

One wonders at times if some of these authors are so close to their fields that they fail clearly to distinguish between what is sure and what is tentative there. Or perhaps what appears to be a somewhat one-sided emphasis stems from an apologetic concern to give a certain class of conservative Christians a better appreciation of the value of scientific inquiry and to extirpate from those Christians' minds the belief that their own theological views are necessarily identical with Biblical truth.

In closing, we wish to state that this book is in many ways a very good book. It deserves to be read, and to be read seriously. Certain emphases which recur throughout the book are valuable correctives. Three come immediately to mind: (1) Scientific evidence should be given serious consideration by Christians, not simply explained away because of preconceived theological assumptions. (2) It should be recognized that religious doctrines (even those of long standing) are not necessarily equivalent to Biblical truth. (3) Hermeneutically, it is improper to utilize Bible texts to answer questions which are irrelevant to the content and context of those texts and to the topic and purpose of the Bible writer who wrote them.

Andrews University

KENNETH A. STRAND

Conzelmann, Hans, *Grundriss der Theologie des Neuen Testaments*. "Einführung in die evangelische Theologie," Band 2. München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1967. 407 pp. DM 28.00.

This "Outline of the Theology of the New Testament" is the first Protestant NT theology to appear in Germany since the publication of Bultmann's theology about two decades ago. Conzelmann himself is a scholar of the Bultmann school and belongs to the circle of scholars who since 1954 have become known as the post-Bultmannians. Therefore it would seem almost natural to observe in what ways Conzelmann's NT theology differs from that of his mentor. This work was written "as a textbook [Lehrbuch] for students" (p. 14) designed to introduce the reader into the present state of the discipline of NT theology. The author makes no attempt to be exhaustive in the citation of past and current literature on the various subjects and problems. Yet the short bibliographies of important studies at the beginning of each new section are extremely helpful in that they introduce the reader to what has been done most recently in those areas. One finds works published as recently as 1967.

Conzelmann's understanding of NT theology becomes apparent in the method and structure of his undertaking just as clearly as Bultmann's view can be read from the structure of his book. The author does not open in the fashion of Bultmann with a section on presuppositions. Instead he presents the material with which NT theology works, namely the kerygma of the earliest church and

the Hellenistic church. This means that Conzelmann rejects the attempts which open with a reconstruction of the teachings of Jesus. He believes that he must start with the kerygma itself where the motifs of NT theology are first available. Thus the "new quester" Conzelmann does not criticize Bultmann for relegating the message of the historical Jesus to the mere "presuppositions" of NT theology, but eliminates it altogether as a basis for NT theology. He believes that he must exclude the question of the historical Jesus on grounds of methodology. Although he affirms that the work of Jesus of Nazareth is the *Bedingung* (presupposition) of church, faith and theology, the basic problem of NT theology for Conzelmann is the question, "Why did faith after the appearances of the Risen One hold on to the identity of the Exalted one with Jesus of Nazareth?" (p. 16). Thus the problem of NT theology is not the question of how the Proclaimer became the Proclaimed. In view of the fact that Conzelmann places a different emphasis on the basic question of NT theology, we must ask the fundamental question whether or not the kerygma of the church is in essential continuity with the life and message of Jesus of Nazareth. Merely to affirm this continuity as Conzelmann does is not enough; it needs explication. In order to demonstrate that the kerygma interpreted Jesus adequately and correctly, within a theology of the NT we must explicate what is inherent in the person, proclamation, and deeds of Jesus of Nazareth, so that faith in Christ is actually grounded in Jesus himself. In other words, this reviewer argues that it is a methodological necessity that first the question of "how" (*wie*) must be answered within the framework of a NT theology before the question of "why" (*warum*) can be given consideration.

Main Part I treats "The Kerygma of the Earliest Church and the Hellenistic Church" (pp. 43-112). As this title indicates, Conzelmann does not distinguish clearly, as Bultmann does, between the kerygma of the earliest church and that of the Hellenistic church. He believes thereby "to overcome the alternative whether the unity or diversity within the New Testament is to be stressed" (p. 25). This procedure would then give room to the "historical manifoldedness" and at the same time the "unity" would appear in the theology's relation to its subject matter, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ witnessed to in the kerygma. This part is interesting insofar as Conzelmann appears to be less sure than Bultmann in the reconstruction of the kerygma of the earliest church and the Hellenistic church, for both are now treated together. This seems to be a reflection of more recent research which indicates that things were more fluid and less distinct than Bultmann had supposed.

The second main part, entitled "The Synoptic Kerygma" (pp. 113-172), is an addition to the outlines of Bultmann's theology, which is on the whole reflected in Conzelmann's work. According to Bultmann's concept of a NT theology one can not yet speak of theology in the Synoptics. Conzelmann goes beyond Bultmann here. While the latter was still dominated by the original perspective of form-criticism,

which sought to search primarily for single units of tradition, the former, under the influence of redaction-criticism, points out that the kerygma is not only interpreted by means of terminological conceptions as in Paul and John, but also through the historical narratives of the Synoptics. Thus Conzelmann proceeds to present the Synoptic kerygma as it is available as a result of the history of the transmission of tradition (*Traditionsgeschichte*), and then asks for the authentic kernel of each tradition. After having outlined the common basic conception of God in the Synoptics, he treats the thematic topics of eschatology, ethics, and Christology. "Jesus does not expressly teach, who he is. . . . After his death this indirect Christology becomes transformed into the direct one of the faith of the church" (p. 146). On this last point the new quester Conzelmann does not go beyond Bultmann in maintaining that the implicit Christology of the teaching of Jesus has become explicit in the kerygma of the post-Easter church.

The third main part is devoted to the "Theology of Paul" (pp. 173-314). In order to avoid the misunderstanding to which Bultmann's existential interpretation of Paul's theology under the categories of "man prior to the revelation of faith" and "man under faith" may lead, namely anthropology, Conzelmann attempts to develop the theology of Paul more along the line of historical developments "as interpretation of the original *texts* of faith, *i.e.*, the oldest formulations of the credo" (p. 13). At this point we recognize again how much Conzelmann endeavors to work out his Pauline theology as well as the entire NT theology in terms of the present-day understanding of the history of the transmission of tradition. Over against Bultmann's "chemically purified distillate" (p. 180), which short-changes the sacraments, the conception of parousia and the end of the world, the theme of the OT, Israel and salvation history, and predestination, Conzelmann takes as his starting point for Pauline theology the imparting of the gift of righteousness from God. "This imparting cannot be experienced, but can only be heard and believed. Theology is the understanding of this process" (p. 185).

Main Part IV is called "The Development after Paul" (pp. 315-348). This section, in distinction from Bultmann who placed it after the section on Johannine Theology, comes immediately after the theology of Paul. Conzelmann attempts to avoid the value judgment of Bultmann's procedure which suggests that the high level of Pauline and Johannine theology was not maintained by later developments. He feels that this value judgment is reflected in today's uncritical use of "nascent catholicism" (*Frühkatholizismus*). He rejects the notion of "nascent catholicism" whenever there is still a *Traditionsgedanke* at work, thus refusing to follow the lead of Käsemann, Marxsen and others. His key to the theology of the period after Paul is "the self-consciousness of the third generation" (p. 319). This is not a key to "development," for "there is no logical consistency of casual legality" to be traced. Yet continuity is maintained in that the historical

movement of the church is determined by the authoritative teachings which are handed on. Therefore, "all theological themes of this period can be reduced to the following common denominator: A new stage of *reflexion* is reached" (p. 320, italics his). This stage of "reflexion" must, of course, again be understood in terms of the history of the transmission of tradition, which is determinative for Conzelmann.

The last main part is devoted to "John" (pp. 349-390). After the historical position of the Johannine writings is discussed, Johannine Christology is treated, which in turn is followed by a section on the "world and man." This sequence indicates that here Conzelmann is less dependent on Bultmann. Though the latter speaks unhesitatingly of "Gnostic dualism," Conzelmann warns that "in spite of antithetical terminology one can only speak with caution of Johannine dualism" (p. 385). There is no cosmological or anthropological dualism; at most one can speak of a "dualism of decision" within the framework of the possibility of existence. The author closes his presentation of Johannine theology with a section on eschatology. He does grant some aspects of future eschatology in John. "The element of futurity is not excluded, but actualized. John does not need any apocalyptic sentences in order to present pure futurity. . . . Naturally John knows the expectation of the parousia (as also the resurrection and judgment). He does not exclude it, but integrates it into his understanding of present salvation" (p. 388). In the last analysis, however, this means nothing else than that in John the future aspect of eschatology has meaning only in terms of present eschatology. "What has the believer to expect from the future? Nothing, aside from what he already possesses" (p. 390).

Within the space available in a review we have mentioned only a few of the many interesting points which Conzelmann treats in his work. In our restricted comparison with Bultmann's work we have been able to stress only the more significant points of disagreement. On the whole, however, it turns out that this post-Bultmannian theology of the NT is indeed very Bultmannian. Thus, in spite of changes and alterations, this work still follows the tradition of Bultmann and does not represent a radical break. Although many readers of this NT theology will be disappointed at the numerous negative conclusions which the author reaches on many points where contemporary NT and Biblical scholarship have opened up new directions, this volume is nevertheless stimulating and is thus highly recommended for everyone who wishes an up-to-date introduction to the state of affairs in NT theology as understood by post-Bultmannian liberal German scholarship.