justification, its wisdom, and its triumph, only in the attitude and relation which the infinite and almighty God sustains to it. It is *His* religion, and therefore it must ultimately become a universal religion.”

With the rise of divergent eschatologies over the last two centuries, the traditional eschatological

optimism of the Church was tagged with the term “postmillennialism,” whether the so-called “post-mills” liked it or not. This has had positive and negative results. On the plus side, it is (as we have seen) a *technically* accurate description of orthodoxy; and it carries the connotation of optimism. On the minus side, it can too often be confused with heretical millennialism. And, while “amillennialism” rightly expresses the orthodox abhorrence of apocalyptic revolution, it carries (both by name and by historic association) a strong connotation of defeatism. Some have sought to remedy this by styling themselves “optimistic amillennialists,” a term that has nothing wrong with it except a mouthful of syllables (“non-millennarian postmillennialist” suffers from the same problem). We cannot expect to settle the question here. But we must be aware of the inadequacies of current theological terminology, so that we will be sure to understand and communicate both the Hope and the Faith of our Fathers.

## BOOKS IN REVIEW

### Catholics and Protestants

Two recent volumes from Servant Books will be of help to Protestants who want to know where Roman Catholicism is going today. Conservative evangelicals find themselves marching side by side with Roman Catholics against abortion chambers, reading outstanding Catholic literature on abortion and other subjects (e.g., William Kirk Kilpatrick’s marvellous book *Psychological Seduction*), and generally finding that we have more in common with Catholics than we had thought. The differences, however, are still very real. Paul Johnson’s *Pope John Paul II and the Catholic Restoration* (1981; paperback; 216 pp.; \$6.95) takes us into the mind of the present pope, his concerns, and his intentions. In the process, Johnson (author of the monumental study *Modern Times*) gives a good picture of the Roman Catholic Church today.

Somewhat more useful for most of us is Peter Toon’s *Protestants and Catholics: A Guide to Un-*

*derstanding the Differences among Christians* (1983; paperback; 160 pp.; \$5.95). Toon pulls together a host of Protestant and Catholic confessional statements, and competently sets out the historic differences between the two, using careful and non-vicious language. He shows the changes since Vatican II, but also shows that these changes have not yet gotten to the roots of the differences between us. Those of us who enjoy reading Catholic theologians who are on the “Protestant Fringe” of the Roman Church (e.g., de Lubac, Bouyer, etc.) will find Toon’s study a helpful reminder of the fact that while certain individual Catholic writers and thinkers may be very close to us, the Vatican itself still has a long way to go.

Trinity Book Service carries Toon’s book at the discount price of \$5.35.

*reviewed by James B. Jordan*

### Liturgical Renewal Resources

I should like to call attention to two *excellent* books on worship by Robert E. Webber. (I am the more happy to do this since twice in the past I have had occasion to be critical of some of Mr. Webber’s writings on socio-political matters.) One volume is written at a more popular level, the other at a more theological one. The more popularly written book is *Worship is a Verb* (Word, 1985; 200 pp.; hardcover; list \$12.95). Webber argues strongly for active worship, against the preacher-centered passivity of modern evangelical liturgies. In this he is directly in

line with the liturgical desires of the Protestant Reformers. Liturgical renewal is in the wind, and Webber gives a sane, balanced discussion of the whole matter.

I should briefly call attention to a couple of things I wish had been said differently. Webber here (as in his other books) relates the use of the physical world in worship (e.g., musical instruments, dance, color, etc.) primarily to the Incarnation. Theologically, it would be better to relate it to the Creation, since God designed the



world to be used in His worship, and to the Resurrection, since it is the death and resurrection of Christ which restores, indeed transfigures, the creation and makes it all the more appropriate for use in worship. On a couple of other points, Webber likes to kneel for communion, but it seems to me (and to most liturgists today) that sitting is the best posture. Any other posture militates against the sabbath-meal, kingdom-enthronement aspect of the Eucharist. Also, on p. 166 Webber says that Calvin abolished the entire Church Year, but in fact Calvin retained the festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost, dividing his catechism into 55 liturgical sections to accommodate this (52 Lord's Days plus three festivals). These, however, are only minor objections.

The other book is *Worship Old and New* (Zondervan, 1982; 256 pp.; paperback; list price \$8.95). I highly recommend this book for pastors and seminarians. We at Geneva Ministries had intended to produce a book on liturgy and worship. With the publication of Webber's *Worship Old and New*, that project was dropped as unnecessary. I should add that Webber writes from a generally Reformed perspective, sensitive to the questions raised

by the anti-liturgical "Puritan," tradition. A systematic treatment, *Worship Old and New* covers the Biblical material relating to the structure of worship, traces the historical development of worship, provides a theology of worship that is effectively Vantillian (equal ultimacy of word and deed, of preaching and sacrament, of knowledge and mystery), and includes chapters on architecture, the Church Year, and music.

Obviously I agree with both the overall direction of the evangelical liturgical movement, and with the treatment of matters contained in these two books. I recommend them virtually without any reservations. Let me say to my anti-liturgical brethren, however, that since liturgical renewal is in the wind everywhere today, you cannot afford to remain ignorant of what is going on. The two best volumes to introduce you to our position are these two books. I strongly urge you to obtain and interact with what Webber has set out here.

Trinity Book Service carries both of these books at a discount. Our price for *Worship is a Verb* is \$11.70, and for *Worship Old and New* is \$8.05.

reviewed by James B. Jordan

## The Doctrine of the Word of God

(No. 2)

by JOHN M. FRAME

(Professor Frame teaches at Westminster Theological Seminary in California. These outlines are from his course on the Doctrine of the Word of God. Prof. Frame has graciously consented to our making these notes available to a wider audience through *The Geneva Review*. They are not to be regarded as a published work, but as notes on a "work in progress.")

### (INTRODUCTION, continued)

#### B. *The Reformed faith is Predestinarian.*

The term "reformed," for some reason, early became attached to the Swiss branch of the reformation (Zwingli, Bucer, Bullinger, Calvin), and eventually became virtually synonymous with "Calvinist." The most controversial aspect of the teaching of these men was their doctrine of predestination, and that is often seen as the chief distinctive of reformed teaching as over against other forms of evangelicalism. In 1618-1619, an international reformed synod meeting at Dordt in the Netherlands was presented with five "points" summarizing the teachings of J. Arminius ("Arminianism"). In opposition to those, the synod adopted what have been called "the five points of Calvinism,"

summarizing its doctrine of predestination. These are popularly summarized by the initials of that fine Dutch flower, the TULIP.

1. *Total Depravity*: Although fallen man is capable of externally good acts, he cannot do anything *really* good, i.e. pleasing to God (Rom. 8:8). From God's standpoint, therefore (the only *true* standpoint), fallen man has *no* goodness, in thought, word or deed, and thus is incapable of contributing anything to his salvation.
2. *Unconditional Election*: When God elects (chooses) people for salvation, therefore, he does not choose because of anything *in them*. He does not choose them because of any goodness in them, or even because he foresees that they will believe, but simply out of his totally unmerited favor—out of grace (Eph. 2:8, 9).
3. *Limited Atonement*: (The most controversial of the five, because of Bible passages *apparently* teaching that Christ died for every individual.) Christ did not die for every human being, but for his people, his sheep, his elect. The point here is that, like God's election, Christ's atonement is *efficacious*; i.e. it accomplishes its purpose. Christ died to *save*, not merely to make salvation possi-

ble. When Scripture says "Christ died for" someone, that someone is *saved*. Not everyone is saved, and so Christ did not die for *everyone*.

(Note, though: Calvinism does not deny that unsaved persons receive benefits from Christ's atoning work. Since Christ died also to save God's created world, as long as any person lives in this world it is possible *in one sense* to say that Christ died for him. But in the ultimate, eternal sense, the atoning work of Christ applies only to those destined for heaven.)

4. *Irresistible Grace*: grace is not like a box of candy that you can send back if you don't want it. Grace is divine *favor*, i.e. an attitude of God's own heart. He alone determines who is favored and who is not. Thus his favor cannot be stopped or changed or resisted by the creature. It will surely accomplish his purpose. Eph. 1:11.
5. *Perseverance of the Saints*: If you are born again by the Spirit of God, justified, adopted into God's family, you cannot lose your salvation. God will keep you; Jn. 10:27-30, Rom. 8:28-39. Perseverance does not mean that once you profess Christ you may sin all you like. If you have confessed Christ from the heart, you will not be dominated by sin, Rom. 6:14.

#### *Excursus: "TULIP" as summary of Calvinism*

##### 1. Dangers in "summaries":

- a. Great theologians (unlike many today) do not generally start with one single idea (such as predestination) and simply base everything on that one idea. Rather (and this was certainly the case with Calvin), they begin with a *complex* of ideas—the whole of Scripture. Thus there is a certain "open-endedness" about their "systems." The whole is open to new insight from the Scripture; it is not rigidly derived from some single idea or "fundamental principle."
- b. This does not mean that Calvinism cannot be summarized. It is a *definite* set of teachings that differ clearly from other teachings. Its distinctives can be formulated, can be summarized in various ways.
- c. Yet we must remember that *many* different summaries are possible, as we look at the total system from various different "angles."
- d. And we must remember that no summary can be substituted for the whole system; none represents it exhaustively; none gives us a "key" so that we could work out the whole system for ourselves, using only the key, not resorting constantly to Scripture.

##### 2. Two kinds of summaries (There are others, as well.):

- a. Some summaries draw attention to the *most controversial* points of a system. TULIP is that kind of summary.
    - i. It emerged out of the Arminian controversy, and in response to specific Arminian formulations. In a sense, TULIP is a summary of "What Arminians don't like about Calvinism," and in that respect really amounts to a summary of Calvinism from an Arminian point of view.
    - ii. However, TULIP is still an excellent summary of the most controversial points of Calvinism—i.e. of what non-Calvinists find most objectionable in the system. If we want *that kind* of summary, a summary for that purpose, we can hardly do better.
  - b. Other summaries, however, draw attention to the basic concerns of a system, its inner dynamic, the teachings that make that system attractive to its adherents (as opposed to those that make it objectionable to its opponents).
    - i. Controversial points are not necessarily the most basic concerns of the system.
    - ii. TULIP, though it summarizes well the controversial aspects of Calvinism, does not do justice to its basic concerns. As many reformed writers point out, Calvinism is far more than "five points"; it is a unified approach to the whole of Scripture.
    - iii. In what follows, therefore, I shall propose another sort of summary, which claims to do more justice than "TULIP" to the basic concerns of Calvinism.
- ##### 3. "The Sovereignty of God" as summary (or "fundamental principle"):
- a. "Sovereignty of God" summarizes the TULIP quite well, and suggests broader perspectives.
  - b. However, today the phrase is not too well understood. Often the term "sovereignty" is taken to mean the power to foreordain and nothing more.
  - c. The modern term "sovereignty" is best understood in relation to the biblical concepts "lordship" and "covenant." To say that God is sovereign is to say that he is covenant Lord. In studying these concepts we shall see most clearly the biblical basis for asserting divine sovereignty.
  - d. Thus, instead of "the sovereignty of God," we shall present as our "fundamental principle" "the comprehensiveness of God's covenant Lordship."

The Geneva Review is published monthly by Geneva Ministries. Those wishing to receive it should address requests to Geneva Ministries, P.O. Box 8378, Tyler, TX 75711. A donation, tax deductible, is requested. Checks should be made out to Geneva Ministries. Permission to reproduce these essays, in whole or in part, is granted, provided the name and address of The Geneva Review is included.