

Notes from Dr. Millard Erickson's course, *Studies in Theology: Last 100 Years of Theology*

1/3/12

- Began by reading from Matt. 16:13-20 and stated that goal of course was to correctly answer the question, "Who is the Son of Man?"
- History done well investigates what led to historical occurrences, what were the methods theologians used to get to where their beliefs led them.
- Erickson: "I am a conservative, biblically-based Christian (as opposed to the over-elastic term, evangelical)."
- We need to anticipate the forces shaping our world. And then minister to where we're headed. I.e., don't chase a moving train. Instead, get to the train's next stop before the train arrives. The question is how can we prepare ourselves for the ministry that is to come.
- European, North American, and 3rd World theologians from the 20th and 21st centuries.
- Grid to apply/three sets of criteria for judging theology:
 - Pragmatic Question: in the final analysis, is it something you can live with? Is it sustainable long-term? (e.g., Christianity: Is it true? Well, does it work? Will you someday wind up in heaven?)
 - Internal-Logical Criteria: relationship between the various signs within a belief system. Is it internally consistent? Do the elements of a particular view contradictory? Is it coherent? Do the elements relate and cohere? Do the elements reinforce one another. (e.g., there is an aesthetic quality—a beauty—to the Christian system of theology.)
 - Object—truth
 - Sign—representation of truth
 - Knower—subjective knower of truth
 - relationship between knower and sign is pragmatic
 - relationship between sign and its internal signs is syntactical.
 - This syntactical relationship concerns the internal-logical criteria.
 - External Criteria: Does it describe accurately and adequately what it purports to describe? (i.e., does the sign fit the object?)
- **Liberalism**
 - Developments in natural sciences (e.g., evolution) were factors in the theological shifts which led to modern liberalism
 - Historical criticism (e.g., JEDP/documentary hypothesis) came to the fore in biblical studies
 - The Bible is rethought in historical terms
 - Developments in philosophy:
 - Immanuel Kant (Lutheran, bachelor [women in his town could set their watches by the regularity of his schedule])
 - wrote three critiques (reason//action//emotion):

- Pure reason—what you believe; discussed theoretical reason; asked "how do we know?"; wrestled with ideas of rationalists (e.g., Descartes) and empiricists
 - All knowledge comes from two things:
 - content—which comes from experience
 - form—logical structure of the mind
 - "concepts without percepts are empty" (e.g., unicorns are conceptual, though unreal)
 - "percepts without concepts are blind"
 - No one has ever seen God.
 - Liberalism was a result of those who accepted Kant's critique of theoretical, though unseen God, and yet wanted to have a religion, had to come up with a way to make it work. Hence, the beginnings of liberalism.
 - Practical reason—ethics/social gospel; how you act
 - Judgment—what you feel
- Liberals are hard to pin down because they didn't issue creeds or manifestos. Whereas fundamentalists did. Liberals would perhaps say, "Liberalism is not a theological system, it is more a method."
 - The method of liberalism is to test everything, rather than to accept it on authority. What do you do when you get conflicting authorities?
 - All doctrines arise out of a historical situation. When situations change, doctrine may not necessarily be valid. They change. Modernists believed that they're "changing" of doctrines was not unlike the changing language of successive Bible translations. At their best, modernists attempted to say the same thing in a different way. The modernists did not think they were changing. They thought they were preserving it by keeping it contemporary.
 - E.g., Fosdick's substitution of belief in the immortality of the soul as opposed to belief in the resurrection.
 - You have translators and transformers, the former preferred.
 - "It's fairly easy to say something new. But its not as easy to translate something same into contemporary language and culture."
 - Liberal is not a noun. It is an adjective. Its a qualifying term.
 - There are a few observable elements of a liberal system:
 - The immanence of God
 - There is not the supernatural and then the natural with some strong barrier between the two. God works within and throughout the system. Miracles are not necessary for God to work in the world. God is at work within the world's natural processes—rather than miraculously acting upon the natural from without in the supernatural.
 - E.g., we don't need miraculous creation story taken literally. God works through evolution.

- Three Views of Revelation/Bible—theological spectrum (each utilize historical method)
 - Left—Religious literature. The Bible is the record of the religious experiences of a group of people, the Jews. (e.g., "The OT is the Jewish national scrapbook.") It's really not even revelation. There may not even be any objective content.
 - Does it have authority? Only to the extent that it reflects a common human experience. (side note: many sermons today are based upon the common experiences of the pastor as they are related to by the congregation).
 - The Bible is inspired to the extent that it is inspiring.
 - E.g., Julius Bixter
 - Center—Progressive discovery. The Bible is the progressive discovery of religious truth.
 - The Jewish people were really adept at this. Like the Greeks were with philosophy.
 - Its a mixture of divine truth and human thinking.
 - How do you sift through it? Historical criticism.
 - E.g., D. Miles Edwards
 - Right—Divine revelation. God is self-communicating. He reveals himself through Scripture and supremely in Jesus Christ.
 - It is progressive, it is partial, it is not infallible.
 - E.g., Henry Emerson Fosdick
- Three Views of Jesus Christ (each utilize historical method)
 - Left—Jesus was a great teacher of moral and spiritual truth, though not uniquely the Son of God.
 - E.g., Julius Bixter
 - Center—Jesus was the person who so dedicated himself to God that he discovered more about Him than anyone ever had. (so here Jesus is placed above Buddha, Mohammed, etc.). Though someone could come along and surpass Jesus' discovery of God.
 - E.g., D. Miles Edwards
 - Right—God chose Jesus and dwelt in Jesus to a greater degree than He has ever dwelt in anyone—at least up 'til that point. This was the Incarnation—that God was in Christ. Not that Christ was God, but that God was in Christ. The difference between Jesus and us is quantitative, not qualitative. So Jesus is an authority for us, but not the only authority for us. We can learned from other faiths (e.g., Islam, hindu, etc.).
 - E.g., Henry Emerson Fosdick
- Evaluation of Liberalism
 - Pros
 - It took seriously the intellectual challenge.
 - They realized that educated people have to be given intelligent answers.
 - They spoke in the language and thought forms of the period.

- They reminded the church of its social responsibility.
- Cons
 - They strove so hard to speak (i.e., restate in a different fashion) to the period that the message became modified.
 - In allowing culture to provide the terms for the discussion, liberalism often gave too much away from the outset.
 - They were accused of not following the method far enough.
 - Humanists charged liberals of being so fond of God that they weren't willing to give him up even when their methods—when followed to their logical conclusions—demanded that they do so.
- **Fundamentalism**
 - Distinguish between Late 19th fundamentalism vs. 1910-1930s version of fundamentalism.
 - Later period changed, narrowed in ways. It became more reactionary against liberals. Hence, less social emphasis in later fundamentalism. More and more specific brands of fundamentalism develop (dispensational, pretrib. etc)
 - Earlier development: Culture changed, denominations changed—led to the realization that what united them as a fellowship was an agreement on certain doctrines.
 - Niagara conference of the Bible—perhaps first list of fundamentals of the faith.
 - fundamentalism is thus born as a descriptive, though not necessarily pejorative, term.
 - Fundamentalists combatted modernism with social laws (Scopes trial) and denominational structure (i.e., control the seminary appointments)
 - Princeton seminary: became apparent that there were two distinct groups: fundamentalists and liberals
 - J. Gresham Machen was at Princeton during this time.
 - Machen eventually left and the fundamentalists lost Princeton, the crown jewel educationally
 - Scopes Monkey trial was grabbed by the press and fundamentalists were not presented very well
 - Fundamentalism in its early stages was a belief in fundamentals of the faith:
 - The inerrancy of Scripture; that the Bible is free from all error, that it completely teaches God's Word.
 - Machen said you could believe in errancy and remain a Christian, but you are in danger.
 - The virgin birth (i.e., virginal conception) of Christ.
 - The idea of miracles.
 - There is no lid on the universe. God can act in human history in supernatural ways.
 - The substitutionary atonement.
 - To deny this was to lose the heart of the gospel.

- The *bodily* resurrection of Jesus.
 - The Bible teaches these fundamentals, therefore they are simply to be believed.
- Fundamentalists maintained the gospel.
- They challenged the scientific method.
- They grew in their outreach.
- But they also narrowed themselves into a variety of splintered groups.

1/4/12

- **Karl Barth (Dr. Erickson pretended to be Barth for about an hour. Very cool.)**
 - 20th century theology began in 1914
 - Ernst Troeltsch—concluded that theology had no more the offer, so switched almost exclusively to philosophy
 - Germany did not have "seminaries" *per se*. They had theology faculties at their universities. This was tied to their state church.
 - Liberal theology saw God as so immanent that they could "see" God working through Kaiser Wilhelm (not unlike the Germany of the 1930's whose theologians mostly endorsed Hitler)
 - Revelation
 - Not *where* is revelation, but *what* is revelation? This was Barth's distinction.
 - The revealing (process) vs. the revealed (product) is, according to Barth, an incomplete and defective view of revelation.
 - Instead, Barth argued, revelation is an *event*, an occurrence, something that happened. God visits people in revelation. Revelation is dynamic and active, not static information.
 - The Bible, therefore, is a report of revelation having occurred. The Bible is not a *recording* of revelation, but a *reporting* that revelation has occurred, as well as a *promise* that revelation will occur again.
 - The Bible—and its words—can *become* revelation. So can preaching. But revelation, whether as reported by Scripture, or as occurring through the words of Scripture or the proclamation of the Church, is an event.
 - Barth had problems with Emil Brunner's revelation as *encounter* was too friendly with the idea of *analogia entis*. Encounter sounds too much like a two-way interchange. Barth maintained that there was no point of contact between God and man.
 - The Bible is the Word of God—the Bible is not the Word of God (both at the same time). This, of course, is unacceptable to rationalists.
 - *The Bible is the Word of God when God chooses to make it the vehicle of His presence.*
 - The mistake of Fundamentalists is that they/we believe the Word of God has been captured in Scripture, and thereby can be controlled somehow.
 - Barth maintains that one knows God by meeting Him, not by knowing about

Him.

- God is His own proof. He cannot be proven by anything else.
- Revelation is not information. Revelations is the dynamic presence of God.
 - Illustration of lights turning off and on. On is light. Off is where the light was and where it occurs. Revelation is similar.
- The most pungent critique of Barth's view of revelation has two prongs:
 - How do you base faith/evangelism on this view of revelation?
 - Neo-orthodoxy has never produced an effective evangelist.
 - When we hear Scripture we hear the "voice" of God, but there is a lot of static in there too (e.g., science and history)
 - How do you get theology out of non-propositional revelation?
 - As we are met/encountered by God, we can then bear witness to what we have experienced.
 - How to get from non-propositions of neo-orthodoxy to propositions of neo-orthodox theology? No one knows?
 - Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, Schleiermacher, and Barth—Erickson's notable theologians. Turned theology into new directions.
- Barth's Major Contributions:
 - Resisting the immanentism, the rationalism, the pluralism of Liberalism. Barth brought about the end of classic Liberalism
 - Barth found a way to return to the Bible.
 - Barth reintroduced the idea of a supernatural salvation, though it was more a neo-salvation.
- Negative Comments on Barth:
 - Barth did not completely rid himself of existentialist philosophy.
 - Proved long term not to be an adequate vehicle for faith, evangelism.
- **Rudolph Bultmann**
 - Born in Germany, 1884. Died in Marburg, August, 1976.
 - Studied at Tübingen, Berlin, and Marburg.
 - Primarily a NT scholar, but his conception and method have held wide influence over theology.
 - His demythologizing in particular ("NT and Mythology," initial article that was influential)
 - Came to be the supplanter of Barth
 - Myth and the New Testament
 - The NT bears upon the face of it the mark of common myth (beliefs common from the biblical era)
 - The three-story universe (heaven, earth, hell)
 - boundaries b/t three levels are not impenetrable (demons come up, angels come down, etc.)
 - Eschatology: a catastrophic end
 - The human person is physical and spiritual. The spiritual part is affected in ways that the physical is not.
 - Modern man knows better than to believe these "myths" accurately

represent reality. For example, disease is not caused by demons, but by bacteria and what not.

- The miracles of the NT were not miracles after all.
- What are we to do about the modern world being different than the biblical world? Three options:
 - Believe the Bible ignorantly.
 - Strip the NT of the myths, to remove the husks and get to the kernel.
 - Keep the myth, but to interpret it correctly. Ask what the biblical writers are really trying to convey here. They were trying to give expression to their existence, the transformation that had taken place within them. They were not trying to give us objective history. Nor were the NT writers attempting to give us a cosmology. They were merely expressing their own existence, their understanding of it, and the transformation that had taken place. When they were talking about Jesus, they were not attempting to factually establish a Jesus biography, but express the difference Jesus had made in their lives.
 - *Historie*—mere history; the question of whether something actually happened
 - *Geschichte*—significant historic; that which is historic; what difference did it make?
 - So questions like "did Jesus really rise from the dead?"
 - *Historie*—we don't know.
 - *Geschichte*—the disciples were transformed by the resurrection.
 - Therefore the NT are significant documents, but not historical documents.
 - Demythologizing does not mean debunking, but correctly understanding.
 - E.g., Gal. 2:20—the question is not whether Christ was crucified, but whether you have been crucified with Christ.
 - Rom. 6:3-4—I have been resurrected with Christ. That's the point, the *Geschichte*. The point is not *historie*—whether Jesus was resurrected.
 - Bultmann would have applauded the song, "He Lives," with its lyrics, "You ask me how I know he lives . . . *he lives within my heart.*"
 - Is Bultmann's view of demythologization a following of Barth's view of revelation to its logical conclusions? (**possible test question**)
- Critique of Bultmann:
 - Positive:
 - The content/substance of the Christian messages is not to give a worldview or to provide a biography of Jesus
 - Scripture is more like sales literature than they are laboratory

results.

- Recognized that the message did employ the thought forms of the day (i.e., the biblical day)
 - We ought not to force contemporary historical methods upon a document written so long ago.
 - He has attempted to state the Christian message in understandable terms for the modern man of his day.
- Negative:
 - Has he demythologized by first mythologizing?
 - Do most Christians today really believe in the three-story world?
 - Is the message of the NT existentialism?
 - Or . . . who made Martin Heidegger the authority on NT?
 - Is he really fair in the contradictions he finds?
 - e.g., b/t virgin birth and preexistence of Christ
 - Can one really have *geschichte* without the *historie*?
 - Paul and Dr. Erickson don't think that you can have a resurrection experience apart from Christ himself having been resurrected.
 - Example of nurse at intersection of wife on her way to visit the husband she doesn't know is dead yet.
 - Facts eventually catch up experience.
- **Paul Tillich**
 - "A real German."
 - Born in Prussia, 8/20/1886
 - father was a village parson
 - Parents were members of the upper class
 - Tillich's sympathies were with the common people, not with the upper class.
 - educated at Berlin, Tubigen, Halle, Breslau, *et al*
 - Was military chaplain. Had formative night during war, sees people dying.
 - "He peered into the abyss of non-being."
 - Why is there anything? Why is there life? Why am I alive?
 - Discovered Botticelli, art, and the experience of reflecting on art
 - Discovered in religious artwork that the content of religion is shaped by the form culture gives to it
 - Culture affects art which affects the form through which religious art is delivered
 - Vehicle for expression of Tillich's religion is existentialism
 - "A man's religion is what he does because he does what he is."
 - Affected by Kierkegaard
 - Became professor of philosophical theology at Union Theology Seminary
 - Bridged in many ways:
 - East/West German // Upper/Common class // European/North American // Philosophy/Theology
 - Great methodologist—worked at how do you do theology
 - The Method of Correlation ("The Tillich Two-Step")

- A two-step process:
 - The analysis of the situation—a philosophical endeavor of examining a situation (culture, politics, art, etc.) in order to determine what questions are implicit in the situation.
 - The authority—gives the answer to the questions implicit in the situation
 - Answers must be given both with authority, but in an expression which is congenial with the situation out of which the questions have come forth. Congeniality is to be in line with the "center" of the situation.
 - Case: Doctrine of God
 - Why is there anything? Answer: God.
 - Situation asks: being?
 - Authority answers: God.
 - God is not *a being*. God *is being*. God, therefore, does not exist. Tillich means this as a compliment, though. Beings exist. But God does not merely exist. God "bes." He is that within everything which causes it to be. God is the ground of being.
 - E.g., God is not a maple tree. He is the sap giving life to the tree.
 - God is in everything, but he isn't everything.
 - Sort of like panentheism.
 - If every finite being ceased to exist, would God exist. No. He, according to Tillich's view, exists only in everything.
 - So God is not a being.
 - Is he a person? No, but he is the source of personhood.
 - God is transcendence not in that he is above, but that he is the great depth within everything.
 - God is being itself.
- Evaluation of Tillich:
 - Positive:
 - Tillich made a creative and useful method of trying to give expression to what we say related to the question.
 - He has understood that people at a certain level of sophistication have to have the gospel presented to them on that level.
 - Negative:
 - Has Tillich allowed the question to dictate the answer?
 - Why isn't the orthodox personal God okay as an answer? as opposed to the ground of being God.
 - Is Tillich's presentation a distinctively Christian answer?
 - It certainly presented a God—perhaps not unlike Hinduism—but is it truly a presentation of the Christian God?

1/5/12

- Began by reading from Heb. 11:35-38; 12:1-2
- Pre-stage of 20th century theology (liberalism); classic period (Barth, Brunner, etc.); transitional stage (Pannenberg, Moltmann [i.e., the last of the 20th giants]); plurality of theologies (process, feminist, etc)
- **Wolfhart Pannenberg**
 - Dr. Erickson took a sabbatical leave and studied with Pannenberg in 1976 because he believed Pannenberg to be *the* systematic theologian of the day.
 - Born in 1928 in what is now Poland; son of a German civil servant
 - Given a middle class education (college prep, and college)
 - Early conversion experience involving a "pool of light" in a clearing; later Pannenberg regarded it as a trivial emotional experience
 - His "real" conversion came through a reasoning process whereby Christianity was determined to be best explanation of life and the world.
 - Became a member of the Nazi Youth Corps
 - Studied in Berlin, Basel (w/ Barth, but eventually became disillusioned w/ Barth)
 - Like Barth, thought theology to be for the church; but extended theology farther into world thought
 - Theological knowledge needs the same tests of knowledge as other academic disciplines
 - Studied also at Heidelberg
 - *Revelation as History*, edited by Pannenberg
 - Personal Characteristics:
 - wide intellectual interests
 - very gracious and warm personality
 - very modest lifestyle / didn't know how to drive
 - penetrating, analytical mind
 - Revelation:
 - You have to see Pannenberg's view of revelation against the background of:
 - Barthianism—Revelation is a meeting of persons, not conveyance of information. Words of Bible are vehicle of revelation, not revelation itself.
 - Bultmann's View—sharp distinct between *historie* and *geschichte*
 - *Heilsgeschichte* view of revelation—events and their separate interpretations
 - Each of these views . . .
 - Pannenberg insists on keeping revelation unitary.
 - History is organic, organismic, holistic
 - No event has meaning in itself, but only in relation to other (things)
 - All events are thought of as before, after, above, etc.—all history is significant, not just *geschichte* or whatever.

- Similar to Hegel's dialectical interrelatedness of all things
- Events get meaning from relationships...the event and its interpretation are one.
 - The whole of history is seen as revelatory.
- The Bible is not authoritative because its *the Bible*. The claims in the Bible must be submitted to the same canons of criticism and validation as any other historical claim.
 - Historical-Critical methodology.
 - Not everything in Scripture is to be taken at face value.
- History reveals not in isolation but as a part of the whole.
 - The meaning of an event can only be seen when the whole of history can be seen.
 - The end of history has already happened *proleptically* in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - History works as revelation because of what we learn about history when viewed proleptically.
- History is public theology. It is accessible to anyone willing to do the work necessary.
- Reason establishes that Jesus has been raised from the dead. But it is faith and hope to believe that we will be raised from the dead.
- Christology:
 - from above—start with Jesus' deity, then proceed from there.
 - from below—e.g, search for historical Jesus. Pannenberg did Christology from below.
 - On the basis of what Pannenberg learned through Christology-from-below, Pannenberg could conclude that Jesus was God.
 - The resurrection of Jesus Christ can be established historically.
 - The Gospels are dubious at best. 1 Cor. 15 is more impressive to Pannenberg than the Gospel accounts. The book of Acts is a good basis for establishing the historicity of the Resurrection.
- Evaluation of Pannenberg:
 - Pros:
 - He restored an intellectual basis for Christianity. Is able to stand up and engage/dialogue historically with the intellectual community.
 - He realized that the question of meaning cannot psychologically be separated from the question of truth.
 - Given significance to the liberal arts (i.e., what you learn in college is not irrelevant to what you learn in seminary).
 - Cons:
 - What do you say to a person who comes to a different conclusion on the basis of examining history?
 - In theory this should not happen.
 - Pannenberg's response: Reason has become naturalized. It has to become de-naturalized.
 - What exactly are the criteria for distinguishing between the legendary

and the historical?

- The lack of clarity regarding the relationship to Hegelianism tends toward Panentheism.

- **Jürgen Moltmann**

- Had a "prison camp" experience. Had effect on him. Realized that his nation (Germany) not only failed at war (WWII), but that they had failed at humanity.
- Moltmann's background:
 - Christian faith had become a faith without hope for the future of the world.
 - German "Christian" support for Hitler disillusioned Moltmann with his native land's version of Christianity.
 - Faith without hope. Hope without faith (Marxism)
 - The arising of a common future
 - In the past there have been many streams that have been independent of each other (nations, ideologies, etc.)
 - There will not be plural futures, but the same future for everyone.
 - I.e., the world is getting smaller.
 - The fundamental question of Christian theology is what is our future, our hope?
 - Christian theology speaks of God historically and if history eschatologically.
- Old theology sees God as the cause behind the universe. Moltmann's theology looks toward primitive Christian apocalypticism.
 - Theology as eschatology. Instead of part of theology being eschatology. All of theology is eschatology. Christianity is eschatological.
 - Everything points to the future. God lives in the future. What is to come to pass is what is really the essence of Christianity.
 - Liberation theology came from this way of thinking. Not that that is what Moltmann had in mind or intended.
- Hope and the Sin of Despair
 - In contrast to hope, there are two basic types of sin:
 - the sin of presumption
 - triumphalism; i.e., looking forward to seeing sinners get what they have coming to them
 - attempting to bring in the eschaton oneself.
 - Failure to take seriously, believe, and act upon the promises of God.
 - i.e., "It's going to happen. I don't need to do anything."
 - Does hope rob us of the significance of today? What about the joy of the present time?
 - No, it supplies meaning to this present. The future—and especially our hope in it—is what gives meaning to our present.
- The problem of evil is probably the most difficult intellectual problem for the Christian faith. Moltmann's response:
 - There is an afterlife. If evil lasted in this life, and there was no afterlife, then there could be no Christian answer to the problem of evil.

- The shift of revelation seems to be from what God has done to what God will do.
 - The difference is between God pushing history from behind as opposed to God pulling history from ahead.
- Evaluation of Moltmann:
 - Pros:
 - Cons:
 - What is the relationship between human effort and divine effort in the bringing about of the eschaton?
 - Dr. Erickson responded with this question when asked what the Achilles heel of Moltmann's theology is.
- **Death of God Theology**
 - 1966 was the year of death of God theology
 - It was a domestic theology
 - Thomas J. J. Altizer, William Hamilton, and Paul Van Buren are leading proponents of death of God theology
 - Neoorthodoxy, Bonhoeffer's religionless Christianity, Tillich's view of God, and the philosophy of Hegel were background factors
 - God is Dead:
 - Hamilton—It was the unreality of God. We do not experience God anymore. He is absent. He is not breaking through and revealing himself to us anymore. He is no longer needed. God's job has been outsourced by technological advance. Further, the experience of the absence of the experience of God (i.e., the problem of evil).
 - Van Buren—God cannot be proven. God cannot be disproven. Nonsense. Prayer? God says yes and God says no are both answers. Prayer means nothing. God is dead.
 - Altizer—God's transcendence is voluntarily given up in the immanent incarnation of Jesus Christ. Its like suicide.
 - Altizer's response to how we know God has made himself totally immanent was Moby Dick (the whale descending into the water for the last time)
 - God is no longer outside of human experience. He is within.
 - Death of God theology ceased, but secular theology expanded from it.
 - Eastern thought came in.
 - Traces of Pantheism could be seen.
 - Evaluation of Death of God Theology:
 - Pros:
 - Respects the honesty of death of God theologians.
 - They have pointed out some biblical themes:
 - we ought not to overlook that Jesus said "when you do unto the least of these, you have done unto me"
 - Our faith ought to lead to loving and helping others.
 - Cons:

- Is the problem of evil really so severe that "God" has to be given up?
- Is an atheistic view of the universe able to account for all the phenomena?
 - With the problem of evil you also have to deal with the problem of good.
- They would not say Jesus is our Lord, but Jesus is our leader. Well, why Jesus and not someone else?
 - Why kindness rather than cruelty, etc.?
- Can you maintain Christian ethics without the doctrine of Jesus?

1/6/12

- Devotion from Psalm 1
- **Process Theology**
 - began by explain how one ought to critique the views of others (see note)
 - Whitehead—mathematician who turned philosopher; profound effect on theology
 - Hartshorne—philosopher; greatly affected theology
 - both attempted to rethink metaphysics (the nature of reality)
 - Analytic philosophy (meaning) and neoorthodoxy were factors leading to the rethinking of metaphysics by process philosophers/theologians
 - As result, process guys attempted to restore metaphysics in a new way
 - We have to construct a more modest metaphysics
 - we must begin to do this with our own experience (rapidly succeeding experiences, as opposed to one long, smooth flow (i.e., like the difference between blinking lights and a light that stays turned on; or like cinema—a series of still photos flashed one after the other)
 - We come into existence in flashes, very quick flashes; we go in and out of existence repeatedly in a way that appears to me smooth and uninterrupted.
 - Maybe reality isn't "stuff," but it is events/a series of occurrences/a process.
- The nature of reality
 - The world is not to be thought of as a collection of things that are essentially static. Rather the world is to be thought of as events, as happenings, as foci of energy.
 - Thus, reality is a process from the past, which is given through the present where decisions are made, into the future which is potential.
 - The past is given. The present is being decided. The future is potential.
 - Reality is *organismic*. It is a whole in which everything is related to everything, in which every event feels, grasps, or "prehends" every other.
 - Whitehead neologism—"prehends" (i.e., events are not isolated—they feel/grasp/"prehend" all other events. Somehow every event is

- affected by (i.e., prehends) all others.
 - All reality is relational.
 - There is an interconnectedness of all of reality.
- There is genuine freedom within the system.
 - Even within non-human events, there is an unpredictability/freedom within the event.
 - Dipolar—Every event has two poles to it. In every event there are two elements: potential and actualization.
 - E.g., Whitehead's "initial aim" and "subjective aim"
 - Hartshorne's "abstract possibility" and "concrete realization"
 - What something could be and what it actually becomes.
 - Some events are more important than others (new things, growth, change are good)
 - persuasion takes place whereby potential is lured toward good actualization
 - The supreme reality to which religion points when it uses the word "God" is that which is the supreme exemplification of the process.
 - If the growth is descriptive of all of reality, so is the supreme entity/force/"God" behind it all.
 - Reality is therefore dynamic and developing, rather than static and final.
- So what about God—according to process theology:
 - God as cosmic moralist—i.e., the one who declares what is good and bad and enforces it. He is the supreme lawgiver and judge and enforcer. This view of God process theology emphatically rejects.
 - God as an unchanging and passionless absolute—This view of God process theology emphatically rejects.
 - God as the controlling power, the absolute Sovereign in the universe—This view of God process theology emphatically rejects.
 - God as the sanctioned of the status quo (i.e., the one who wants things to remain as they are [i.e., moral values are eternal])—This view of God process theology emphatically rejects.
 - God as male—This view of God process theology emphatically rejects.
 - The most important thing to remember about God is his *immanence*. He is everywhere and is involved in every event. He participates in the nature of reality. What is true of reality is true of God. If everything is changing and growing, then so is God as well. He is, in that sense, becoming God. God is moved by what happens in the world.
 - God has a primordial pole (I'm guessing pole as in potential vs. actual) which is the source of all reality.
 - All events reveal God, although some events are more revealing than others.
 - God knows the past completely, but not the future (link here b/t process theology and openness theology?)
 - God can only design the potential for existence, but not the actualization.

- God's primary attribute is his love. His is not threatening and coercive, but loving, luring, persuasive, and enticing. God is the supreme cosmic salesman.
- Evaluation of Process Theology:
 - Pros:
 - They have sought to do genuine metaphysics.
 - They have taken into account contemporary science.
 - They have rightly pointed out that orthodox theology has sometimes been extreme and rigid.
 - Cons:
 - There is a lack of clarity on what is the basis of authority.
 - They may have conceded too much to contemporary culture.
 - This does not seem to explain what the basis of continuity really is.
 - What is the basis for the uniqueness and the preferability of Jesus Christ.
 - What assurance do we have that good will win out?
- **Feminist Theology**
 - Mary Daly
 - Former Catholic Christian theologian at Boston College
 - Disavows the title of theologian. Prefers religious philosopher
 - Questions whether there is any objective knowledge at all
 - Correlated doctrine with women's liberation
 - Aimed to study the potential of the women's revolution // to transform human consciousness and its externalizations.
 - What can the women's revolution do to change the social forms of humanity?
 - Her theology was not based on some written text, but upon experience —thought not just any experience, but the women's experience.
 - She repudiated almost all of the experience-theology of history for being based almost exclusively on Western, white, upper middle class theologians
 - The rules for theology have always been made by males.
 - Like Adam got to name all the animals, men have always been the theologians to the exclusion of women.
 - Quoted Tertullian, Augustine, and Aquinas, and Luther, and Barth saying derogatory, "sexist" things about women.
 - The angry feminist has reason to be angry.
 - The real Golden Rule is that "Those who have the gold make the rules"
 - Male-centered theology is too logical. Feminine theology is more creative.
 - The biblical conception of a male God needs to be castrated.
 - Held somewhat of a Tillichian view of God. God is not a noun, but a verb.
 - Rejects the "mythological" traditional Christological because Jesus was

- male.
- Original sin is sexism.
 - To forbid women pastors is the same as muslims convicting female rape victims of adultery
- Rosemary Radford Ruether
 - Catholic theologian and artist
 - Begins with human experience, but seeking for biblical truth.
 - Gives much larger place to Bible than Daly.
 - Particularly concerned about Scripture which speaks to contemporary societal situation (e.g., sexism)
 - Scripture challenges us, but we must also challenge Scripture at points.
 - Challenges the Bible on the grounds that it—in part—originates from man and not God.
 - God:
 - The Patriarchal approach is not the only biblical one.
 - There is also the prophetic approach.
 - The loving, nurturing God—even the maternal God.
 - To take the biblical description of God as "Father" literally is to make an unnecessary and forbidden idol out of God's being described as male.
- Rebecca Pentz
 - Fuller (trained and taught there)
 - Claims to be an evangelical
 - Believes in the authority of the Bible
 - Goal: to show that orthodoxy need not be sexist and discriminatory; that a Christian woman can find in her religion the vision and strength to be all she can be
 - Doctrine of God:
 - God is not male because such categories do not apply to God. It is anthropomorphism to conclude otherwise.
 - Radical feminists real problem is with hierarchy and control. They reject God because he has authority and control over humans.
 - This is true for men as applied over women, but not to God over men and women.
 - Power does not have to be power over or power against.
 - Radical feminists object to God being God.
 - Christology:
 - Orthodox views
- Evaluation of Feminist Theology
 - Pros:
 - Who, when, and what we are affects how we see things.
 - Highlighted the fact that rightly or wrongly experience enters in to how we see things.
 - Cons:

- If Jesus isn't your ultimate authority, don't call yourself a Christianity.
- Its not just that women aren't willing to submit to men, they're (e.g., Daly) unwilling to submit to God.
- **Black Theology**
 - Only a black person can understand the black experience.
 - James Cone
 - A uniquely black theology
 - pointed out that theologians were all "cousins" (and thought Western culture supreme)
 - cold, objective theology does not experience the passion of oppressed, black theology
 - Christian theology is a theology of liberation; study of God in light of the study of the oppressed community
 - Roberts, Washington (black theologians of *balance* as opposed to ideological theologians like Cone)
 - Evaluation of Black Theology:
 - Pros:
 - Reminded us of the universality of Christ
 - Reminded us of the danger of a enculturation of Jesus to one particular group of people
 - We tend to create Jesus in our own image.
 - Cons:
 - Particularly in Cone, there is a tension between the Black Power movement and the traditional Black religious experience
 - Again, particularly in Cone, there is a kind of fideism (the Black experience is it! Why? Not much reason. Approaches anti-intellectualism)
 - There is a selectivity in the use of the Bible (e.g., all have sinned, not just Whites)
 - Theodicy
 - If Blacks are God's favored people, why are they allowed to undergo such an inordinate amount of suffering

1/9/12

- Devotion from Matt. 6:25-34
- **Latin American Theology**
 - "Third World" is more frequently being referred to as "Majority World" b/c of rapid growth and majority of believers in the third world
 - Mostly pentecostal; fair amount of liberation theology
 - Traditional theology (Bible informs situation); i.e., theology comes from the Bible.
 - In liberation theology, however, one begins with life situation.

- Theology is critical reflection upon praxis (i.e., upon actual practice or living)
- Monopolar vs. bipolar hermeneutics
 - Monopolar hermeneutics approaches the Bible and asks "what does the Bible say?" The assumption is that the Bible has a certain meaning, and further that such meaning is discernible.
 - Bipolar hermeneutics (used by liberation theology)—the truth is to be found both in the past and in the present. A bipolar approach utilizes both revelation in Scripture as well as the present as a dialogical contribution to the understanding of truth.
 - Whereas mono polar hermeneutics approaches theology in regard to the *past*, bipolar hermeneutics approaches theology from the present using the social sciences to bear upon theology (i.e., economics, political science, and sociology)
 - Our beliefs have to be formulated in the dynamic dialogue between the present and the past.
 - The writings of the Bible came out of historically-conditioned situations, as opposed to absolute conditions.
 - So the question is not "what does the Bible say," but what historical situation are we currently in?"
 - For theology to be relevant it must speak to the current situation, not simply be a reiteration of the past. The Bible was written in a different situation from ours.
- Three different ways of understanding poverty:
 - Poverty is *vice*. People are poor bc they're lazy, ignorant, or wicked.
 - Poverty is *backwardness* (economic or social), in which case reform is the solution.
 - Poverty is *oppression*. People are poor because the powerful classes have seen to it that the poor classes remain poor and weak. The solution is to transform the situation. This may involve *revolution*.
 - Read how much the minor prophets, for example, address oppression.
- Part of the oppression of the poor is *ecclesiastical* oppression.
 - Latin America has been predominantly Roman Catholic, where authority is generated from the top.
 - The Church itself has been involved in the economic exploitation of the poor.
- Liberation is a *secular* theology in some ways.
 - The world is not simply fallen, in need of redemption. It is a source of truth (in dialogue with Bible, tradition, etc.)
- Human nature
 - The human problem is not Gen. 1-3(i.e., fall from grace), but Ex. 1-3 (i.e., freedom from oppression)
- God puts his emphasis on the poor.
 - The poor on almost more highly valued than the rich in the view of Liberation Theology.

- Class Struggle:
 - Liberation theology has often allied with Marxism.
 - Gutierrez remarks that Marxism is valuable for its social analysis.
 - Some Liberation Theologians have been okay with violence in order to improve social situation.
 - The ministry of the Church ought therefore to reflect God's emphasis on justice. The ministry of the church ought to be social ministry.
 - More emphasis upon life here than life hereafter.
 - Evaluation of Liberation Theology:
 - Pros:
 - Reminds us of the limitations of our own perspectives (like Black and feminist theologies). We really can learn from others unlike ourselves.
 - Whether we have been directly involved with oppression or not, we have been involved indirectly and perhaps unaware.
 - Cons:
 - In Jesus' teaching, as important as physical health and well being is, it is secondary to one's spiritual health.
-
- **African Theology**
 - Remember that Africa was very important part of Christianity at one time (Origen, Augustine, coptic Church of Egypt [5th century])
 - The history of Africa (slavery, colonialization, exploitation) is important in reckoning African theology.
 - Two major groups of African theology:
 - Those who stress political and social liberation (i.e., South Africa)
 - Those theologies who strongly emphasize indigenization
 - Incorporates African culture
 - Is it more important to preserve African culture? Or to put an end to oppression?
 - Those Who Emphasize indigenization:
 - Western Christianity brought to Africa its own culture, and was ignorant that it did so (i.e., thought that Western culture *was* not Western, but Christian)
 - Missionaries were often insensitive to African customs (e.g., polygamy)
 - Traditional African Religion:
 - Worldview (common characteristics)
 - Do not prefer classification; view things in isolation (?)
 - Mythical view of the universe (not much for theoretical hypotheses; instead, prefer stories)
 - Symbolism—symbols and what they represent are more unified.
 - Time (not quantitative, but qualitative and concrete). Seasons have rhythm. They're not exact.
 - Weather—not simply natural forces, but weather has volition.
 - We our not just spectators to the passage of time, but we must live in harmony with nature (as opposed to forcing nature to adapt to us)
 - Community Structure

- They believe in the idea of community which includes the living and the dead. The dead are spiritually present among the living, and they are much more powerful in their influence now than when they were living.
- God is not addressed directly, but is approached through a chain of command.
- Approach to God:
 - God is patron and most senior member of family/community.
- Very concerned with social and community concerns.
 - Kind to strangers
 - Leave some harvests for the poor
- Belief in Witchcraft:
- John Mbiti
 - Saw African religions as preparation for Christianity.
 - Draws significant parallels b/t OT world and African milieu
 - Strong emphasis upon importance of piety and service
 - Scriptures should be our guide as to the relationship between Christianity and traditional African religions
 - Not particularly attracted to Black Theology.
 - exaggerates the theme of liberation
 - against the decisive tendency to use "black" of God and Christ
 - uses theme of oppression more than joy
- 'Mercy' Oduye
 - Methodist; native of Ghana
 - African traditions must be taken seriously and treated respectfully (e.g., the divine spirit of nature)
 - Believe in the presence of all generations in the Christian community
 - Retain African practices (drumming, dancing, extemporaneous prayer, etc.)
- 'Elwood' Shorter
 - Catholic
 - deep concern for enculturation theology—there needs to be exchange, not isolation, between traditional Western Christianity and African expressions of religion
- [Sawyer]
 - Kinship b/t Jesus as elder brother and Christians
 - This is potential touchstone/bridge between Western Christianity and African religions
 - Christ as Healer
 - Christ as Ancestor (the one who's gone before)
 - Christ as Victor (victory over everything, including death)
 - The Suffering Christ (identifies and suffers with his people in oppression)
 - Christ our Guest (guests are blessing)
 - Christ as the Master of Initiation
 - Christ as the Chief
- Evaluation of African Theology:
 - Pros:

- Attempting to find elements in the culture as vehicles for communicating Christian truth
- Cons:
- **Asian Theology**
 - Christians are vast minority. Theology produced reflects this.
 - Heavy influence of Eastern religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism
 - Tended to coalesce around two issues: liberation and pluralism
 - Liberation Theology:
 - Christian Conference of Asia (CCA)—promotes liberation theology
 - Bong Rin Ro:
 - Pandekarr
 - *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism*
 - Choan-Seng Song
 - Third-eye theology (i.e., the heart)
 - *communcatio idiocadum*—humanity to deity, deity to humanity (attributes communicated each one to the other)
 - Koyama
 - Water Buffalo Theology—use simplest language to communicate to simple people. Theology must be more down to earth, more correlated to people's needs.
 - Biblically-oriented contextual theology:
 -
 - Evaluation of Asian Theology:
 - Pros:
 - The goal has to be not to equate Western culture with the essence of Christianity.
 - Cons:

1/10/12

- Devotion from 1 Sam. 17:38-40 on knowing what and what not to bring into battle.
- **Roman Catholic Theology**
 - Catholic theology used to *seem* as though it were unified.
 - There is a fixed set of doctrines and these must be agreed upon by all.
 - The doctrines were regarded as definitional for being Catholic. You had to accept "*the faith*"
 - Top-Downward authority.
 - Some areas of latitude:
 - RC never officially objected to adherents of theistic evolution
 - Those who did differ held their views privately.
 - Specific Doctrines:
 - The Nature of Authority
 - RC has two equal authorities: the written tradition (i.e., the Bible) the

- unwritten tradition (i.e., the history of the Church)
 - both are believed to have come down from the Apostles, especially Peter.
 - Ordination is traced all the way to Peter.
 - RC churches operate on the franchise system (from Rome). You need permission, education, etc.
 - Sacraments can only be administered by someone who has been ordained (i.e., who has the downwardly transmitted authority)
 - The problem w/ Protestant fundamentalists according to RC: no inerrant interpretation
- Philosophically:
 - Thomistic, Aristotelian influences in the "elements" of transubstantiation.
- The Nature of Salvation:
 - Salvation is by grace, but that grace is possessed and controlled by the Church. They are the only ones authorized by God to dispense His grace. This dispensation takes place through the *sacraments*.
 - The Sacraments must be administered by someone properly ordained. This is known as *sacerdotalism*.
 - This is why RC can say, "Outside the Church there is no salvation."
- The Nature of God
 - Based on Aristotelian view. God is perfect, complete, impassable, immutable, knows everything, can do anything, everywhere present, etc.
- Vatican II
 - Pope John XXIII wanted a fresh wind to blow through the Church
 - Society was moving away from respect for such centralized authority
 - Doctrine of God was changed:
 - Instead of the Aristotelian, Thomistic influence of an unchanging, impassable God—VII brought about more of a process type of conception (influenced by Teilhard de Chardin, a cosmic evolutionary, everything is organic and growing type of thing)
 - Maybe God is at work in other religious venues (e.g., Buddhists, etc.). These changes represented to most significant shifts to take place as a result of VII
 - The formula "Outside the Church there is no salvation" was going to be redefined.
 - But a redefining took place regarding what it means to be "inside" or "outside" the Church
 - Previously inside meant those who were churched, believed "the faith", received the sacraments, etc.
 - VII talked about "degrees of membership"
 - Those who are fully incorporated (baptized)
 - There are non-Catholic Christians who are linked to the

- Church (other types of Christians such as Lutherans, Baptists, etc.)
 - There are people who are in other religions, those of no faith, and even atheists of good will. These are people who are related to the Church.
 - E.g., Karl Rahner's idea of "anonymous Christians" as those people who are saved and don't know it.
- Evaluation of Roman Catholic Theology:
 - Pros:
 - better take on infallibility? (didn't get all of that)
 - willingness to see values and insights in traditions other than their own
 - Renewed emphasis upon the Bible
 - Cons:
 - There is an undigested view of authority. What determines what the truth is? Is it the Pope or what?
 - "400 years of change crammed into 6 months" reflections on VII
 - What is the distinctive of Christianity and why? What is the relationship to other religions and non-religious persons?
 - What is the nature of the Church? What is its role? Its power?
 - What is the nature of salvation? This needs more explanation.
- **Narrative Theology**
 - Narrative theology is almost more a mood than a movement.
 - There are parallels in homiletics—i.e., narrative preaching.
 - Theological Methodology
 - Tilley and the nature of metaphor (the purpose of metaphor is to bear the freight of insight from one place to another)
 - Problems with propositional theology
 - You can lose the oak of meaning in the forest of explanations
 - It can rob important Christian concepts of the power to invoke new insights
 - It has difficulty showing how faith enters into the life of believers.
 - Rituals—i.e., reenacted metaphors—are better ways of conveying meaning
 - Storytelling—telling, retelling, adopting and adapting, and especially through autobiographical preaching
 - Narrative theology, storytelling, is a better way of conveying and *illustrating* the truths of Christianity
 - What are the differences between propositional and narrative theology?
 - both agree that the Christian traditions must be understood and distinguished from those that are incompatible with the Christian tradition
 - What are criteria for this?
 - Propositions compatible? Or Stories compatible?
 - Formulating and reformulating systems vs. making religious tradition vibrant in a new context by telling new stories.

- Single, united, definitive statement of doctrine vs. irreducible statements of Christianity
- The role of Narrative (different conceptions)
 - communicational role—communicating by telling a story
 - hermeneutical role—the idea that the narrative portions of Scripture are the key to understanding the didactic portions. The stories shed light on the propositions, rather than the other way around.
 - heuristic/epistemological role—the idea that there is not necessarily a fixed content to the Christian faith. Instead, it is growing in the lives of Christians down throughout church history.
 - This is where Tilley falls.
 - Our world has changed. Therefore we must change how we do theology as well. Things that have changed in our world:
 - The rise of empirical analytical philosophy (in which the function of language is emphasized)
 - A recovery of the realization that human experience is inherently narrative in form.
 - Music is notes or it is a whole (narrative emphasizes the continuity of the whole)
 - The evolution of biblical criticism
 - Erosion of the Enlightenment myth (that people are basically rational desiring ideas instead of stories)
- Narrative of believers can provide theology (Biography as Theology)
- Evaluation:
 - Pros:
 - They have correctly emphasized the communicational power of narrative.
 - It does remind us that the work of Christ is in a sense continuing.
 - Empathy is often an essential to understanding, that I have to be able to enter into it in order to understand it. And that stories are a means by which we are able to enter in to Christian truth.
 - Its a reminder of the need for spiritual vitality in the theologian.
 - Cons:
 - There are some indications of pre chosen conclusion, that the selection of the cultural factors, and the selection of the story is made a presupposition of what the story/truth is.
 - Narrative itself has difficulty in explaining things. (e.g., Ruth, Boaz, and the interjection of explanation into narrative)
 - Why follow Christ's story? Why not take other religious leaders and follow their story?
- **Postmodern Theology**
 - Excursus on methodology and argumentation: using "distinguished" sources to support your view (i.e., giving weight to sources which give weight to your view). Gave the example of the prof. who told his assistant to go to the library and find

sources that agree with me.

- Evaluative vs. descriptive language (e.g., ad hominem attacks, pejorative language)
- Postmodern theology is a mood.
 - Whereas the goal of modernism was objectivity and universal truth, postmodernism says truth is not discovered, but manufactured. It is an interaction between the object being known and the knower.
- Who we are affects how we see things (America's reaction to the O. J. Simpson case).
- All knowledge is conditioned. Therefore the idea that knowledge and truth exist independent of us is a myth.
 - Two views of reality:
 - Statue view of reality (shaped)
 - Play-Doh view of reality (we shape) = postmodern
- Postmodernists typically don't like to talk about the premodern times, because there was objectivity prior to the Enlightenment.
- Everything is relative.
- You cannot be absolute about things.
- Pluralism—blind man and the elephant

1/11/12

- Excursus on the importance of how questions are posed.
- The battle for setting the terms of a debate is very key to the issues being discussed.
- **Postliberal Theology** (could probably also be known as "The Yale School of Theology")
 - George Lindbeck
 - *The Nature of Doctrine*
 - His theological concern grew out of an ecumenical context // and trying to forge some kind of unity of the Church in some sense
 - Talks about the nature of religion // what really is Christianity?
 - There are three basic views of the nature of religion in general and Christianity in particular
 - Emphasize the cognitive aspects of religion (i.e., doctrines, events, structures). Doctrines tell you something about something that is true. Informative about objective realities.
 - The experiential/expressive emphasis
 - Religion is not so much telling us how things are, but are telling us about our existential orientation and our feelings (similar to Schleiermacher's emphasis on religion and feelings of dependence on 'God')
 - The Cultural-Linguistic Conception of Doctrine
 - Combination of Cognitive and Expressive of (cf. RCs like

Rahner)

- Grows out of ecumenical dialogue
- Focuses on the extent to which languages resemble religions and religions resemble language
- Doctrines are communally authoritative rules of discourse for the Christian community
 - They are procedural rules, not substantive in nature, guides to behavior
 - They tell you how to operate, not how to live or what to believe or feel
 - They are like the rules of grammar.
- It is difficult to make clear how this combines variable and invariable elements of 'competing' beliefs
- People who hold to cognitive view combine 'insecurity and naiveté . . . people from whom the sects recruit'
- Three levels of doctrine
 - One—prayer, sacraments, rituals, etc. (practices, not truths *per se*)
 - Two—information about how to be the Church and how to operate in level one (not very clear here)
 - Three—Okay, I didn't really follow on this three levels thing. Erickson said it was unclear and difficult to pinpoint.
- Case Doctrine: The Doctrine of Man
 - Cultural-Linguistic—the role of the doctrine is that it should inform how we relate to other human beings. Not so much telling us what the human is, but how the human ought to act with regard to others.
- This is postliberal thought in the sense that it went *through* liberalism, not in the sense that, like fundamentalists, it took a detour around liberalism.
- Hans Frei

- **Evangelical Theology**

-
- Fundamentalism vs. Modern Liberalism gives rise to Evangelicalism
- Conservatives increasingly disenchanted with obscurantism and anti-intellectualism of Fundamentalism
- Harold John Okenga
 - writes article, "Can Fundamentalism Win America?" His answer: no.
- Carl F. H. Henry
 - *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*
 - more adequate rationale for Christian faith must be given
 - Needs to be emphasis upon social aspects of gospel; not enough social concern among fundamentalists
 - Tendency towards denominational fragmentation over non-essentials

of the faith

- National Association of Evangelicals (NAE)
 - positive instead of negative emphases
 - restores unity
- Charles Fuller
 - evangelist
 - "Old Fashioned Revival Hour"
 - Fuller Seminary
 - Came into some money. Decided to take money and start on the West coast a scholarly, evangelical seminary. Attempted to be a 19th Century evangelical Princeton, but on the west coast instead of the east coast
 - Carl Henry, Harold Lindsell, Wilbur Smith, Everett Harrison among first professors
- Billy Graham Evangelistic Association
- *Christianity Today*
 - Underwritten by Howard Pew
 - Pastoral level journal of theology
 - increased circulation rather rapidly by sending free copies to every pastor in the country for a period of time
 - Evangelical alternative to *Christian Century*
- The New Evangelicalism
 - similar to earliest fundamentalists (e.g., Machen, Warfield, Orr)
 - Erickson prefers "new" to "neo" evangelicalism as a moniker, as "neo" carries tones of change or difference
- Theology
 - Firm, nuanced view of inerrancy (nuanced in the ways it distinguished itself from later Fundamentalists)
 - generally mild Calvinism (held to predestination, but not with the vigor of the staunch Calvinism at Westminster; Van Til wrote strongly against the new evangelicalism)
 - For the most part it was premillennial, but not pretribulational or dispensational)
 - Many of the movements first leaders were Baptists (Carnell, Henry, Ramm, Vernon Grounds)
 - Others were Presbyterians
 - Fuller Seminary were predominantly Baptists and Presbyterians
 - Difference in spirit, not necessarily in essential doctrines, from Fundamentalists
 - Apologetic orientation to New evangelical theology
 - desire to avoid the errors of fundamentalism
 - thorough preparation, people speaking in their areas of competence
 - a more mediating view of human origins (i.e., not as categorically opposed to all forms and all levels of evolution; macroevolution rejected, microevolution not so suspect)

- Philosophically
 - tended to be presuppositionalists, but not in the Thomistic sense of natural theology
 - Instead, you start with a basic belief, a presupposition about God—that he is Triune, personal, good, and revealing of Himself, etc.
- Emphasis on Social Aspects of the Gospel
 - Social ministries, not so much social action
- The New Evangelical movement helped the plight of public opinion of Christian
 - reasonable, irenic, yet vigorous in making their case
- When Carnell took over as president of Fuller Seminary he sought to broaden the theological spectrum
- "Black Saturday" experience
 - Daniel Fuller is supposed to take over as Dean of the School of Theology after getting second doctorate, this time from a European institution
 - Fuller took exception to inerrancy in order to assert leadership and authority as new Dean
 - Two poles within the faculty:
 - Progressives such as LaSor and Fuller
 - Conservatives such as Lindsell and Smith
 - Maybe Fuller Seminary was not as unified in its doctrinal convictions as previously thought
- Kenneth Kantzer takes over Trinity and imports much of Evangelicalism's profs (many from Fuller)
- Another phase of Evangelicalism comes along:
 - Third iteration of 20th century evangelicalism
 - Roger Olson's postconservative evangelicalism
 - not a school or organization, but more of a mood
 - evangelical and conservative are not coextensive
 - you can be an evangelical while not holding completely conservative doctrines (inerrancy would be important here)
- **Open Theism**
 - traditional view of foreknowledge: God knows all of the past, present, and future before it ever happens. On this basis there is prophecy. God has exhaustive, definite foreknowledge of the present
 - Ps. 139:4; Isa. 41:26; 48:3
 - Prophecies, etc.
 - Greg Boyd
 - Abraham and Isaac: God learned from Abraham, "Now I know..."
 - God experiences regret in other passages ("I regret I made man..."; "why did I ever make Saul king?")
 - How do you account for prophecy?
 - Unilateral—God makes prophecy and he doesn't involve anyone else in its fulfillment
 - Conditional—e.g., Jonah and Nineveh; God changes mind based on how

people react

- Conception of the Nature of Freedom—key difference b/t camps
- Biblical/Hermeneutical Considerations
- Open theism is influenced by modern process philosophers/theologians
- Maybe the future isn't the "future" to God?
- The future does not exist, therefore there is nothing there to know. So says some open theists.
 - God knowing the future would be like God making square circles. Again, so says the open theist.
 - REPLY: then neither does the past exist. So I suppose God can't know it either.

1/12/11

- **Open Theism** (continued)
 - The argument about prayer
 - Didn't prayer in the Bible change what God is going to do? And don't we pray in a similar manner? If so, how can it be the case that God knows everything that will happen in the future.
 - Therefore, in practice all Christians who pray are implicit open theists. The practice of prayer assumes the open theist position.
 - The argument about "Don't blame God (for Hitler, or bad things happening) because God didn't know it was going to happen."
- **Developments in the Doctrine of Salvation**
 - What happens to people who don't hear the gospel?
 - Traditional
 - those who don't hear the gospel are lost and heading to hell. The majority of those who have lived are lost.
 - This is the exclusivist or restrictivist view.
 - Variation within Evangelicalism
 - On the basis of general revelation one might come to the contours—the outline of the gospel story—on their own (think Rom. 1-2). To believe in a powerful, good God and that humans are not good enough and need God's help.
 - This view sees parallels to the OT believers who didn't know specifically about Jesus but knew God would save by his grace.
 - J. N. D. Anderson, A. H. Strong, J. I. Packer, and even Billy Graham hold varying positions within this position.
 - Sanders and Pinnock (Inclusivism) firmly believe in this possibility, whereas the names above think that such is a possibility.
 - Universalism
 - All will be saved. None will be lost.
 - Unitarian Universalists
 - small %

- Inclusivism (Clark and Pinnock)
 - Three major arguments:
 - Saved through implicit faith
 - Sanders talks about "control beliefs" as certain basic elements of Christian faith that are used as criteria for interpreting Scripture as a whole. Sanders "control belief" is that God is love and just.
 - Points out texts that imply God wants all people to be saved (Heb. 11:6; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:4; Rom. 11:3; Rom. 5)
 - Biblical instances
 - Melchizedek factor ("priest of the Most High God," yet not a part of the covenant people). Apparently M learned from general revelation.
 - Cornelius in the book of Acts
 - All who are saved are saved through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. It is his work that accomplishes salvation, even if those saved don't know of Jesus or his atoning blood.
 - Rev. 7:9—"a great multitude from every tribe, nation, language."
 - Postmortem Evangelism
 - This is not the old belief in the second chance after you die. This is saying that everyone gets a first chance to believe. If they don't get it in this life, they'll get their first chance in the afterlife. If you do have a chance to believe in this life, you won't get the postmortem chance after you die.
 - Apostle's Creed ("descent into Hades")
 - based upon—at best—very difficult and obscure passages
 - That clause does not appear in the earliest versions of the Apostle's Creed
 - Sanders believes this.
 - Based upon "descent into Hell/Hades" passages (e.g., 1 Pet. 3:18ff.; 4:6). Seem to indicate that between Christ's death and resurrection he went to some place and preached the gospel to those who did not believe in this life. This is *postmortem evangelism*.
 - Notice the tension between implicit faith and postmortem evangelism: if every person can believe implicitly, why would they ever need a postmortem "first" chance?
- Annihilationism
 - Not everyone will be saved, but no one will be lost.
 - Those who are not "saved"—the finally impenitent—will not be punished forever in hell.
 - Rather significant number of British evangelicals have summed up and adopted a form of annihilationism

- The biggest name in this group would likely be John Stott.
 - Based on the idea of the burning up or the destruction of people ("kill the body . . . kill the soul" passage)
 - "the broad road leads to destruction"—destruction/destroyed means done away with
 - Other Reasons:
 - "control belief" about the nature of God; if God is love he will not submit souls to endless punishment and suffering
 - The Greek idea—not the biblical idea—is that the soul is immortal
 - Problems with this view:
 - frequent biblical references to eternal punishment and suffering
 - cf. Matt. 25:46 (sheep and goats judgment scene)
 - Sheep live forever, but goats don't?
 - The lake of fire
 - Rev. 19-20 on the torment of the devil forever and ever
 - Anyone else's name not found in Book of Life tormented forever and ever as well
 - There are some biblical themes we should not ignore, themes which annihilationists capitalize on.
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- With the move to post conservative evangelicalism there also came a move in the opposite direction
 - also note that there are many in evangelicalism who came from without
 - Bloesch—semi-Barthian evangelical
 - Thomas Oden—
 - Geisler extreme to the right. Pinnock extreme to the left.
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- **The Unfinished Agenda of Evangelical Theology**
 - Many of these comments come from Dr. Erickson's contribution to a festschrift for Chip Conyers (one of Erickson's good friends on the faculty of Truett)
 - Failure to think through the implications of one's beliefs leads to an unfinished agenda
 - The problem of customary consistency
 - This takes place when we take related doctrines for granted.
 - E.g., Erickson position as a 4 point Calvinist. He rejects limited atonement and doesn't feel that TU_IP necessarily/logically requires the "L" of limited atonement.
 - Just because a doctrine has always been a part of a theological package, that does not mean that it necessarily follows that it *has* to be part of a theological package. Test views. Don't just accept them.
 - Failure to recognize cultural influences. The extent to which my reading of Scripture is affected by my cultural setting.
 - E.g., Postmodernists don't apply their theory (that everyone's view is culturally conditioned) to their own theory.

- Failure to interact with contemporary issues (not to accept them all, but to at least recognize and address them)
- Assumption that what is new is the best (better than old or new)
 - Chronocentrism
 - Postmodernism is currently making this mistake
- Issues:
 - The nature of general revelation: its extent and its efficacy
 - Is it possible from general revelation to demonstrate the existence of God?
 - If there is general revelation, how much can those ignorant of special revelation know about God?
 - Is there some point in the unbeliever where we can evangelistically make contact? (i.e., analogy of being)
 - How much must one know and understand and believe in order to be saved?
 - Doing an inductive study of Scripture, how much knowledge is necessary for salvation?
 - The illumination of Scripture
 - What is the relationship between the exegetical work that we do and understanding Scripture?
 - To what extent is our work and Holy Spirit's role in creating our understanding?
 - The Immanence-Transcendence Dialectic
 - What is the relationship?
 - To what extent is God working through non-Christian aid organizations?
 - Divine Foreknowledge
 - physics, wormholes, time travel, etc.
 - there needs to be more work done defining how God knows the future.
 - Intermediate State
 - conscious existence between death and resurrection
 - if there is an intermediate state, what does this say about the nature of a person? What part of the person is alive, conscious?
 - The status or the future of the unevangelized
 - what about infants or mentally disabled?
 - The nature of the believers resurrection body
 - traditional: the believers resurrection body is going to be like the body Jesus has between resurrection and ascension; physical, eat, etc.
 - Ladd and Harris: Jesus' resurrection body was a spiritual body and we'll have one like that
 - James Orr: the body Christ had between his resurrection and his ascension was a transitional form and that the body was changed at resurrection and at ascension. Same body, but not the same body.

- **Post Conservatism** (i.e., postmodern evangelicalism)—Derek Brown, Garrett Fellow shared with us for about an hour on post conservatism.
 - *Revolutions in Worldview* (recommended book)
 - What is post conservative theology?
 - An evangelical response to postmodernism. Not *the* evangelical response, but a primary and important one.
 - Theologians trying to make sense of the postmodern setting that we're in. And make sense of evangelical theology.
- Quick Tour from Modernism to Postmodernism
 - Premodernism
 - Erickson, *Postmodernizing the Faith*
 - Characteristics:
 - Belief in supernaturalism
 - belief in universe and rationalism
 - observable nature not the whole of reality
 - purpose to the universal pattern to history
 - belief in the objective existence of the physical world
 - correspondence theory of truth
 - language was referential
 - Modernism
 - correspondence theory; referential language; discernible purpose of history
 - Change from premodern times has to do with the why of existence
 - w/o supernaturalism
 - looks to nature to find answers to questions of existence and reality
 - "Reality is restricted to the observable systems of nature" (Erickson)
 - Humanism—humans are highest value and discerners of truth
 - Certainty—the desire to be certain about what we know
 - found primarily in the scientific method
 - knowledge is objective
 - Foundationalism was in play—what is the one foundational, unthwartable belief upon which I can build my whole system of thought
 - sense of anti-authoritarianism b/c the thinking self had become the one who is able to discern truth and get knowledge.
 - external authorities (religion, Bible) had to be testing by the thinking subject
 - the individual is the one who comes to truth, and it is every individual's responsibility to do so.
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 - Postmodernism
 - not a single, easy to define stream of literature to define
 - its multifaceted

- found its way into architecture, history, and literature
- finds different expressions in different countries
- Key characteristics (especially in North America):
 - the objectivity of knowledge is denied
 - foundationalism is being questioned b/c the means by which we approach foundations are conditioned
 - so can we really have certainty at all?
 - questions the possibility of metanarrative (i.e., a story that explains all stories)
 - Universal theories of history and metaphysics should be abandoned
 - scientific method as the best way to get knowledge is being questioned
 - other ways include introspection
 - not possible to get to objective knowledge
 - to claim otherwise is to participate in oppression
- What are evangelicals going to do about the shifts
 - Why the label, "post conservative?"
 - The want to hold on to important aspects of evangelical Christianity, but wish to relate to postmodern setting
 - But some wish to reform (e.g, Roger Olson)
 - progressive
 - desire fresh light breaking forth from God's Word
- 1993ff.—key works and figures in post conservatism
 - 1993—Stanley Grenz, *Revisioning Evangelical Theology*
 - give honest thought to how to express truth in new contexts
 - to be evangelical means that someone has shared in the new birth; conversion
 - theology is a second order enterprise; take care not to say our theology is the same as God's revelation, Scripture
 - theology can and should be revised
 - community provides a vital source of theology
 - propositions as the only source of theology is outdated
 - 1995—Roger Olson, article from syllabus
 - four defining foci of evangelicalism
 - conversionism
 - bible as authority
 - evangelistic
 - emphasis on Christ's work on the cross
 - The essence of Christianity is narrative-shaped experience, not propositions or doctrinal statements
 - doctrine matters, but not as an end in itself
 - 1998—Roger Olson, "Does Evangelical Theology Have A Future?" (*CT* article)
 - two kinds of evangelicals:

- traditionalists—Christianity is a bounded set in order to avoid relativism and pluralism; doctrine is a first order issue; Reformation is touchstone of doctrinal truth; postmodernism is enemy
- reformists—centered set, boundaries are open and undefined; not concerned with who is in or who is out, but looks to the center and commits to four defining foci of evangelicalism; doctrine is 2nd order and is revisable; postmodernism is not enemy, but a dialogue partner
- 2000—*Renewing the Center*
 -
- 2001—
 - Doctrine of the experience of conversionism is most important
- Evaluation:
 - Pros:
 - seeking to genuinely interact with postmodernism
 - they're exposing modernistic tendencies in evangelicalism which leaves little room for the Holy Spirit
 - Focus on the community as playing a vital role in the formulation of theology
 - community is a refining medium
 - Right to say that doctrine is not the same as Scripture
 - Cons:
 - Unfair to suggest that evangelical theologians equate doctrine and Scripture
 - Labels of "traditionalist" and "reformist" are not fair
 - Can't avoid making doctrine a first level issue
 - conversion has to be first order doctrine for post conservatism to work
 - overextension of the dichotomy between Scripture and theology.
 - What makes PC different from Scheiermacher's religion of experience?
 - Olson: oh yeah, well what about traditionalists with dead orthodoxy?
 - "Centered set" doesn't mean anything.
 - even centered sets have boundaries
 - therefore language of "centered set" is unhelpful
- Dr. Erickson's comments:
 - What are the categories being applied?
 - The terms being used are slanted.
 - Theologians ought to "reform" not transform doctrine. The doctrines are not necessarily innovative, but the forms through which they are expressed are.
 - Community's experience vs. what the Bible says
 - Where is the center without boundaries? It is nowhere.
 - James Orr, *A Christian View of God and the World*

- "He who with his whole heart says "Jesus is Lord" has committed himself to [much more]"

A few parting comments and fielded questions before our final exam:

- Helmut Thielecke—*A Little Exercise for Young Theologians*
- Influence of Tillichian thought and neoorthodoxy upon much of 20th century theology
 - Tillich—God is everywhere and in everything (i.e., Panentheism)
 - Neo-orthodoxy—the idea that the Bible is not in itself transcendent truth that settles everything
- "analytic philosophy"—asks about the meaning of language. Philosophy humbled. Value in that it points out the sloppy use of language.