

The Easter Sermon

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You can never tell just where Jesus is going to show up. There he was the other day, for example, in the pages of the *New York Times Book Review*. There amid talk of the latest psychobiography of Flaubert, the most recent feminist dissection of social hierarchies, and yet another analysis of the decline and fall of modern marriage, was Jesus of Nazareth, looking as out-of-place as Saint Francis at a \$500-a-plate political fund-raiser.

What prompted Jesus' appearance in the *Times* was an essay called "Jesus Among the Historians," written by the eminent Roman Catholic biblical scholar John P. Meier.¹ It was ostensibly a review of E.P. Sanders' confident historical statement, *Jesus and Judaism*, but the real focus of interest was neither Sanders nor his book, but his subject: Jesus.

Now since the Book Review section of the Sunday *Times* is designed to be read by people who are killing time between Sunday brunch and "Masterpiece Theater," there is obviously some opportunity for subtle evangelism there, and Meier was rising nicely to the task. He was respectful of the fact that he was on the American equivalent of Mars Hill talking to moderns and skeptics. He was careful to maintain the precise methods and to speak in the measured prose of the careful historian, saying no more than the evidence would merit. But the man was scoring some preaching points, no question about it.

For example, on the New Testament record of Jesus' miracles, Meier clears his academic throat by observing that "how one explains the phenomena [of miracle working in ancient and modern religion] varies with both the subject studied and the observer commenting." Cautious enough, but then, without catching his breath, he announces in the very next sentence:

In the case of Jesus, all that need be noted is that ancient Christian, Jewish, and pagan sources all agreed that Jesus did extraordinary things not easily explained by human means.²

All that need be noted . . . indeed. If I read him correctly, what Meier was saying in his understated way, was that if you had been there in the synagogue at Capernaum the day the man with the withered hand got called up to the front, glanced around nervously at the stony congregation, stretched out his hand, and suddenly found that for the first time in his life he could extend his arms to embrace a friend without shame, you may have gasped with amazement, sung a psalm in gratitude, or maybe even have rushed off to Herod's office to see if the government could put an end to such interruptions of the liturgy. But, be you Jewish, Christian, or pagan, you would not have tottered casually off to brunch.

As for Jesus the teacher, Meier notes, accurately, if somewhat obviously, that many of Jesus' pronouncements - on mercy without measure, on love

without limits, on forgiveness without boundaries - seem to contemporary people to be noble ideals, but "simply unattainable." Fair enough, but Meier does not leave it there. He looks the reader straight in the eye, pauses, then calmly states:

To Jesus, they were possible, but only for those who had experienced through Him God's incredible love changing their lives. Radical demand flowed from radical grace. If religion was grace, then ethics was gratitude. . . .³

After that, can we really move casually on to the review of the new book on Marilyn Monroe? But Meier is not finished. He patiently walks his readers through the synoptic problem, the thorny matter of Jesus' self-consciousness, the complex question of what can be firmly known about Jesus versus that which was the invention of pious imagination, always obeying the constraints of historical evidence, but straining here and there at the tether to give witness to the challenges of this remarkable human being from Nazareth. "The kingdom was somehow already present in His person and ministry," reports Meier, "and on the last day He would be the criterion by which people would be judged."

And then . . . and then . . . Meier arrives at the resurrection. And here his pen falters, his decisive voice grows curiously quiet. "Since the Jesus of history," he finally states, "is by definition open to empirical investigation by any and all observers, the resurrection of Jesus, of its very nature, lies outside the scope of this essay. This does not mean that the resurrection is not real, but simply that it is not an ordinary event of our time and space, verifiable in principle by believer and non-believer alike."⁴

And there you have it. The trail of the historical Jesus, we are told, is a fascinating path, full of wonders and rich insights, available to be traveled by all, but it leads inexorably to a precipice. All history can say is that Jesus died on a Roman cross, and that, as Meier reminds us, "starting in the early thirty's of the first century, people who had known Jesus during his earthly life and who had deserted Him out of fear did a remarkable about-face after His disgraceful death and affirmed that Jesus had risen and appeared to them."⁵ On one side of the precipice, then, there is only a record of capital punishment and a few scraps of information about the beginnings of a religious movement. On the other side, there is whatever it was which turned Peter from a coward to a martyr, but history alone cannot take us across the gap.

And there stands the preacher on Easter, straddling the gap, one foot firmly placed on the side of history and tangibility where people believe only what they can see and touch, the other foot shakily reaching toward, if not firmly placed upon, the mysterious ground of resurrection faith. What to say . . . what to say?

No wonder the sermonic pen falters and the homiletical voice becomes mute in the days before Easter. No wonder that Easter, the one day in the year that most laypeople naively assume must be their minister's very favorite day - what with the crowded sanctuary and the choir in full voice - is, in fact, held in secret terror by many of the clergy. On every other Sunday the clever preacher

can, if inclined, parry and thrust with a few Churchill quotes, tell a couple of cute animal stories, and usually get away with pretending that the Christian faith is, after all, not really so unreasonable. But on Easter, the preacher must straddle the awe-ful gap, must stand up there before people who are wearing wrist watches, carrying credit cards, and wondering if their just-filed Form 1040's are going to be audited, and tell them that it's the truth - the truth above all truths - that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. "Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked . . ." (Acts 17:32a).

No wonder there was such excitement surrounding the famous Shroud of Turin. It seemed to be a piece of concrete evidence graciously tossed from the far side of the chasm to the near. If it were what some claim it is, the very burial cloth of Jesus with an image implanted by a powerful burst of energy, then it is no less than a photograph of the resurrection able to be studied with electron microscopes and hung in a museum for all to see - a sign from heaven.

But those who truly know the way of the gospel know there is no such sign, no steel bridge from here to the resurrection. There is only word of mouth, generation to generation. There is only the voice of the preacher, blown by the wind of the Spirit, to span the gap. "The best Easter sermon that I have heard or read in the United States during the past ten years," Markus Barth once wrote . . .

. . . was an honest expression of the preacher's complete bafflement by the Resurrection stories. . . . It was a confession of lack of understanding; it revealed want of appropriation, and failure of communication. It was a cry for help and enlightenment: Here it is said that Thou art risen. But where are you now? How can we believe? Help our unbelief! — This preacher did more than take the Resurrection seriously. He could not stand up to it; like John of Patmos he just fell down.⁶

All genuine gospel preaching on Easter is first a falling down before the mystery of the resurrection, but it is not only that. It is also a getting back up again to say what we can say. A good place to begin considering just what that might be is in the ancient record of another preacher's struggle with what to say about the resurrection. I'm talking about Paul's famous and convoluted statement in I Corinthians 15.

There was a time when I viewed I Corinthians 15 as perhaps the most disappointing of all New Testament passages, because it apparently delivered so little after promising so much. Earlier in my youth some well-meaning preacher had fixed it in my mind that this text was a product of the crystalline logic of Paul's formidable theological mind, and that, properly understood, it constituted an irrefutable proof of the resurrection. When I became old enough to examine such claims for myself, however, I never could get the logic of the passage to work. At the time I had never heard the phrase "circular argument," but if I had, I would certainly have applied it to this passage.

"I have preached to you," Paul's argument seemed to go, "that Christ is raised from the dead. Now if I have preached that to you, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (This was, to my mind, a promising start, with exactly the correct question raised. I hastened on to see how

Paul answered his own query.) "Now if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised, and that would mean that I didn't tell the truth in my preaching and your faith is in vain. But I *did* tell the truth in my preaching and, in fact, I'm going to preach that truth to you again, 'Christ has been raised from the dead.'" (To my mind, this was no example of crystalline logic; this was a merry-go-round, and I wanted off.)

The text was a disappointment to me then because it seemed to promise proof but to deliver only more preaching. It seems to me now, though, that I seriously misunderstood the way the logic of the passage actually works and, therefore, missed a crucial insight about the resurrection.

The text *is* an argument of the "if this, then this" variety; I was right about that. And I was also correct about the notion that such arguments cannot hang in mid-air. They must touch ground *somewhere* by appealing to *something* that even the skeptic must admit is true. Suppose that I am trying to convince you that a mutual friend, Bob Smith, was not in church last Sunday. It will not do simply to jump up and down and insist that he was absent. I need an *argument*, so I construct the following: "If Bob was in Hong Kong last Sunday, then he was not in our town, and, if he was not in our town, he, therefore, could not have been present in church." So far, so good; the logic chain makes sense. But now, for this to work, I need some proof for the *first* item in the chain. I need a photograph, an affidavit, a telephone call record, or something of the sort which will verify to you and anyone else who is interested that Bob was, indeed, in Hong Kong last Sunday. If I can produce the evidence, then you will have to bow to the logic of my argument. The chain moves deductively from what we definitely know to that which can be logically inferred from that knowledge.

But what I failed to see was that not all "if this, then this" arguments move that way. Sometimes the argument is not grounded at the *beginning* of the chain, but at the *end*. Sometimes such arguments do not move *from* what we definitely know, but *toward* it. Let's try my argument that way. "If Bob was in Hong Kong last Sunday," I say, "then he was not in our town, and, if he was not in our town, he, therefore, could not have been present in church."

But, then, suppose *you* say, "But he *was* in church last Sunday. He sang in the choir. I saw him. I heard him. You saw him, too." Ah, now, because you know and trust your own experience, the logic of the argument begins to run the other way. "We *experienced* Bob present in church. Therefore, he was *not* out of town; he was *not* in Hong Kong." In this case, what we definitely know comes at the *end* of the chain and ripples back toward the beginning.

And that is precisely how the logic of the Pauline argument runs:

If there is no resurrection of the dead . . .
 . . . then Christ has not been raised
And if Christ has not been raised . . .
 . . . then our preaching was a lie
And if our preaching was a lie . . .
 . . . then your faith is futile.

At this point - and this is the key - the Corinthians would shout in unison,

"But, our faith is *not* futile." Even the badly divided Corinthians - squabbling about the Lord's Supper, pointing fingers at each other about eating meat fresh off of some pagan altar, crossing swords over tongue-speaking, splitting hairs over church leadership - *even* the Corinthians would agree about this one thing: Their faith was *not* in vain. They had, if nothing else, a lively faith, a dynamic sense of the experience of the risen Christ in their midst. Their zeal threatened on occasion to burn down the church, but they did have zeal. "In every way you were enriched in God," writes Paul, "with all speech and all knowledge, even as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you." In other words, amazing, troubling, mysterious, and energizing things were happening at Corinth. If you worshipped at Corinth on Sunday, you might go away filled with the Holy Spirit or you might go way mad, but you wouldn't just go away, tottering off casually to brunch.

So Paul's argument does not work from the beginning to the end, but from the end back toward the beginning. Because the one thing the Corinthians were sure of was the electric quality of their faith through the charismatic presence of Christ, they would exclaim "No!" to the assertion, "Your faith is in vain." This "no," really this affirmation of their faith experience, would then flow back through the entire chain of the argument, changing the value of the signs from minus to plus, thus: Our faith *is* alive - we know that, therefore Paul's preaching which brought us to this faith *was* the truth, and Christ *is* raised indeed, and, therefore, we *can* affirm with conviction the resurrection from the dead.

The point here is exceedingly important for Easter preaching. If on Easter we try to find our way from our age to the resurrection of Jesus, we will only find that there is no way to get there from here. Meier is right, the resurrection "is not an ordinary event of our time and space," and, as such, it is not only outside the scope of Meier's essay, it is also outside of our grasp. All that we will find are an empty tomb, perhaps an abandoned shroud, and the sociological data of an eccentric new religious movement.

Easter preaching does not begin, then, with people's general inquisitiveness about what really happened that Sunday morning long ago, trying to coax that curiosity gradually into a reasonable recitation of the Apostles' Creed. Nor does it begin by explaining the mechanics of the doctrine of the resurrection and then beckoning people to muster up what it takes to believe in it. Easter preaching begins with the vision that the Risen Christ is present and at work in the world and that people everywhere experience the power of this living Christ and feel Christ's claim upon their lives.

In short, Easter preaching begins with people's experience - not just their ordinary experience, but with their experience, clearly felt or vaguely sensed, of the Risen Christ. As Hans-Rudolf Muller-Schwefe once put it, "'Did not our hearts burn?' (Luke 24:32) is the theme of Easter.'" Most of those who show up in the pews on Easter are there because, to some degree and in some way, they have heard Christ calling to them, and they have come searching for the words which will enable them to say, "Our faith is not in vain." The gift of being able to speak those words is what the Easter sermon is all about.

Now it may sound as though, by pointing to experience as the starting

point for Easter preaching, I am calling for some sort of short-circuiting of the theological process, issuing a license to push aside the books of systematic theology, to abandon gleefully all closely-reasoned analyses of the doctrine of the resurrection in favor of a more exciting romp through people's religious experience. That is not at all what I have in mind. In fact, the understanding of Easter preaching I am describing will send us quickly and deeply into every responsible theological treatment of the resurrection we can get our hands on. But we will go there not in order to find out what people are supposed to believe about the resurrection so that we can teach it to them. We will, rather, go to theology because it will teach *us* where to look and how to look for the power of the Risen Christ in human experience.

One of the first such lessons theology has to teach us is that the resurrection of Christ serves to validate the ministry of Jesus. As Carl Braaten puts it: The risen Christ who is present with us now "is identical with the one who was - the Jesus of history. The risen Lord is continuous with the crucified Jesus."⁸

This seemingly innocuous theological statement is actually quite important for Easter preaching. There are plenty of people whose Christian faith and practice consists of various attempts to follow Jesus as the model for their own living. As one pastor recently told me, "If I make a strong theological and ethical case for the liberation of the oppressed, my people shrug and yawn, but if I tell them the stories of Jesus caring for the poor and hungry, they ask, 'What can we do to help?'" It is easy, of course, to take shots at a simplistic "What would Jesus do?" approach, but finally to look down upon such efforts is to miss the point of Easter. The resurrection validates the earthly ministry of Jesus as the way of God, and far from condescending to attempts by Christian people to live like Jesus lived, the resurrection lifts such energies to the highest power.

I attend a church which prides itself on its ability to appeal to the educated sensibilities of the residents of our university town. Not long ago I found myself at a "covered-dish" dinner at this church, seated next to a man whom I had seen around the church, but never met. We introduced ourselves to each other, and he asked me how long I had been attending that church. "Only about two years," I replied. "We're fairly new in town. How about you?"

"I've been in this church for years," he answered. "In fact, I'm the only non-intellectual left in this congregation."

"You're kidding," I ventured with a smile.

"No I'm not. I haven't understood a sermon that's been preached here in twenty-five years."

I weakly suggested that he must surely be exaggerating, but he was clearly in the middle of a point.

"But I'll tell you one thing," he went on. "I'd *never* leave this church."

When I asked why, he told me that for several years, every Monday night, he and a few others had been taking the church van to a nearby prison for youthful offenders. "Sometimes we play ball with the kids," he said. "Sometimes we have a little Bible study. Most of all we just get to know them as people. I started doing this because Christians are *supposed* to do things like that, but now I find that I get a lot from it myself." He paused for a moment,

then continued, "I have found that you can't prove the promises of God in advance, but if you live them, you find they're true, every one."

What can we say in an Easter sermon to that man who is visiting a prison because Jesus said to do so and who "hasn't understood a sermon in twenty-five years"? He probably wouldn't warm up to, "The resurrection validates the ministry of Jesus," but how about, "Your faith is not in vain"?

Another insight theology gives us is that the resurrection is God's promise of the future intended for humanity. As Hendrikus Berkhof expressed it, "(Jesus') glorification is the ground of our coming glorification. As the first and only one he is at the same time the firstfruits."⁹ Or as the writer of I John puts it, "It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know when he appears we shall be like him" (I John 3:2).

The implications of this are, of course, many, but one thing we can surely say is that the resurrection opens the way for all human rebellions against determinism and hopelessness. The resurrection reveals that the phrase "history repeats itself" is too nearsighted to serve as a creed. If history endlessly repeated itself, dead people would remain dead, and the women who came to the tomb would have found there a decaying body in need of some fragrant spices. Instead, they found that God's tomorrow is not confined to yesterday's tragedy, but is open, free, moving, and alive.

There are some people who live toward this future, even if they do not know how to name it. Some people say, "The poor are always with us," and, with a shrug of the shoulder, walk away to make the next payment on the Mercedes. Other people, however, sacrificially share their possessions from warm and generous hearts. Why? Some people say "There will be wars and rumors of wars," and just hope that when the time comes we have more fire-power than the other guys. Other people pray for peace, work for peace, and live as makers of peace. Why? Some people say, "Once a jerk, always a jerk," and let many suns go down on their anger. Other people forgive and forgive, seven times seventy. Why?

The only sensible answer lies in the fundamental assumptions we make about the future. If tomorrow is to be just like today, only more so, then only a fool would forgive, pray, love and sacrifice. To be sure, some prudent planning might be in order so that we can draw the best available hand from the present deck, but we already know what's in the cards.

But if the tomb could not remain sealed, if suffering and death do not have the last word, if God's future for us is more than an infinite extension of yesterday, then we can hope for more than a reshuffling of the same old cards. A radically new game has been promised.

There is a theory currently in vogue among some physicists that the movement of time is connected to the expansion of the universe. As long as the universe is expanding, goes the theory, time flows along from past to future. If for any reason, though, the universe should begin to contract, time itself would reverse. People, if they were able to survive such a shift, would journey from age to youth, from the grave to the cradle, and they would "remember what is to happen tomorrow." Some of these theorists have even suggested that our universe has a mirror-imaged twin, which is now operating from future to past.

In this universe, composed of antimatter, time runs backward.¹⁰

If there is such an alternative universe, I do not care to live there. I find utterly terrifying the thought of a life in which every detail of the future is predetermined. But the sad truth is that, existentially, many people already live in that universe. The tragic facts of human life are already fixed, and all that remains is the joyless living out of them.

In Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man is Hard to Find" a notorious outlaw, called the Misfit, is terrorizing, and finally murders, a family who have had an auto accident on a lonely rural road. One member of the family, the grandmother, as she fears for her life, calls out, "Jesus, Jesus." The Misfit responds:

Jesus was the only One that ever raised the dead . . . and He shouldn't have done it. He thrown everything off balance. If He did what He said, then it's nothing for you to do but throw away everything and follow Him, and if He didn't, then it's nothing for you to do but enjoy the few minutes you got left the best way you can - by killing somebody or burning down his house or doing some other meanness to him. No pleasure but meanness.¹¹

In his own grisly way, the Misfit spoke the truth. Either the mean facts of life are already set, and there's nothing to do but grab what we can in the few ticks of the clock we have left, or "He did what He said." And if the latter is true, then everything is indeed off balance. Life is asymmetrical; the sands of the past do not pour into an identical sealed chamber, only to have the hourglass turned over to repeat the same closed sequence. The tragic past flows instead toward redemption.

It is perhaps the most remarkable of all human phenomena that there are people who insist on living their lives as if the dice are not, in fact, loaded. I'm talking, of course, about the Martin Luthers and the Martin Luther Kings, but I am also speaking of the people who will be out there in the pews on Easter morning. They are having children in uncertain times, and serving up soup to the homeless, and giving their money to the Cancer Society, and praying for justice for poor people in countries whose names they can hardly pronounce, and writing letters to people in jail, and trying to stammer out why they believe in God to people seated next to them on airplanes, and being hospitable to strangers, and in countless other ways betting their lives on a future more gracious and redemptive than they or anyone else can possibly create by mere human effort.

I know that there is faithlessness out there, too. I know that there are plenty of churchgoers whose creed is progress, whose savior is technology, and whose sacrament is cash. But that is not the whole story. In a world where Christ is not one idea among many, but a living presence, that *cannot be* the whole story.

There is a couple I know who have every reason to let their lives slip safely into some predictable groove. They are politically conservative, socially cautious by nature. They are retired. Their income is fixed, but comfortable. Their children are successfully raised and gone. They have every reason to pat them-

selves on the back for a job well done, turn on the television, and relax. Through a program in their church, however, they began to write a federal prisoner. It began slowly - a chatty letter every now and then, a card and a box of cookies on his birthday. Then a visit, and another. Then the man is paroled, out, free, a human being to be faced and dealt with. Last Christmas, when most retired folks with stocks and bonds were carving the turkey and figuring out how to get on the good side of the new tax law, this couple gave thanks and broke bread in their home with their newly-released friend in Christ. "I think he was convicted on armed robbery, we're not sure" one of them told me. "Anyway, it was good to have him in our home." What do you say to these people on Easter Sunday? How about, "Your faith is not in vain"?

There is yet another place in people's experience where theology teaches us to look for evidence of the living Christ. It sounds like a cliché to say it, but we must not let that dissuade us. Despite the fact that these words on the lips of some can be trite, it is nonetheless true that the power of the Risen Christ can be seen in all efforts to love others, especially the unlovely.

It is one of the ironies of contemporary church life that the fundamental claim of the gospel to love those whom the world rejects has become associated in the minds of many with theological parties, and, in particular, the bureaucracies of the big denominations. The fact that cumbersome, ideologically-centered phrases, like "marginalized persons" and "liberation of the oppressed," are fighting words to many people and groups in the church today should not be allowed to obscure the greater truths that the Risen Christ indeed calls us to love those who, on ordinary grounds, would be our castoffs and even our enemies; and furthermore, that there are people, many of whom do not know the bureaucratic jargon, who strive to exhibit just that kind of love.

Where can this kind of love be seen? It can be seen in those families who choose to adopt the "unadoptable" child. It can be seen in those who tirelessly circulate petitions aimed at warming the political hearts of city halls grown cold to the homeless in the streets. It can be seen in those who sit caringly beside beds in nursing homes. It can be seen in those who give up cherished leisure time to refurbish houses for refugees. It can be seen wherever there is active and loving concern for any victim.

But it would be a half-truth to speak only of love for victims. For some, what appears to be love for victims is actually the energy produced by hatred for the victimizers. Resurrection love is more radical than that. The One whom God raised was Jesus, who ate and drank with prostitutes and tax collectors, with victims *and* victimizers. As Moltmann put it:

The message [the gospel] brings into the world says that in fact the executioners will not finally triumph over their victims. It also says that in the end the victims will not triumph over their executioners. The one will triumph who first died for the victims and then also for the executioners, and in so doing revealed a new righteousness which breaks through the vicious circles of hate and vengeance. . . .¹²

It must be said, of course, that love for an oppressor is not always perceived by the oppressor as love, since sometimes this love comes in the form of protest

and confrontation. But it must also not be forgotten that it is possible for confrontation to be born of love rather than of hatred.

Early in my ministry I found myself embroiled in a rather nasty theological fight at the denominational level. The issue of the conflict has long since faded, but not so the memories of the bitterness which existed between the two sides. As is often the case in such disputes, the opposing groups were not just debating parties, they were feared enemies, each side persuaded that the other sought to undermine the faithfulness of the church.

During one of the most acrimonious seasons of this struggle, we learned that our four-week-old daughter would have to be hospitalized for surgery. We had been assured that the surgery would be successful (and, as it turned out, it was), but we were new parents; she was our only child; and it was a dark and frightening time. The day before the surgery, I received a telephone call from one of the leaders of the other group in the theological dispute. I groaned to myself. Not now, I beg you. Not now.

But the voice on the other end of the line spoke an unexpected message, "I heard the news about your daughter," he said, "I want you to know that she, and you, are in my prayers." Something about the hesitancy in his voice let me know that this was not the expression of pious sentiment. Something about the character of Christian love had struggled free from the grip of enmity and found expression through him.

"Thank you. That means more than I can say." That's what I said to him. I wish I had added, "Your faith is not in vain."

Seeking to live the life that Jesus lived. Hoping toward a redemptive future we cannot fully see. Loving those we would not ordinarily love. These are but a few of the many truths to be discovered by the Easter preacher in the doctrine of the resurrection, the many ways in which the power of the Risen Christ can be seen and felt in human experience. So many, I suppose, they can not be numbered, because, when all is said and done, the resurrection is the claim that you can never tell just where Jesus is going to show up.

NOTES

¹John p. Meier, "Jesus Among the Historians," *New York Times Book Review*, December 21, 1986, pp. 1, 16-19.

²*Ibid.*, p. 17.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶Markus Barth, "Introduction" in Leonhard Goppelt, et al., *The Easter Message Today* (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1964), pp. 10-11.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁸Carl Braaten, "The Kingdom of God and Life Everlasting," in Peter Hodgson and Robert H. King, *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Traditions and Tasks* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), p. 279.

⁹Hendrikus Berkhof, *Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Study of the Faith* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), p. 312.

¹⁰See, for example, the article "Is There A Past in the Future?" *New York Times*, December 30, 1986, pp. C1ff.

¹¹Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find," *The Complete Stories of Flannery*

O'Connor (New York Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1971), p 132

¹²Jurgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God* (New York Harper and Row, 1974), p 178