meters of Scripture and the insight of great Christian psychological thinkers ..." (p 19). Interdisciplinary conversation as practiced in this book, becomes the way of developing a Christian psychology.

Although a lot of hard work and thinking has gone into this book and the project of developing a Christian psychology, it is a pity that the dominant epistemology guiding the author is very modernistic, structuralist and fundamentalist. This is clear from the very first paragraph describing the purpose of the conference from which the book originated: "... we shared the desire to think about persons in ways strongly guided by the Bible and the great classical tradition of orthodox Christianity" (p 1). This limits the contribution the book can make to a specific community of Christians. This book will be of value to Christian pastors, psychologists and people who approach the issue at hand with the assumption that the Bible can provide answers to all problems concerning understanding human beings and is able to solve "psychological" problems people experience.

I miss attention to the issue from a more adequate epistemological position – critical self-reflection would change the question that the book tries to answer. The question is embedded in a modernist, fundamentalist, positivist scientific approach. Postmodern and constructionist ideas would change the question at hand. The method of addressing the question would change to such an extent that the endeavour to create a Christian psychology (that is a biblical psychology) would become in itself an unacceptable and problematic issue.

To call it Christian psychology (why not anthropology?) obscures the importance of the real implications of this shift. This is a move away from privileging psychology as having the dominant say about understanding being human. What we need is a deconstruction of the dominance of the modernist, positivist psychologising of people, a move towards a more culturally and politically sensitive way of thinking about being human.

Confusing matters further is the assumption from which the problem is approached, namely that ‘Theology’, ‘Christian’ and ‘Biblical’ are more or less synonymous. A biblical or Christian psychology is assumed to be a theological position, which, from my point of view, is unacceptable. What is presented eventually is a contemporary psychological analysis of cultural discourses, and not necessarily a theological analysis. Psychology as such is a modernist invention. The same also applies to modern theology, which is also based on rationality. In both reason becomes normative for what is psychological and theological, and both disciplines become fundamentalist.


Geneva, Switzerland: WCC Publications

Reviewer: Rev G J Volschenk (Pongola)

This volume is a collection of lectures given at the World Council of Churches consultation in Bossey at the 50th anniversary of the Ecumenical Institute. These “articles” are independent of one another and represent a variety of perspectives on the Biblical jubilee. Seen overall, these articles are very superficial. There is a lack of in-depth theological discussion of the historical and theological context and interpretation of the jubilee.
This review consists of two parts. Part one concerns the interpretation of the Biblical jubilee texts, while part two comments on the practical application of the jubilee regulations.

i) Interpretation

According to Gottwald (33) there has emerged virtually no consensus on any of the major points at issue in the interpretation of the jubilee regulations. The many loose applications of the jubilee regulations are the result of a lack of consensus in the interpretation of the texts. With the exception of Smyth’s and Jospe’s articles, there is little theology of significance.

I would like to comment on two theological issues, in particular one stated by Ucko (4) about God’s being:

God has chosen humankind to be co-creators with God. The world is not perfect as created, and God knows it. God has put human beings on earth to refine their environment. ... and God is transformed from an absolute into a “constitutional” monarch, bound as humankind is bound, to the condition of the constitution.

In contrast to the above-mentioned statement within the context of the ecumenical paradigm, Reformation theology states explicitly that God is the Absolute God. He is the “ganz andere Gott.” Louis Berkhof (1984:59) says: “The infinity of God is that perfection of God by which He is free from all limitations. In ascribing it to God, we deny that there are or can be any limitations to the divine Being or attributes.”

The other theological issue is the definition or concept of justice. “There is an intrinsic connection between peace, justice and the environment. Peace is dependent on justice, justice on the equal distribution of resources ...”

This point overemphasises the horizontal aspect of justice, while forgetting its relational or vertical aspect — to be in the right relationship with God. Achtemeier (1982:99) rightfully states that “... righteousness is fundamentally more concerned with the covenant relationship with God, and more particularly with man’s broken and restored relationship to God, than it is with man’s moral shortcomings and ethical ideals”.

ii) Application

As already mentioned, the problem with regard to the application of the jubilee regulations is the result of a lack of consensus in the interpretation of the texts. Human beings have freedom of choice. We have the “responsibility”, the ability to choose our response in every situation. Our present life situation is the result of our own thought patterns, attitudes and behaviour. There can be no change without responsibility. Before we can put the jubilee regulations into practice, we must ask a few questions: What is the cause of the present situation? Whose responsibility is our current situation?

Leon Klinicki (51) has given a ringing critique of, as well as advice to, those who want to implement the jubilee regulations:

The international debt, especially of the third-world countries, is the consequence of banking as well as national irresponsibility. Military juntas or leaders with little political wisdom accepted loans beyond any realistic possibility of return. These loans generally did not help the masses but rather benefited only individuals, military leadership or the new post-colonial civil administrations, who have learned quickly the lure of corruption, both economic and political.
I am concerned about the use and abuse of biblical laws, a dimension of theological contempt that might seduce religious leadership in their fight for social justice. The gift of prudence should help denounce economic injustice, but also educate people to be responsible in economic dealings (my italics).

The redistribution of wealth without responsibility will not bring equity. We live in an interactive system of relations, where we need one another. We must break the “victim-triangle” or victim metaphor, and take responsibility for the results of our actions.

This is a very readable book that focuses our attention on the jubilee regulations in general, but specifically on the pitfalls in the application of the regulations. The book brings to our attention specific situations in some countries worldwide. It is a very useful reference guide. The title faithfully reflects the contents of the book. The interpretation and application of the jubilee remain a challenge to theologians, sociologists, economists and ecumenicists. The jubilee is a utopia, but unless there is consensus in the interpretation of the texts, the application may be an impossibility.


Resensent: Dr Johann Beukes (Kriel)

In die tydperk na die Reformasie het die gereformeerde teologie verskeie omwentelinge en klemverskuiwings beleef. Verskeie universiteite is daarom in die laat sestiende en sewentiende eeu in Nederland gestig waar die gereformeerde teologie akademies “nuut” bedryf en genuaniseer kon word. Tipiese universiteitsteoloë soos Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676) van Utrecht het ’n enorme invloed uitgeoefen op die verstaan en bedryf van hierdie nuutgenuaniseerde verskynings van gereformeerde teologie. Sommige universiteitsteoloë het hulle teologie op sogenaamde “skolastieke” wyse ingen: wat dit alles inhou en impliseer, het egter om ’n verskeidenheid van redes nie die aandag en oorweging gegee nie. Hierdie uitstekende inleidingswerk van Van Asselt en drie doktorale studente poog om die gereformeerde skolastiek, soos wat dit later bekend sou staan, van sodanige ongingeligheid en bevooroordeeldheid te rehabiliteer. Die outeurs doen moeite om die belangrikste ontwikkelingslyne en gevestigde oortuigings in die gereformeerde skolastiek te herwaardeer en tweede gereguleerde teologie te maak gehad het, onder loep te neem, waaronder Armuniaanse en Socianisme. Verder word ook aandag geskenk aan die eietydse relevansie van die skolastieke metode en poog die outeurs om hardnekkige besware teen die skolastiek vanuit eietydse raamwerk te hanteer.

Normaalweg word die begrip “gereformeerde skolastiek” (negatief) geassosieer met die rigide implementering van die grondgedagtes van die evangelie in die statiese kategorieë van die Aristoteliese filosofie, spesifiek gedurende die sewentiende eeu. Die verruimende aard van die Hervormingstekologie word waargeneem as deur hierdie statiese bedryf gekompromitteer. In stede van die vars Hervormingsboodskap van Calvyn is teologiese studente met ’n dor en rigiede sisteemkennis die kerk ingestuur, met as