

Embracing the Transformation:

A Comment on Missionary Preaching

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Understanding waits upon conversion, and the primary task of the newcomer is a missionary task: to offer a persuasive account of a new moral or physical world. He must appear to the natives like an eagle at daybreak; they have their own owls (Michael Walzer).¹

"Missionary preaching" is the voice of a "newcomer," one who has something dangerously new to say. "Missionary preaching" intends to make available to the listener the mission—the powerful mission of God in the world. That mission is an *assertion* of new reality wrought by God (*Gabe*), and an *invitation* to receive and participate in the new reality (*Aufgabe*). In the pulpit at Columbia Theological Seminary, there is a sign for the eye of the preacher only. It says, "We would see Jesus."² The sign is the urgent request of the congregation that the preacher focus on making visible the new evangelical reality at work in the world. Less Christologically articulated, the sign might say, "Show us the promised land," "Show us the power of God," "Tell us about the new world," "Announce the news that we may begin again."

I

Missionary preaching is simply (to quote Walzer) the "persuasive account of a new world" that is now available because God's purpose, God's intent, God's rule is now in effect. Conversely, the power and claim of all other purposes and all old intentions have been broken. We need no longer live in fear or deference to those old powers, or hope for the gifts of those old regimes. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come (II Cor. 5:17).

The central metaphor for this proclamation is the coming of God's governance which displaces, nullifies, and delegitimizes every other governance. Martin Buber has seen that the covenant meeting at Sinai was a daring act whereby the rule of Pharaoh was broken by the "Kingship of Yahweh."³ The same break in power is dramatically asserted in Isaiah 40-55, when the governance of Babylon and of the Babylonian gods is broken by the rule of Yahweh (cf. Is. 46-47). In the New Testament, the Marcan version of Jesus' self-announcement is a parallel assertion: "The Kingdom of God is at hand, repent" (Mark 1:15). The invitations of Moses, Isaiah in exile, and Jesus, the invitation of the whole Bible, is to change the foundational loyalty of our life and to engage in this new loyalty which heals, liberates, and reconciles.⁴ The mission

of God is to overcome all such deathly powers. Preaching is the invitation to join in that overcoming, in order to have life. The central affirmation of every missionary sermon is that the power of deathliness has no more authority or claim over us. We are free for the loyalty appropriate to our life in the world.

II

An amazing fact about the Bible is that the Bible knows that this single, central proclamation must be articulated in a rich, daring variety of ways. It will not do, either in the Bible or in our preaching, simply to reiterate a single formulation of the news, even if we like the sound of that formulation. When we use only a single formulation (or a few variants), the news becomes tired, boring, and reductional. The challenge of preaching is that this well-known tale of God must be told as if it had never been heard before. The new land must be shown as if it had never been seen before.⁵ That fresh telling and that new showing require disciplined, diligent imagination on the part of the preacher.

It is useful, I suggest, to pay attention to some of the central *thematic constructs* of the Bible which shape the assertion (*Gabe*) and the invitation (*Aufgabe*) in different ways. I will mention five such thematic constructs which suggest that the Old Testament text is relentlessly rich and imaginative in articulating the new world of God in which we may live:

1. *Chaos is transformed into creation.* In its largest scope, the Bible invites us to think about God's transformation of the whole cosmos.⁶ Much distorted missionary preaching is excessively personalist and privatistic about "me and Jesus." How different if we think of Genesis 1 or Isaiah 65:17-25 as examples of missionary preaching! These poems assert the news that God has fashioned the chaotic, disordered world into a liveable, ordered home (cf. Is. 45:18-19). We are invited to terminate our complicity in the chaos (either causing chaos or enjoying it), in order to live freely on the terms of the life giving order of God.

Or conversely and even more boldly, the Bible speaks sweepingly about the old creation now hopelessly distorted, so that God works a wholly new recreation. In the new world offered in these texts, old distortions of greed and anxiety are displaced by sharing and trust. Our preaching is to invite participation in a new creation which is offered as a liveable home.

2. *Despair is overcome by God's promises moving toward fulfillment.* In his magisterial study of the Hexateuch, Von Rad has shown how the literature of Genesis-Joshua is organized as the *promise of God* (Gen. 12:1-3) moving to the *fulfillment of God* (Josh. 21:43-45).⁷ The life of Israel is fixed securely between sure promises and trusted fulfillments. Between the promise at the beginning and the fulfillment at the end, there is a buoyancy which knows that this flow of life is being kept, guarded, and guaranteed by God (cf. Heb. 11). The whole of the Hexateuch is preaching for "missionary work," because these texts present all of life under promise. They invite us to abandon our practice of despair and futility, as though there were no promises and no fulfillments, as though life flatly depended on us. The text asserts we are no longer fated in

a world of cosmic indifference, because there is a powerful destiny spoken over us that can be trusted.

3. *This world of harsh injustice is being urged to God's justice.* The story of Israel's monarchy (Samuel and Kings, the pre-exilic prophets) is a story of fearful self-serving power which is brutal and selfish. We find ourselves not far removed from such power which works deep injustice and which seems set to last forever. But the text, through the voice of the prophets, gives account of another purpose, a purpose of care, compassion, and fidelity, which relentlessly protests against the brutality and finally has its way.⁸ This alternative account of Israel's life (told, for example, through the tale of Naboth's vineyard, or Hezekiah's prayer, or Amos's judgment, or Jeremiah's tears) asserts that Israel's life is not a flat, closed history. Israel's life is a demanding choice between two ways, one of which leads to life and one of which leads to death (cf. Deut. 30:15-20). In the context of the kings of Israel and Judah, this entire literature of kings and prophets is an exposé of injustice and an assertion that the rule of God's caring justice finally is the wave of the future. This sad story of the monarchy and the determined poetry of the prophets, together are a summons to leave off old ways of manipulation and control, in order to embrace the possibility of communal justice appropriate to God's new rule.

4. *In a world of exile, there is a powerful impetus to come home.* The literature of the exile is a statement acknowledging what it is like to be displaced, alienated, and abandoned.⁹ This earlier literature draws very close to the alienation of modern life. "Exile" is a pertinent metaphor for much of our present experience. The literature, however, does not dwell on the reality of exile, nor on the route into exile. It focuses rather on going home, on being cared for and led home by a God who fights for us like a warrior (Is. 40:10) and who carries us gently like a mother (Is. 40:11, 49:14-16).

5. *The wisdom of God is overcoming the foolishness of the world.*¹⁰ The wisdom tradition of Proverbs and Job seems an unlikely locus for missional preaching. Yet even these texts bear witness to a different world where God governs.¹¹ The book of Proverbs is about the world of foolishness which brings death, a foolishness based in greed, selfishness, indifference, and the yearning for a "quick fix." The new world of God, offered as an alternative by the wisdom teachers, is one wisely ordered that yields life and well-being to those who are obediently discerning. The poem of Job, in a quite different idiom, reflects on the killing, isolated outcome of a life lived in stultifying conformity (Job's friends) or in arrogant defiance (Job). The book of Job invites us to a different world in which the wonder of God is visible and acknowledged (Job 38:1-41:34), and in which the terrible options of conformity and defiance are overcome (42:1-6).

These five categories are enormously suggestive and comprehend in a general way much of the text of the Old Testament.

1. *Chaos becoming creation or new creation* (Gen. 1-11)
2. *Despair yielding to promise toward fulfillment* (Genesis-Joshua)
3. *Injustice overridden by God's justice* (Samuel, Kings, Prophets)
4. *Exiles invited home* (exilic literature)
5. *Foolishness overcome by wisdom* (Proverbs, Job)

This is not an exhaustive list of the theological-literary thematic constructs available in Old Testament literature, which are ways to present the new rule of God.¹² It is, however, a sufficient sample from which to observe the various ways in which the Old Testament lends itself to missional preaching. These theological-literary constructs are not yet the concrete stuff of preaching. They are only general models in which the texts are located, and they provide for us general interpretive clues. Three observations occur to me about this inventory.

First, there is *rich variety* in these constructs. No one of these thematics is more basic than another, though we may each have our favorite. Each makes its own peculiar statement and must be taken on its own terms. None should be flattened or reduced to sound like any others.

Second, each in its own way concerns the *transformative enterprise* of God that is under way, in which we are invited to participate.

Chaos is *being transformed* into creation.

Despair is *being transformed* into fulfilled promises.

Injustice is *being transformed* into a community of justice.

Exile is *being transformed* into homecoming.

Foolishness which kills is *being transformed* into wisdom which gives life.

In each case, the world is no longer what it was. The world is not as we thought it was, or as it appeared to be. A new world is, in the moment of the text (and our speech about the text), being offered and made available.

Third, these several thematic constructs are not flat descriptions or reports. They are rather *powerful appeals for us to discern the world differently*, to discern the world afresh, to receive a quite fresh perspective on the world through these particular articulations. The texts are not neutral observations, but they are powerful arguments that because of God's gospel, the world we live in is not the one we have been led to embrace.

III

We have moved in our analysis from *dominant metaphor* to *thematic constructs*. Now we make a second move toward greater specificity. What is preached is not a slogan about the new kingdom. What is preached is not a set of formal constructs. What is to be preached is the *specificity of the text* in order to permit a *weaned imagination*.

A. *The specificity of the text*. I assume that every missional sermon is the explication of a specific text as a peculiar presentation of a changed governance. I will suggest three examples of how we might move from *dominant metaphor* to *thematic construct* to *specific text*.

1. Micah 4:1-4

- a) The dominant metaphor: *God's new rule*
- b) The thematic construct: *chaos became creation*
- c) The specific text:
...they shall beat their swords into plowshares,

and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more;
but they shall sit every man
under his vine and under his fig tree,
and none shall make them afraid. . . (Mic. 4:3-4).¹³

We live in a world of chaos. Nobody needs more evidence for that. It is a world of greedy insecurity in which we want more and more fig trees and vines. We never seem to have enough to be satisfied. The reason we are driven by such greedy insecurity is that we have chosen to live by sword and spear, by weapons of aggression, intimidation, and brutality. The combination of greedy insecurity and weapons of brutality, of course, yields a world of chaos. They leave us very much afraid. The world is nonetheless being transformed. Creation is being made new. It is being made new in the very moment of this text. While we listen to the poem, we notice that fewer vines and fig trees might satisfy us, if only we begin to refashion our swords and spears into gardening tools to care for the earth and let it produce. The very poem and the sermon we preach are a part of the scenario of transformation. By the end of the poem, by the conclusion of the sermon, our weapons are slightly reshaped. We have had a slight move towards disarmament, not only in the big "Cold War," but in all the "cold wars" we fight every day. We find our chaos is a bit tamed. We have a glimpse of what it is like with God's new rule. We have a new hope and yearning that we could live, at home and everywhere, with "none to make afraid." We have now heard the invitation grounded in God's action.

2. *Exodus 15:20-21*

- a) The dominant metaphor: *God's new rule*
- b) The thematic construct: *despair transformed by God's promise*
- c) The *specific text*:

Then Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and dancing. And Miriam sang to them: Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea (Ex. 15:20,21).

We live, like ancient Israel, in a world of slavery, unreasonable expectations, and hopeless quotas. We are pursued by peer pressure, debts to be paid, social expectation, the daily drive for food. We endlessly produce and it is never enough. That world of pressured production is deeply without hope, a dead place without promise. At the edge of that dead place, however, if we listen carefully, we can hear a new, faint piece of music which, while we listen, grows louder and more compelling. The music has an odd beat, the sound of liberated tambourines. We rush to the edge of the empire from where the sound is coming. When we arrive at the edge (where we never dared go before), we find our sister Miriam and many other sisters, dancing and singing with abandonment. Their bodies look exhausted from the accumulation of too much work and too much hopelessness. But the tambourines summon their feet, and they cannot keep still, tired as they are. We watch their dance. Now they are

not tired because they are not in despair. They have slipped over the border of the empire and stand outside it. We listen to the song, and in the singing we hear the name of this God, Yahweh, who is strong and powerful, who has drowned the horses, killed the warriors, ridden the sea—all the way to freedom.

We listen cynically to the song, because we are modern. We do not believe in silly miracles, because Pharaoh is forever. There are, moreover, no promises which the corporation has not co-opted. At least there is none known to us. Even in our cynicism, however, there is something haunting about the tambourine. Even more haunting is the look of rest and joy in the tired faces of the women, the sense of well-being and starting again which we never expected. The tambourine does not lie. Even if the song is primitive, it is transformative. We begin a cautious foot-tapping and soon we have tentatively joined the song of freedom. The God who made the old promises has acted. The production quotas will no longer control our life—we sing all the way to freedom, and we will not again knuckle under to the quota and the pressure. It is strange, but the very song of Miriam (and the sermon we hear about the dancing) is itself the very process of transformation and liberation. The song sets us a little free and we will never fully regress again. We have been at the edge of the empire, and we have looked outside the empire to the dance. We notice what it is like when we shake off the weight of despair.

3. *Proverbs 15:17*

- a) The dominant metaphor: *God's new rule*
- b) The thematic construct: *wisdom overpowering foolishness*
- c) The concrete text:

Better is a dinner of herbs where love is
than a fatted ox and hatred with it (Prov. 15:17).

What we eat shapes our life. We have to watch what we eat. There are so many ways to be stupid about food. There are too many kinds of junk food, some cheap and greasy, some highly caloric, some exotic and costly. The more affluent we become, the more we imagine that every meal should be a rich feast. The more affluent we become, the more intense the social whirl, inviting and being invited, fed to exhaustion. We have to keep up appearances and return obligations. "We are going out and the sitter will fix pot pies for the children." The whirl leaves us exhausted. It is almost no fun anymore. But we cannot offend this fast style. "If we don't keep it up, we will be dropped, and anyway, the kids like the sitter better than us." One way is fatted ox, sea food, prime beef, with exhaustion and alienation. Another way is to simplify, disengage, get healthy and slow down—eat greens, herbs, spinach. The alternative is not to "graze" but to eat, surrounded by a family with stories to tell and jokes to enjoy, laughs to share, hurts to pool, fears to embrace—"where love is." When a semblance of order returns to our consuming, the meal feels like the kingdom of God. The new rule has overwhelmed our hastened, desperate affluence concerning junk food and junk life. So we sing, "Forgive our foolish ways, Reclothe us in our rightful minds" with sane eating and caring.

The text is such a simple proverb. The patient, gentle discernment of what

is “better,” nevertheless, lets us leave off the killing foolishness. The proverb is unpacked at the dining room table in the presence of the whole family. The proverb transforms our foolish, deathly life into a feast of the kingdom—greens!

These three texts are so very different—Micah hoping, Miriam dancing, and Solomon advising. Each text bears a witness: Micah from *chaos to creation*, Miriam from *despair to promise*, Solomon from *foolishness to wisdom*. All three texts bear witness to the new rule of God, the new rule present in the text itself, a new world given in the act of our listening. In each rendering of the text, the preacher must attend to—

- a) the central claim of a new governance;
- b) the thematic construct that shapes the transformation;
- c) the detail of image and the nuance of the text.

B. *A weaned imagination.* The purpose of a textual, missional sermon is to help listeners participate in the transformation God is now working, working in the process of the text and its proclamation. That is, the purpose of such a sermon is to let us be transformed. The sermon is not to talk about a transformation that happens somewhere else with someone else at another time. It is a transformation that happens now with us, here, in this moment of speaking and hearing. (Cf. Deut. 5:3.) We need to ask: How do people like us change? How does transformation happen? While we do not know fully, this much seems clear. Serious preaching which evokes change aims not at doctrinal clarification or moral rectitude (either conservative or liberal), but at a weaned, newly-authorized imagination.

By “imagination” I mean the pictures, images, and metaphors we have in our heads which shape our world and determine our actions and values.¹⁴ These images are elemental and preconceptual, having been acquired in prera-tional kinds of ways. They are not changed by rational argument. They are changed by being displaced by a more compelling set of images and narratives that have authority in our most elemental experiences.

When we belong to the old world—of chaos, despair, injustice, exile, and foolishness—we act out that world. If the world is perceived and experienced as chaos, we will act chaotically. We have been a long time learning to trust in and rely upon those *un*-evangelical images of the world. “Missionary preaching” seeks to offer a more compelling set of images rooted in our deepest tradition and making contact with our memory and hope. Such preaching seeks eventually to wean our imagination away from the deathliness of a world where God does not govern.

Thus, for example, Micah’s contemporaries lived in an imagined world of swords, spears, and greedy scarcity. Micah *imagined* with them a different world, a world of disarmament and contentment and security. He invited his listeners to live toward that alternative world. Miriam’s contemporaries *imagined* a hopeless world of Pharaoh’s brick quotas. Miriam and her sisters danced an alternative of promise and possibility, outside the scope of the empire. Solomon’s greedy people *imagined* a world of junk food and junk living. The wisdom teacher *imagined* a “better” world. In each of these three cases,

the new world offered is only an act of imagination, not more.

The world of swords and spears still exists after Micah's poem, but we imagine pruning hooks and plowshares.

The world of Pharaoh and bricks still exists after Miriam's dance, but we imagine tambourines, dancing, and freedom.

The world of junk food still is seductive after Solomon's Proverb but we imagine a family happily gathered around spinach.

Little by little, our imagination can be weaned away from false "world proposals" that are the ideology and propaganda of the "rulers of this age." When our imagination is weaned away from falseness and death, the new rule of God has a chance. We imagine plowshares, tambourines, and spinach. We hope differently on that basis, care differently, dance differently, eat differently—in a very different world, a world given us by the text.

IV

The text of course seems remote from our daily experience. It is the important, demanding task of the preacher to let the text touch in authoritative ways the concreteness of our imagination. The main claims of missional preaching, as I have suggested them, are:

- a) We live in a situation (world) that needs transformation.
- b) The news is that the decisive transformation has happened.
(All of these texts witness to that conviction.)
- c) We can participate in the unfinished business of the transformation—
by following the transformation wrought through the text;
by yielding our deathly images to be available for new images
given us in the gospel and its poetry;
by acting on the basis of the new claims of creation/promise/justice/homecoming/wisdom.

The interpretive problem is this: How do I discern and experience this new reality given in the text? Missional preaching not only makes an assertion. It issues an invitation. The invitation is to *relinquish* the old world of death, to *embrace* the new world of life. The drama of relinquishing and embracing is the crucial, ongoing, unfinished drama of our life. For each of us, the invitation entails different actions and different transformation. But there is also a commonality about our situation. I suggest that in the United States, at the end of this century, i.e., the next years of our preaching, the *relinquishment* to which we are summoned is to break free of the *ideology of consumerism* which dominates our culture and the allied *deception of militarism* which keeps us in bondage. Such a relinquishment is a tall order indeed, perhaps one about which we have no agreement. What we probe for is the concrete experience in our life of the power of chaos/despair/injustice/exile/foolishness. I submit that the world view of consumer militarism (or conversely militaristic consumerism) touches every aspect of our life, engendering despair, fear, greed, and finally brutality among us.

Missional preaching is to make evident the deathliness of our present idolatry and to present the good news of another counter reality. This deathly power which besets us—

touches *public policy*, in terms of defense, welfare, taxation, and even our view of capital punishment;

touches *interpersonal relations* so that persons in marriage and family relations and in other face-to-face relations are treated as useable commodities, or as conforming automatons;

touches *personal self-concepts* fostering a sense either of needing to be a consumer or a producer, ready to be hedonistic or useful, in either case debased from personhood and therefore increasingly numbed;

touches our *perception of the world* as a cosmic orphanage where we live continually under enormous threat;

touches our *view of God* who is variously an awesome judge who punishes wrongdoing or a doting friend who is utterly tolerant.

Such an ideological view—chaotic as Micah's world, enslaving as Miriam's world, brutalizing as Solomon's foolish eaters—will destroy us.

The news to be proclaimed in missional preaching is that an alternative world is possible and offered because a faithful God rules.

Public Policy can be compassionate and caring when free of the deathliness of militarism.

Other persons can be friends and neighbors when not pressured by utility.

The self can be celebrated as a beloved, summoned heir of God when we are freed of consumptive, productive models of self.

The world can be appreciated as a network of life-giving forces when exploitation of creation is stopped.

God can be recognized as a faithful, generous, demanding partner when our distortions of works righteousness and cheap grace are relinquished.

Every and any person can join the mission and share in the transformation. Any and every person can make important moves towards the new governance. We are invited into the transformation by "the renewal of our minds" (Rom. 12:2). The new governance, however, requires that we not be "conformed." Preaching is an imaginative empowerment for transformation when our minds, hearts, and imagination are reinstructed.

V

The massive possibility in such preaching is that the world will be re-perceived and re-engaged as God's creation, now being freshly renewed. It is this settled but unfinished transformation that must be preached. In such preaching we assert:

1. *The truth of the transformation.* Missional preaching must affirm in as many modes and ways as possible that a new world of creation, promise, justice, homecoming, and wisdom has indeed begun.

2. *The hiddenness of the transformation.* It belongs to God's way that the new world comes like "a thief in the night," noticed only by those who watch for its coming. The loud, shrill power of the old world still fascinates us. We must be attentive to the alternative if we are to notice.

3. *The demand of the transformation.* The deep gift of God is free, but it is costly. No one enters this new world easily, casually, or accidentally. Entry requires an intentional embrace, and a knowing relinquishment.

4. *The polemic of the transformation.* This preaching and the choices it requires are not "tolerant" or "evenhanded." The gospel is no friend of Pharaoh or death. The enemy is concretely named, and we must be prepared to name the deathliness that is operative in public policy, in our personal, intimate lives, and everywhere that we seek a newness.

5. *The joy and freedom of the transformation.* The assertion and invitation of missional preaching is an offer that we can now, as never before, become who we are meant to be, at peace, in joy, safe, cared for, empowered. This joy contrasts deeply and decisively with the failure of the living death all around us.

We began with a wondrous quote from Walzer. There really is "a new world." That new world requires a "persuasive account." That new world requires that the preacher be "like an eagle at daybreak"—fresh, awesome, daring, sure, and powerful. Too much of our preaching is like an owl at dusk—settled, wise, and dull; or like a pigeon at midnight—tired, unimpressive, fearful, sapped of energy. The transformation mediated in this text is for the congregation. It is, however, also for the preacher, that the preacher should be transformed from owl or pigeon to eagle. The text and the gospel intend that the preacher is one who may mount up on wings like an eagle, in order that the rest of us should

run and not be weary,
walk and not faint (Is. 40:31).

When the eagle comes with a new world,

we shall dream with Micah,
we shall dance with Miriam,
we shall eat herbs with love.

The new world, birthed in the sermon which permits new dreaming, new dancing, new eating, evokes new, joyous living. We are then no longer conformed, but utterly transformed. We have our minds renewed, our lives changed, and our world begins again.

NOTES

¹ Michael Walzer, *Interpretation and Social Criticism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), p. 44. Walzer is speaking generically about the missionary task of any missionary and not specifically about the Christian mission.

² In a church where I preached recently, the sign for the eyes of the preacher only said, "Don't Move the Microphone." I could not detect a Christological intention in that expression.

³ Martin Buber, *Kingship of God* (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1967).

⁴ After having written this paragraph, I am aware that these three articulations echo the

dramatic shaping of the material by Bernhard W. Anderson, *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible* (New York: Association Press, 1971)

⁵ On the prospects for this demanding responsibility, see Fred B. Craddock, *Overhearing the Gospel* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978)

⁶ See Bernhard W. Anderson, *Creation versus Chaos, Reinterpretation of Mythical Symbolism in the Bible* (New York: Association Press, 1967)

⁷ Gerhard von Rad, "The Problem of the Hexateuch," *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), pp. 1-78

⁸ See Walter Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978)

⁹ See Ralph W. Klein, *Israel in Exile* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980)

¹⁰ This formulation is, of course, an inversion of I Corinthians 1:18-25. The inversion is required because, in the end, it is God's foolishness which is wise.

¹¹ See Gerhard von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972)

¹² Among the other thematic constructs which might be discussed are: a) the move from lament to praise in the Psalms, b) tales of inversion in the books of Genesis, Numbers, and Kings, and c) apocalyptic anticipations in Zechariah and Daniel.

¹³ The entire poetic unit of vv. 1-4 (5) must, of course, be treated. Because of space limitations, I have quoted only a portion of the unit.

¹⁴ See John Coulson, *Religion and Imagination* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981)