

Fuller, Reginald H., ed. *Essays on the Love Commandment*. Trans. Reginald H. and Ilse Fuller. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978. 107 pp. \$7.95.

This book consists of four essays excerpted from a *Festschrift* for Hans Conzelmann (Georg Strecker, ed., *Jesus Christus in Historie und Theologie* [Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1975]). Each of the essays in some way treats the theme of the love command or the Sermon on the Mount.

According to Fuller, the four essays were brought together in an attempt to bridge the gulf which separates biblical studies on the one hand and ethics on the other. In the preface he states: "Much contemporary ethical discussion, while claiming to be Christian, has been conducted without reference to the biblical norms. There are signs of awareness both on the side of biblical scholarship and on the side of Christian ethics that this ought not to be, and attempts are being made to redress the situation. Let us hope that these essays may contribute something to those attempts" (p. 8).

The first essay is by Luise Schottroff, "Non-Violence and the Love of One's Enemies." She begins by surveying R. Bultmann's and H. Braun's understanding of the command to love one's enemy. Both Bultmann and Braun are criticized for focusing primarily on the subjective experience of the person who loves while ignoring the enemy and the concrete relation that exists between the Christian and the enemy. According to Schottroff, the context of the command in both Matthew and Luke is not a general humanitarian love, but love for the persecutor which always moves in a direction from the weak to the strong.

Schottroff is much more sympathetic with Martin Luther King's understanding of the command in terms of non-violent resistance. The command not to resist evil does not rule out all kinds of resistance, but only a certain kind of resistance, i.e., violent resistance. To simply surrender to the enemy's unjust demands would not be love. True love for the enemy is seen in non-violent resistance which has the salvation of the enemy in view. Thus Schottroff concludes: "There can be no doubt that for disciples of Christ non-resistance is an essential part of their life-style. But our assent to non-resistance is only credible when pursued in combination with the practice of resistance, and where it is a combative and evangelistic means for the salvation of all" (p. 28).

In the second essay, "The Double Commandment of Love: A Test Case for the Criteria of Authenticity," R. H. Fuller presents a detailed study of the three synoptic versions of the love commandment in an attempt to separate tradition and redaction. He concludes that Matthew and Luke use a non-Markan source that gives the most original version and attempts to reconstruct this source's version. By applying various criteria Fuller concludes that the double commandment (love for God and neighbor) is authentic.

Fuller then takes a leap which appears to go beyond the evidence. From the fact that the double commandment does not occur in Rabbinic Judaism or Qumran but does appear in *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* in what appears to be a wisdom context, he concludes that the double commandment had its origins in a wisdom tradition of Hellenized Judaism. Jesus uses this tradition and in so doing claims implicitly to be the spokesman for the wisdom tradition.

In the third essay, "The Theme of the Sermon on the Mount," Christoph Burchard attempts to uncover the factors that determined the composition of Matt 5:3-7:27. He begins with the assumption that the theme is set forth in Matt 5:16 and that the entire sermon has to do not with the gospel of the kingdom or ethics in general but with the disciples' commission to the world. The instructions in the sermon are instructions for missionary endeavor given from a perspective which subordinates miraculous and prophetic activity to the living out of the divine will before others. Matt 5:3-16 is an introduction which gives a summary of the contents of the sermon and 7:13-27 is a conclusion which warns the disciples of the consequences of failing to fulfill their commission to the world. According to Burchard, the entire sermon fits this theme, and although this is undoubtedly a major theme, it is difficult to see how all the material, such as the discussion of the motives for worship in chap. 6, fits the theme as neatly as Burchard believes.

The final essay is by M. Jack Suggs and is titled "The Antitheses as Redactional Products." In a previous work (*Wisdom, Christology and Law in Matthew's Gospel* [Cambridge, 1970], pp. 109-113) Suggs rejected the common view represented by Bultmann that three of the antitheses are authentic sayings of Jesus while three are Matthean redaction and argued that all six are redactional products. Here Suggs maintains his previous view but reassesses the old evidence and presents some new arguments. He rejects Jeremias' claim that the criterion of dissimilarity proves authenticity, for while the dissimilarity is admitted, it could apply to Matthew as well as Jesus. Suggs believes that Matthew views Jesus as Wisdom, which is the embodiment of the law. Matthew creates the antitheses so that Jesus, as the embodiment of law, can authoritatively give the true meaning of law over against the Pharisaic misconstructions and misunderstandings of law. Matthew's purpose is to define and exhibit the True Law and call people to obedience to it as the first stage of discipleship. While Suggs does not present any convincing evidence that the antitheses could not go back to Jesus, his discussion does point up the problematic nature of the criteria for authenticity.

Although each of the four essays in this book is interesting and informative, the book as a whole does not live up to the purpose stated in Fuller's preface, for it is difficult to see what the last three essays contribute to a discussion between biblical scholars and ethicists. All three seem rather to perpetuate the status quo, i.e. technical NT scholarship with little attempt to delineate ethical significance. The one exception is Schottroff's essay, which

does discuss a contemporary ethical question from a biblical base, although even here one wonders if her conclusions, which have much to commend them from a theological and ethical standpoint, are actually drawn from the biblical text. Nevertheless, her essay is an important contribution to biblical ethics, whereas the other three essays contribute to NT scholarship but offer little in the way of dialogue between biblical studies and ethics.

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Furnish, Victor Paul. *The Moral Teaching of Paul*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1979. 143 pp. Paperback, \$4.95.

This book differs considerably from Furnish's previous work on Paul's ethics, *Theology and Ethics in Paul* (Nashville, 1968), which was a major descriptive study of Paul's ethical thought in relationship to his theology as a whole and was addressed primarily to scholars. The present work is a much smaller, popularly written book for laymen which discusses the relevance of Paul's ethical advice for several contemporary moral dilemmas. As such it is a very welcome addition to the all-too-small list of works which attempt to address current ethical issues from a base of solid biblical scholarship.

According to Furnish, the book is written "for people who believe that Paul's moral teaching ought to be taken seriously but who are not sure what it means to do so" (p. 9). An introductory chapter discusses a basic approach to Paul's ethical advice by contrasting the "sacred cow" approach, which takes everything literally without regard to its original setting, and the "white elephant" approach, which sets Paul aside as outmoded and irrelevant for the modern world. Both are rejected in favor of an approach which takes Paul seriously but recognizes that he addressed specific people in a specific time and that his advice cannot be simply transplanted into our own time. Furnish then looks at Paul's advice in relationship to four contemporary issues: sex, marriage, divorce; homosexuality; women in the church; and governmental authority.

The first chapter of the issue focuses on 1 Cor 7 and concludes that while the basic topic under discussion is a mistaken view of sexuality at Corinth, Paul's discussion demonstrates an emphasis on the mutuality of the marriage relationship, a concern for the character of the relationship between husband and wife, and a recognition that individual cases differ and thus require different actions.

Regarding homosexuality, Furnish argues that it is not a major biblical concern, and since Paul offered no direct teaching to his own churches on the subject of homosexual conduct, his letters cannot yield any specific answers to the questions being faced by the modern church. Paul was opposed to homosexuality because he, in common with his age, associated it with lust