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Notes

Introduction

1. Nonetheless, hidden theological valuations quite often tend to affect seemingly historical study. The 'quest of the historical Jesus', not only before Schweitzer but also after him, is a case in point; see E. P. Sanders 1985, 330, and passim.

2. It is castigated by Morton Smith 1969. He regards the 'painstaking studies of tradition' by scholars like Gerhard von Rad as 'great achievements' (35), but finds modern Old Testament theology 'unspeakable' (32).

3. From now on I will mostly use the masculine pronoun in an inclusive sense in the hope that this conventional usage may not hurt (justified) feminist sensitivities too much. My mother tongue happens not to know grammatical genders — there is only one common word for 'he' and 'she' — which makes me prone to skip this particular problem.

4. Methodologically, the most acute presentation of the history of New Testament theology is that of Boers 1979. Morgan 1973, 1-67, is rewarding; Kümmel 1970, 123-46, is informative. See also Goppelt 1981, 251-81; Hasel 1982, 13-139, is more a list of problems and positions than a grappling with the issues. Merk 1972 thoroughly discusses Gabler and G. L. Bauer and then presents a survey of more recent developments (207-72). There is a shorter version: Merk 1980. K. Berger 1988b is more critical; he offers incisive, if mostly tantalizingly brief, comments on several modern works.

PART ONE: FROM GABLER TO WREDE

1. The Dual Programme of Biblical Theology: J. P. Gabler


2. E.g. Kümmel 1970, 115; Smend 1962, 345; Boers 1979, 23; Morgan
orientation system among many and it was relatively useless to appeal purely formally to the god or the scripture. Only in the Middle Ages did Christianity become the leading and, later on, the only system of orientation in Europe (5ff.).


25. Luise Schottroff, another pupil of Braun, pleads for a practical task: biblical study ought to serve ‘the liberation of all people into a life in fullness and justice’ (1988, 255). Her horizon is that of faith (248) and hope (261) but not of the church, which is an institution open to severe criticism (256f.). The guild of biblical scholars is sternly criticized for legitimating existing power structures with their work. Cf. further Georgi 1985, 87: ‘Is not the task of a critical theology, especially one of the New Testament and of the Bible at large, to uncover the suppressive manipulation which a so-called Christian culture, and in particular Christian power structures, have exercised on the tradition which has become ours?’

26. Petzke draws on Habermas and H. Albert in arguing over against Gadamer for a critical stance to tradition (6ff.).

27. The primacy of experience is also emphasized by Patte 1983 in his structural reading of Paul’s letters.

28. Johnson’s 1998 book on religious experience was a disappointment to me, a combination of extended polemics and curious interpretations (e.g. of the reasons for some Gentiles to seek circumcision).

PART THREE: DEVELOPMENTS IN THE 1990S

1. Conflicting Voices from the Debate on Principles


3. My position is distorted on several points by Adam. He disregards my concession that other interpreters may work in a church context, if they prefer (99 n. 34). It is not my suggestion that the reason for preferring a historical phenomenology of early Christianity to New Testament theology is that ‘the former would smooth interreligious relations’, while ‘the latter merely serves the parochial interests of an anachronistic (!) institution’ (99f). See below, 168f. Nor does my argument rest on the
assumption that the historian holds ‘a privileged role in determining what the New Testament texts mean’ (104). My point is the opposite (see below, 207)! For further distortions see 268 n.16.

5. Cf. the quotation below, 277 n.123.
7. ‘Violent’ in the ET, but the German has ‘gewaltig’ (not ‘gewaltsam’).
8. The fact that they quoted the Old Testament would show that they ‘intended to put another canon alongside that of the Old Testament’—a truly amazing assertion. What this fact shows is the opposite (noted e.g. by Hübner 1990, 38, whom Balla, 110 unjustly criticizes).
9. See e.g. Balla, 69f. (on the Apostolic Council) and 159–165 (adoptivist christology).
10. Cf. my comments on Schüssler Fiorenza’s attitude to Stendahl, above, 92f.
11. For a critique of Schüssler Fiorenza’s reading of Revelation see Räsänen 2000.

2. Pan–Biblical Theologies

2. Correctly Merk 1995, 134.
4. Merk 1995, 133 speaks of a ‘nearly “uncontrolled” confidence in the Synoptic tradition which goes far beyond a “critical sympathy”’.
6. Apart from Gesé, Stuhlmacher builds a great deal on the work on his other Tübingen colleagues Martin Hengel and Otfried Hofius.
7. Merk 1995, 138f: also finds Hübner’s actual task too limited when compared with his stated ‘pan-biblical’ goal. Likewise Mauser 1994, 355: the reader of the second volume has the impression of reading a commentary on the use of the Septuagint rather than a New Testament theology which is a disappointment after the first volume with its systematic power.
8. On this volume see Vos 1995.
9. Hübner himself calls attention to this in a review (1995b, 798).

3. New Testament Theologies

1. Volume 1 on Pauline literature and other letters was assigned to the late Helmut Merklein.
2. Hill 1994–95 very properly entitled his review article ‘Theology that Burns with Passion’. Hill commends the book to students and scholars, ‘but especially to preachers’.
3. Cf. e.g. Caird 76, 88, 393–7, 406.
4. Hill, 119 thinks that, had Caird lived to complete the book, it would have been more affected by E.P. Sanders’ work on Judaism.
5. For a comprehensive critique see Dunn 1998b.
6. For a comprehensive and balanced review see Morgan 1999.
7. The no less than 25 pages devoted to the history of Jesus research (241ff.) seem misplaced, even apart from the fact that this account is outdated (it remains within the confines of German debates and pays no attention to recent American scholarship).
8. Merk 1995, 123. Cf. Morgan 1998, 303: ‘... the author’s judgment is always balanced, and his expression lucid and economical. The result is a sound, reliable, and readable survey which deserves to be widely used.’

4. Histories of Early Christian Theology

2. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Merk 1995, 120.
6. Ibid.
7. Thus the verdict of Merk 1995, 120ff.
8. The ET The Theology of the First Christians, Louisville 1997, was not available to me.
10. I concur with Dunn’s judgment that some chapters are ‘more soundly based and more valuable’, in particular Chapter 9 which ‘contains quite a useful survey of concepts of “Church”’ (738).
11. Cf. ibid.
12. Roloff 1996, 128 rightly speaks of ‘minimizing the Jewish problem’.

5. A Semiotic Cathedral: G. Theissen

1. These include, among others, the guidance of religion by implicit axioms (Dietrich Ritschl) and its independence as a self-organizing system (324).

2. Theissen’s account of rituals seems speculative, apparently due to the various theories of sacrifice he is adapting. Baptism ritually stimulates the anxiety about one’s becoming a victim which has to die. In the eucharist the guilty consciousness that all life lives at the expense of other life is ritually stimulated. The rites express in an unacknowledged way the hidden anti-social nature of human beings in order to change this into motivation for pro-social behaviour (135). ‘The reduction of violence in the performance of ritual and the increase in violence in the fantasy of ritual are in tension, but only together do they both make the primitive Christian sacraments effective rites which transform the violent nature of human beings into a motivation for pro-social behaviour’ (159).

3. Theissen only deals with Matt 25.31ff. as an instance of the fusion of upper-class values with the mentality of small people (91f.).


5. Some readers may find this part fairly speculative, and the attempt to combine the deification of Jesus with a religious a priori (301) surely smacks of special pleading.

6. The network of basic axioms and basic motifs (the ‘grammar’) creates plausibility (292ff.). The Philippians hymn was plausible for those whose fundamental convictions included the axiom of a change in position, but Theissen does not seem to believe that there was a divine being who descended from his pre-existence (293). In more general terms, those who were convinced of the truth of the Christian faith had intuitively read the fundamental ‘grammatical rules’ off the narratives, images and poems of the Bible. This looks like a kind of demystologization: ‘change of position’ (among humans) is central, the Philippians hymn’s celebration of a divine being descending and being exalted becomes an image for this change. This is quite appropriate on a second level of reading, but at times this conviction seems to control Theissen’s presentation of the historical first Christians as well. The transfer to an abstract level helps him to iron out differences.

7. Theissen (xiv) indicates that the invitation to give the Speaker’s Lectures in Oxford led him to outline in this book a synthesis on which he had planned to work much longer; the present outline ‘must be filled and differentiated further’.

6. Summary

1. The exceptions are the conservative volumes of Caird and Wright which, for their part, are in harmony together.

PART FOUR: OUTLINE OF A PROGRAMME

1. Historical interpretation: Principles

1. See now the penetrating discussion of this section of my work by Barr 1999, 331–8.

2. On these different audiences see, although from a different point of view, Tracy 1981, Ch. 1. The difference between ‘exegesis at the Sorbonne’ and ‘exegesis in the church’ is reflected on by Dreyfus 1975.

3. For a similar claim made for Old Testament theology see e.g. Dentan 1963, 96: Old Testament theology is ‘part of the total organism of theological studies’, the ultimate purpose of which is ‘to prepare men for the Christian ministry’ and to contribute ‘to the general enlightenment of the Christian community with regard to the faith by which it lives’.

4. Strecker and Schnelle 1988, 150. The authors quote J. A. Bengel’s exhortation: ‘Te totum applica ad textum, rem totam applica ad te.’


8. Ibid., 138.

9. To be sure, the situation is more complicated, for even in a state university many, perhaps most, people study exegesis in order to become ministers in a church. This is certainly the case in my own country. In an exegetical class the teacher has to pay pedagogical or even therapeutic attention to the present mental and social situation of his pupils, and a wise pedagogue will probably try to avoid a head-on clash. In practice, then, compromises are hard to avoid. But it is imperative not to confuse pastoral strategy with ultimate aims. It is my experience, and that of some colleagues as well, that exegetical insights can be mediated in a more
relaxed spirit in educated lay circles than among undergraduate theological students.


11. To give one instance, some years ago I participated in a meeting, called by the Archbishop of Finland, in which university theologians discussed the 'biblical question' with bishops and diocesan educators. I read a paper on unity and diversity in the New Testament, in which I presented James Dunn's work to the audience in some detail (not least because Dunn cannot be written off as a 'radical' by any church authority, but must be taken seriously by them precisely as an exegete with pronounced church concerns). I limited my discussion (mostly) to canonical texts, assumed that the New Testament is in some sense normative for the church and tried to drive home the question, 'What should the church learn from the undeniable theological diversity in this canon?' I did not suggest a direct answer (only the vague one that some kind of pluralism must follow), as I think that that is not the business of the exegete, but tried to specify some issues which would have to be faced if church leaders really take modern biblical study as seriously as they assert they are doing. (The paper is published in Finnish in TAik 91, 1986, 193–204; some of its contents are summarised above, 99–101.)


14. The problem lies in the tension between the precritical understanding of the Bible so deeply embedded in the Christian tradition and the demands of truth in the modern academic world': Bowden 1988, 3.


16. Adam 1995, 104, distorts my point. See also Oeming's comments on Gerhard von Rad's 'inner tragedy' between the Scylla of historical-critical exegesis and the Charybdis of the pious confession which contributes to the vagueness of his central concepts (1985, 73). Oeming (128) feels that the tragedy reaches its consummation in Stuhlmacher.

17. J. T. Sanders 1975, 129, rightly notes (in an epilogue to a work characterized by largely 'negative' results regarding the applicability of New Testament ethics) that 'studies in controversial areas should not be undertaken — or published — only when they are affirmative!' He rightly refers to Albert Schweitzer's 'negative' classic (Schweitzer 1954).


19. For instance, some 90% of the Finnish population belong to the Lutheran church of the country; and even of the rest, many belong to one religious denomination or other. Such figures, however, hardly give a correct idea of the actual (lack of) significance of confessional Christianity in the country. Cf. Bowden 1988, xv, on the situation in England ('the churches in England have never been numerically so weak'; 'recent statistics indicate an active membership in the Church of England of about 3% of the population').


21. Cf. Luz 1985, 19: half a century ago the classical reader, for whom commentaries were written, was the minister engaged in a scholarly preparation of his sermon. However, this situation no longer exists; times have changed even in the church.

22. Cf. Morgan's reference to 'a European butter mountain of research out of all proportion to its religious usefulness' (1988a, 117).

23. Again, it should be stressed that no hard-and-fast line can be drawn between a societal and an ecclesial way of framing the task. Even in a church context, clarification of the identity of the members (as distinct from preaching) is a most important task. Petzke (1975, 18) raises a pertinent question in asking whether the Christian religion is really irreversibly 'thrown upon this one form of proclamation (preaching) which arose in the social situation of antiquity'. Even in a church setting alternative forms of (group) communication may contain a greater promise. From an exegetical point of view the development of 'bibliodrama' commands great interest. Cf. Kiehn et al. 1987 (in particular the contributions of Læuchli and Spiegel; Schramm's article on the relation between exegesis and bibliodrama draws on Stuhlmacher's hermeneutic and shares the problematical features of the latter); Læuchli 1987.


28. Scroggs 1988, 26, who rejects a purely humanistic interpretation of the Bible, comments: 'Here the sense of liberation is dizzying. Gone are the shackles of the Church once and for all. Gadamer's judgment that the text makes a truth claim can still be honoured and yet ignored, for the claim it makes is no more ultimate than that of the Quran or the Upanishads. Aesthetic appreciation has replaced the concern for a claim upon our lives.' But this is precisely the question: Why should the truth claim of the Qur'an be any less 'ultimate' than that of the Bible? Why is it only the truth-claim of our own tradition that ought to be 'honoured'?
of and general statements on 'New Testament theology' which display little perplexity on this score.

36. Under this heading, many issues will have to be dealt with which do not normally turn up when exegetes discuss 'revelation': e.g. dreams, visions and journeys to heaven.

37. E.g. Hasel 1982, 218, claims that ‘the final aim of NT theology is to demonstrate the unity that binds together the various theologies and longitudinal themes, concepts, and motifs’. Cf. Strecker 1983, 118: ‘New Testament theology’ deals with the question of unity of the theology in the New Testament. Perrin 1984, 415: ‘If we are to achieve a theology of the New Testament, we must first find a motif, a theme, a factor by means of which we can identify a unity within the diversity.’

38. Not surprisingly, many of the answers given are quite abstract (Dunn, Perrin, and even Schelkle: above, 68).

39. In my account of the history of ‘New Testament theology’ I had reason to note that in these syntheses an essential unity was often asserted without any attempt to explain the apparent diversity; cf. Gulin, Grant, Nikolainen. In the last two cases the discrepancy between the assertion of unity and the actual findings of the exegete was especially striking.

40. Kaftan (above, p. 37); cf. also Goppelt (above, 87).


43. Johnson 1986, 1–2, also thinks that the impact of the New Testament writings, ‘disproportionate to their size or claims’, justifies their separate study. But it is out of the question that, say, the Gospel of Mark has had an impact on the basis of such literary merits as are discovered in it by Johnson (147–72) – supposing it had any impact at all between the second and the nineteenth century.

44. Quoted by Holtzmann 1911, II, 173 n. 4. Holtzmann states that nothing Paul wrote has had ‘as interesting a history’ as Rom. 13.1–7, in which politicians operating with religious motives have often found ‘the contents of the whole Gospel, indeed all religion’ (173).


46. Still another feature of the situation is that some non-Christian texts have exerted a greater influence on theology than many canonical ones, e.g. Plato’s Timaeus.

47. This is seen by Petzke (above, 106). A new allocation of space is practised by Koester (above, 104).

48. Cf. Küng’s justification of his concentration on ideas in the interreligious dialogue (1987, xix): ‘In this process we must concentrate in the
first instance on ideas, teachings, doctrines... without mistaking the fact that religion is more than ideas. And yet, religious practices are often not the factor that divides religions... but the ideas, teachings, dogmas, and everything that follows from them.' To be sure, one might argue that in the process in which Christianity emerged from Judaism and was eventually separated from the mother religion, precisely 'religious practices' (circumcision, table-fellowship) were a decisive dividing factor. But the most important thing, after all, was not the practices as such, but the meaning accorded to them within the different systems of orientation.

49. Johnson, in giving his grounds for rejecting a historical model of interpretation, states that the historical model has been unable to deal with the religious contents of its sources 'except in a comparative, developmental, or theological fashion'. Historians have 'shed away... from asking what sort of religious experience gave rise to the Christian movement and motivated the writings that now interpret it' (1986, 11). But there is no reason why historical study which uses early Christian writings for purposes of reconstruction (rather than for a literary analysis) could not in principle focus on experience, and in fact the history-of-religions school did just that.

52. I am here following Kari Syreenni's description in a Finnish article of a controlled process of understanding (TAik 93, 1988, 25f.). In some respects, this comes close to K. Berger's views (above, 97f.).
53. Schüssler Fiorenza 1999, 27. On her relationship to Stendahl's programme cf. above, 93. Dentan 1963, 23, is right in contending that 'every subsequent attempt to obscure the distinction which Gabler made (sc. between biblical and dogmatic theology) has resulted only in confusion in both fields'.
54. Cf. Meeks' comment on Koester's way of combining a theological viewpoint with historical work (1982, 448): '... as a church theologian as well as a historian he is obliged to make some methodologically critical judgments - about what ought to be as well as what has been. A less faithful or more cautious historian would have avoided the problem by leaving such questions to the systematic theologian. Ironically that might have produced a history that would be more useful to the theologian, by avoiding certain confusions of categories... There is no direct line between was and ought.' Rudolph (1970, 184) has an analogous comment on the relation of comparative religion to theology: ‘Only a “non-theological”

science of religion is able to provide theology with unadulterated results of history-of-religions research that have not been filtered through theologizing or crypto-theological prejudices.’ (The latter refers to the work of such scholars of religion as Heiler and van der Leeuw.)
55. Bultmann 1955, 251; Merk, 1972, passim.
58. See Räisänen 2000.
59. See e.g. Clines 1993, 84–87; 1995.
60. Clines 1993, 84.
61. Ibid., 84f.
62. Räisänen 1987a, 2; cf. xv–xvi with n. 18.
64. On the Gospels as ideological narratives see the narrative-critical discussion in Merenlahti 1999, Ch. 8.
66. For criticisms of Rhoads and Michie see Räisänen 1990, 14–37.
67. I sense two obvious problems in narrative criticism: (1) the a priori decision to presuppose the internal (often ‘masterful’) coherence of texts like Mark’s Gospel and (2) the relation between the ‘text world’ and factors external to the text. Narrative critics are eager to know as much as possible about the cultural context to understand ‘the implied author and the implied reader’, but ‘wary of interpretations based on elements external to the narrative’ (Malbon 1992, 28) – but can they do justice to both concerns at the same time?
68. Wrede 1973, 100.
70. Moxnes 1993 (esp. 154, 156ff.) incorrectly construes Meeks’ programme as an alternative to mine, evidently due to a misunderstanding of my ‘global’ intentions. See above, 168f.
71. E.g. Malina 1986, iii–iv, 12.
73. Cf. Dunn 1998a, 12.
74. This is my impression of the net result of Thurn’s interpretation of Paul’s treatment of the law after his ambitious attempt of ‘derhetorizing Paul’.
75. Robbins 1996, 41. For a discussion of the enterprises of Syreenni and Robbins see Merenlahti 1999, Ch. 8.
76. Robbins 1996, 42 finds ‘a tendency within much historical and
theological criticism ‘to make every new specialization a subdiscipline of historical and theological reasoning’ which means that ‘additional disciplines are not allowed into the exegetical arena as equal partners’; ‘certain historical and theological approaches stand in an authoritative position over other disciplines’. I can see the danger; as far as I am concerned I can only emphasize that my concern is to defend the right of even historically-orientated research to exist and flourish in the changing field as a fully legitimate approach – which never was so rigid and sterile as many (though not Robbins!) would make us believe today.

77. E.g. Schlier (above, 66) spells out the fact that faith postulates a necessary unity behind the historical diversity. This faith (or belief) is indeed manifest in recent ‘New Testament theologies’.


79. Baird 1971, 57

80. Cf. Baird 1971, 57: ‘If the historian of religions is ever to reach the goal of ‘understanding’ other religions, belief must not be a desideratum. Otherwise one could only understand as many forms of religion as he could simultaneously believe.’ Morgan points out that the assertion that unbelievers cannot understand religion and theology well enough to write its history is ungrounded and potentially obscurantist and can be challenged by plenty of counter-evidence from ‘history of religions’ study (1977, 250). Correctly also Cullmann 1967, 73; Theissen 1979, 11.

81. For a specimen of an outstanding contribution by a professedly (if posthumously!) non-believing scholar consider the work of Franz Overbeck. And see now, of course, the work of Lüdemann.

82. Cf. Kaftan (above, 37f.): whenever the interpreter’s personal interest in the concern of the Bible lures him to read texts in a strained way this is detrimental. Witness the works of Richardson or Guthrie, and many others!

83. Contrast J. Weiss’s careful distinction between what was central to Jesus himself and what is important to Weiss as a modern person (above, 63). Cullmann’s criticism of the existentialist theologians (above, 32f.) is also pertinent here.

84. The point is well made and illustrated with interesting examples by K. Berger 1988a, 168–70.

85. Even more so Schlatter’s claim that the interpreter’s own faith is the presupposition of true objectivity (above, 34).

86. On Bultmann’s view of Judaism see e.g. Sanders 1977, 43–7.

87. My argument in this and the following paragraph is emphatically endorsed by Barr 1999, 538f., cf. 198.

88. Cf. Dentan’s claim (1963, 116) that the author of an Old Testament theology should ‘in some way share the Old Testament faith’, or even ‘the (l) biblical faith’, in conjunction with his definition of Old Testament theology as a ‘Christian theological discipline’ (122). Westermann’s Elements (1982) is still completely silent on Judaism! Cf. Levenson 1985, 1–2: ‘The sad fact . . . is that the endeavour known as “Old Testament theology” has been, as its name suggests, an almost exclusively Gentile affair. Indeed, its evaluation of the central institutions of ancient Israel does not depart in substance from those provided by the premodern Christian tradition. It is as though the historical-critical methods have yet to take deep root. Pockets of old bias remain untouched.’ For signs of a change cf. R. E. Clements, Old Testament Theology 1978 (unfortunately not available to me); Hayes-Prusner 1985, 251–2, 279. See now the discussion in Barr 1999, 266–311.

89. Stendahl 1984, 22. Cf. Baird 1971, 59: it is our statements that are on trial and not the degree of empathy; Barr 1983, 112: ‘What is generally meant, when people speak about presuppositions, is that they want deductive considerations.’

90. It is made by K. Berger 1988a, 186–8.


92. See K. Berger 1988a, 188.

93. Presumably consistency would further dictate the use of the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew Bible (cf. Stuhlmacher, Hübner).


96. Even Koester in his great work (1982) stopped in the mid-second century, although in his programmatic declaration (1971) he had required that the first three centuries be included in a history of early Christian literature.


99. Thus also Schlier in his pointedly church-orientated reflections (above, p.66); recently also the conservative theologian Morris. Similarly Gnilka.

100. Perrin 1984, 418.


102. Recent studies (such as Uro 1987; Kloppenborg 1989) have
confirmed the view that a particular group with a distinct theological outlook is to be discerned behind 'Q' (which is not 'only what you make it').

Koester (above, 103) also treats e.g. the Synoptic apocalypse and the parable chapter Mark 4.1–34 as independent documents. Such a procedure is appropriate, if there are sufficient literary-critical indications to make the hypothesis of an independent source plausible (in this case, the Synoptic apocalypse has a higher claim to independent treatment than has Mark's collection of parables).


104. Strecker 1975, 29. His more dubious reasons include a reference to the outstanding position of Paul in the canon and to his significance for the church of the Reformation.

105. Cf. also Grant (above, 60). Burrows' 1946 thematic outline of biblical theology was not available to me. See on it Hayes-Prussner 1985, 192–5.

106. Cf. the reflections of the young Bultmann (1911/12, 436–7) in favour of a thematic organization. Bultmann's reason then was that the aim of a theology of the New Testament is not to understand the person of Jesus or of Paul, but that which is characteristic of the new religion. Still, Bultmann also ponders the possibility of devoting a separate treatment to Jesus, Paul, and perhaps John, 'since in them stages of the historical development find their expression' (436). This, of course, is what he actually did decades later.

107. Wrede pointed out that only a few individuals should be singled out of the mass of early Christians because of their intrinsic importance; his choice included Jesus, Paul, John and Ignatius. But if the history of influence is any guide, Matthew and Luke (the latter especially as the author of Acts) deserve special attention (more so than Ignatius), as does the author of the Pastoral letters (cf. Petzke). And perhaps Irenaeus should move up in the ranking list too?

108. This is stressed by Grant 1950, 22 (above, p.60): to describe the rise of Christian doctrine satisfactorily one would probably need ten times more material than the five hundred pages of the New Testament!

109. Koester 1982 organizes the latter part of his work (chs. 10–12) geographically; K. Berger does so even more intensively.

110. 'We cannot write a theology of Peter or James or even of Paul, for in no case do we have sufficient material, or even an indication that the writer is giving us what he sees as most important in Christian theology. They are all occasional writings. But these writings are theologically informed, and we do well to take seriously the ideas expressed or implied in them', Morris 1986, 11.

111. For my own picture see Räisänen 1992a, 149–202, where much literature is also given and various alternatives are discussed.

112. Consider Bultmann's discussion of pre-Pauline Hellenistic Christianity, largely gleaned from late sources.

113. So, in various ways, Koester (above, 103f.) and Johnson (107f.). See now also Schweizer's 'theological introduction' (1989).

114. Cf. Riesenfeld 1957, 1261. In Old Testament theology, Eichrodt's thematic structuring of his work had as its consequence that 'although he gave some lip service to historical development and historical change, the body of his discussion does not often pay attention to this historical perspective' (Hayes and Prussner 1985, 183).

115. For an example see my discussion of the various views of the law in Räisänen 1987a, Ch. VI.

116. Nor with the creation, as Schelkle does.

117. Käsemann 1972/73, 243f., considers eschatology and christology as possible starting-points, opting for the latter.

118. Cf. Kaftan, Grant.

119. This course is taken by Rowland.

120. The position of the section presupposes a certain understanding of its contents: the radical view of the human condition, often taken to be Paul's decisive contribution, ought to be seen rather as a secondary ideological conclusion, an inference 'from the solution to the plight' (E. P. Sanders 1977, 474f., etc.).


122. Cf. Watson's question at the end of his study (1986, 180f.): can Paul 'still be seen as the bearer of a message with profound universal significance? Facing this question will mean that the permanent, normative value of Paul's theology will not simply be assumed, as is often the case at present. It must instead be discussed - and with genuine arguments...?' See also Wilson 1982, 347–51; J. T. Sanders 1975, 66.

2. Historical Interpretation: A Model

1. It is based on a paper read in a congress of the International Association of the History of Religions in Turku 1997.