

Thomas Barrosse, "The Johannine Relationship of Love to Faith"; Bruce Vawter, "John's Doctrine of the Spirit: A Summary View of His Eschatology"; Rudolf Schnackenburg, "Christian Morality according to John"; W. K. Grossouw, "Christian Spirituality in John"; Raymond E. Brown, "The Johannine Sacramentary"; Rudolf Schnackenburg, "Is There a Johannine Ecclesiology?"; J. Ramsey Michaels, "Reflections on the Three Epistles of John."

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Utke, Allen R. *Bio-Babel: Can We Survive the New Biology?* Atlanta: John Knox, 1978. 247 pp. \$11.95.

The new biology threatens to revolutionize life as we know it in the last quarter of the twentieth century. We witness today as critical a breakthrough in knowledge and technology in biology as we witnessed in physics a generation ago. In the first part of the book the author sets forth what we know and what we soon shall see in various areas of biology. In the area of reproduction, he refers to new methods of birth control, self-administered abortifacients, artificial insemination and sperm banks, control of sex in offspring, artificial in ovulation, artificial placentas, cloning, and artificial wombs.

Under physical modification, he refers to the following realities and possibilities: transplanted, artificial, and regenerated body parts; genetic engineering, including negative and positive eugenics using cell fusion, transformation, sperm therapy, transduction, and microsurgery; artificial and synthetic plants and animals; man-animal, man-plant, and plant-animal chimeras.

Under mental modification, he refers to the electrical control of the brain; the chemical control of behavior, memory, and intelligence; disembodied brains, head transplants, and brain transplants; and man-computer and man-machine chimeras.

Under prolongment of life, he refers to the control of disease, freezing techniques to preserve someone for future reanimation, chemically-induced hibernation and suspended animation, and control of the aging process.

The last chapter in this section deals with the creation of life.

The second half of the book deals with the implications and possible consequences of the biological revolution described in the first half. The author first raises questions concerning the unthinking acceptance of the "progress" gained through science and technology, whether these are not doing more *to* man than *for* man. In view of the rapid acceleration of knowledge without corresponding growth in morality, he queries whether we are not in fact now like children playing with dynamite.

Next he sets forth the blessings which we can gain from the advances of the biological revolution and weighs these against the dangers. His emphasis is clearly on the dangers. He looks at the current developments as a Bio-Babel rather than as a cornucopia of unlimited blessings. In the light of these dangers, he proposes a ten-year moratorium on artificial in ovulation research, on the development of artificial wombs, on attempts to clone small mammals and humans, on cell fusion experiments, and on recombinant DNA research. Research in other areas should be slowed down, but those areas are not as serious as the ones mentioned above. During this period of moratorium, conferences and forums that include leaders in all disciplines and fields of knowledge should be held to discuss these various types of research.

Utke also calls for a revolution in which wisdom rather than knowledge will be the objective and that will result in a new person who "would be less self-centered, less orientated toward seeking power, and more concerned about nature, mankind,

humanity, and future generations than are most people today" (p.221). This new person would be a humanized scientist who would share his knowledge and become politically active so that he can change society, a new educator who is not simply an imparter of knowledge but a professor of wisdom, a new layman who becomes informed and active in the shaping of society, and a new religious person who becomes involved for positive good in exercising his Christian responsibility.

The author has set forth well the research being carried on at the present time, including the most up-to-date material available (his postscript adds new developments since the main part of the book was completed). Yet he appears to be much more optimistic regarding future developments than the evidence warrants. Perhaps he felt that the negative tone in presenting the evidence is necessary in order to indicate the serious dangers which are upon us and the Babel-like nature of man's research. Scientists who have been working in these fields have themselves warned against the frightening implications of such research, so Utke's suggestion of a moratorium is not a strange proposal. However, in a complex world, the practicality of such a moratorium has to be weighed in the light of what other countries are doing and will do. What implications does such research have regarding self-defense? What implications does it have regarding our moral quality? Would it be better to stop such research even if this means being overcome by our enemy who continues this sort of research? From a public-policy point of view, questions of this kind have to be asked, and this is what Utke calls for.

From a Christian standpoint, the issues would be looked at differently. How realistic, moreover, is his appeal for a revolution which in fact demands the conversion of American society? Given the nature of man, is this possible? While attempts should be made for the transformation of men, they should always be made with the awareness of the sinful nature of men. Perhaps ultimately the only real solution for man's hubris is God's intervention as at the Tower of Babel. This does not mean, of course, that the Christian should have a laissez-faire attitude. While in this world, the Christian should put forth every effort to influence it according to what he considers the humane options in harmony with Christ's principles. Yet he does this, not in wild-eyed optimism, but in sober realism.

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White, Ronald C., Jr., and Hopkins, C. Howard. *The Social Gospel: Religion and Reform in Changing America*. With an essay by John C. Bennett. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976. xix + 306 pp. \$15.00/\$6.95.

In 1940 C. Howard Hopkins published *The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism*, a volume that, along with Henry May's *Protestant Churches and Industrial America*, remains authoritative on the movement. Believing that the social gospel needs "re-visioning," Hopkins and Ronald C. White, who teaches religion at Whitworth College, have now compiled a volume that forces one to do the rethinking the authors desire.

To classify this volume is difficult, for it contains excerpts from the published and unpublished writings of social-gospel advocates, excerpts from previously published works on the movement, new essays written expressly for this volume, and commentary by the compilers themselves that links this varied material together. The resulting book is surprisingly coherent and reads almost like a monograph.