DIALOGUE SEQUEL
to
Jürgen Moltmann's

FOLLOWING JESUS CHRIST IN THE WORLD TODAY

Occasional Papers No. 8

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Preface

For this sequel to Occasional Papers No. 4 we stand in debt to these writers who worked into their busy schedules time to write or reformulate responses to Moltmann's lecture presentations, given on his visit to two North American centers (Elkhart and Winnipeg) in the fall of 1982. Even more, we are deeply grateful to Professor Moltmann for his willingness to read these responses and to respond in such a helpfully critical and brotherly way. Marlin Miller's Introduction contributes also a helpful analysis of the dialogue and beckons us forward in this regard.

Tom Finger's article introduces the heart of Moltmann's theological contribution by focusing on the distinctive emphases of his Christology, the foundation for Moltmann's ethics as well. The six responses are addressed to specific lectures in Moltmann's series (the four chapters in Occasional Papers No. 4, Following Jesus Christ in the World Today). Moltmann's final essay responds directly to both Finger's essay and these six responses. Perry Yoder's book review, published by the Conrad Grebel Review (Winter, 1984) is included here by permission in order to make it readily available with this larger forum of discussion.

I here wish to express my deep personal appreciation for Moltmann's response in this way: until now I have not been able to read through this sequence of material (and I have done so several times) without weeping as I conclude Moltmann's response--and amid my tears, I cry out, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven!"

- Ed. Willard Swartley

INTRODUCTION

Two years ago Professor Jürgen Moltmann gave four lectures on "Following Jesus Christ in the World Today: Responsibility for the World and Christian Discipleship" at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries and Canadian Mennonite Bible College. The lectures have been published initially in this series (OP #4), and subsequently in Politische Theologie - Politisch Ethik (Grünewald: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1984; ET: On Human Dignity: Political Theology and Ethics [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984]).

In consultation with Professor Moltmann, AMBS organized the original series in dialogical format. Two persons responded to each lecture, thus initiating broader discussion. Roman Catholic and Lutheran as well as Mennonite theologians participated in the 1982 Elkhart series. Several of the Mennonite responses have been gathered in this booklet. The Bauman article recapitulated several issues related to Moltmann's second lecture on Luther; Yoder's comments addressed two questions to Moltmann's lecture on Barth; the Friesen summary focused several points in his third lecture on political theology; and the Koontz and Finger responses sharpened challenges to the fourth lecture which proposes an ethics of discipleship for the nuclear age. In addition, Helmut Harder from CMBC contributed a critique of the third lecture.

Professor Moltmann answered these queries and comments in piecemeal fashion during the discussion periods in the lecture series. He also graciously agreed to write a more systematic response to the responses, included as the final article of this booklet. In its own way, the response to the responses may well evoke further dialogue. Rendering these elements of conversation accessible to a broader readership invites others to participate in this discussion of what it means to follow Jesus Christ in a time overshadowed by nuclear violence.

The introductory article on "Moltmann's Theology of the Cross" by Thomas Finger was given originally as an introductory lecture to Moltmann's theology for AMBS students prior to the lecture series. It summarizes and seeks to evaluate several aspects of Moltmann's theology which may resemble "anabaptist" theological perspectives. It also suggests ways in which both might learn from and be corrected by the other. The lecture thus serves well as a preliminary study to the essays collected here.

In his response, Moltmann expresses the hope that this theological conversation might continue. His response to the responses provides ample challenge to further discussion, not simply as a debate between "reformed" and "Mennonite" theologians, but as a matter of discerning a fitting vision of knowing and following Christ. The challenges range from the relation between believing and doing to our readiness to have our existential decisions judged and transformed by the living Jesus Christ.

Moltmann couches the relation between believing and doing in terms shaped by a dialectic of traditional Protestant and liberation theology. He appropriately challenges theologians of an Anabaptist persuasion to articulate a theological ethic which does not fall into the traps of Protestant liberalism. Whether that would best adopt the dialectic between a preoccupation with right beliefs and right praxis remains nonetheless a fundamental theo-ethical issue and a challenge to further debate.

Similarly, Moltmann implicitly challenges pacifist Christians to resist evil, even if that may mean in extreme cases that one "becomes guilty in order to save human lives." Those whom he challenges may also wish to encourage him to review Bonhoeffer's way of resisting Hitler in the light of Jesus' "resistance" to the tyrants of his time. All will doubtless agree that a "new" ecclesiology and then a "new" ethic is needed. Perhaps this ecclesiology and ethic constitute the subject of the ongoing dialogue. Perhaps the pastoral model of an André Trocmé and the Christians of Le Chambon point to an alternative to the apparent impasse between an approach inspired by Bonhoeffer and the image of silent withdrawal which haunts the European "peace church" tradition during the Third Reich.

MOLTMANN'S THEOLOGY OF THE CROSS

Thomas Finger

Jürgen Moltmann's theology of the cross has much in common with the Anabaptist perspective. For both, the significance of the cross must extend beyond the sphere of individual salvation. For both, taking up the cross cannot consist entirely in bearing personal sorrows or crucifying harmful inner desires. As John Howard Yoder has insisted, to "take up the cross" means to take up the approach towards life that led Jesus to the cross. It entails adopting at least a general socio-political orientation. It involves identifying with oppressed people, rejecting violence, and going counter to those Powers That Be who live by violence. In short, taking the cross seriously involves making an at least implicit critique of many systems and structures of modern life, and thereby risking disfavor, danger, and even death.

In all these ways, Moltmann is very much in line with traditional Anabaptism. In one important way, however, his approach is very different. It is a distinctly theological one. However much his conclusions and even aspects of his method may differ from those of the systematic theological tradition, he is continually in dialogue with it, and continually contributing to it.

On the other hand, it is commonly supposed that the Anabaptist tradition has very little to say on the more speculative theological themes. Anabaptists--so the common impression runs--have much to say about ethics, discipleship and practical Christian living, but really nothing at all about "speculative" theological topics like Soteriology, Christology or the Trinity.

Notice, for instance, some representative quotations from Robert Friedmann's helpful <u>Theology of Anabaptism</u>. Of Soteriology, which is "traditionally the very nucleus of all theology," Friedmann insists that it "is and cannot be a major theme in Anabaptist thought.... These early

Anabaptists...desired to walk in the footsteps of the Master 'in love and cross'.... Therefore the question of salvation naturally dropped into the background and was dealt with only casually."[1]

Or take Christology. "Turning to the doctrine of the nature of Christ," Friedmann writes, "we again find among the Anabaptists no interest in such speculation." Friedmann does concede that traditional formulations (such as the Chalcedonian Creed) were accepted unreservedly by Anabaptists. "But one feels," Friedmann continues, "that this is not the center, not the decisive element.... What truly mattered was both the model of the life of Christ and the fact of His death on the cross.... All speculative, basically "hellenic' sophistication of patristic theology is left behind."[2]

Or finally, consider the doctrine of the Trinity. As in Christology, Anabaptists affirmed the traditional trinitarian teaching. However, Friedmann insists, "Such an affirmation was not central within their existential approach, and in their own group they hardly ever referred to it." Rather, they accepted it "without hesitation, since it did not in any way interfere with their own particular concern for discipleship and the building up of the Kingdom."[3]

Now much of the theological tradition certainly has discussed Soteriology, Christology and the Trinity in ways that are highly abstract, unrelated to and sometimes even opposed to discipleship. Yet statements like those just quoted seem to say more. They seem to imply that--in its more "speculative" branches, at least--theology has nothing to do with practical Christianity. They also seem to imply the reverse: that the Anabaptist perspective has nothing significant to contribute to the "speculative" areas of theology.

Friedmann's remarks about the original Anabaptists also apply to many in Mennonite and similar circles today. Many are constantly stressing peace, social justice and community. But if one should ask what all this has to do with salvation, or with God--one often receives an embarrassed grin, a few inarticulate groans...and perhaps a lot more on peace and justice and community.

This need not mean that such persons have no theological beliefs. Not a few frequently express orthodox convictions through song and hear them from the pulpit. Here again the comparison with early Anabaptism is apt. It's not that either group necessarily rejects the basic "speculative" affirmations of Christendom. It's more that neither group can see any important connection--or at least, can articulate any important connection--between these beliefs and what seems to matter most in concrete Christian living.

But is it the case that reflection on more "speculative" theological themes has little to do with discipleship? And is it the case that the Anabaptist orientation has nothing to contribute to scholarly discussion on these themes? I have chosen to discuss Moltmann's theology of the cross partly because Moltmann presents a powerful case that the way of the cross, which he affirms most profoundly, can best be traversed when one grasps its theological significance. I have also chosen this theme because it provides an intriguing example of how one who shares many Anabaptist convictions goes to work within the theological tradition.

I. THE CROSS AND SOTERIOLOGY

How is the cross related to Salvation? If "the cross" functions largely as a catch-word for a kind of lifestyle or a code of ethics, one would suppose that salvation is attained largely by acting in accordance with it. If we do our best, one might think, we will somehow participate in salvation. But if our understanding of Soteriology stops here, we can come perilously close to the works-righteousness so heavily critiqued in the New Testament.

Jürgen Moltmann's Soteriology is deeply influenced by Martin Luther's "Theses" for the Heidelberg Disputation of 1518. Among Mennonites, of course, Luther is in some disrepute. Was he not, after all, the archetypal Protestant who so sharply split the inner, spiritual Kingdom from the outer, political one--and who restricted his revolutionary insights to the former? Moltmann largely agrees with this

Anabaptist critique of Luther.[4] Nevertheless, in these early theses, which predate Luther's developed thinking on the "two kingdoms," Moltmann finds insights capable of transforming Soteriology in both its personal and social dimensions.[5]

Following Luther, Moltmann starts not from the standpoint of practical Christianty, but from the more "speculative" theological questions: how do we know about God? What is God like? He begins by contrasting two ways of understanding God's nature. The first is philosophical. It begins by reflecting on observable phenomena and reasoning "upwards" towards God as their ultimate Source or Cause. For instance, in our world one finds things, people or events characterized by some degree of power, some kind of beauty, or some sort of wisdom. One then infers from these that their ultimate Source must be supremely Powerful, Beautiful and Wise. (This is the via eminentiae popular in Medieval theology: for instance, in Thomas Aquinas' fourth "way").

Now Moltmann doesn't argue that this philosophical approach is entirely incorrect. But he insists (like Luther) that it usually leads us to act in the wrong way. For if we suppose that God is supremely Powerful, Beautiful and Wise, then we normally assume that to be like God we must acquire more power, attain more wisdom, and become more beautiful. And so we set out to gain more of these things--to become more Godlike and to please God--through our own efforts.

The second approach to understanding God, however, does not survey the world at large and search for clues to God's character. It begins with God's self-revelation. How do we know what God is like? According to this second way, by looking at Jesus--and especially Jesus on the cross. And if we look at the cross, what kind of God do we see? One who is obviously and overwhelmingly powerful, wise and beautiful? No. We see a God encompassed by weakness, a God apparently ensnared in the most senseless foolishness, a God marred by repulsive ugliness.

This second approach to understanding God (by looking "downwards," as it were, rather than "upwards") also has implications for our actions. If God is revealed amidst that which the world regards as weak, stupid and ugly, then we must take a new look at these things. Maybe if we take more seriously those

who are weak and suffer, those situations fraught with senseless tragedy, riddled with ugly brokenness--maybe there we will find God. And maybe we will become less enamored with the human striving for power, wisdom and beauty. For this striving, after all, has produced many victims and has spawned much of the suffering, tragedy and brokenness in this world.

If we press this line of thinking further, the cross yields principles of social criticism. It provides a standpoint from which to critique systems of power and wealth, and from which to initiate remedies for social disenfranchisment and poverty. Mennonites have discerned many such implications, even if they may not have thought of them in just this way.

But the cross, so understood, also has profound soteriological meaning on the personal level. For if I take God's cruciform revelation seriously, I must acknowledge that deep down I too long to be powerful, wise and beautiful. I must admit that I too am terribly afraid of being weak and stupid and ugly. I am afraid of failure. I am afraid of dying. But, Moltmann continues, if I keep my gaze on the cross, I begin to realize that God himself became weak, foolish and ugly. God himself entered into the pain and horror of failure. God even entered into death. And yet God was not finally conquered by these.

Now if I fully grasp this, says Moltmann, I become ashamed of my fearful longing and striving for power, wisdom and beauty. For it was these strivings, in the person of Jesus' religious and political enemies, that put him to death. And I am brought to repentance.

Repentance, however, is not some heroic introspective effort to strangle these strivings in oneself, not some mighty moral resolve to wholly redirect one's actions. True repentance is possible only when we realize--perhaps just implicitly--that if Christ went through weakness, failure and death, and that these did not destroy him...then if we abandon our fearful attempts to establish our own strength, success and our very existence, we too will not be destroyed.

The essential soteriological meaning of the cross, then, is that God himself experienced suffering and death, and was not destroyed; consequently, if we go through these things in union with him, we too will not be destroyed. We will not be abandoned. Nothing

can ever separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

When and insofar as I truly apprehend this (or better: insofar as I am apprehended by this God), then I can begin taking up my own cross. In union with Jesus, I can begin crucifying my own inner fears and strivings. And I can take my place in opposition to such strivings as they manifest themselves in society. For the critique of the cross, as we said, also carried powerful soteriological meaning for society.

Accordingly, approaching the cross from the standpoint of Soteriology as Moltmann does will not diminish its significance for ethics or discipleship. On the contrary, it strengthens it. For we cannot effectively critique and reform the strivings for power, wisdom and beauty which corrupt society if we are still enslaved to them. If the crucified God is not enabling us to crucify their roots in ourselves, whatever we do will ultimately spring from them, and perpetuate their influence--perhaps in a much subtler form. On the other hand, the more assured we are of the presence of the crucified One, the more authentically will we be able to withstand the social opposition of these forces, and to suffer it, as Jesus did, in genuine love.

II. THE CROSS AND CHRISTOLOGY

Moltmann's book, The Crucified God, from which most of this material comes, is much less concerned with Soteriology than with Christology and the Trinity. Moltmann, in fact, insists that we cannot really know what the cross means for us until we grasp what it means for God. In this volume, theology is not primarily reflection on ethics or experience, from which one seeks to derive some understanding of God. It is instead an effort to ground all ethics and self-understanding in the doctrine of God.

Many, of course (and not only Anabaptists), would object that Christology leads into the most abstruse speculations. What possible relevance could discussion about natures, persons and essences in the Godhead have for discipleship? Moltmann, however, does not begin with such concepts. He begins with the history of God's activity, focusing particularly on

the event we have just discussed: the cross. Let us reflect more deeply on what we just said about it.[6]

What lies at the core of the soteriological significance of the cross? It is the conviction--unarticulated though it may have been--that God himself experienced suffering and death...and that therefore God is with one in these things. But examined more closely, such a conviction implies that this Jesus who suffered and died and is with one is not merely a moral example--though of course he is that. It implies that he is not merely a social critic--though of course he is that. Beyond these, it also implies that somehow this Jesus is...God. Or at least that God is present in Jesus: so deeply, in fact, that when Jesus suffers, dies and rises, all this happens in God...and this is why the cross has saving significance.

Now all of this, of course, may be extremely unclear conceptually. A Christological conviction about the Deity of Jesus is not normally something that one first grasps intellectually, and for which one later finds ethical or experiential applications. Usually it is something that one first grasps implicitly, and that demands conceptual clarification as one probes its meaning more deeply. For Moltmann, Christological (and Trinitarian) affirmations are not intellectual speculations. Rather, formulating and affirming them become necessary as one seeks to grasp the historical and soteriological reality of the Christian faith in depth.

Let us look more closely, then, at Jesus' history.[7] Throughout his ministry, Jesus is in closest communion with the One he calls "Father." He teaches about his Father, prays to his Father, obeys his Father. His "Father" is clearly God. However, this identity of purpose is so close that Jesus himself exercises functions appropriate only to God. The coming of God's Kingdom coincides with the coming of Jesus. He speaks with authority appropriate only to God. He forgives sins as only God can. In short, the message and reality of the Kingdom of God are so inextricably bound up with the person of Jesus that he himself can be none other than God in person.

Yet when Jesus dies on the cross, he is shockingly abandoned by God. He cries out in agony: "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?"

When we ponder this contrast in depth, how strange it appears! We seem to have God crying out to God. We seem to have God being abandoned...yet being abandoned by God. Were this event of little importance, we could perhaps push this perplexity aside. But the cross is the very starting-point of our knowledge of God! How, then, shall we seek to apprehend it? Moltmann insists that we cannot do justice to the issues which Christology raises so long as we operate with a simple, self-identical concept of God. To apprehend the cross, we must make some differentiations in what we mean by "God." In other words, Christology leads inevitably to Trinitarian thinking.

III. THE CROSS AND THE TRINITY

To many, the Trinity seems the most abstract of all theological subjects, the one most distant from discipleship. But for Moltmann, Trinitarian doctrine, properly understood, arises from efforts to apprehend more significantly the history of God's action in the world, particularly that of the cross. Moltmann calls the cross the "matter" of the Trinity, and the Trinity the "form" of the cross.[8] Let us follow him, then, as he unfolds the doctrine of the Trinity through focusing on different aspects of the cross.

A. The Meaning of the Cross for the Son. We will not grasp the deepest significance of the cross from the standpoint of ethics. We cannot even do so from the standpoint of Soteriology. Rather, we must ask what it means for God. For Moltmann, Christology merges into trinitarian doctrine as he begins to ask what the cross meant for the Son.

For the Son, the cross was an horrifying experience of abandonment. He had come proclaiming the arrival of God's Kingdom--an arrival which, we have seen, was intrinsically connected with his own. The Son had experienced constant unity with his Father. But then in Gethsemane he began to sense that the One Whom he had known so intimately was withdrawing. Jesus was delivered over to those who hated him: he was deserted, mocked, tortured, killed. "Jesus clearly died with every expression of the most profound horror."[9]

To apprehend this horror, we must remember what the cross meant in Jesus' time. It was hardly a religious symbol. It was brutal, torturous execution by a tyrannical government. The one crucified was not only cast out and execrated by civil society; such a person was also regarded as cursed and rejected by God.

Moltmann sharply contrasts the suffering of a martyr devoted to a good cause with suffering which involves total rejection.[10] He finds a great distinction between suffering when, on one hand, one has a sense of inner justification and the support of others, and, on the other, when one expxeriences the final, overwhelming sense of aloneness and rejection. For Moltmann, Jesus experienced complete aloneness and rejection--even from God. We can think of this experience of utter godforsakenness as Hell.

According to Moltmann, this abandonment belonged uniquely to Jesus' cross. In this way, the cross of Christ is not like the cross you and I bear. For if we take up our cross and suffer, no matter how badly we suffer, we do so in union with Jesus. We do not die alone. But Jesus died alone. To use traditional language, he died in our place, in our stead: he bore for us the curse of abandonment, the curse of rejection.

B. The Meaning of the Cross for the Father. If God the Son suffers abandonment by the Father, it might seem as if God the Father bore some attitude of rejection, judgment, or wrath towards the Son. Indeed, Christian piety and Christian theology have often visualized the cross in this way. God the Father, so to speak, is sometimes pictured as situated above the cross, pouring down on the Son the wrath that all sinners deserve.

Yet this way of thinking, rather than drawing us towards God's saving action on the cross, can push us away. For although we may identify with the Son in his suffering, the Father seems overwhelmingly angry, and just barely appeased by the suffering of his Son.[11]

Moltmann, however, sees the Father also as suffering.[12] He often refers to Romans 8:32: "He who did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, will he not also give us all things together with him?!" This passage, at least, refers

to the grief, the agony of the Father in delivering up the Son. At the cross, then, the Father also suffers--though Father and Son suffer in different ways. The Son, as we said, suffers abandonment. But only the Father, according to Moltmann, suffers death. For, precisely speaking, those who die do not suffer death. When we die we cease to feel. But we suffer only when we can feel. Consequently, only God the Father "suffers death," bearing the grief of seeing a loved one suffer up to and through the final pain of loss.

C. The Meaning of the Cross for the Spirit. In The Crucified God, despite his repeated use of the term "Trinity," Moltmann says comparatively little about the Holy Spirit (in this respect he reflects the Western theological tradition's tendency to concentrate on the relationship of Father and Son, and to more or less tack on the Spirit at the end). However, in this work he refers to the Spirit as what issues from the interaction between Father and Son on the cross:

> Whatever proceeds from this event...must be understood as the spirit of the surrender of the Father and the Son, as the spirit which creates love for forsaken men.... It is the unconditioned and therefore boundless love which proceeds from the grief of the Father and the dying of the Son and reaches forsaken men in order to create in them the possibility and the force of new life.[13]

However, Moltmann's recent book, The Trinity and the Kingdom, says much more about the Spirit.[14] Moltmann goes back through Jesus' life and notices that he is baptized by the Spirit, driven into the wilderness by the Spirit, and performs mighty acts through the Spirit. Moltmann also emphasizes those many New Testament passages which talk about the Son being raised through the Spirit, and about the Spirit baptizing people into the Father and Son, or into the life of God. This broader treatment shows that his trinitarian theology is not focused narrowly on the cross, but on the overarching historical sweep from creation to consummation.

D. <u>The Meaning of the Cross for the Divine Nature</u>. What is at the core of the Oneness of the Father, Son and Spirit? What do they share that makes them divine? Moltmann says little about a divine "nature" or "essence." His main point is that the persons of the Trinity are united in purpose, in will. Even in their most painful separation from one another, even in their deepest agony on the cross, Father and Son remain united in purpose. Thus, while Moltmann does mention a unity of divine "substance," he seems to define this "substance" almost entirely in terms of this unity of will.[15]

Moltmann departs from traditional discussions of the divine "nature" in at least one other respect.[16] According to the theological tradition, God is "eternal"; hence, God cannot die. Understandably, the tradition encountered difficulties when it considered Jesus' death. For he was fully divine...and yet he died. Theologians usually solved this by saying that, strictly speaking, it was only Jesus' "human nature" which suffered and died. Of course, that human nature was so closely intertwined with his "divine nature" that the latter was brought into very close connection with death. But few traditional theologians went so far as to say that Christ's divine nature, or that God, actually died.

Yet this is precisely what Moltmann means to say. It is the fact that God went through death which gives us confidence in God's presence when we go through it too. Think again of his picture of the cross. Down below, as it were, is the Son abandoned by the Father. Up above, so to speak, is the Father grieving over the death of the Son, yet allowing the Son to be abandoned. Moltmann says that this grief and pain which stretches apart the Deity becomes wide enough, as it were, for the whole world to fit within it.

In other words, when God enters into the pain and suffering of death, when God experiences abandonment and grief in their most powerful form, God identifies with all the sufferings which ever occurred. This means that all of humankind is taken up into the infinite love of God:

> Only if all disaster, forsakenness by God, absolute death, the infinite curse of damnation and sinking into nothingness is in God himself, is community with this God

> eternal salvation, infinite joy, indestructible election and divine life. The bifurcation in God must contain the whole uproar of history within itself.[17]

On the cross, God opened himself to grief and abandonment. And as God opened himself, this made room for anyone else who suffers to enter and to experience not only sympathy, but the actual presence of God--a presence which ultimately extends beyond suffering and creates new hope and life. Or, to use another of Moltmann's images, the Trinity is "open." Theological tradition has often pictured the Trinity as a kind of "closed circle" in heaven. But for Moltmann, the Trinity has always been open for people on earth: God has always been seeking fellowship with humans and seeking to share their experiences. And by actually dying, God has opened himself in the widest possible sense.[18]

E. The Meaning of the Cross for the Divine Attributes. The theological tradition has extensively discussed the so-called "attributes" of God: immutability, omnipotence, eternity, etc. Moltmann's general relationship to this tradition is well exemplified in the way he treats them. On one hand, he feels this discussion is meaningful and devotes some space to it. On the other, his own views often depart sharply from the common ones. He is attempting, in other words, to introduce some very different considerations into the theological tradition itself.

Theologians have sometimes talked about divine "immutability" in such a way that God seems static and wholly untouched by change of any sort. Clearly, if Moltmann is to find any use for this term, he cannot define it in this way. For if God died on the cross, God experienced something new. God changed. Moltmann, however, finds it still meaningful to affirm that God's essential character never changes. He finds it significant to assert that God's fundamental purposes never change. On the cross we observe a consistency of character and purpose despite the most profound opposition and pain. In this sense, theology can and should speak of God as "immutable."[19]

IV. SOME IMPLICATIONS OF THE CROSS

Throughout this article I have been not only explaining Moltmann's theology of the cross, but also indicating its relevance for discipleship as Anabaptists see it. In closing, let me make this relevance more concrete by indicating several implications.

A. Community. Moltmann's understanding of the Trinity provides the strongest possible theological foundation for the Anabaptist emphasis on community. Moltmann is saying that God is essentially a community of persons. God is not just a vague, mysterious force. Neither is God a single, isolated, self-sufficient person. God is essentially an intertwining of relationships marked by self-giving, response, acknowledgment, sharing, and enjoyment of one another.

This is the deepest reason why true salvation cannot be individualistic. For to participate in the Life of God is to enter into this process of giving and sharing. To truly enter it involves being drawn into closer relationships with others.

When Mennonites try to explain to our individualistic culture why Christian living involves community, they sometimes simply insist that Jesus commanded it. This is true enough. But this answer leaves us with Jesus as an isolated, commanding individual set over against his community. We fail to see Jesus himself as one who walked in continuous obedience and love towards his Father and experienced the continuous presence of the Spirit. And we fail to see that Christ's community not only follows him, but is also caught up into his life which he shares with his Father and his Spirit.

B. Society and the Church. So long as people think of God as a single being existing "above" us and apart from us, they may well assume that society should be structured in hierarchical fashion. If God is a single ruler who gives commands, then we ought to have a single political authority who makes the rules and enforces them. And we also ought to have churches in which a single pastor calls the shots and runs the show.

But if God is trinitarian, and if salvation involves participation in this trinitarian Life, then God's relationship to humanity will be less one of command and obedience, and more one of sharing, working together and mutual interaction. This would imply that social structures should be not hierarchical, but mutual, reciprocal and open to the participation of as many as possible. And our churches should encourage corporate decision-making and leadership.[20]

C. Feminism. All along, of course, I have been using the terms "Father" and "Son." To many, such terms connote a masculine view of God. I have employed them, however, not only because they reflect Moltmann's usage, but also because I believe, as he does, that their biblical use conveys not patriarchy but intimacy. By customarily calling God "Father," Jesus revealed the personal, compassionate side of Yahweh more fully than did the Old Testament. And he also revealed the tender, mutually loving relationship of Father and Son.

In other words, the deepest significance of "Father" and "Son" is to express characteristics that we more often think of as "feminine" than as "masculine." And feminine imagery seems even more appropriate for other features of Moltmann's Trinity. He speaks of the whole world, with all its grief and pain, being caught up by and carried within the love of God. Rather than speaking of God as carrying the world within "himself," might we not more appropriately talk of God carrying the world within "herself," as a mother carried a child?[21] Does not Moltmann's major emphasis on the passion and compassion of God correspond more closely with what we more often associate with women than with men?

D. Anabaptism and Theology. Hopefully, this article has stimulated questions as to whether contemporary Anabaptists might not profit from more serious involvement in theology. We have seen how Moltmann considers the cross not only from the standpoint of ethics and discipleship, but from that of Soteriology. I have argued that such an approach is hardly irrelevant to ethical and social concerns, but complements and undergirds them. We have also

seen how Moltmann seeks to ground all this in the doctrine of God. By so doing, he has provided deep foundations for concerns such as community, social and ecclesiastical reform, and feminism.

Perhaps Moltmann's deepest reason for pursuing these topics theologically might be stated as follows. When we examine in depth the tasks to which we are called, the joys and hopes which are to motivate us, and the suffering and grief which we are to endure, we discover that we are called not to perform merely human tasks with some help from God. We find, instead, that all such joys and sufferings have already been experienced and taken up into the life of God. If we know that God has experienced all the glorious hope of the inbreaking Kingdom, and all the inexpressible anguish of failure and death, we know that we are never alone, no matter what may happen. We know that our aspirations and our struggles are grounded in the fundamental movement of the universe.

Finally, we have also seen how one with convictions close to those of Anabaptists has had great impact on the theological tradition. Moltmann belongs within the tradition in the sense that he finds most of its major questions significant and works by recognized scholarly methods. But he is quite different from the tradition in the way that he answers many of these questions. Notions such as God dying, or the Trinity as the "form" of the cross--these are relatively novel. Nevertheless, they have sparked much serious attention and won much acceptance. This indicates that the theological tradition is very open to the type of insights found in the Anabaptist tradition. The time is ripe for articulating other Anabaptist insights in theological fashion.

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1. Robert Friedmann, Theology of Anabaptism (Scottdale: Herald, 1973), p. 78.
2. Ibid., pp. 55-56.
3. Ibid., p. 53.
4. Jürgen Moltmann, The Crucified God (New York: Harper, 1974), pp. 72-73.
5. For what follows, ibid., pp. 68-73, 207-219. The biblical text to which Moltmann most frequently refers is 1 Corinthians 1:18ff.

6. In the following two paragraphs, we are not yet showing how Moltmann develops his Christology historically. Instead, to give continuity to our exposition, we are indicating how Moltmann's developed Christology is related to what we just said about his appropriation of Luther's "theology of the cross." We do not mean to imply that Moltmann derives his Christology primarily from analysis of soteriological awareness.

7. See esp. ibid., pp. 145-53, 120-25.

8. Ibid., p. 246.

9. Ibid., p. 146.

10. Ibid., pp. 55-56, 63-64, 145-46.

11. Despite the inadequacies of this picture (which is my illustration, not Moltmann's, it seems that the New Testament does occasionally speak of Jesus bearing the judgment or wrath of God: 1 Cor. 5:21, Gal. 3:13, Heb. 9:28, 1 Jn. 2:1-2, etc). Moltmann, however, often speaks as if Jesus' Kingdom message replaced the notion of divine judgment with that of divine love (ibid., pp. 128-35). Moltmann espouses a "universalist" position that all human beings are saved by Christ's work.

12. Ibid., pp. 242-43.

13. Ibid., p. 245.

14. The Trinity and the Kingdom (New York: Harper, 1981), pp. 65-94. In another of Moltmann's major theological works, The Church in the Power of the Spirit (New York: Harper, 1977), the Spirit plays a major role.

15. The Crucified God, p. 244.

16. Ibid., pp. 227-35.

17. Ibid., p. 246.

18. Ibid., p. 249.

19. Ibid., p. 229.

20. See The Trinity and the Kingdom, pp. 191-202

21. Ibid., pp. 108-111

Response to Moltmann's
"Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms
and Its Use Today"

Clarence Bauman

At this stage my function perhaps should be to recapitulate a very complex situation in a few simple premises so that we can get along with our dialogue.

I would like to make some indications and reservations "kurz und spitz," i.e., quite to the point and concisely. I will state first of all Luther's position as elementally as I possibly can in a descriptive way and then move on to his intrinsic self-understanding, his Selbstverständnis, his rationale for that position and its theological self-justification. And thirdly, I will indicate my own reservations in terms of evaluations and implications of Luther's position.

Jesus taught: "resist not evil with evil" (Matt. 5:39--note dative of means). Paul advised: "overcome evil with good" (also dative of means--Rom. 12:21). Since the Roman Catholic church couldn't 'rhyme' these texts with life--as Luther said--i.e., with the sword, therefore they taught: "Christus habe solchs nicht gepotten, sondern den Volkomenen geratten." (WA 11, 245, 18f.). That is, Christ did not command the Sermon on the Mount, but he gave it to us as counsel for the 'perfect' ones (consilia for the status perfectionis), i.e., for the monks, for the clergy. Despite the separation of clergy and laity, however, both realms were confused, Luther thought, for the Pope in the crusades against the Turks waged holy rather than merely secular war. That's the problem.

To set the record straight and presumably solve the problem, Luther declared that God rules the world in two ways: through law and gospel (Gesetz und Evangelium). And that constitutes what is known as the order of maintenance and the order of redemption (Erhaltungsordnung und Erlösungsordnung). Law holds the world together, love moves it forward. This constitutes then two contrasting modes of rule (Herrschaftsweisen) and these may never be mixed or

confused. Luther said very explicitly: "Ein Fürst kann wohl ein Christ sein" (WA 32,440). A prince can be a Christian and vice versa, so long as it remains perfectly clear that his secular vocation has nothing in common with his Christian profession.
The person is indeed a Christian, but his office, his vocation, has nothing to do with his being a Christian. In the secular office or Amt it doesn't belong (or fit) how you are to suffer for Christ and how you are to act for Christ. That remains all for your "Christ-person." ("da gehöret nicht her wie du gegen Gott leben. . .tun und leiden sollst, das las für deine Christperson gehen," ibid.).

Since the secular Amt is ordained of God, Luther held that the hand that wields the sword is no longer Menschen Hand, sondern Gottes Hand (not man's hand, but God's hand). "Und nicht des Mensch, sondern Gott hängt, rädest, enthamptet, würgt, und friegt ("Not man, but God, hangs, racks on the wheel, decapitates [executes] strangles, and wars"). "Nicht ich schlage, stosse, und tote, sondern Gott und nein Fürst, dessen Diener meine Hand und mein Leben sind" ("Not I slay, stab and kill, but God and my prince whose servant my hand and my life is"). (Ob Kriegsleute auch in seligen Stand sein Können, WA 19,626).

So life demands both the clenched fist and the outstretched arm of Jesus ("die gepanzerte Faust und die Hand Jesu"), as Naumann well said. The main thing is not to seek to rule society by the Sermon on the Mount, and that has been emphasized over and over again by theologians like Niebuhr and Nygren and many others; that's 'schwarmerish,' idealistic fanaticism, instead of what is required, namely, pragmatic secular realism. In other words Luther might well say: "When I stand up in the pulpit and someone attacks me for the sake of the Gospel, then I suffer as a faithful servant of Jesus Christ. But when someone attacks me for the sake of the prince's land then I hold my dagger upon his head. So an Anabaptist asks Luther: some night you are riding through a dark forest, the Schwarzwald, and someone attacks you right suddenly,--will you have time to ask if it's for the Evangelium, for the Gospel's sake, or for the land? Doesn't Luther's Zwei-Reiche-Lehre (two-kingdom-teaching) imply, as Professor Moltmann

ably developed, the schizophrenic dichotomy of the person? Doesn't it undermine the integrity and the unity of the Christian self? To this existential dilemma Luther responded variously:

1. Each person on earth has two persons: a "Christ-person" in which respect he is bound solely to God and a "Welt-person" in which he bound to others. The moral effect of this distinction is Luther's insistence, that one's entire Christian being remains entirely <u>invisible</u>. The Christian as a Christian expresses nothing that can be discerned as having a Christ nature in the outer life; the manner of the outer life belongs to the secular realm. In other words, the entire Christian being remains entirely <u>invisible</u> so that <u>Nachfolge Christi</u> within the church invisible is reduced to a pure spiritualism (except for the Word and Sacrament).

2. As a "Christ-person" one remains <u>simul iustus et peccator</u>--simultaneously justified and sinful, according to Romans 7--and this two-fold designation binds one both <u>ontologically</u>, in terms of one's original sin (<u>Erbsünde</u>), and <u>morally</u>, in the sense of <u>duty</u>, to the order for the world (<u>Weltordnung</u>).

3. Luther claimed that true Christians belong to God's kingdom and that they need neither worldly sword nor law <u>for themselves</u>, but only for their sick neighbors. But Luther was unable to say <u>who</u> these true Christians really were or how one might identify them, if not by their deeds or character since on principle they must remain anonymous within the <u>ecclesia invisibilis</u>.

4. In contrast to pagans and fanatics, Luther held that Christians must rule and wield the sword <u>in love</u>. As judge, hangman, or soldier they must dutifully perform their <u>act</u>, but withhold any evil intention. In Lutheran ethics this casuistry is known as <u>Gesinnungslehre</u> (ethical intention), and is exemplified by the soul-stirring prayer of an American Lutheran chaplain who on August 5, 1945, blessed the Hiroshima H-bomb mission--so as to withhold any evil intention.

Finally, Luther's two-kingdom-teaching has been described as an <u>Irrgarten</u>, a maize of unsolved logical and moral contradictions. I cite only four.

If God and His will are one, which seems to me to be the elemental presupposition of all theological reflection, whether Christian or Jewish, why claim that secular authorities are subject only to God, but not to His will as revealed in Christ's teaching?

Second, if Christ's teaching is excluded on principle from all secular office, by what criterion of discernment is one to distinguish that administration from the power of the devil--from evil itself?

Third, when will intelligent theologians begin to understand that the Sermon on the Mount is Jesus' interpretation of exactly how God's law is to be lived in this world here and now by all who profess His name--that Jesus' *Berglehre* is not some impractical hypothetical irrelevance to be spiritualized in some other cloud-world kookoo-land where there are no enemies to love, as if what Jesus said applied to a different time than *now* or in a different way then *then*? As though Jesus didn't say what he meant or didn't mean what he said!

Finally, who in the final analysis determines what constitutes my responsibility. Jesus? Or the draft board?

Response to Moltmann's "Barth's Doctrine of the Lordship of Christ and the Experience of the Confessing Church"

John Howard Yoder

I'd like to record, without wanting to pursue them, two quibbles about reading church history before taking up the issue more central to the dialogue.

Yesterday one of the students asked a question about the fallen world. Professor Moltmann said he's not sure that the world should be spoken of as fallen. Today he referred to Barth's use of Romans 13 and the particular understanding of "powers" that Barth had borrowed from Cullmann as odd. I doubt that that is an adequate way to deal with the set of New Testament texts, in which the language of "principalities and powers" still seems to me to have more to say than Moltmann grants. If we take all of the Pauline language of "powers" together (of course that's an exegetical assumption, namely, that we should read all of those passages in relation to each other), one must say at the same time three things: that the powers are good creations, and fallen, and coming under the lordship of Christ. That complexity would seem to me to promise more adequacy in solving this problem of where the line runs than if we were to say that people are fallen but the world isn't. It seems rather that the *exousiology* of Paul does talk about other levels of fallenness, other locations of fallenness, to which the ministry of Christ as Lamb and Lord also has relevance. But that would mean going into Paul.

The other point, also about Paul, would be whether to follow the division introduced by some scholars between *Corinthians*, which is Paul proper, and Philippians and Colossians, which represent an undesirable or regrettable enthusiastic development out of Paul, and not Paul himself. There would be reason to discuss that, and it would make a difference, but I would rather not concentrate on that; I just take note that it is a question.

I would like to take up a more central issue, one mentioned earlier. How do we assess the experience of the Confessing Church--e.g., Barth's counsel to people to stay in the state church--and its gradual assimilation into the state church structure after the war. This is not just an historical challenge. It has to do with the theology behind the history that happened and the history that didn't happen.

The Confessing Church story is a remarkable story of theology producing action, clear thinking resulting in structural change. But it is also a story of that action not growing in clarity with time, but rather becoming more and more diffuse. The real victory of the Confessing Church was not that it kept doing its thing with great clarity; it was rather a number of people catching on to a number of proper insights through the 30s and into the 40s. Then it was ratified by the fact that the outside world--first the ecumenical world, and then the occupying forces reorganizing Germany--recognized the leaders of the Confessing Church as the leaders of the post-war German established Evangelical church.

How did it happen that the leaders of the Confessing Church, practically all in jail when the war ended and whom the allies then helped become the bishops and presidents of the land churches, accepted stepping back into an established church situation instead of going on being a free church. I once had the occasion in 1955 to ask Martin Niemoller that. He said in effect, "We're sorry, we shouldn't have." The desire not to make a schism, not to step out until you're pushed out, stood in tension with the language of the gathered church which was already present in Confessing Church thought more than people realized at the time. People didn't realize, at the time Barth wrote his pamphlet on <u>The Christian Community and the Citizen Community</u>, that this was the first time for centuries in mainline Protestant theology in Europe that somebody had conceived of the society at large as not being coterminous with the believing community. That was a profound insight, which Barth knew was dictated by his theology, but he hadn't spelled how radical it was. As a result, it wasn't as radical as it might have been. People could keep talking that way and going on with the state church structure, with its linkage with the economy and the rest of society,

as that was preserved by the allied occupying forces, because they thought it would help to keep the country together. The Gathered Congregation was the title of a little booklet by Professor Otto Weber, Professor Moltmann's teacher, which Harold Bender showed me with a smile in 1949, saying, "Here is somebody from a good university faculty talking about a believers' church, unfolding a vision of the church which would not depend upon the state, which would be made up of people who affirm that they believe, and would be structured from that confession."

The difficulty with the Confessing Church is that it didn't find ways permanently to incarnate the theological insight that the way for Christ's lordship to be proclaimed in the wider society is to have a visible body carrying it instead of having that proclamation contradicted by a secretive church, a non-democratic church, a church without free speech, a church without equality, etc.

So the question I am looking at is illustrated by the history, but it is not a historical question. What is the potential of this theology, if properly understood, especially with the wisdom of hindsight, to guide in producing the kind of empirical church that could be an appropriate vehicle for that kind of message of Christ's lordship? Barth didn't get his theological insight from the empirical church. He got it from rethinking the roots of ecclesiology from a biblical christology. Barth called for a different kind of church; he never saw it come into being. Should he have?

Response to Moltmann's "Political Theology and Political Hermeneutics"

Helmut Harder

In his discussion of what it means to follow Jesus Christ in the world today, Jürgen Moltmann presents, in his third lecture, a lucid description of current political theology. His apparent purpose is not to assess this theological movement, but to show how it offers a better option for understanding our Christian responsibility than we have in the scheme suggested by Luther or Barth. From this standpoint Moltmann's presentation of political theology is stimulating and informative. However, it is necessary for the sake of the quest for a valid framework for Christian responsibility to also look critically at the political theology which Moltmann commends. Does the critical hermeneutics as outlined by Moltmann remain faithful to the "true Christ"? (p. 67). The comments that follow will speak to this question by highlighting one questionable aspect of what is otherwise an appealing framework for theological reconstruction.

Moltmann begins by observing that for the new political theology "*praxis* becomes the criterion of truth" (p. 63). It follows that one must take a critical attitude toward reality, and especially toward political existence and social functions. The function of criticism is to open up new possibilities for the future of humanity. In this connection eschatology becomes both the foundation and the medium of one's theological outlook and passion. That is, one's history and one's present life must be awakened, grasped and changed by a zeal which is fed by the eschatological vision of the coming kingdom of God.

Crucial to Moltmann's view is the Christological basis which he provides for the contemporary implications of Jesus' messianic message. He begins with the defensible statement that "Jesus' messianic message and deeds may be summarized by the concept of *eschatological anticipation*" (p. 68). The

implication that follows is that the followers of Jesus in the world today are led forward toward the messianic future by the power of anticipation engendered by Jesus.

Having established the relation of Christology to eschatology, Moltmann proceeds to make a point which is questionable. He states: "But if Jesus is the anticipator of God then he must simultaneously and unavoidably become the sign of opposition to the powers of a world which is opposed to God and to this world's laws which are closed to the future" (p. 68). It is at this point that our question arises. How does the view of Jesus as "anticipator of God" establish the basis for "opposition to the powers of a world which is opposed to God?" Moltmann provides us with no theological basis for this connection. He simply states that the followers of Christ are inspired by "the practical passion to renew life now in the spirit of the resurrection" (p. 69).

But inspiration and passion for renewal do not provide a trustworthy basis for Christian ethics. Nor does the wrongness of the world or the proneness of the church to follow traditional ways or the status quo of political rule. Yet these are suggested by Moltmann as the motivation and legitimation for the way of Jesus' followers. One may have expected that an appeal would be made to the power of love as a final touchstone for ethics. But in the end even love is relativized or possibly set aside. In the struggle for the achievement of justice, says Moltmann, "love remains fragmentary" (p. 77).

We find that Moltmann's understanding of Christology takes the message of Jesus regarding the kingdom of God seriously, but does not take Jesus' method of action into account with equal care. Indeed the way of Jesus does not provide, in Moltmann's description of political theology, the basis for the way of Jesus' disciples.

It is at this point that the question must be raised as to whether political theology is based on the "true Christ." Moltmann wants this to be the case. He says: "Not christology nor messianism as such, but Jesus makes the messianism of the political theology we here describe specifically Christian" (p. 67). But one can argue that in his way of putting the matter the determining norm for Christian ethics is not the way of Jesus Christ but

rather a messianic vision which is impassioned by a zeal for the messianic kingdom of God rather than by the way of Jesus. And we are left to our own ethical decisions when it comes to choosing the means of achieving the end. What matters above all else is that we enter the struggle against exploitation, oppression, alienation, destruction and apathy in the firm conviction that although death may be our lot, the resurrection will vindicate our cause. There is always the related comfort that it is impossible in any case to keep one's hands clean and one's heart altogether pure. In the meantime it is possible to celebrate that which we anticipate.

It is true, as Moltmann states, that Christian theology "must grasp (Jesus) and his history in an eschatological way" (p. 67). However in doing so, Christian theology must take care that it does not transgress an essential element in the way of Jesus as established by him and his history: the way of non-violence. Unfortunately Moltmann's attempt to build a bridge between Jesus Christ and our situation loses sight of Jesus' call to non-violence. It is not that Jesus' situation was different from the plight of those who suffer injustice in our time. Surely he could have legitimated the move to violence - as is done in political theology - on the basis that the acts of the oppressor give ample cause for a "just war" of liberation. But Jesus renounced any violent campaign against the oppressor. His mandate is clear: "Do not resist one who is evil. But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matthew 5:39). Or, "put your sword back into its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword" (Matt. 26:52). Here we find no ambiguity regarding the process of life that leads to the kingdom of God. Rather the kingdom of shalom is reached _via_ the way of shalom.

There are two points at which political theology is appealing. First, the call for justice is undoubtedly central to an understanding of the Christian mission. Second, the eschatological framework for present orthopraxis provides a measure of hope and vitality to the sometimes discouraging experiments in the present. However what has been all but abandoned in Moltmann's description is the way of Jesus. If the event of the cross of Jesus Christ is normative for the way of the

followers of Jesus, then we cannot bypass the manner of his death for our political hermeneutics. Our reference point for Christian responsibility is not first the dialectic between a despicable death and a glorious resurrection, but the actual way in which Jesus bore his cross. He did not take the sword; nor did he permit his disciples to do so. He did not muster an army as those who were zealous for the messianic kingdom in his day might have preferred. Rather, in his way of suffering he showed the way for his followers.

The exemplary character of Christ is not depicted in terms of resistance but in terms of active non-violent service to all. The matter of judging between good and evil in such a way as to cause bloodshed was not Jesus prerogative: "He committed no sin; no guile was found on his lips; when he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he trusted to him who judges justly (Matt. 2:22-23). Nor is confrontation with the calculated risk of the death of the oppressor the way of Jesus' followers: "If when you do right and suffer for it you take it patiently, you have God's approval. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps" (1 Peter 2:20b-21).

It is not at all a question of whether or not to bring the hope of the future kingdom of God into present reality. This must be done. It is not at all a question of whether or not to work as advocates for the oppressed. This is the Christian's calling. It is rather a question of how to follow Jesus Christ in the way today. Surely the guidelines for our way are given in Jesus' way.

Response to
"Political Theology and Political Hermeneutics"

LeRoy Friesen

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our brother for being with us this week. This has been an inspiring experience for me. In fact, I have felt a certain element of doxology running through all we have done together, and for the inspiration and teaching I am very grateful.

I have also appreciated the sequence of topics. It has been interesting to start with St. Martin and begin the discussion there. One of my theories is that there is a kind of "closet Lutheran" in most of us Mennonites, that deep down we have our own two-kingdom theories which, just as surely in ways not totally unlike Luther's, divide reality into two kingdoms, with sometimes the lines falling not very far from where he drew them. Perhaps then, apart from personal participation in the military, we allow the "other realm" to be secular in a way not unlike Lutherans. By beginning with Luther we can better critically assess then our <u>own</u> thinking.

Everything that has happened this week in these lectures raises questions, for all of life. But for me it has raised questions particularly in regard to my situation as a Yankee, a male, a white person, a prosperous and relatively secure individual. For me the hard questions focus upon the first world/third world relationship, to use those slightly dubious categories. This analysis of church-world responsibility causes me to experience tensions as a person living here on the side of power. The force of these questions presses upon us and I hope that we can address them more specifically.

Moltmann mentioned that at age 19 he discovered that Auschwitz had taken place; those of us here over 40 or 45 discovered in August of 1945 that something had happened, namely Hiroshima. But today the Hiroshimas and the Auschwitzes are going on also; we get them serialized at 5:30 p.m. and the urgency of living in a world with that kind of information, given

the topics we have been struggling with here, is pressing upon me and upon all of us.

The one question that I would like to raise has already been alluded to earlier. It has to do with how we go about building a political theology without drifting away from the crucified God. Is it possible to do political theology in the way in which it has been outlined here and yet remain firmly embedded in the God who abandoned and was abandoned on the cross, the God who reaches out not in raw omnipotence, but in weakness, in self-giving, in sacrifice? This is a question that I direct to liberation theology and political theology in general. That's the more comfortable statement of the two forms of my question because it questions them, rather than ourselves. It questions those who espouse political theology about whether indeed the crucified God serves as a sufficient and appropriate foundation for liberation theology.

I think about the depth and extent of human suffering: of El Salvador, Guatemala, the Philippines, Chicago, and even Elkhart. I think of God in the torture chambers and of God in the malnutrition-ridden child. I think of the suffering God in people who are being systematically disenfranchised, negated and dismissed as persons--image bearers of the suffering God. I think furthermore, as our brother has helped us to see, of God as not only being present in those situations, but of opening himself indeed to all the pain, of all the generations, of all peoples of all times, and somehow taking that pain into herself and transforming it. And then I question whether political theology, as we experience it in our time, grows out of that cross perspective or out of a more triumphal dominating view of the deity.

But as I said, that's the easier half of the question because it's directed primarily out there to someone else. The harder question for me, as a person living in this society with my complicities to situations that cause many of these sufferings, is about this situation that exists in the world, on the one hand, and questions about the church, our ecclesiology and our ethics, on the other. If indeed we follow the suffering, dying, and crucified God, what is the shape of our ecclesiology in relation to

the victims of systemic abuse in the world? If we follow the dying God, the one who has forged a tenacious commitment to little people, broken people and unpeople, if we follow that one, what will be the shape of our ethic? I believe we have yet to see the full scope of what it means to be so committed to the other, not merely to one of our own kind, not waiting until after the Rabbis and Confessing Christian pastors are taken away before we respond, but in the fashion of the Master of the universe reaching out now and making the supreme overture to the other, the alien, the stranger, and, indeed, to the enemy.

I wonder too what this means for the content and method of learning here at AMBS--what implications it has for learning theory (praxis?) and epistemology that guides seminary education.

Response to "Following Christ in an Age of Nuclear War"

Ted Koontz

I'll speak today largely out of my background as a student of international politics and nuclear war. It won't be surprising to you, therefore, that my comments might be a bit more pessimistic than those of Professor Moltmann. This is also not surprising given the fact that I come out of a Mennonite dualistic tradition which doesn't expect as much of the world as it expects of the church. In any case, let me say something about three convictions which grow out of my experience of studying international politics and nuclear war. These convictions lead to some questions that I'd like to pose for our theological discussion.

Conviction one: we may very well destroy all of human life on earth sometime in the reasonably near future. I don't know whether it will happen. I know it is a real possibility.

Conviction two: "realistic" policies that can make this possible destruction less likely are available for politicians who want to work in the "real" world. There are also policies that can make it more likely. But even the best of these policies, insofar as they still exist politically in the real world in the United States, require the maintenance of some form of nuclear deterrence. They are all far from the kind of Christian norm that Professor Moltmann has been talking about.

Conviction three: international politics will not be changed so that this immoral nuclear threat will go away any time within the foreseeable future. Pacifism, I think, _is_ realism if we are asking how we can avoid the danger of extinction that Jonathan Shell, for example, talks about. But pacifism is the absolute opposite of realism when we look at the question of what is likely to happen and answer that question on the basis of information about the ways nations and peoples do in face behave historically.

Arising out of these perspectives (and no doubt these perspectives are open to question) are some issues which merit our attention and discussion. The possibility of destroying human life raises a question about the shape of Christian hope. Professor Moltmann raised the question: "What can I hope for?" I must say that my confrontation with the possibility of the end of human life on earth has forced me to the view that our hope must be in something/someone that is beyond this earth, this history, and this world. How does a focus on "redeeming the world" come to grips with the fact that this world will end, whether soon through nuclear war, or eventually through the burning out of the sun? Stated directly, what can I hope for when the radiation is falling after a full-scale nuclear attack? I don't believe I would find a hope focused almost exclusively on "redeeming the world" very hopeful in that situation, nor do I now find such a hope very hopeful as I contemplate the real possibility of finding myself in that situation someday. This is not to say that we should not care about the world. We certainly should care about it and seek to redeem it. But we should not rest our hope only on the possibility of redeeming the world, even with God's help. We must, in other words, reject both the unconcern about the world (in contrast to individuals) of some within the evangelical or fundamentalist camp and the implicit optimism about prospects for redeeming the world found in much theological liberalism historically and, perhaps, in much current anti-nuclear activism.

A related question is, "what is the source of hope?" For all Christians, of course, the source of hope is God. But there are differences in how one sees God acting and entering into history. Again, I'll simply say confessionally that I've been driven by my study of nuclear war and international politics to see God acting decisively in dramatic ways and not simply in ways that grow out of increasing faithfulness, intelligence, or whatever else human beings do in history. Is God working through the Catholic Bishops or through the German churches as they become aware of the problem of nuclear war? I believe that God is working there, but will that acting save us? Is not the image of God raising Christ from the dead in a very dramatic, unexpected

way, in a way that has very little to do with the continuity of human action in history, a better image of the way God sometimes works, an image more appropriate for thinking about hope in the context of the nuclear threat? As far as I can see, our basic hope must be rooted finally in a radical divine breaking into history, an inbreaking which changes it completely.

Another question has to do with a point Tom Finger raised. If international politics, and more broadly the world, is not going to be transformed and if one is still committed to taking the way of Jesus seriously as the norm for our lives, then doesn't this require that our focus be primarily on ethics for the church rather than on ethics for the world? Shouldn't our focus be on christianizing church politics, creating an alternative way of living within the church that can model a different way for the world? The point where this connects especially to what Tom said is this: if the call of Christ is a call to a radically different way of life, doesn't it follow that that way of life will only be possible for those who choose to follow that call? Conversely, isn't living the cross way impossible for those who reject or ignore that radical call? This is confirmed for me through my years studying international politics in a secular university context. To speak directly to the issue of nuclear weapons policy, my experience with very bright, well-informed, and morally sensitive students of nuclear deterrence leads me to believe that renouncing nuclear weapons is not a position one comes to on the basis of the best secular wisdom. It does not "make sense." Only on the basis of a radically different perception of reality, revealed most fully in Jesus, can one favor renunciation of nuclear weapons while at the same time facing (rather than ignoring or denying) the grim realities of international politics.

In light of this I wonder if our most basic model for relating to the world should not be one of evangelism. I do not mean that in any narrow sense. Rather, I mean calling persons to become disciples of Jesus in a full sense, to transfer their allegiance and to join a new community. This community attempts to live by and witness to different standards, to create new patterns for human living together which in some degree point

the Kingdom, patterns which are signs to the world of newness breaking in, but patterns which are never fully realized in the new community and which can only be models for the world in a limited sense because the world does and will continue to include persons for whom reality is not defined ultimately by Jesus Christ. In other words, don't we need to take the distinction between church and world seriously in thinking about what we want to say to the world, even on an issue like nuclear policy? And shouldn't the highest priority be given to living in the church by the reality defined for us in Christ and to inviting others to join us in creating that new human community?

But despite the priority on living the new life within the church and the task of evangelism in relating to persons in the world, I am firmly convinced that part of our care for the world which God loves should include our speaking directly to crucial questions of public policy. Here I am in full accord with a view that rejects "withdrawal" from the world. But if my initial observations growing out of my study of international politics are correct, particularly my convictions that there are policy options available in the "real" world of American politics which can make nuclear war much more or much less likely--but that abandoning nuclear deterrence is not an option in the "real" world of American politics (because those politics are not and will not be determined by the reality of Jesus), there are some significant implications for the shape of our witness on nuclear policy.

One clear implication is that we cannot expect, and in one sense we should not ask, governments to act on the basis of the ethics of Jesus until we have successfully evangelized "the people" so that they see reality as defined by Jesus. This suggests that we should be rather modest in what we call governments to do. To call them to abandon nuclear weapons is, from the "realistic" point of view, to call them to suicide or to surrender of that which is held most dear. At the same time, the implication of my observation that there are policy options which are "realistic" and which can make a significant difference is that there is a path to which governments can and should be called which is different from the path of full

discipleship (the discipleship path being one which can be "seen" only by those who see Jesus as the definition of reality) but a path which may not lead to a nuclear catastrophe.

Thus I am at once more pessimistic than some who seem to believe that a radical reorientation of defense policy may be possible if only we work hard enough and are more optimistic about the possibility of making meaningful, but not transforming, changes in policy directions within the basic framework assumed by most political leaders. I am not certain how all of this relates to Professor Moltmann's perspectives, but I eagerly await his further reflections on these issues.

Response to "Following Christ in an Age of Nuclear War"

Tom Finger

Professor Moltmann, your words have moved me very deeply on an intellectual level and on an emotional and personal level as well. That makes it a bit difficult to respond immediately with some well-formulated questions. If I have heard you correctly, you use the traditional just war theory to argue that a just nuclear war is impossible; the nuclear arms race, therefore, is immoral. Further, at the end of your lecture you affirmed that pacifism is the only realistic view of life in the face of the nuclear threat. It may sound as if you have moved from a traditionally Reformed, just war position to the traditional Anabaptist peace position. Perhaps one reason you just received such great applause is because people thought they were celebrating your conversion to our position! (You have to watch it when you come to a Mennonite seminary!)

I want to affirm my great appreciation for these similarities: I rejoice that in many ways the body of Christ, despite its many diversities, seems to be drawing together and moving towards agreements on many of these issues. However, I would like to press a little further some of the issues that you raised--not with the purpose of uncovering discrepancies between us so that we can engage in splitting hairs, but to enable us to think more precisely and deeply about these issues.

In <u>The Crucified God</u> you made statements about Jesus which leads, as far as I can see, in the direction of pacifism. You said that Jesus' whole message is based on a "revolution in the concept of God" (p. 142). God, especially as we see him on the cross, rather than being avenging, "takes on himself grief at the contradiction in men and does not angrily suppress this contradiction. God allows himself to be forced out. God suffers, God allows himself to be crucified, is crucified, and in this consummates his unconditional love that is so full of hope" (p. 248).

As I understand The Crucified God, you see Jesus teaching us human beings that we ought to follow in the way of the cross; we ought to follow in the way of the love of the crucified God. You write that Jesus "denied that human beings . . . had the right to pass judgment and execute vengeance in their own cause" (p. 143). Jesus "did not call upon the poor to revenge themselves upon their exploiters nor on the oppressed to oppress their oppressors. Theologically, this would have been no more than the anticipation of the last judgment according to the law, but not the new righteousness of God which Jesus revealed in the law of grace" (p. 141). Moreover, you go on to say that the message of Jesus certainly had political implications. In Jesus' day there was no politics without religion any more than there was religion without politics.

However, in your 1968 essay, entitled, "God in Revolution," you wrote that "The problem of violence and nonviolence is an illusory problem. There is only the question of the justified and unjustified use of force and the question of whether the means are proportionate to the ends." (Religion, Revolution and the Future, p. 143). This sounds to me like a just war statement. It seems to assume that violence is the rule of life; therefore, we cannot really opt for nonviolence. Since we must somehow be engaged in the struggle of violence and counter-violence, the least we can do is to find more humane and limited ways to exercise violence. Today I ask: do I hear you critiquing that second position?

I have always felt that that second position stands in tension, perhaps in contradiction, to what I read in The Crucified God. In the essay you said that violence is a fact of life. From that I infer that we must use violence to some degree. Yet in The Crucified God you said Jesus--whom you insist, preached and lived a message with political implications--did not use violence. Jesus showed us that it is possible even in this world to live apart from the circle of violence and counter-violence. Today you said very profoundly that any use of violence draws us into a vicious, unbreakable circle of retaliation. You very clearly said that we break out of this only by learning to love our enemies in a new way. And you went on to insist that pacifism is

the only realistic view of life in the face of nuclear war.

Let me press the question a bit further, though in this way. In limited warfare, such as in a guerilla action, on behalf of peoples who are severely oppressed, might it still be possible to use violence in a way in which means are proportionate to ends, and in which the damage done is greatly outweighed by the good attained? In other words, is the pacifist emphasis which I heard today (and here my terminology may not be entirely adequate) largely theological; is it based on the nature of God and the mission and message of Jesus, so that one must be a pacifist in all situations? Or is that pacifism largely strategic or practical: is it the only sensible, logical way to operate in a world of nuclear war? That is, does your pacifism hold only or primarily in the realm of nuclear war, but permit exceptions in other kinds of situations? That's my main question.

A second question focuses on the extent to which those who live by the way of the cross and the power of the Spirit can expect pacifism (either total pacifism or nuclear pacifism) to apply to those who don't choose to follow this way. In your lecture on "Political Theology and Political Hermeneutics of the Gospel," you said that Christian groups cannot impose their morality on our pluralistic society. Today you said that the traditional Anabaptist way is to make defenselessness, readiness for suffering and martyrdom, a way of life; however, you continued, this is a personal commitment and not a political proposal. The question, I think that all of us have, is: if we are to witness for and live out the message of peace in our society, to what extent can we expect society as a whole to live by these norms? Can we expect society to go along with them? Or should we, as many Mennonite groups have done in the past, withdraw from such political witness because we can't expect society at large to follow this way?

For instance, to take a practical situation. Amidst the threat of nuclear war, with our vision of peace, should we support a nuclear arms limitations treaty, such as SALT III, IV, X, XV, or whatever? Or should we go further and push for reduction of armaments? Or should we go still further and urge unilateral disarmament? I cannot ask for a

comprehensive answer here, but perhaps you, by referring to your own situation, can help us think through the implications of the way of the cross which we want to follow. To what extent and in what ways can we attempt to implement this way in a society where certainly not everybody is willing to live without the recourse to means of defense?

A RESPONSE TO THE RESPONSES

Jürgen Moltmann

(translated by Carol Martin)

I have not forgotten my visits to the Mennonite seminaries in Elkhart, Indiana, and to the Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The days were filled with lectures and discussions with students and members of the faculties. The nights were filled with thoughts that circled in my head. I came to teach, but I was also taught. I came to give, but I received much, and I am very thankful for this mutual giving and taking. A deep feeling of fellowship with these Mennonite brothers and sisters has grown within me. After my return I did all I could to present and recommend the Mennonite peace witness in the magazines and newspapers of the Evangelical Church in Germany. In the Foreword of my new book on Politische Theologie-- Politische Ethik (Christian Kaiser Verlag, Munich: 1984) I write: "In the fellowship of this 'peace church' I was encouraged to persevere in this direction: the political peace witness of Christians should be unmistakably clear, and national politics must abstain from military intimidation and the use of force." In the same vein, I would like to try to find answers to the questions raised by the respondents. I am pleased with this further opportunity to work theologically with Mennonite theologians; I trust it is not the last.

I. The Theology of the Cross and the Way of Jesus.

In his lecture, Tom Finger explained the most important theological insights of my "Theology of the Cross" very well. He confronted my theology with the "Theology of Anabaptism." Further, he pointed to Mennonite reservations concerning theology and theological theories, noting rather the Mennonite emphasis on the practice of discipleship. As also Helmut Harder emphasizes, this high view of Christian

practice comes under the heading, "The Way of Jesus." The "Way" that Jesus walked, and that he showed to us, leads to the "Way of the Cross." Those who follow Jesus are to take up their cross and be ready to give their lives (Mark 8:34-38). The question that Tom Finger asked on behalf of many Mennonite Christians was: What is the relationship between the "Theology of the Cross" and the "Discipleship of the Crucified"? What do Christian theory and praxis mean for each other in view of the crucified Christ? Stated more simply: How are the knowledge of Christ and following Christ to be related in the believer and in the believing community?

The answer from the European theological tradition says: First comes knowledge, then comes the deed. That is why in theology the credenda, or the objects of faith, are dealt with first, then the agenda, or objects of Christian ethics. According to this plan, the "Theology of the Cross" comes first, because if one is to come to salvation, one must first and above all recognize God the Father and Jesus the Son of the living God in the Passion and at the cross on Golgotha. Faith is first a "certain knowledge" and then "a wholehearted trusting," says the Heidelberg Catechism, Question 21. This faith leads a person into the fellowship of Christ, and in this fellowship to the "Way of Jesus," and on (in) the Way of Jesus, then to "Discipleship of the Crucified." The strength of this answer lies in the fact that it leads the believing person away from him- or herself and directs his/her attention only to Christ and God. The weakness is that theory is overemphasized and praxis is so undervalued that people could have the impression that deeds in practical living are so dubious and relatively unimportant that salvation depends only upon the right theory or the right attitude.

In contrast, the newer answer from Latin American liberation theology says: First comes the Christian praxis and then comes the theological knowledge. It is always the praxis that determines the knowledge, not the reverse. Quoting Pascal, Gustavo Gutierrez, in Theology of Liberation (Orbis Books, 1973), writes: "Theology is reflection, a critical attitude." First comes duty to love and service. "Theology follows; it is the second step" (p. 11).

Gutierrez, completely Catholic in his thinking, is taking love as his point of departure. If love is the praxis, then the job of theology is "reflection on Christian praxis in the light of the Word" (p.13). But if theology reflects praxis in the light of the gospel, then this praxis cannot be the realization of a theory, nor can it be a transferring of knowledge into deed, because it is itself a principle of knowledge. For our question this means: first in discipleship of Jesus I recognize in my own deeds and suffering who Jesus actually is. The strength of this answer lies in the application of faith to the whole person, and therefore to his or her life experience. One does not believe only with the reason or with the feelings of the heart, but with the whole of one's life. The weakness lies in overemphasizing practice so much that one could get the impression that what one believes, or even whether one believes at all, is not so important; it all depends on doing the right thing. The consequence would be an unthinking pragmatism.

A dogmatic Christianity without life can easily develop out of the first answer. The second answer can become a practical Christianity without faith. Both answers are one-sided. Stated philosophically, the first answer is idealistic and the second materialistic. The truth is not "in the middle," but in a dialectical relationship between theory and praxis in the life of a congregation and of the individuals in the congregation.

The "Theology of the Cross" cannot be subsumed under reflection upon the "Way of the Cross," which one is walking, because in the theology people look not at themselves but at the one who died for them on the cross at Golgatha, and they recognize there the Son of God. But the more they recognize him and the deeper they understand him, the more and deeper they are led on their own "Way of the Cross" and in this way they understand Christ with their whole experience of life. The "Theology of the Cross" develops out of the experiences of and insights into the "Way of the Cross," is related to this "Way of the Cross," and can never be severed from it. But the theology is not absorbed by the "Way of the Cross," as Christ was not merely a herald to be absorbed in the life of Christians. According to the New Testament, Christ is not only an example; he is first the redeemer. This

makes the difference between his cross and the cross that his followers are to take upon themselves: The cross of Christ is vicarious, redemptive suffering for many; the cross we carry is at best a witnessing, apostolic cross. One cannot separate the "Theology of the Cross" from the "Way of the Cross." As merely theory or speculation it becomes blind. But one also cannot declare the "Theology of the Cross of Christ" and the "Way of the Cross of Christians" to be synonymous. As mere praxis, the "Way of the Cross" has nothing more to say and falls dumb. Christo-logy and Christo-praxis belong inseparably together and deepen each other. Both must stand under the motto: First Christ, Christ first!

Because of the urgency of Helmut Harder's question about the meaning of the "Way of Jesus" for theology, I will address his critical question here. In my lectures I examined the theological bases of the ethical and political concepts of the Protestant tradition. I found that (1) the Lutheran two-kingdom teaching springs from a one-sided theology of the cross, i.e., in a Christology that relates the resurrection of Christ exclusively to his cross--as confirmation, as meaning of the cross, or as God's identification with the Crucified--and that (2) the Reformed, Barthian Lordship-of-Christ teaching is based upon a one-sided resurrection theology, i.e., in a Christology of the Pantocrator, who is no longer easily recognizable as the "lamb of God." (3) The newer "political theology" proceeds from the "theology of hope" and understands Jesus as (a) the messianic prophet, (b) the apocalyptic priest, and (c) the eschatological king. With a view to (b) and (c), I have attempted to bring together the elements of truth in the Lutheran and Reformed traditions, as I understand them. I am well aware that I have not yet sufficiently integrated the meaning of the earthly Jesus as the messianic prophet (a). In dialogue with Lutherans and Reformed, one can expect from Mennonite theologians that they will inject the theological meaning of the prophecy of the earthly Jesus and thereby also the call to discipleship in the "Way of Jesus," as, for a start, John Howard Yoder does in his The Politics of Jesus (Die Politik Jesu--der Weg des Kreuzes, with a Foreword by Jürgen Moltmann, Agape Verlag, 1981). I myself have made my

contribution to this underdeveloped part of the traditional Christology in my book, Kirche in der Kraft des Geistes (Munich: 1975, III, Para. 1 and 2; ET: The Church in the Power of the Spirit). In order not to repeat myself, I would direct the reader to this chapter in answer to Helmut Harder's questions. Here I am concerned with how the message and the way of the earthly Jesus are to be understood.

Jesus' life and his way of living were completely determined by his message: "The Kingdom of God is at hand" and "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven." This message is a messianic anticipation, because it makes present the future of God. But because this future of the Kingdom of God is made present to the poor and not to the rich, to the sick and not to the healthy, it calls forth contradiction and opposition and enmity among the rich, the healthy, and the righteous. Jesus experienced opposition from the rich, the healthy, and the righteous from the very beginning. His way from Galilee to Jerusalem had to become a way of Passion. He was crucified by the powerful in Jerusalem. But by God, his father, whose Kingdom he had announced, he was resurrected from the dead, taken up into heaven, and enthroned as Lord of the Kingdom of God. I believe this to be enough evidence for my theory that anticipation and opposition are logically and theologically connected in the [hi]story of Jesus.

We recognize and experience the "Way of Jesus" in the messianic light of his gospel of the Kingdom of God for the poor. We understand the "Way of Jesus" and his messianic message in the eschatological light of his resurrection from the dead and his coming parousia in glory. We are brought into the "Way of Jesus" and experience the fellowship of his suffering and the comfort of his presence when we take up the messianic mission of Jesus and attempt to fulfill it as our own. People who follow Jesus first participate in his mission, and then experience the "Way of Jesus." This is clearly seen in Matt. 11:5 and Matt. 10:7-8. To the question of the Baptist Jesus replies by pointing to his own mission: "The blind see, the lame walk, lepers become clean, the deaf hear, the dead rise, and the Kingdom of God is preached to the poor." But in Matt. 10:7f. he gives this commission to his disciples: "Go and preach: The Kingdom of God

is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, drive the demons out . . . ." The mission of the disciples is described by the same messianic promises as the mission of Jesus himself. Only because of this can the "Way of Jesus" become also the "Way of Discipleship" for his followers.

I emphasize that so strongly here because I have the impression that Helmut Harder understands the "Way of Discipleship" in moral terms and makes Jesus an "example" on this way of moral discipleship. If he were to understand it in these terms, it would remind me of the liberal Protestantism of the 19th century, of Immanuel Kant and Albrecht Ritschl, and of my grandfather, who left the church because he thought that morality and a good life were all that were important.

But just as Jesus' way was determined by his messianic message, so is his Sermon on the Mount determined by his making present the Kingdom of God and the messianic era. The Sermon on the Mount is the "messianic Torah," i.e., the Torah of the dawn of the messianic age. This does not mean that the Sermon on the Mount is a messianic utopia. To the contrary: if indeed the Messiah came in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, and if under his preaching the messianic age dawned, then it is only natural to live according to the Sermon on the Mount. In fellowship with the Messiah and in the possibilities and powers that God pours out on all flesh in the messianic age, the Sermon on the Mount is "an easy yoke" and "a light burden."

The messianic message of Jesus leads us therefore to the "Way of Jesus." In first place is the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and his peace; nonviolence is in second place. I do not understand Helmut Harder's somewhat polemical passages on pages 31-32. I would say: Jesus calls to the Kingdom of God and to the peace of God, and this is the way of nonviolence. But one cannot well say that this is reversed, because then nobody would agree as to why the "Way of Nonviolence" is supposed to be good, and nobody would find the motivation and the strength to walk this way. Jesus is not primarily concerned with nonviolence but with the peace of God on earth. The only means for testifying to and spreading this peace of God on this violent earth is indeed nonviolence.

Helmut Harder's critical comments seem to originate from the idea that "political theology" has legitimized the movement toward violence, at least toward revolutionary violence (p. 30 bottom). This was admittedly an aspect of the "Theology of Revolution" which developed around Camillo Torres, but it is not part of that "political theology" that Johann Baptist Metz and I developed in Europe. We were concerned that Christian theology, and with it, Christian existence, be led out of the ghetto into which it had been banished by respectable [bourgeois?] society: "religion is private." We desired that Christians walk the "Way of Jesus" not only in their private lives but also in their public, political, and economic lives. That is why we call Christian theology a "political theology." We have criticized political violence from the beginning and have renounced it in the name of Jesus.

I would like to add a remark about Helmut Harder's remarks about "active non-violent service to all" and "resistance." "Non-violent service to all" could at the time of Jesus and can in our day be easily fulfilled by not disrupting the violence of the violent and not even questioning it. Our ecclesiastical charities and the Red Cross offer "non-violent service" to the hungry and wounded, but they question the violent exploitation and starvation of the people of the Third World as little as they question the wars that produced so many wounded. If Jesus had acted in this sense, he would not have died on a Roman cross, the deterrent-punishment for agitators against Roman imperialism, but would have been given a Nobel Peace Prize, had there been any at that time. But he was murdered on a Roman cross. I understand Jesus' message of the peace of the Kingdom of God so, that his commitment to nonviolence condemned the violence of the political powerholders as godlessness and blasphemy. This is why he was crucified as an agitator against the political powers. If God's Kingdom is the Kingdom of nonviolent peace, then no violent deed can be of God; consequently all of the kingdoms of this world, built upon violence, are predestined to judgment and defeat.

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount stands in the light of the dawning of God's Kingdom and must, to be consistent with the deity of this God, be understood

as universal and all-encompassing. It may not be reduced to the life of a believer. It may not be confined to the private life of the peacemakers. The Sermon on the Mount questions this entire godless and violent world and places it under judgment, for it says that the Kingdom of God is coming to redeem the whole creation.

In the Lutheran and Reformed Churches there has often enough been too much accommodation to the violent schemes of this world, i.e., of the nations. In all love, is there not in Mennonite congregations too much withdrawal from this evil world into the familiar circle of believers and peacemakers? I have no right to criticize. I would like to say, however, that the violent world of politics stands in bitter need of attack from the Christian peace witness. For this world is, in spite of all of its violent deeds, God's beloved creation, and God will come into his own in this creation. For the Christian faith there is no dualism, neither the gnostic dualism of the good God versus the bad God, nor the apocalyptic dualism of pious resignation in this hopeless world. The way of Jesus is the measure and the plumbline, not for "our way," as Helmut Harder says, but for the whole of creation, for he is the Son of the God who created heaven and earth.

II. The Politics of Following Jesus.

In this second section I would like first to respond to the different questions and critical remarks concerning praxis which came from the respondents.

Clarence Bauman is completely right about his criticism of Luther's two-kingdoms teaching. What he writes I understand to be support and reinforcement of my criticism. In the life of a Christian the two-kingdoms teaching does not lead to freedom but to schizophrenia. The experiences from the most recent German history are appalling. Unfortunately the Lutheran Churches of the Federal Republic of Germany have learned nothing from them.

But Clarence Bauman addressed one theological point which even Lutheran theologians with the two-kingdom teaching have also raised. If both

kingdoms, the spiritual and the worldly, are God's kingdoms, then we must ask whether a split in God himself must be assumed and whether the _Deus absconditus_ in the worldly kingdom must be differentiated from the _Deus in Christo revelatus_ in the spiritual kingdom or whether we deal with the One God who revealed himself in Christ and whose will consequently is only to be discerned from the preaching of Christ. While conservative Lutherans like Althaus and Elert saw only the _Deus absconditus_ at work in the worldly kingdom, theologians from the Luther-renaissance of the 20s such as Ernst Wolf, Hans Joachim Iwand, and the Swedish theologian Törnvall stressed the unity of the God revealed in Christ. When one emphasizes this, one can still differentiate between the two kingdoms as different areas of life, but one must concede that all depends on the undivided obedience of Christ in both areas, measured by Christ's Sermon on the Mount in personal and in political life. "Christian person" and "worldly person" cannot be differentiated. There are comments in Luther that speak for the first interpretation and there are comments that speak for the second interpretation. This is explained by the simple fact that Luther knew no clearcut two-kingdoms teaching but responded in different ways to different situations. The judge of this issue is not Luther but Jesus Christ, as he is testified to in Scripture.

John Yoder asked me the question on the "principalities and powers" becaue I said too little about them and repudiated the term "fallen world." He would like to say "that the powers are good creations, and fallen, and coming under the lordship of Christ." I would respond by asking whether he can show me from the Scriptures (1) _when_ the powers, (2) _where_ the powers, and (3) _why_ the powers "fell"? One must surely dig far into the apocryphal apocalyptic to find the myth of the fall of the angel Lucifer. The original Old Testament traditions know nothing of it. It is true that the so-called Deuteropauline epistles Ephesians and Colossians speak of the triumph of the resurrected Christ over the powers, but hardly anything is said about their creation and fall into sin. I would not dispute that creatures other than humanity can detach themselves from God and therefore

can "fall." But most of what is said about it is pious speculation. The Son of God did not become an angel but a man, in order to save sinful and condemned humanity. For the sake of humanity Christ then conquered the evil powers that only have power over people because the people are sinners and godless. The victory of Christ over the "powers" is no far-away heavenly drama but occurs for the sake of humanity. But there is a problem here between Paul and Deutero-Pauline Ephesians and Colossians: According to Paul, in the end God will destroy "all rulers, principalities and powers" because he will destroy death (1 Cor. 15:24-26). Yet according to Ephesians 1:21 the exalted Christ apparently subjugates these powers, so that they must serve him. I find it difficult to reconcile these two statements about the powers. Because of this, I have followed 1 Corinthians. To state it simply, I do not expect a Christian state in the Kingdom of God; I expect no state at all.

John Yoder then lamented the failure of the Confessing Church in Germany after 1945. Why did the Confessing Church not become a "free church?" Why was there a restoration of the old established church in the pre-1933 form? I cannot answer these questions. The leaders of the Confessing Church that I know all complained about the decision of the Synod of Treysa 1945 and considered the path of the Evangelical Church in Germany wrong. But in 1945 they did not have the strength for an alternative. The majority of the young pastors of the Confessing Church had either been killed in the war or were still in prisoner-of-war or concentration camps. The older pastors around Bishop Dibelius could step back into the old established church situation. The Evangelical Church in Germany is no confessing church and has no right to preen this year in the glow of the *Barmer Theological Declaration* of 1934.

I believe that, 40 years after the end of the war, we have only one chance to become a true and confessing church of Jesus Christ. It lies in a new building up of congregations "from below," from the many discipleship and peace groups that have already built upon the foundation of the evangelical church in Germany, but which are not represented in the politics and declarations of the Evangelical Church in Germany.

Unfortunately we are currently observing the tragedy that the bishops and official representatives of the Evangelical Church in Germany are fighting these groups of renewal in our church in the name of the state. The little Reformed Church to which I belong is taking the path of renewal that it has been working on since 1945, with its unmistakable declarations of peace and with the declaration of the _status confessionis_ in the question of the threat and use of "weapons of mass destruction." We have not yet taken the step into the situation of a "free church" in the German sense because we want to take many Christians and congregations of the Evangelical Church on this path with us.

LeRoy Friesen's question is very personal. He expressed what we all feel and what depresses all of us who have been made into accomplices of violent systems and collaborators in systems of injustice. Sometimes, as a Christian in the Federal Republic of Germany I feel like Israel once did during the Babylonian exile, in a position of extreme non-freedom among an unfree people. Simply by existing and living in this country of the "First World" one becomes guilty of the repression and starvation of people in the "Third World." Our "Political Theology" does not drift away from the "crucified God" but in the name of this God wants to call our society from repression to confession and repentance and to solidarity with the poor. What we call "Political Theology" is nothing other than "Christian theology" after Auschwitz, after Hiroshima, and in view of the starving people of the "Third World."

LeRoy Friesen asks: "If indeed we follow the suffering, dying, and crucified God, what is the shape of our ecclesiology in relation to the victims of systematic abuse in the world?" I have often thought about this and have found in reading the New Testament that Jesus again and again directs his disciples' attention to the people (_ochlos_), for whose liberation and redemption he came. Jesus praises the poor, the suffering, and those who hunger for righteousness, because the Kingdom of God will be theirs (Matt. 5). He promises the Kingdom of Heaven to children (Mark 10:14). He calls "the least"--the poor, the naked, the hungry, the prisoners--"my

brothers (and sisters)" (Matt. 25). And there is no indication that these people were Christians or believers. There have apparently always been "comrades" in the world outside of the church and without special faith. If the church hears and accepts the message of Jesus about the Kingdom of God, it will have to step into fellowship with these unrecognized comrades: It is the poor, the weak, the powerless, whom nobody can stand. They are not the objects of Christian love. They are the comrades of God and subjects of the fellowship of Christ. They must be recognized and respected as such, before trying to help them. Along these lines I see the necessity first for a new ecclesiology, then for a new ethic.

Tom Finger returned with another question, which also came up in Winnipeg, and which really embarrasses me. It is the question of violence in exceptional situations. My answer reveals my personal dilemma. In 1943 at age 17 I was inducted into the German army. I watched the destruction of my home city Hamburg in the "fire storm" in July, 1943, in which more than 70,000 people died. I survived only as by a miracle. In 1945 I was fortunately taken prisoner by the English. In 1948 I returned to Germany. My generation was pitchforked into the war long after the war was lost; we were to die because Hitler wanted to live a little longer and to make Auschwitz possible. When I returned, I swore two things to myself: (1) Never again war and never again service in a war and (2) if I should ever have the opportunity to eliminate a tyrant and mass murderer like Hitler, I would do it. In this line, I have participated in the peace movements against the arming of West Germany and against nuclear armament and against the stationing of Pershing 2 in West Germany. But I have always simultaneously admired Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who took part in the active resistance to Hitler and who gave his life in that cause. I also have great understanding for the Christians in Nicaragua, who have joined the Sandinista Liberation Front, in order to end the crimes of the dictator Somoza. I know that both of these decisions in a sense contradict a pure moral of nonviolence. But I would ask my Mennonite friends to comprehend my dilemma from the bitter

experiences of my life. I do not represent the "just war" teaching. I also do not advocate a justification of the murder of tyrants. But I know that there are situations in life in which one must resist and become guilty, in order to save human lives. Perhaps Bonhoeffer was right when he spoke of a conscious assumption of guilt in such cases. My generation in Germany became guilty because we did nothing to hinder the mass murder of the Jews. "Auschwitz" remains our mark of Cain.

I want to close with Ted Koontz's question, because it asks about hope: "What can I hope for?" I will answer personally: I hope in God and trust myself to the faithfulness of the Lord. He will fulfill his promises and not allow my hope to be destroyed. What does that mean? I hope for eternal life in the Kingdom of the living God. It will come out of eternity into time and out of the "over there" into the present. Because this hope is founded in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, it reaches beyond death and cannot be killed by any death--even atomic death. This is my great and eternal hope. It is the foundation and source of my little and temporal hopes. Because the development of armaments and the incapability of humanity give every reason for pessimism, I set my active hope against them. I am no optimist, but I will not allow myself to be driven into resignation by the threatening world catastrophe. Many people have allowed themselves to lose courage in the face of this danger. My hope for earthly peace and for the survival of humanity and nature on earth is a hope in opposition to despair; I hope in spite of. And that is why I believe that politics without the threat of mass destruction is possible. I also believe that abandoning nuclear deterrence is an option in the real world of American politics. That is why I work in the politics of my own country for real steps towards nuclear disarmament and for the building of a non-terrorist world system. It is realistic because it serves life.

It was asked again and again whether the Sermon on the Mount is valid only for believing Christians or also for politics. I am convinced that the Sermon on the mount is valid for all, because it is the law for the Kingdom of the God who created all people, and who wills that all receive salvation. The Sermon on the

Mount was directed to the disciples of Jesus and "to the people" (*ochlos*): "When he saw the people, he went up on the mountain and seated himself, and his disciples came to him, and he taught them" (Matt. 5:1). The Sermon on the Mount is valid for the people in America, in Europe, in Russia and Asia, wherever it is heard. It determines the *politics of discipleship* and also *discipleship in politics*.

Review of Moltmann's
Following Jesus Christ in the World Today: Responsibility for the World and Christian Discipleship.

Perry B. Yoder

This volume represents the fruit of a lecture series given by Professor Moltmann in the fall of 1982 at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries and again at Canadian Mennonite Bible College. The first chapter, a prolegomenon to the lectures, is an account of Moltmann's spiritual and intellectual pilgrimage. Here he relates especially his experiences in a British prisoner of war camp and how it was that he took up theology. He also gives a brief overview of his intellectual development as represented by his major writings. This sets the stage for the following lectures, which are an attempt to begin a dialogue between Moltmann and the historic peace church traditions. For my part, I enter into a discussion of his material with trepidation since I am neither a theologian nor the son of a theologian, but only a Bible scholar to whom the book review editor said, "go, review the book and have it on my desk by September."

The lectures themselves comprise four chapters. The first three present, in turn, three theological options which characterize Christian political attitudes and actions in Europe: Lutheran two-kingdom theology; the confessing church legacy, especially as formulated by Barth; and political theology--the position of Professor Moltmann. The final chapter is an eloquent plea for pacifism in the face of the present preparations for nuclear war. I found these chapters both insightful and helpful in understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the various theological stances characterizing present Christian approaches to politics generally and war particularly.

To what extent the author has adequately described and fairly criticized the first two options I leave to

others, more knowledgeable than myself, to discuss. For myself, I was most impressed with his use of christology as the lodestone in his presentation and evaluation of these positions. Here Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, representing the quintessence of christology, were used as a guide both for criticism of other positions and for construction of his own position--political theology. It is to this chapter, where he presents his position, and to the final one, his call for the renunciation of nuclear arms, that I would like to direct my attention in this brief review.

Moltmann begins with a brief discussion of the nature and goals of political theology. He reports that it is a response to secularization and a political critique of the church. Two points are quite clear: First, the church cannot be apolitical. Either consciously or by default the church has social and political influence. Second, a goal of political theology is not "to 'politicize' the church," but "to Christianize the political involvement of Christians" (p. 64). Here, it seems to me, are crucial issues in which we as Mennonites need to enter into dialogue. The tacit Mennonite assumption has been that the church and its mission are apolitical. Long after missionaries have recognized the value of anthropology in order both to mitigate the negative impact of the gospel on another culture and to facilitate authentic, organic acceptance, we still believe that the cup of cold water--relief, rural development, etc.--done from "pure" Christian motives can ignore political contexts and consequences. This is, of course, a head-in-sand position. Political science is to relief and development what anthropology is to missions. We have, however, never quite owned up to confessing the political effects of our actions, either at home or abroad. Indeed, often churches and our relief agency, the Mennonite Central Committee, seem intent on denying either their political relevance or the necessity for their political involvement to change the status quo. Boycotts, demonstrations, and civil disobedience seem unsightly, if not wrong, to many Mennonites. But the church has not spoken clearly and loudly about what policies in South Africa, in Central America, and in the Philippines we are supporting by not ruffling the status quo.

We are now reaping the whirlwind because we have not taken our actual political involvement seriously. Church members leave their church's theology behind (it is apolitical, isn't it?) when they act politically, e.g., vote. In the last election in the U.S., as reported in The Mennonite Weekly Review, practically every heavy Mennonite voting area went for Reagan--for a massive military buildup both of nuclear and conventional weapons, and against aid to poor people, educating the underprivileged, teaching school children in their native language. What do you call a people who hold relief sales for MCC but elect officials who will use their tax money to do the opposite? We must ask with Moltmann, what is the orthopraxis of discipleship in our political situation?

The second major fact of political theology discussed by the author is its future orientation. "The new political theology...has declared eschatology as its foundation and as the medium of Christian theology..." (p. 65). Some of the implications of this statement he explains and elaborates in the remainder of the chapter.

This emphasis leaves me with several questions. First, the word "eschatology" has become such a cliche that it seems unable to say much. Here, if I understand the argument, the emphasis lies on regarding history as open and needing transformation now in anticipation of God's kingdom. Thus eschatology is here the "code word" for a certain view of what should happen in the present based on a particular understanding of history as it is interpreted from an ideal future. Now this notion of an ideal future--the kingdom of God--as the rudder for our understanding of the past and action in the present, raises a serious question for ethics. In the last part of chapter 4, ethics is understood to be participating in liberation because this is what Jesus and the kingdom are about. But, ethics is more than a goal--liberation; it also specifies the way to the goal. Whether this type of specificity can be gotten from eschatology the lectures do not appear to answer.

Now it is exactly at this point that the Bible apparently diverges from Moltmann's program. In the Bible ethics is normally grounded in the past--what God has already done, rather than in the future--what

we conceive that God will do or wants us to do. This notion lies behind typical phrases like, "the indicative precedes the imperative" or "grace and law are linked together," which are used to describe this dominant biblical pattern of human action founded on and responding to the gracious action of God. Thus in Exodus 20, the ten commandments are a response to what God has already done, not actions commanded for the sake of a future possessing of the land of Canaan. The past is more than a pointer to the future for which we strive, it is also the basis for our response in the present, which is the harbinger of that future. Thus Christian exhortation to action is based on what God has done. It reflects its source in God's grace and guides us in actions that are consistent with these paradigmatic grace events. Because God liberated and liberates, so also we work toward liberation. But we work for liberation not in just any way, but along a path which reflects and replicates the act of God in Jesus.

It seems to me that it is exactly this perspective that prevents us from adopting a political legalism that says we must earn our own political salvation or present manifestation of God's grace. The future is open; it is not ours to earn.

This leads me to my last comment and question: what is the relevance of the ethical instruction in the New Testament for our peacemaking today? In his last chapter, Moltmann, having discussed various positions taken toward nuclear arms by Christians, interjects the Sermon on the Mount as a judgment on them. He draws on the last anthithesis in Matthew 5 to point to the necessity of love for the enemy. This principle is then applied to the arms race, and is basic to his call for life without armaments. Here is a clear and fundamental appeal to the teachings of Jesus. What is not clear, however, is how this principle of love applied to the arms race between the superpowers is tied into the program of liberation. As outlined in the preceding chapter, acting ethically is defined as "to participate in the comprehensive process of God's liberation of the world, and to discover our own role in this, according to our calling and abilities" (p. 80). Unfortunately, ethics so grounded in what we conceive to be God's liberation has often been a major motive for "Christian" violence

and warfare. Partners with God have felt the need to eradicate the heretic, the oppressor, or the menace of atheistic communism. Confronted with nuclear madness, we turn, appropriately, to the Bible to find guidance for our response. However, the teaching we find there must not be disassociated from its own authentic roots, namely God's grace. This factor needs recognition in our theoretical statements about ethics. Ethical action, including opposition to nuclear arms, then becomes part of a way of life reflecting God's transforming grace which is extended to all in love. The point of this life, as Professor Moltmann so eloquently writes, is to be cooperators with God in liberation. But the point never cancels the means nor the basis.

In summary, Moltmann has written a very helpful and powerful booklet. It is to be hoped that he will be joined by other influential and articulate spokespersons in opposition to the current nuclear madness.