

Meye, Robert P., *Jesus and the Twelve*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1968. 257 pp. \$ 4.95.

In a time when NT scholarship emphasizes the kerygmatic Christ and thus the kerygma of the early Church, the author, Professor at Northern Baptist Seminary, goes beyond the kerygmatic Christ to the historical Jesus and beyond the kerygma of the early Church to the *didache* of Jesus himself.

This monograph based on his Basel dissertation limits itself to the didactic motif in Mk. His basic thesis is that Mk emphasizes the didactic function of Jesus. Connected with this function is Jesus' intimate relationship with the Twelve and his revelation to them of the Messianic secret. Meye also seeks to demonstrate the historicity of the Twelve.

Meye shows quite conclusively in chapter II that Mk emphasizes Jesus' function as teacher. However, the meaning of teaching is so much expanded that one wonders whether teaching can be so clearly distinguished from preaching. In Mk 1:21-28 the "new teaching" includes Jesus' exorcism. One wonders also how that which cannot be understood can be used as a teaching medium. I am referring to the use of parables with the crowd. The section on parables, because of this aspect, needs much more clarification. At one point Meye speaks of the parables as having a "didactic or teaching function, *i.e.*, they actually give a clear statement of Jesus' proclamation" (p. 43). Elsewhere Meye makes a clear distinction between teaching and proclamation but it is interesting that he has combined the two here. Has he made a Freudian slip, that is, is the content of teaching basically the same as the content of proclamation, and can the issue, teacher or prophet, be sharply drawn? On page 48 Meye says that "Jesus' way as a teacher is for Mark a direct cause of the way of the cross." How can this be except that the content of his teaching is connected with the reason given for condemning him to the cross, that is, that he proclaimed himself as the Christ? Manifestly while proclamation is a less fitting word for private instruction, hence "there is no private proclamation," *hērussein* and *didachein* are not so neatly distinguished. In Mk 6:30, as Meye has pointed out, the preaching activity (6:12) of the disciples is later summarized as what "they had done and taught." The prophetic aspect of Jesus' ministry is so intertwined with the didactic aspect, as Dodd has shown, that great care has to be exercised in trying to distinguish them.

In discussing the narrative pattern in Mk, Meye has selected the three significant sea crossings, the confession at Caesarea Philippi, and the resurrection as the key events in the didactic process. In the sea crossings the disciples ask, "Who is this man?" and Jesus replies, "Do you not yet understand?" The disciples find their answer at Caesarea Philippi where the "not yet" of Jesus' question becomes "now." But the confession that Jesus is the Messiah is not the final answer. Jesus must teach them that the Messiah must take the way

of the cross. This the disciples do not fully understand till the resurrection. It seems somewhat arbitrary to select the three sea crossings and suggest a pattern although there are similarities. What part does the rest of the narrative play in the didactic process? Again it seems that not much is gained at Caesarea, which Meye assumes "as a central and pivotal event" (p. 71), if mere (Meye would say "sheer") Messianic confession is obtained. They are charged not to tell any one about him. And further, Peter's understanding is so far from right that Jesus has to rebuke him with the words, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not on the side of God, but of men" (Mk 8:33). It would seem that lack of understanding would be a gain over misunderstanding.

Meye makes clear from the outset that he is interested not only in putting forth Mk's theology but in establishing the reliability of the entirety of the Gospel including the redactional sections. Thus the redactional sections are accepted as historical. Much of the material on which Meye builds his case is in these sections. Perhaps the Achilles' heel of his study is at this point and his refusal to see an intricate intertwining of the pre-Easter and post-Easter understanding of Jesus in the Gospel. The validity of his study, actually, is not dependent upon the historicity or non-historicity of the materials. He could have made a strong case for Mk's understanding of Jesus as teacher and the role of the disciples without insisting on the historicity of the redactional sections.

Since Meye has schematized the role of the disciples (instruction before the cross, proclamation after), he has a problem with the sending out of the Twelve. His solution—"the one mission of the Twelve is a point of beginning for Jesus' instruction in the full meaning of their mission" (p. 112). It seems hardly possible that the disciples who had not yet understood could have gained much from such a mission in preparation for their post-Easter mission. What is described is basically a healing mission with the call to repent.

Meye agrees with Wrede concerning the Messianic secret as it relates to the disciples except for this one significant difference, *viz.*, for Wrede it is a non-historical dogmatic construction by Mk to resolve the tension between a non-Messianic historical ministry of Jesus and the Church's Messianic confession, while for Meye it is not a non-historical dogmatic construction but a historical description of what actually took place. Though the disciples did not understand, the secret was revealed to them, and after the resurrection this secret Messianic didache became their kerygma. Here again the question should be raised concerning the content of the didache and that of the kerygma. Ultimately they are the same, as Meye indicates on pp. 136 and 214, so that the real issue is whether Jesus is to be conceived primarily as one who reveals his secret to a closed circle or one who spreads this secret abroad, and not whether he is a teacher or a herald. A teacher can teach a crowd, as Mk has Jesus doing. What Meye has not made clear in the early chapters is this distinction.

In dealing with those texts which seem to broaden the concept of disciples beyond the Twelve, Meye generally deals with the problem satisfactorily but has difficulty with Mk 2:14 and is least convincing with Mk 4:10, 11, 34. If the expression "those about him" can be shown to be an expression in Mk for a small circle of disciples within the Twelve, it would remove the problem, but until then it seems more likely that it refers to other disciples than the Twelve, since the phrase "with the Twelve" is connected with it.

The fact that the Twelve are recorded even when the names of the Twelve are not identical in the lists, Meye contends, argues for historicity of a group of Twelve. However, it could be argued that the Twelve is a later imposition, that actually there were more than Twelve but when the term Twelve was adopted to agree with the twelve tribes, various attempts were made to select only this number. There would be a general consensus regarding the majority of those who should be included in the Twelve, but beyond these some would favor one over another and thus lead to differences. I do not think Meye sees the force of this argument.

Although there are points at which the book can be strengthened, on the whole it is a well-constructed and well-developed book. There are many valuable insights throughout and it will be worth careful study. This is a positive contribution to the understanding of the Marcan Gospel and the didactic motif presented in it.

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Minear, Paul S., *I Saw a New Earth: An Introduction to the Visions of the Apocalypse*. Washington, D. C.: Corpus Books, 1968. xxvi + 385 pp. \$ 10.00.

An understanding of the literary structure of the NT book of Revelation is essential to correct hermeneutics in dealing with this book. Unfortunately, such analysis of literary features is altogether too often neglected in studies of the Revelation. *I Saw a New Earth* is different. One of its truly strong points is that it gives extensive and careful attention to literary features as well as to historical backgrounds.

This publication contains three major parts: (1) "The Visions" (pp. 1-197); (2) "Issues in Interpretation" (pp. 199-298); and (3) "Translation with Annotations" (pp. 299-365). There is a bibliography (pp. 367-384), but no index.

Part I contains a section-by-section presentation of Minear's own translation of the Apocalypse. Following the translation, there is an analysis of the literary structure of each section, consideration of special items for discussion and reflection, and notation of points for further study. Helpful bibliographical references are given in connection with the points for further study. The sections into which