



The Hinge

International Theological Dialog for the Moravian Church

The Life and Work of Arthur Freeman

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Gerald Harris, Gerald Stover, Kenneth Henke

Special Feature by
Bishop Theo Gill

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One of the early offices of the Moravian Church in Bethlehem, Pa. was that of the Hinge: “*The office of the Hinge requires that the brother who holds it look after everything and bring troublesome factors within the congregation into mutual accord without their first having to be taken up publicly in the congregation council.*”

— September 1742, *The Bethlehem Diary*, vol. 1, tr. by Kenneth Hamilton, p. 80.

The Hinge journal is intended also to be a mainspring in the life of the contemporary Moravian Church, causing us to move, think, and grow. Above all, it is to open doors in our church.

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Notes from the Editor

It is sometimes difficult for a small community of faith like the Moravian Church to recognize and value its living scholars. It is easy to celebrate figures like John Amos Comenius or Nicholas von Zinzendorf, but it can be hard to appreciate the contributions made by men and women we know. This issue is dedicated to the life and work of one of the most significant Moravian intellectuals and pastors of the modern era. Arthur Freeman has been a teacher, spiritual counselor, and pastor to two generations of Moravian clergy in North America, and he has also been the leading representative of North American Moravian theology in the Unity and in ecumenical gatherings.

This issue of *The Hinge* brings together several people whose lives and careers were influenced by Brother Freeman, and it includes a scholarly article on the influence of Otto Piper on Art's own theology. In this issue you will learn about Art's role in the revision of the *Ground of the Unity*, his work on Moravian hermeneutics and spirituality, his pioneering efforts in multi-media communication, and his importance for the Unity.

There are many reasons why this tribute to Brother Freeman is appropriate. First of all, as Hartmut Beck points out in his article, Art was one of the founders of *TMDK* (later *ITD*), a journal dedicated to transatlantic theological discussion in the Moravian Church. Art was truly the guiding spirit of the North American version of *TMDK/ITD*, and after his retired as editor, the editorial board decided to merge *ITD* with *The Hinge*. Now that *The Hinge* is continuing the international mission of *ITD*, the new board wanted to acknowledge the work of Art.

Another reason for honoring Art is that he is now of an age when it is good to look back and realize that your work was meaningful. All of the contributors to this issue of *The Hinge* believe that Art's scholarship, pastoral care, and sincere love for Christ and the church have been of great benefit to the Moravian Church.

Our tribute also coincides with a special project undertaken by Moravian Theological Seminary — to make electronically available many of Art's selected publications and unpublished works. To access a growing collection of his theological and literary works go to www.moravianseminary.edu/freeman. The link to Art's works can be found under "Useful Links" in the Center for Moravian Studies section of the Seminary's website (the same section where past issues of *The Hinge* are found).

A final reason for devoting an entire issue to Art Freeman is that the mission of *The Hinge* is to promote theological reflection and discussion in the Moravian Church. I can think of no better way to do that than to highlight the work of a scholar and bishop who always addressed controversial issues in a spirit of love.

In this issue we also have a special contribution from Bishop Theo Gill of Germany and a letter to the editor.

David A. Schattschneider Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Arthur Freeman was “multi-tasking” at Moravian Theological Seminary long before that idea became a tired cliché. Art’s work as a teacher, scholar, and writer is well known and well documented. But while he was making these expected faculty contributions to the Seminary, he was also engaged in a multitude of other activities. These other tasks played a major role in shaping the Seminary ethos during his thirty-four years as a faculty member (1961–1995).

Like many teachers, Art was interested in providing “hand-outs” to class members as an aid in their appropriation of class material. He entered teaching in the age of the mimeograph with its easy-to-tear stencils and gooey black ink. Next came the “spirit duplicator” that produced copies in a distinctive purple color with a distinctive smell. Finally, the modern age arrived with the installation of a photocopier, “for faculty use,” in cramped quarters in the basement of Comenius Hall. Now Art was really able to hit his stride and was well on the way to his unofficial title of “King of the Copy Machine” (with the facetious suggestion that his family owned “an interest” in a Wisconsin paper mill!). As the years passed, Art used this technology to facilitate the writing of his own textbooks for his courses and to spread his ideas to an ever-growing audience. But his embrace of the copy machine was also indicative of Art’s abiding interest in whatever new technology came along and his eagerness to explore its use as a teaching tool.

Art was one of the first faculty members to use a computer back in the days when they were huge machines that practically covered his always-crowded desk (in his always-crowded office). Soon new handouts were appearing from his in-office printer. But he kept up with the technology. In the first session of the Seminary’s extension program in Antigua, he was willing to don his clerical collar and purple shirt for an interview on local TV but could also be found sweating away in his room at night trying to get copies out of a new portable printer he had brought along with his laptop.

In the pre-digital camera age, Art could be seen at many Seminary events with two cameras strung around his neck (one with film for color slides, the other for black and white prints), a large camera bag over his shoulder (for close-up lenses, filters, etc.) and perhaps a tripod stuck under his arm. Art was the “unofficial” Seminary photographer and the results of this activity have provided a valuable record of Seminary life.

When Bahnsen Center was dedicated in 1976, Dean William Matz began a tradition (which still continues) of hosting a campus-wide Christmas Reception to bring together members of the Moravian College and Seminary communities. For many years Art provided the program for this event. In an uncanny precursor to many later Power Point tricks, Art produced an elaborate show as the program. This involved placing two slide projectors in the Saal balcony, with a dissolve unit between them to smoothly transition from one picture to the next, all arranged to run automatically,

with an appropriate musical sound track. The message of the show was always appropriate to the season and demonstrated the results of his skill as a photographer.

During most of his years at Moravian, Art served faculty colleagues in two specific ways — as Faculty Secretary and as Faculty Marshal. To serve as Faculty Secretary meant one had to balance two roles: participation in discussion as a faculty member while also taking notes in preparation for preparing the formal minutes of the meeting for the official record. He handled these two roles successfully and his participation in faculty decision-making and his willingness to “type up the minutes” were much appreciated.

The role of Faculty Marshal may appear more glamorous as one remembers Art leading the commencement procession down the aisle of Central Moravian Church while firmly clasping the institutional Mace. But behind the public appearance, the Marshal was responsible for the endless details and planning which ensured a successful and smooth graduation ceremony. Art took care of all those details which, year after year, culminated in his getting the students, faculty, administrators, trustees, and alumni organized for that grand parade.

There was a world to be explored beyond Bahnson and Art took students into it with enthusiasm. A personal trip to Moravian churches in Europe convinced him of the educational value such a trip would have for Seminary students. After much planning and negotiating, Art led the European Seminar

in September 1973. Following a week of orientation on campus, a large group of students, alumni, and friends spent three weeks visiting Moravian Church historical sites and active congregations in what was then West Germany, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia. It was a very successful endeavor. On-site lectures and presentations were enriched by many conversations with European Moravians about their church life and American church life. Friendships were formed and many have lasted to the present. The whole experience also left the participants with many stories of experiences which were sometimes humorous, sometimes poignant, and occasionally scary, as those Americans ventured behind the very real Iron Curtain. Three years later, Art served as the principal organizer for a group of European Moravians who visited the United States during their American Seminar.

Moravian Theological Seminary now sponsors a wide variety of ecumenical continuing education events for clergy and laity through its Office of Continuing Education. This “outreach beyond Bahnson” owes its origins to the pioneering work of Art Freeman. In 1970 Art assumed leadership of the emerging Ecumenical Committee for Continuing Education (E.C.C.E.) which he ran almost single-handedly in its formative years. The Lay Academy was established in 1975 to target specifically the interests of regional laity. Finally, in 1990, the Office of Continuing Education was created through combining the programs of E.C.C.E., the Lay Academy, and the Seminary’s endowed lectures program.

Today's successful programming is a tribute to Art's foundational efforts.

I was privileged to have Art as friend and colleague at Moravian Theological Seminary for twenty-seven years. Soon after my arrival in 1968, I audited Art's course in the Theology of Zinzendorf and enjoyed an early exposure to Art, his teaching style, and his enthusiasm for the subject which has been central to his subsequent scholarly work. As time passed I came to appreciate Art's many talents and the gifts he gave to the Seminary community. We shared experiences in Europe, in Antigua, and in many long conversations in Bahnson. He was truly very instrumental in shaping the ethos of the Seminary during all the years of his service as a faculty member. I can attest to that as can the many students who have come to know him over the years.

The Rev. Dr. David Schattschneider is the Dean Emeritus and Professor Emeritus of Historical Theology of Moravian Theological Seminary.

Maggie Wellert Sister Bay, Wisconsin

David Schattschneider speculated that I may have been the longest lasting student ever at Moravian Theological Seminary, having taken my first course in the spring semester of 1989 and graduating with a second degree in

May of 2001 — at least one course in each of three decades! And in many of those semesters, I made sure to sign up for whatever it was that Art Freeman was teaching.

Never one to do things the easy way, I matriculated in the spring semester, which meant that nearly every course had a fall pre-requisite, except for the New Testament course Professor Art Freeman was teaching. So, I signed up for that one! It filled a requirement and would let me start on my tentative journey, entering graduate school several decades after college.

After the first lecture, I walked gingerly to the podium, and shyly (really!) said, "I think I shouldn't be in this class. I think this is a bit over my head." The Professor gently asked, "What is your church background?" That was an easy one: "I grew up in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod." "Well," he replied, "that means you have a good biblical background. Go to the library and get this history book — it's a survey of the times between the Old Testament and the New. You'll be fine." And I was.

Until I got to the first assignment. Our text was a very fat book that had a long German name that I never did learn how to pronounce! Each student was assigned one chapter in the unpronounceable book: read it and make a presentation to the entire class. I read my chapter...and read my chapter...and read my chapter...nothing. Finally, I outlined the entire chapter, said lots of prayers, practically memorized the entire thing, and stood behind the podium to make my first presentation at

MTS. It actually went well...I even managed to answer questions!

That Thursday afternoon was the last day of classes before spring break. So, everyone, myself included, was bolting as soon as class was finished. On to free time! When we gathered again, ten days later, on our first Tuesday afternoon class, as Art entered the room, he walked right to my seat, stood in front of me, smiled, and said something to the effect of, "Your presentation at our last class was excellent. That was very difficult material and you made it accessible for everyone. Thank you." Wow!

It was Art's hospitality and graciousness that enabled a nervous, timid, forty-something to enter graduate school and love it so much that she never wanted to leave. I decided right then that since Art was obviously a little long in the tooth, and that I was doing this school thing part-time, that no matter what Art was teaching in a given semester, I was signing up. Whatever it was, it would fill some requirement! And I did exactly that until he retired. Art is a masterful teacher, and you received an unpublished book with every syllabus! And when Art shared materials prepared for adult study, he gave you permission to duplicate.

What did I learn in all those classes?

I learned that the heart and soul of Moravian identity is living from your relationship with the Savior.

I learned that one doesn't merely teach or study the faith, the scriptures, the mothers and fathers of the faith, one lives their teachings.

I learned that theology is the work of the people — that all our God words come together to help us discern how to live this terribly challenging life introduced to us by Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ.

I learned that human compassion, kindness, and love trump all that the world has to offer, even when one is walking a path of intense suffering, even — and especially — when the suffering is that of your beloved.

I learned that an ecumenical spirit is part of Moravian DNA.

I learned about spirituality and blessings and about Shalem Institute.

I learned that I love this stuff...that I love learning...that the reason I love learning is because it connects me to the Lord, to the Lord's people, to the Lord's church.

I learned that I'm good at reading, synthesizing, and interpreting, which helped me learn that I could preach.

I am honored and deeply grateful to serve as a pastor in the Moravian Church. The very notion of being a pastor wasn't even close to being on my radar back in 1989. The grace, the wisdom, the hospitality that Bishop Art Freeman extended a nervous new student, opened doors that led me on a completely new journey, opened my ears to a call that I would otherwise never have heard.

Art helped me imagine a new chapter. This year I was accepted in a Shalem Institute Program, Leading Contemplative Prayer for

Retreats and Small Group. Another imagining, courtesy of Art Freeman!

Thank you, Brother Freeman, for your mentoring Moravian Heart and Spirit. Thank you for making room at your table and sharing of your bounty. Thank you for blessing our lives with your gifts.

The Rev. Maggie Wellert is Pastor of Sister Bay Moravian Church.

Hartmut Beck **Karlsruhe, Germany**

As the author of this article, it is a privilege and a joy to be invited by *The Hinge-ITD* Editor to write a few lines on the life and work of Arthur Freeman, who was the North American Editor of *TMDK/ITD* for many years. I will focus especially on his merits for the publication of this Moravian periodical in the United States for twelve years, and on the beneficial personal friendship which we have shared with one another for more than half a century. This is also an example of the importance of personal mutual knowledge, relationship, confidence and cooperation and its meaning for the structure of Moravian fellowship in which we are joined worldwide with one another across seas and continents on the foundations of a great common ecclesiastical history and a great measure of common theological tradition and conviction.

For the academic year 1949–1950 I was privileged to be the first German foreign guest student after World War II to attend Moravian Theological Seminary in Bethlehem as a boarder in Hamilton Hall (which I always remember very thankfully) with Bernhard Michel (later for many years editor of the monthly *North American Moravian*) as my roommate. Arthur Freeman was, at that time, one of my fellow students whom I would not have forgotten until this day. The quiet, purpose-conscious, and friendly manner in which he steadily worked did not yet betray that only a few years afterwards, with academic degrees from Lawrence University, MTS, and Princeton Theological Seminary, and after eight years of pastoral work establishing a new Moravian congregation, he would be a Professor at MTS for 34 years (1961–1995) and since 1991 a Bishop of our Moravian Church.

Still in the years of his initial pastoral work he continued with studies in the field of New Testament theology and made his dissertation for a Ph.D. at the Princeton Theological Seminary with the subject “The Hermeneutics of Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf”. This laid the tracks for much of his further academic and church work with many lectures, manuscripts and published articles on such and related subjects. All this was crowned by the publication of his book *An Ecumenical Theology of the Heart — The Theology of Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf* (1998, Bethlehem, PA, 346 pages), for which in 2000 (the year of the 300 years jubilee of N. L. von Zinzendorf’s birth), a German-

language translation (by Barbara Reeb) was published.

In the years of his academic and theological work, his relation to practical church work was safeguarded through the fact that Freeman was in charge of continuing education for pastors of different denominations through an organization run from MTS. Decidedly influenced by the 20-year-long illness of his first wife, who died 1981, Freeman developed a strong interest in the theological and psychological aspects of illness. Physical and mental deficiencies, healing, and health were the subjects of many of his deliberations, presentations, and publications. He also became involved in the Spiritual Formation movement which resulted in an almost book-like 292-page manuscript titled “Spiritual Formation,” which could very well have been used as a textbook for some of his lectures. His interests reached into the area of systematic theology and doctrine, to matters such as the understanding of Scriptures, especially in the Moravian Church and tradition, faith, order and ministry, the particular features of Moravian Theology with Christocentrism rating very high, theology of evangelism and questions of denominational church and interchurch relationships and dialogue, as the titles of some of his many papers and publications (of which I have received from him, read, and carefully preserved) indicate.

Not only during the time of his academic teaching functions and active church service, but also in the years of formal retirement, he continued to participate in many areas of church

work (even for some time fulfilling pastoral work at Central Church in Bethlehem) and relationships, especially in dialogue matters. This included participation in the Evangelical-Lutheran/Moravian Dialogue in the 1990s and the Episcopal-Anglican/Moravian consultations after his formal retirement in the function as a theological and denominational representative of and for the Moravian Church in North America (US).

For the Moravian Church his participation in the Unity Synod of 1995 at Dar es Salaam was very helpful and important for the amendments of the text of the *Ground of the Unity* which were decided upon. After his formal retirement he could dedicate even more of his time and turned his attention to the further development of *TMDK (Transatlantic Moravian Dialogue–Correspondence)*. The first issue was published in 1993, and, until the end of 2005, he was the editor responsible for the English-language North America Edition.

The Development of *TMDK/ITD*

Let us now turn our attention to the beginnings of the *TMDK/ITD* periodical and its development, the English-language edition of which now with the publication of *The Hinge: International Dialogue for the Moravian Church*, Vol.15 / No.1, Winter 2008, has been combined with *The Hinge*.

In May 1987 Dr. Hans-Walter Erbe from the German Moravian Church spent some time in Bethlehem, PA, from where he returned with an honorary doctoral degree. During his stay there he had contacts with members of MTS

and Moravian College, among whom Win Kohl and Arthur Freeman played significant roles. Already in May 1987 in a letter to H.-W. Erbe, Freeman, as a professional and well-informed Moravian theologian, expressed the wish to aim at some kind of theological dialogue with European Moravians, especially with those in Germany, because he felt that this might be of interest for American Moravian pastors and theologians. With his letter he did send, as a starting point for a possible exchange of thoughts and opinion, his essay on “Moravian Faith/Identity and Evangelism” which he had conceived already on 1/29/1986 and revised on 11/22/1987. This paper was translated by Frieder Vollprecht and even published in German in 1990 in the periodical UNITAS FRATRUM. Copies of the text of this essay were distributed to a number of Moravians with known theological interest and knowledge (Bishop Hellmut Reichel, Bishop Paul W. Schaberg, Heinz Schmidt, Dr. Jörn Reichel, Hans-Christoph Hahn, Dr. Walther Günther, Bishop Theodor Gill, Hartmut Beck) most of whom were theologians and Moravian ordained ministers (except for H.-W. Erbe and J. Reichel). Their individual replies were returned to Freeman, who on March 6, 1990 (revised May 28, 1991) answered again in one lengthy, 14-page document “Reply to Respondents”. This was the very beginning of a sort of dialogue, which, however, had not yet the form which could satisfy the participants.

In December 1989 Hans-Walter Erbe (who was 86 years old at that time and who died on February 12, 2001 at the age of 98)

invited Hartmut Beck, being a theologian and Moravian minister with background knowledge of the Moravian Church in North America and language proficiency for English, possibly to take care of this matter, which so was agreed upon. H.-W. Erbe communicated this to the participants of this dialogue by correspondence on May 13, 1990, asking for their agreement, which they did give, and for further confidence and cooperation in the matter. We did feel, however, that it was not satisfactory to have a given number of participants on the one European side of the dialogue process and one only, Arthur Freeman, on the other one, but that for a real dialogue the base at both sides should be widened and strengthened in appropriate ways. After continuing considerations, I invited to a preliminary meeting on April 15, 1993 at Neuwied, Dr. Walther Günther, Frieder Vollprecht (who now is also a member of the European-Continental Provincial Board), Helge Heisler (the two last ones still being members of the present Editorial Committee) and Bishop Bernhard Krüger.

All this resulted in the publication of the first comparably small, 32-page issue (*TMDK* Nr.1) in the German language in July 1993. It began as a small periodical with three copies per year until the end of 1999, when it changed to two per year in 2000, each one an average of about 80 pages. Consultations with Arthur Freeman, who from the very beginning was Editor for the English North America Edition, Dean David Schattschneider, and Otto Dreydoppel on his Editorial Committee, led to the publication of the first English-language

issue *TMDK* No.1, NA-Edition, with 64 pages in November 1993. Since that time until May 2003 with *TMDK-NA* No.26 and *TMDK-EU* Nr. 27 when *TMDK* was changed to *ITD* in the new form (both then again starting with the number 1), the North American issues were always one figure behind in the sequence of counting the issues. They were for a long time in both languages rather identical, carrying each one the same shared and exchanged main articles, each one translated into the respective other language. So *TMDK/ITD* for a long time was in a very real sense bilingual in a way that will no longer be the case.

In October 2000 the Editorial Committees in North America and for Europe agreed to a policy statement under the headline *TMDK: Identity and Purpose*. This was published in *TMDK-NA* No.21, November 2000, pg.10, and it is still worthwhile to quote the first passage of it literally:

Transatlantic Moravian Dialogue—Correspondence/Transatlantische Moravische Dialog—Korrespondenz *TMDK* is a journal for the support of theological dialogue in the International Moravian Church and wishes to contribute to contemporary theological discussion. It seeks to encourage the development of theological studies and skills which will support the Church in its life and faith, to learn from the insights and perspectives of others as they share from different contexts, and to provide a deposit of theological discourse which may become a resource for the future.

From July 1993 until November 2007, in the 27 issues of *TMDK-EU* and 26 issues *TMDK-NA*, and the 9 of *ITD-EU* and 5 of *ITD-NA*, many subjects were discussed: The Moravian Church in History, Ecumenical context and its Uniqueness; Church-Society-Politics; Pastoral Care; Psychology and Theology; Ecclesiology; Confessing Faith; Ecumenical Dialogue; Theological Education; Changing Perspectives on Mission; Women in the Ordained Ministry; Laity and Offices; Zinzendorf in the Year 2000; The Church and its Unity; Gospel and Culture; Faith and Charisma; Experience and Theology; Essentials and Variety; Justice and the Global Setting; Future and Evangelism and many others.

All this would not have been possible without the continued development and use of the modern electronic media-technology of which Arthur Freeman is a master. When I started the work with the old typewriter technology and heavy Air Letter Mail for manuscripts, he already had his office filled with modern electronic media machinery which he modernized and completed with ongoing developments and which he could and did use very well for communications as well as teaching functions. This did impress me when, in 1992 from August 27–September 7, my wife and I had a grand visit with the Freemans in Bethlehem, PA. Years earlier, in June 1950, I had the opportunity to visit with Arthur in Green Bay, Wisconsin which was his hometown. In 1994 in June (4th through 11th) we were pleased that the Freemans visited with us here in Karlsruhe, from where I brought

Arthur to Niesky for some theological lectures of younger Moravian ministers and students of theology here in our country. We had another important personal contact staying again with the Freemans in Bethlehem in 2000, when on May 13th at the Commencement Ceremony of Moravian Theological Seminary I was privileged to receive an honorary Doctorate of Divinity degree for which Arthur Freeman offered to respective *laudatio*. On all these occasions we had the opportunity not only for personal conversation but also for mutual consideration of theological questions and common work on the envisioned or running TMDK project.

Our joint efforts for the TMDK/ITD in which we shared so long were at the same time a period of deepened personal acquaintance, confidence, and friendship which was not only beneficial for our personal lives but also for our service as editorial partners. We engaged for more than 13 years in a mode of very good and friendly — and I dare to say efficient — cooperation. Arthur Freeman was 80 years old in October of the past year and he certainly deserves that the toil and responsibility of editorial functions be passed to younger hands. As a phase of lifetime in which we, if we through the Grace of our Lord, can get so far, often cannot exist without some or eventually even numerous medical appointments. So also I myself have now at the age of 84 handed over editorial responsibility to someone else (whose name soon will appear in the *Impressum* in the new form to which this will change) continuing, however, for the time

being with a share in the respective European Editorial Committees work.

Moravians are educated and led to live and to look upon life in the way of modesty. And it is also true that our Moravian Bishops, in the way in which we have them and consider them, exemplify modesty. But nevertheless homage and thanks should be offered to those who do deserve it: and certainly ARTHUR FREEMAN is deserving of it.

Hartmut Beck, born 1923 at Paramaribo, spent his youth in Surinam, at Herrnhut, in the Netherlands (attending there the Dutch Primary School) and in the Zinzendorf Paedagogium Boarding School at Niesky in Germany. After World War II he started theological studies as a Prisoner of War in France and continued at the Martin-Luther-University at Halle (Eastern Germany) and Tübingen. Before his final State Examination there he spent the academic year 1949–1950 as a foreign guest student at MTS in Bethlehem, PA. from which he in 2000 received the honorary Doctor of Divinity degree. His ministerial service brought him in 1952–1965 to East Africa (serving the four last years as Superintendent of Moravian Missions and as Chairman of the Board of one of the Moravian Unity Provinces in Tanzania), 1965–1977 in various functions in the Regional Church (Landeskirche) of Baden, and 1977–1988 (year of formal retirement) as pastor of and for the Moravian congregation of Hamburg with intensive

ecumenical involvement on behalf of the Moravian Church. Since 1988 he is living at Karlsruhe, still with some share in various church work activities and especially since 1993 until November 2007 as Editor of the German language Continental Edition of TMDK/ITD, of which the English North America Edition is now combined with The Hinge.

Gerald R. Harris Winston-Salem, NC

It is eight-something on a Tuesday morning. I have finished working the night shift in the emergency room at St. Luke's Hospital in Bethlehem, PA, shared breakfast with some co-workers — eggs, hash browns and beer — and made my way to Hamilton Hall for "Introduction to New Testament Studies" with Professor Arthur Freeman. This was the beginning of a long semester, long because I worked 40 hours a week on the night shift while being a full-time student at Moravian Theological Seminary.

At the time I had a far greater liking for Old Testament studies, especially the prophets. I found the gospels light fare compared to Hosea and Amos and Isaiah. And I was exhausted with the epistles, the steady diet of my tradition of origin. As the semester wore on, exhaustion combined with a less than enthusiastic interest in the subject found me nodding off into the

fitful land of guilty sleep. Professor Freeman was gracious in not calling attention to my flagging spirit.

Somehow, I don't remember if I chose it or if it was assigned to me, I had the responsibility of reading and reviewing B. H. Streeter's *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins*. The professor's response to my review was even more gracious: "I am not sure you read this book, or if you did, that you understood it." Believe me, that was gracious. That book put me to sleep faster than the sermons in "Introduction to Preaching."

Truth be told, and despite the nap times I enjoyed in class, some seeds were planted that have grown into a great love for the gospels. I am still not a fan of the epistles. But the gospels have become a source of unending discovery and delight, not to speak of challenges as great as any of those of the prophets.

My appreciation for Professor Freeman, his wise and humble spirit, deepened during our time together on the Faith and Order Commission. Whether we were discussing the orders of ministry and ways of recognizing and honoring lay ministry, insisting on service as fundamental to all orders of ministry, or human sexuality/homosexuality, or racism in the church, Professor Freeman did what is rare in my experience of the Moravian Church. He always brought a reasoned, biblically and theologically informed perspective to the table, a perspective which was also aware of the current status of thinking in the social sciences.

Moreover (to use one of Howard Cox's favorite words), Professor Freeman's power

of persuasion resided in his arguments alone. Never did I see him attempt what has become far too common in the church: to use the power or authority of his position or titles, to coerce someone into towing the line. In disagreements he always stuck to discussing the issues, not to demeaning those who differed with him. He was never dismissive of another person's point of view or of the person.

I remain grateful for Professor Freeman's paper on theological method in the Moravian tradition, which the Faith and Order Commission adopted as a guide for its work. Again, Art's paper and the spirit in which it is written is a great argument for the value of the Moravian tradition. If his perspective had governed the way we have responded to any number of theological differences in the last few years, we would not only be better off, but would be more faithful to our own heritage.

Professor Freeman's merits as a Bishop were in great evidence during the Northern Province Synod of 1994. I chaired the sub-committee that considered changes to our statement scripture in the *Ground of the Unity* and in the *Moravian Covenant for Christian Living*. This sub-committee was comprised of the full spectrum of views on the subject and of some delegates who felt strongly about their views (read, ready to defend to death). I am convinced that apart from Bishop Freeman's gentle, yet powerful wisdom and gracious spirit, we would not have come out of committee with anything worth presenting on the floor of synod, let

alone a proposal that made its way into our *Book of Order*.

When it came time for me to pick a project/thesis advisor for my D.Min., I turned to Professor Freeman. I was working in an area that had become a passion of his: spiritual formation. He proved to be not only a wise counselor, but an ass-kicker as well. After completing course work, I fell into a funk before completing the thesis. Professor Freeman called one day and was not at all happy with my excuses or lethargy. His gentle spirit assumed a bolder form.

The narrator of Herman Hesse's *Journey to the East* says to Lukas, "I have not come here to instruct you, but to learn from you." I thought of Art when I read this line. I was used to college professors who lectured, pouring their knowledge into my porous brain. The professor was the possessor of knowledge or information that I did not have and needed, at least to pass the course. I did not bring anything to the table. I was impressed by the way Art honored the experience of his students. Art believed each person's experience offered a unique perspective on whatever subject we were discussing.

The narrator of Hesse's novel goes on to say: "It is my passionate desire to... tell quite simply the story of our journey." I think Art has told the story of our journey as Moravians in ways most beneficial to the church. Printing an edition of Art's papers on Moravian theology and practice would bring his wisdom and irenic spirit to a larger audience, an audience

that continues to struggle over questions of Moravian identity.

Hesse's narrator continues, "the reality that I once experienced, together with my comrades, exists no longer, and although its memories are the most precious and vivid ones that I possess, they seem far away, they are composed of such different kind of fabric, that it seems as if they originated on other stars in other millennia, or as if they were hallucinations." A recognition and recovery of Art's contribution to the Moravian experience, would go a long way to keeping the narrator's experience from becoming our own.

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Gerald Stover Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

There are many former students of Professor Arthur Freeman's who would be more qualified than I am to report the academic influence Professor Freeman has had upon their life and professional public Christian witness. My own report is more private and personal. I will talk about Art Freeman as a Professor, Mentor, Spiritual Director, and Friend.

Dr. Freeman guided and refurbished my Christian worldview during a time of personal upheaval and a disjunctive period in my young adult life. A foundering transfer student from

another seminary, I was skeptical about the value of any graduate school of religion or any school of Christian theology when I arrived at Moravian Theological Seminary.

Dr. Freeman's patient attendance to my interest in the link between New Testament Studies and the theology of Christian Spirituality set me on a new path, and offered me a foundation for serious systematic reflection and adult Christian living. His course work was copious, but the challenge of his lectures and his academic handouts made me hungry for lasting peace and personal integrity in all matters of conviction, word, and deed. Dr. Freeman spoke and taught of the New Testament and Christian spirituality in a way that grounded me in Christian hope for adult life.

Arthur Freeman wrote me a warm personal letter following my first semester at Moravian Seminary assuring me that my pastoral gifts and calling were valid, and that my calling to seminary life and further graduate school training were both meaningful and pertinent to others in need. The warmth of his letter unnerved me completely. I left Seminary after a very awkward and uncomfortable first year and moved out of the area.

This quiet affirmation by Arthur Freeman of my spiritual interests and commitment to adult Christian life could not be forgotten, however. When I returned to Moravian Seminary a year later, I knew that his observations about my Christian life and witness had import and depth that I could not ignore. My attention to his course work and scholarship deepened.

I should note that Professor Freeman was not always understood or fully appreciated as a scholar and instructor by all his students, partly because one needs to have a certain amount of historical, theological, and philosophical background to ask Arthur Freeman pertinent questions. I was fortunate to have such a background.

I can also report that the next three years of conversation, study, reading, and writing with Dr. Freeman opened doors of understanding and appreciation of the living, resurrected Christ, the deeper aspects of the Christian gospel, and the witness of the Moravian tradition to the call to Christian unity that changed the direction of my life. I found my intellect to be fully engaged, and my need to reflect and meditate on the purpose of adult Christian life fully sated. Dr. Freeman's good will and Christian courtesy toward both my personal and intellectual journey was continual. I came to realize that this gentleman was (and still is) doing this for ALL who cross the threshold of his office door both as instructor and as a pastor.

Failing to fit into any traditional ecclesiastical role of preacher, pastor, or teacher led me to finish an MATS degree at Moravian Seminary over a period of five years. I also returned to my painting trade and became a self-employed contractor. The seminary education I had chosen and received seemed personally meaningful but hardly productive in any public or professional sense. I presented these concerns to Arthur Freeman and we conversed on an occasional and/or a monthly basis while I pursued my first

and continuing happy marriage, established a local business, and purchased a home.

A period of reasonable contentment as a "normal" adult led me away from regular conversation with Arthur Freeman. We became neighbors, but we were not yet adult friends. Dr. Freeman completed his book on Zinzendorf. I assumed all of the normal responsibilities of middle age.

Five years ago, following the death of my mother, a family crisis emerged. I found myself in need of counseling, and of a spiritual director. My wife, a graduate of the MAPC program at Moravian Seminary, was very supportive and I found an independent professional family counselor very helpful. Dr. Freeman also provided steady support as a spiritual director, even in his retirement.

I began looking for ways to thank him for his lasting contributions as a listener, and as a source of encouragement in matters of spiritual discernment. Fruits of our many conversations and exchange finally came to benefit others far beyond the Moravian circle of theological education and Moravian Church fellowship. I have gradually found meaningful places for service in local parish prayer groups, the Lehigh County Conference of Churches, the Robert K. Campbell Lectures on Christian Unity sponsored by the Lehigh County Conference of Churches," and the international Focolare Movement. Thanks be to God for these opportunities for Christian service, and most of all for Arthur Freeman's continuing affirmation

of my specialized call to ecumenical dialogue and international Christian life.

Arthur Freeman's contributions as a bishop in the Moravian Church, assistant pastor at Central Moravian Church, and as a teacher and lecturer in a wide variety of settings in Pennsylvania and abroad have filled his retirement with many meaningful opportunities for further church service.

In gratitude, I have attempted to celebrate his writings and provide context and contacts with historic Anabaptist groups in Pennsylvania, regional Catholics, and international ecumenists in order to further the Moravian witness and public ecumenical awareness of Dr. Freeman's scholarship. While not all of these contacts and contexts have proved fruitful, several have been an encouragement to Dr. Freeman and have reminded him that his students truly value his witness, writing, and work as an academic, a pastor, a teacher, and a spiritual director.

Several of these fruitful contacts are listed below:

1. Dr. Freeman presented the Durnbaugh Lectures at the Young Center for Anabaptist Studies in Elizabethtown, PA, following my introduction of his book to the Young Center staff and faculty.

2. The Society of the Atonement Vatican Library for Ecumenical Studies received copies of Dr. Freeman's book on Zinzendorf in both German and English.

3. Other regional and international seminary libraries have received copies of the Zinzendorf book by Dr. Freeman.

For other MTS graduates reading this article who have also benefited from Dr. Freeman as Professor, Mentor, Spiritual Director, and Friend, I would heartily recommend providing copies of Dr. Freeman's book (and other writings) to Seminary and graduate school of religion libraries in their immediate geographical area so that his academic materials can continue to have the wider audience that they so richly deserve.

Gerald Stover is a professional house painter in Bethlehem, PA.

Otto Piper and Arthur Freeman: Biblical Theologians

Kenneth Woodrow Henke

“Be an opener of doors for such as come after thee.” (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

In the Preface to Arthur Freeman’s *An Ecumenical Theology of the Heart*, he expresses appreciation to Otto and Elizabeth Piper for their encouragement while he was working on his Th.D. at Princeton Theological Seminary. He particularly thanks Otto Piper for directing him to the hermeneutics of Zinzendorf as a thesis topic. Again, at the beginning of the introduction to that book he writes that while raised in the Moravian Church, it was only when he was studying at Princeton that he was prompted to explore the theology of Zinzendorf in depth. Piper, he writes, had a deep interest in hermeneutics and often urged his graduate students “to pursue the hermeneutics of significant persons in their theological tradition.” As an advisor to Art Freeman in his doctoral work, Piper was able to bring not only a solid background in the German theological traditions, but also his own personal interest. He had a working knowledge of Zinzendorf and the Moravian contribution to German church life and thought and regularly used the *Losungen* himself in his daily devotional time. Art Freeman states in his tribute, “I have been forever grateful to Piper, for Zinzendorf has decisively shaped my own theology.”¹

While others in this issue will doubtless explore Art Freeman’s relationship to Zinzendorf and his contributions to Zinzendorf and Moravian scholarship, I would like to take up in this essay something of his relationship to the work and thought of Otto Piper and Piper’s writings and teaching in the field of Biblical Theology. A reading of Art Freeman’s subsequent work makes it clear that his doctoral studies at Princeton Theological Seminary, and particularly his encounter with the teaching of Otto Piper, were a significant formative event that helped shape much of the direction that his subsequent career and scholarship would later take.

Who was Otto Piper? Born November 29, 1891, in Lichte, Thuringia, Germany, Piper attended the Gymnasium in Erfurt and began his university studies at Jena, where he remained from 1910 until 1913, with a short break for a semester at Marburg. He specialized in the courses in philosophy and in the New Testament, which he studied with Heinrich Weinel (1874–1936), Adolf Jülicher (1857–1938), and Hans Lietzmann (1875–1942). Although religious instruction had been a regular part of the German educational system he had grown up in, it was Piper’s studies with Weinel that helped him understand the personal significance which the gospel has for

the life of each member of Christ's church. In an autobiographical statement contained in his papers, Piper wrote that "Dr. Weinel succeeded in an impressive way in pointing out the necessity to combine both the scholarly aspects of theology and the formative power of the gospel." According to Piper, Weinel sought the essence of Christianity in "the life of Jesus and in personal fellowship with him."²

From Hans Lietzmann Piper learned "the importance of studying the historical texts, and thus the value of the study of Biblical languages." Besides philosophy and religion courses, Piper also took courses in Greek and Roman archaeology and in art history. The public library in Jena also had an excellent collection of modern literature that the students at the university made good use of. For two years Piper volunteered to help supervise an after-school program for mentally handicapped children, aiding them with homework and telling fairy tale stories with illustrations cut out from various fairy tale books. From his high-school days Piper had also been active in the German youth movement, the *Wandervogel*, an important part of the cultural scene in Germany from about 1890 until the outbreak of World War I. He was active in organizing groups that took hiking and camping trips over the weekends and vacations, learning to sing the old German folk songs and discussing for long hours together the kinds of changes that young people of the day felt needed to be made in the German educational system and in the values and structures of German society.

In 1913 Piper spent eight months in Paris, where he studied simultaneously at the Sorbonne and at the Faculté Libre de Theologie Protestante. This time in Paris was an important event in his life. Some of his own ancestors had been French Huguenots, and in France he was impressed by the vitality of the religious life of the French Reformed Church (a minority church in France) as compared to the State-controlled Lutheran Church with which he was familiar in Germany. Of particular influence on him in Paris was the ministry of Wilfred Monod (1867–1943), a vibrant preacher and pioneer leader in the work of ecumenism and in the social witness of the Christian church. "I was led by Wilfred Monod," he writes, "to a new understanding of what he called the 'realism' of the Hebrew prophets as opposed to the spiritualism of Greek philosophy."³

A short period was spent at Heidelberg in 1914, studying economics and political theory, after which Piper took his ordination exams in August 1914. With the outbreak of World War I, he went into the army and was sent to the front as an officer. Piper's time on the actual battlefield was limited. On August 15, 1915, he was seriously wounded when a bullet struck and entered his head directly under his right eye, crushing his nose and ripping out much of the bone behind his right ear as it exited again. It grazed near, but did not penetrate, his brain. Nevertheless, when the Red Cross wagon came to the area where he had been wounded he was at first left for dead. Only as the medics were about to pull away did they notice that one of

the soldiers they had already loaded into their truck had died.

Piper was then taken back to the dressing station in his place, and his life was saved. Skillful doctors were able to do much for him, including repairing his face, but Piper spent much of the remainder of the war in hospitals. He permanently lost the sight of his right eye and his vision with his left eye was impaired. In future years he would often resort to the use of a magnifying glass to help him in his reading. His facial muscles had also been irreparably damaged, which made facial expressions such as smiling extremely difficult.

This close brush with death and his lengthy recovery gave him much to reflect on and time to do so. In the closing months of the war, Piper was in Munich. Here he used the opportunities available to become acquainted with Roman Catholic theological thinking by taking courses at the University of Munich. At the same time he participated in circles of progressive Protestant thinkers such as that of Johannes Müller of Elmau (1864–1949), who built a retreat center in the Bavarian Alps south of Munich where he urged a form of Christian life that went beyond intellectual theological concepts to an experiential approach of living in the spirit of the gospels.⁴ Piper and Müller were to remain lifelong friends. Another significant event from these Munich days was the position Piper took as tutor to a young son in the Salinger family. This boy's sister, Elizabeth, would become Piper's first wife.

After his Munich period, Otto Piper would

move to Göttingen, taking some of his new friends with him to do graduate theological studies. At Göttingen he focused especially on the writings of Luther and the reformers and on the exegetical work of the Swabian school, Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687–1752), Johann Tobias Beck (1804–1878), and Adolf Schlatter (1852–1938). In 1920, Piper took his doctorate with a thesis analyzing the concept of religious experience in the thought of Friedrich Schleiermacher.

Over the next dozen years or so, Piper published widely including in such important theological periodicals as *Die Christliche Welt*, *Theologische Blätter*, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, and *Die Furche*. He also contributed articles to the second edition of the important *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* and wrote several books and booklets of varying length, including two volumes on theological ethics, a booklet on youth and religion, and *Weltliches Christentum* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1926), an exploration of piety and religious sensibility outside the institutional church. His speeches and publications also explored the relationship of church and state and the relationship between experience and redemption, the latter published as *Erlösung als Erfahrung* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1932). He taught first at Göttingen as a university professor and then at the University of Münster, as successor to Karl Barth. In explaining the style and content of his teaching and university work in those days, he wrote:

I emphasized the value and necessity of combining several fields of specialization and also the desirability of devoting some

courses to a broad survey of the whole field of theology. I also emphasized the value of courses in which the student would take an active part. In particular, I offered, in each semester, a special course in which a work of literature or philosophy would be interpreted by the participants. In order to attain to the universality of outlook, I interested my colleagues of the other faculties to meet regularly and to present papers in their field of specialization. I also advocated the necessity of a close relationship between the Theological faculty and the denominations. In the German system, the Theological faculties were considered as being institutions of research, yet without any responsibility in the spiritual and theological life of the Church. I succeeded in persuading a number of younger ministers to meet regularly and to discuss the practical problems which confronted the denominations in a theological perspective. In like manner, some of my colleagues in Münster joined me in organizing theological retreats, as a result of which the participants were given an opportunity to discuss their theological and practical problems in a general manner.

“In all my lectures,” he wrote elsewhere, “I was anxious to show the bearing which theological statements have upon the problems of our days.”

Politically, Piper was unafraid to speak out on national issues. He openly joined the Social Democratic Party because of its active concern for the needs of the working classes, despite the unpopularity of a socialist position among his colleagues on the university faculty. In the midst of the growing sentiment in Germany for a militant National Socialism, which preached German re-armament and the cultivation of strong German nationalism under the leadership of a charismatic Führer, Piper spoke out for a Christian pacifism which would work for international understanding and reconciliation between the German people and their former wartime enemies. “It is completely erroneous,” wrote Piper, “to say that pacifism weakens the bones in view of the fact that God has called us to establish peace, and that call demands courage.”

Piper also continued to work for the ecumenical cooperation of the churches. In 1927 he was one of the German delegates to the Lausanne Conference on Faith and Order. In 1928, 1930, and 1931 he made extended trips to France to further inter-church contacts and understanding. In 1930 he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the Theological Faculty of Paris.

When, in 1933, the new regime in Germany began its attacks on the Protestant Church, he delivered a course of lectures on State and Church, which did not please the authorities. He was dismissed from his teaching post and no longer allowed to hold a professorship in Germany. There followed a very difficult time

of upheaval and uncertainty in his life. In a talk he later gave in 1942, he recalled feeling at the time

very much like a shipwrecked sailor...His boat has been smashed by the violence of the elements, he has spent many days in a rather precarious situation on the waves of the ocean, time and again being tossed up by the billows and submerged into the salty flood, his mouth and tongue filled with the bitter waters of the infinite sea, his skin parched by storm and pitiless sunshine, his mind tired from incessantly looking over the unlimited vastness of the element...From a career in which most everything seemed to be settled definitely for the rest of my life history unpredictable vicissitudes and the arbitrary whims of men uprooted me completely.

Dismissing his last class in July 1933 he knew the Church struggle was underway, but he did not anticipate that “soon Fate would separate me from my students, my family, my home church, and my native country. There followed times of uncertainty and fear, of loneliness and perplexity, of profound shame for what was done in the name of my country.”⁵

Unable to return to teaching in Germany, by November of 1933 he had been taken in as a refugee by the Quaker College at Woodbrooke, Birmingham, England, where he spent a year. In 1934 Swansea University in Wales invited him as a “guest of the college” and this was followed by an invitation from the College of North Wales,

in Bangor, to serve as a “special lecturer.” There were no regular funds for his salary in Wales, but colleagues there pooled their resources to help support Piper and his young family. He was able to supplement this income with guest preaching and public lecture series, especially on the religious situation in Germany, and with teaching in Adult Education programs. He also gave of his time to the Student Christian Movement in Britain and to preparing for the World Conferences of the Churches scheduled to be held at Oxford (Church, Community and the State) and at Edinburgh (Conference on Faith and Order) in 1937.

It was in the academic year 1937–38 that Piper was offered a visiting professorship in Systematic Theology by John Mackay, President of Princeton Theological Seminary. In addition to teaching, he gave the Stone Lectures in the spring of 1938 on “The Christian Interpretation of History.” Over the next few years he stayed on in Princeton as a guest professor in New Testament and lectured widely at American colleges and universities and at clergy gatherings. The response to this work was quite positive. A collection of letters of appreciation to John Mackay for Piper’s services to the church at large in this period may be found in the archives at Princeton Seminary, which includes many expressions such as the following letter from a pastor testifying to Piper’s abilities in the field of Biblical interpretation:

The benefit and memory of that Conference still lives with me. In this day of conflict in the lives of thinking people where I minister I have been able to bring

a new faith and interpretation of the Bible through the wisdom and understanding of the lectures that Dr. Piper gave...he made the Bible the living Word of God to me. I take the liberty of using much of Dr. Piper's phraseology *ad verbum*, having made detailed notes, and time and again I have laymen in my community tell me that the interpretations I have given them are life and spirit. One man used the expression to me thus, "I looked on the Bible as an arid desert full of dead men's bones of interpretation but your living approach has made the Bible an oasis". I gave him Dr. Piper's approach.

In 1941 Otto Piper was offered a permanent chair at Princeton Theological Seminary as the first Helen H.P. Manson Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis and in 1942 he became a naturalized U.S. citizen. In addition to his regular teaching load and his work with pastors, Piper was a key person in helping Dr. Mackay develop the doctoral program at Princeton Theological Seminary.⁶

In a sense, many of the most troubling years of Otto Piper's life should have been over at this point, but it was not to be entirely so. Both of Piper's sons were drafted into the US Army during World War II and Gerhard ("Gero"), the eldest, was killed in the Battle of the Bulge. A former student remembered how, at the close of the first seminary Chapel service following the Christmas break, in January 1945, Piper went to the front of the Chapel and read with tears in his eyes the telegram he had received

informing him of his son's death. The Chapel grew very quiet, this student writes, but then came "the comfort of the Holy Spirit in the closing prayer. Others, of course, had lost loved ones in the war. We prayed that the war would soon end."

Following the Chapel service, Piper was scheduled to teach an introductory course in New Testament exegesis on the First Letter of John. Students wondered if he would show up, for he had been delayed at the Chapel due to people wanting to express their condolences. In a short time, however, Piper arrived and began his lecture. "Seldom had a lecture on I John made such an impression on a class as that morning. Against the backdrop of the hatred of war and the devastating telegram that he had just read, it was as if he wanted the students to be challenged that day by the beautiful passage of God's love and brotherhood... 'For we know that we have passed from death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother remains in death...and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren...'" Further unexpected tragedy was to come when on Thanksgiving eve in 1948 his wife, Elizabeth, died suddenly of a severe attack of asthma.

Otto Piper also felt a special responsibility to the terrible situation in Germany and other parts of Europe as a result of the war. He put in many hours in the mid- and later 1940s, drafting Princeton Theological Seminary students to help him, collecting, sorting, listing, packing and posting clothing, medicine, food and other relief items donated for refugees in

those war-torn lands. He also served as founder and president of the American Emergency Committee for German Protestantism that sought to further personal contact between congregations of Germany and the US and to secure American sponsors to help support 5,000 German pastors following the war. In 1960 he received the Officer's Cross of Merit, First Class, from President Heinrich Lübke of the Federal Republic of Germany for these efforts.

In the course of a sabbatical leave in Germany in 1950 Piper renewed an old acquaintance and found a second wife in Elizabeth Rüdiger, a former German schoolteacher. After some initial problems in getting the necessary paperwork she was eventually able to join him in Princeton and by all accounts was a very congenial helpmate in the many years that remained. The couple was especially known for their flower garden and for the gracious Friday afternoon teas the Pipers prepared for their students, where conversations ranged far and wide, "from some political crisis to some burning theological issue, to his moral and written support of a Presbyterian minister in Cincinnati in the minister's refusal to pay his income tax [because of the large portion going to military expenditure which he felt was inconsistent with his Christian beliefs], to some special challenge facing a former student in an overseas post..."⁷

Building on his earlier publications in Germany, Otto Piper's major English language publications include *Recent Developments in*

German Protestantism (London: SCM Press, 1934); *God in History* (New York: Macmillan, 1939); two explorations of Christian sexual ethics, *The Christian Interpretation of Sex* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941) and *The Biblical View of Sex and Marriage* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959); and a re-working of his *Christian Ethics* (London: Nelson, 1970). He also continued to contribute numerous articles to theological publications.

However, much of his important work in Biblical theology became available only in a more limited way, through mimeographed compilations of his lectures which his students put together and circulated privately. These included notes from seminars on "The Biblical Theology of the New Testament" from various years, but which in its most complete version consists of three parts. The first part is labeled "Prolegomena" and treats such topics as the historical roots and development of Biblical Theology, the relationship between the two Testaments, and the relationship of Biblical imagery to theological terminology.

The second part is labeled "Kerygma." It treats first of the idea of the "Kingdom of God" and its nature, then of the purpose of God and its mystery. Further sections cover additional problems such as the relation of the Kingdom of God to the Incarnation, the Redemptive Function of the Kingdom, the contrast between "the World" and the Kingdom, and the relationship of Christ to "the World."

A third major collection of notes on New Testament Biblical Theology continues the

exploration of the “Kerygma,” this time with a focus on the term “The Messiah.” It develops at some depth a Biblical Christology, including an exploration of the meaning of prophecy and fulfillment and an exploration of the significance of both historical and supernatural factors in the New Testament accounts. Other sets of class notes, seminar papers, and exegetical notes also survive in the archives including those on “The Parables of Jesus,” “Biblical Apocalyptic,” “The Gospel of Mark,” and materials related to a seminar on the “Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.”

Piper continued in his teaching role at Princeton Theological Seminary until his retirement in 1962. He taught many who were preparing for the vocation of parish ministry, but also gave of his time in a special way to doctoral candidates under his direction. Some of his students went on to become teachers themselves in various colleges and seminaries around the country, including Presbyterian, Lutheran, Baptist, Church of the Brethren and Mennonite schools, and, as we know, at the Moravian Theological Seminary in Bethlehem. Others went on to teaching positions at colleges and seminaries overseas.

In his retirement years, Piper worked on a project compiling New Testament bibliography and on a commentary on the Gospel of Mark which remained unfinished. In a tribute at the time of his retirement in 1962, then President McCord of Princeton Theological Seminary remarked of Piper, “His is the happy combination of massive erudition, deep piety,

and a puckish sense of humor, and concern for the church that is not tangential to but an outgrowth of his New Testament concern.”⁸ He lived on to the very full age of 90, passing to his eternal reward on February 13, 1982.

“You are rewarding a teacher poorly if you remain always a pupil.” (Friedrich Nietzsche)

Arthur Freeman Dissertation

Turning now to the work of Art Freeman in its relation to that of Otto Piper, one place to begin is with Art Freeman’s 378-page detailed study of the hermeneutics of Zinzendorf which constitutes his thesis for his doctoral degree at Princeton Theological Seminary. This work was submitted to the faculty of the seminary in 1962. It is a carefully researched and thoughtful undertaking, reflecting much attention to original sources. Art Freeman specifically thanks Henry Williams of the Moravian College and Seminary Library, and the staff of the Archives of the Northern Province of the Moravian Church at Bethlehem for helping make possible his research. In his introduction to the work he points out that North American Moravians had often lost sight of Zinzendorf’s important contributions in part because of their loss of facility in the use of the German language. He further notes that although there had been increasing discussions in Europe regarding Zinzendorf’s contributions, especially in light of the theme of ecumenism, and that there had been new German-language explorations of some of Zinzendorf’s creative insights, there had yet to appear a thorough study of Zinzendorf’s principles of Biblical interpretation. He cites a

letter from Richard Träger, Herrnhut Archivist, confirming this.

Art Freeman then goes on to suggest that his own focus would be largely historical, but that “it is also the desire of the author to point up the relevance of Zinzendorf to contemporary hermeneutics wherever feasible.”⁹ Because of the large amount of material available, Art Freeman gives his rationale for focusing especially on Zinzendorf’s sermons; the notes, comments and explanatory materials to be found in Zinzendorf’s Bible translations; as well as, to some extent, Zinzendorf’s catechetical works, poetry and hymns. Following a thorough study of the primary materials, important secondary sources were consulted. Also attended to were the standard lives of Zinzendorf and background historical materials on the eighteenth century and on hermeneutics in general.

This is not the place for a thoroughgoing examination of this highly interesting work, only parts of which were eventually reworked after a lifetime of Zinzendorf studies and incorporated into Art Freeman’s book *An Ecumenical Theology of the Heart* (Bethlehem: Moravian Church in America, 1998). Not the least of its value is the making available to the reader extensive quotations from Zinzendorf’s works (for those who have the ability to read Zinzendorf in his original German).

The overall structure of the dissertation sets up the investigation of Zinzendorf’s hermeneutics in three steps. The first stage is a biographical presentation of Zinzendorf, placing him in his historical context, noting

the particular materials which will be the focus of the study and exploring at some length Zinzendorf’s personal wrestling with the religious and philosophical issues which challenged his own Christian understanding, particularly the relationship of philosophy and theology and the nature of religious truth.

The second major section treats the theme of hermeneutics proper. Here there are a total of seven very full chapters. Among the topics discussed in this section is the impossibility of approaching scripture without some presupposition (cf. Bultmann on the topic of *Vorverständnis*) and therefore the responsibility of the interpreter to acknowledge this and be intentional in choosing the point of departure for their exploration of scripture. Alan Richardson’s work on the relation of fact and interpretation in modern historical method is also drawn upon.

Zinzendorf’s understanding of the “Christ of the Cross” is shown to be his chosen interpretive principle in the study of scripture and his work is brought into dialogue with other approaches to Biblical interpretation of his time, including rationalism, Lutheran scholasticism, and in some depth with the Biblical hermeneutics of Johann Albrecht Bengel who wrote several contemporary critiques of Zinzendorf’s thought. The third division of the dissertation explores Zinzendorf’s practice of Biblical exegesis.

There is much wrestling in each of the chapters of the section on hermeneutics, which explore in detail Zinzendorf’s approach to

topics like the nature of scripture, the role of the Holy Spirit in Biblical interpretation, and the language best suited for the communication of religious truth. For instance, in the section on “The Language of the Bible,” Art Freeman points out that for Zinzendorf it was the Bible itself that provided the kind of speech best suited to convey the objective realities of Christianity. Such language is experiential, and not systematic and abstract.

Art Freeman draws particular attention to a letter of Zinzendorf’s regarding translation addressed to “einen besonders treuen Lehrer.” He sees the purpose of this letter as encouraging this teacher to use the language of Scripture (“Bibel-Sprache”, or as Zinzendorf elsewhere terms it “Apostolisch Teutsch nicht aber Theologisch und Lateinisch Teutsch” — Apostolic German, rather than theological or Latinized German) in his teaching and preaching. The point is that in addressing the *Gemeine* in “Bibel-Sprache” one would be using a theological language which would “cut across all the different national and religious languages.”¹⁰ In using “Bibel-Sprache” to speak about matters of faith and life, Christian truth would be expressed “in the heart-language in which it became incarnate before man put his efforts to explaining it.”¹¹ The language of Scripture, it was thought, would bring people of various theological understandings together because it would bring them back “to the original fount of their experience and the starting point of their theology.”¹² Furthermore, it was a form of language which could be used with the simple and uneducated, and which in its

humility and simplicity mirrored the Christian truth itself, which “comes in the form of a humble incarnation.”¹³ An appreciation similar to Zinzendorf’s for the value of “Bibel-Sprache” is perhaps part of what drew both Art Freeman and Otto Piper more strongly to the field of Biblical Theology, rather than Systematics.

In his summary chapter of the central part of his dissertation Art Freeman explores what Zinzendorf means by “Heart-Religion,” making a distinction between understanding the term “experiential” in the sense of “feeling” versus what Art Freeman prefers to speak of as “Zinzendorf’s particular brand of inner empiricism.”¹⁴ Heart-Religion “consists not of knowledge of a systematic theology, but the knowledge of the Saviour-Creator Jesus Christ. This knowledge is personal and real, not ideal.”¹⁵ It depends neither on our ability to express or explain what it is we know, nor on the abilities of our efforts and intellect to discover it, but rather it “begins in God’s grace, Christ’s action toward us, and it concludes in our response to Him. Religion can then be summed up in ‘Umgang mit Christo.’”¹⁶ Although Art Freeman does not use the term here, this is the core of what he will later often refer to as a *relational* theology.

At this point in his dissertation Art Freeman breaks out from a strictly historical analysis to share his own reflections:

It seems to the author that Zinzendorf is emphasizing something which needs serious consideration. Where does Christianity begin? Does it begin with

historical studies of a Jesus of Nazareth and attempt to systematize his teachings and those of the early church about life, man, and God — or does it rather begin with an experience of the reality of the living Christ, the Christ experienced and described by the Apostolic Church. This thesis has already contended that Zinzendorf was right in stressing the latter. If so, then man must begin with all of the limitations of his mental apparatus, his language, his culture, and his science to seek to explain this reality in the light of the Biblical revelation, knowing that he will falter and err, and knowing that if his explanation becomes only explanation he will indeed lose that which is the one great pearl: the reality he sought to define...The doctrinal system which one develops does not necessarily have rational coherence, and it may contain large gaps which one feels no urgency to fill out. The coherence of this theology lies in the reality experienced in the heart, a reality which is never vague, but has the content of the historical Saviour.¹⁷

Having laid out the central premises of his understanding of Zinzendorf's hermeneutics, Art Freeman then goes on to develop a third large division of the thesis, looking specifically at Zinzendorf's exegetical practices, including his approach to textual criticism, to philological concerns, historical concerns, and the use of such modes as allegory and typology in doing

exegesis. There is also attention to Zinzendorf's exegetical procedure in preaching, his use of exegetical aids such as commentaries and alternate Biblical versions, and his contacts with other scripture scholars of his day. The final chapter of this section explores Zinzendorf's understanding of the Church (especially the Church as *Gemeine*), the use of scripture in the Church and the place of the Church in understanding scripture.

Nowhere in Otto Piper's published writings do we find such an extended study in the history of Biblical interpretation as Art Freeman provides in his study of Zinzendorf's hermeneutics. Nevertheless, one understandably can see in the dissertation the influence of Piper's teaching and concerns. In discussing the principles of biblical interpretation, Piper pointed to two different but related processes: exegesis and appropriation. "The interpretation of a document consists of two different though closely related processes," he writes. "Exegesis makes the document both intelligible and comprehensible; appropriation is the personal response to the intrinsic challenge of the document."¹⁸ While he felt that modern Biblical interpretation had made great strides in exegesis, providing greater understanding of the Biblical texts in their historical and literary contexts, he suggests that it has often "utterly failed in understanding the task of appropriation."¹⁹

Traditional Protestant orthodoxy, for example, tended to identify the Bible and its message with a certain system of theology. "The result," he writes, was that "the exegete

always finds his special brand of theology in the Bible.” This approach presumes to “know the content of the Bible before it is interpreted” and thus the very nature of the Bible as a living communication of God demanding a fresh personal response of faith is disregarded.²⁰ Likewise, historical and literary criticism which “take up so much of the time and energy of the modern exegete” can also miss the mark: “For instance, how little does it matter for our appreciation of the last twenty-seven chapters of the Book of Isaiah that in all probability they were not written by the prophet who speaks in chapters 1–39 as long as we can be sure that God is speaking to us through them!”²¹ One can clearly see the parallels here between Piper’s concerns and Art Freeman’s presentation of Zinzendorf’s struggles with both the sterility of Protestant scholasticism and the limitations of Enlightenment rationalism.

Another interesting point of connection between Piper’s concerns and Art Freeman’s presentation of Zinzendorf is in the matter of both the simplicity and the profundity of the Biblical text. Piper writes:

Moreover, by the grace of God the language of his revelation is of extreme simplicity. A child can understand the words of the Bible. Whereas the value of philosophical and scientific language consists in its subtle differentiation, the value of Biblical language consists in its profundity. On account of the simplicity of Biblical language it is possible to reach agreement upon the essential truths among all those who are capable at all

of understanding the spiritual nature of these symbolic terms; and yet at the same time on account of their profundity ample room is left for diversity according to the nature and degree of spiritual insight given to various interpreters.²²

While one may challenge this statement, there is no doubt that it resonates with certain themes in the writings of Zinzendorf.

In a section of his dissertation discussing “Proof of Inspiration” and in the following one on “Simplicity—Viva Vox” Art Freeman explores these topics further in the thought of Zinzendorf. In Art Freeman’s exposition, Zinzendorf is shown to admire most not the orator “who takes many hours to express something in his well-turned phrases” but rather “the man who in a few, precisely chosen words in a simple fashion makes his statement so that all may understand him.”²³ Art Freeman reports that the differences, defects and contradictions in Scripture, and the fact that these defects and contradictions were kept in the Bible through the centuries, far from undermining Biblical authority for Zinzendorf, were actually seen as testimony to its divine inspiration.

The writers of Scripture “have honestly and simply written under the guidance of the Spirit within their own personal and historical terms and no one has tried to harmonize the historically conditioned differences. . . they wrote and spoke from the heart what they knew in simple fashion which did not obliterate their humanity, their personal defects, or their faulty understanding in certain areas of knowledge. . . Scripture as man

has it now is the product of the Spirit-inspired experience of the living reality of God in Christ Jesus.”²⁴ It is this understanding which is also related to Zinzendorf’s endorsement of poetry and hymnody as a better vehicle for conveying religious truth than prose, for it “arises from the heart, rather than only from the mind.”²⁵

An interesting theme which appears at several places in the dissertation is Zinzendorf’s understanding of Biblical interpretation, and indeed of any understanding of religious reality as *öconomisch*. In discussing Zinzendorf’s use of this term, Art Freeman points out that while the term was used by the Federal theologians such as Cocceius and Lampe, it is used in a somewhat different fashion by Zinzendorf. While Cocceius stresses the idea of the growth and broadening of the knowledge of God in successive stages of revelation, for Zinzendorf this is not so. “History does not represent a growth from one level of revelation to another, from one Economy to another. Rather is each Economy an entrance of God (Christ) into that particular time in history, with methods pertinent to that time and offering man an experience of truth which he is capable of at that moment.”²⁶

Art Freeman has included some further exposition of Zinzendorf’s ideas on “The Economies of God” in the chapter on Scripture in his *An Ecumenical Theology of the Heart*, so there is no need to spell them out in detail here. What is pertinent for our purposes is the way this discussion of Zinzendorf’s understanding of the *öconomisch* nature of God’s revelation

illuminates Piper’s comments on ample room being left for diversity “according to the nature and degree of spiritual insight given to various interpreters.” If the nature of inspiration is essentially *öconomisch* (“for that particular person or group, at that particular time, in that particular culture”) then differences of interpretation are not only natural, but may even be expected.²⁷

The insight behind this understanding will be an important theme that Art Freeman will return to in a number of his subsequent writings. To take just one small example, in his piece on “Our Theological Journey” in which Art Freeman addresses differences in the understanding of Christ and the atonement in various synods in the Moravian Church, he prefaces his more particular remarks on the *Ground of the Unity* with a piece of New Testament Theology about the “Many New Testament Presentations of the One Christ.” He carefully states that while the placing of the Gospels first in the New Testament may be seen as in a sense the affirmation of the centrality of Christ and his story, that “it is important to note that the presentation of Christ is not limited to one Gospel...Christ as the center of the presentation and the message of God cannot be presented in a single way, thus the choice of four perspectives preserving not only the perspective of four early Christian communities but perhaps also representing the Christ who spoke differently in different contexts.” He goes on to suggest that the differences within the Gospel traditions may well be as much due to the contextual concerns

of Jesus as to the particular concerns of the various New Testament communities. “Though Jesus is the center and speaker of his message, it is not worded the same to all. Context is determinative.”²⁸

Further, there is the need to take into account the process of growth in understanding under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. “It is important to note that Paul’s process took 14 years from his conversion to the mature theologian we meet in Galatians and Romans. Peter’s process culminating in I Peter, the maturing of his theology, took over 30 years. In I Peter he advocates views to which he objected during the ministry of Jesus,” writes Art Freeman.²⁹

Piper also spoke of the need to continue to wrestle with scripture in order to find new spiritual insight. He spoke of his own struggles to continue to ponder and grow in understanding of the meaning of scripture: “I for one must admit...[t]he more intensely I try to understand the meaning of the basic concepts of the Bible the greater is the perplexity they cause in my mind.”³⁰ “Our theological views and systems have constantly to be revised in the light of new exegetical insights...The Holy Spirit is not a destructive principle. But as a life-giver He is certainly opposed to stagnation and complacency.”³¹

The final chapter of Art Freeman’s dissertation on Zinzendorf is given over to the topic of “Scripture and the Church.” After examining Zinzendorf’s usage of the various terms “Kirche,” “Religion,” “Sekte,” and

“Gemeine,” Art Freeman goes on to recount the various ways Scripture found a place in the community of the 18th century Unitas Fratrum, and then asks, “What is the place of the *Gemeine*, or Church, in the process of interpretation?” He goes on to say that another way this could be phrased is to ask “in what way is the interpreter dependent upon the *Gemeine* if he is to understand and interpret Scripture correctly.”

He comes up with three points which he feels are important. First, for Zinzendorf interpretation is never a solitary scholarly venture. Rather Zinzendorf was always ready to check his interpretation and translations with others, recognizing his place within both a particular historical expression of the church and also in relation to “the invisible and real Church which transcended historical confessional bodies.” Second, “since the truth resulting from interpretation is not a theological system but primarily an understanding of religious reality, then the *Gemeine* becomes the place where one’s interpretation may be tested, for this is where that reality may be found.” Closely related is the last point, that “since the *Gemeine* possesses the reality of which Scripture speaks, this reality is only learned there.” Art Freeman concludes by remarking that it is greatly to Zinzendorf’s credit that in a day when many sought meaningful religion primarily in a retreat to a religious individualism, Zinzendorf continued to emphasize the importance of the Church.³²

This centrality of the Church as the context for biblical interpretation is also a concept emphasized by Otto Piper. “Now the Holy Spirit is given to the whole Church as the Body of Christ, and He operates in the individual believer only inasmuch as the latter is a member of that mystical body. Applied to the task of exegesis this statement means that the subjective element in the individual exegete’s work has to be checked by the spiritual insights of the Church as a whole.”³³ Piper hastens to add that this is not to be taken in the Roman Catholic sense whereby a church hierarchy strictly prescribes the acceptable rules for interpretation or decides authoritatively how certain biblical passages or books may be understood. Rather, it means that those that attempt biblical interpretation can only do acceptable work when they recognize the way they have been conditioned by, and hold responsibility for, the spiritual life of the Church.

“[N]o exegete has made himself a Christian. His personal faith presupposes the teachings, the experience, the spiritual fellowship, and the example of his denomination...while the doctrinal standards of our church can never be absolutely binding for our exegetical work, they are of the greatest heuristic value for our interpretation of the Scriptures.” This is because they are “a condensed expression of the spiritual insights of past generations, who have earnestly striven for the true understanding of the revealed truth.” On the other hand, he places strong value on those from differing denominational traditions listening to one another to see if there might be some leading of the Holy Spirit expressed in these alternative

teachings which might be missed or underplayed in one’s own.³⁴

In the spring of 1975, Art Freeman sent a draft copy of the completed manuscript for his book *Prayer and the Doing of Theology: An Approach to New Testament Theology* to Otto Piper for Piper’s comment. He had previously shared with Piper earlier portions of the work in progress. In a letter dated June 4th, 1975, Piper wrote back that he appreciated that his former student had taken the time to share his work. He also wrote, “It gives me special pleasure to witness your theological activity in view of the fact that a number of my former students never completed an extensive theological study.” After making some suggestions as to possible publishers Piper felt Art Freeman should contact, he also offered to lend the weight of his own endorsement if Art Freeman felt that might help in finding a publisher for his work. “In submitting your manuscript to publishers,” he wrote, “you may refer to my name and indicate that in my opinion your essay is apt to advance protestant theology beyond the subjectivities of modern existentialism in the direction of some scriptural realism.”

If the mid-20th century has often been thought of as a “Golden Age” of Biblical Theology,³⁵ by 1970 Brevard Childs had published his *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970). This manuscript on *Prayer and the Doing of Theology* may be seen as Art Freeman’s own response to that “crisis.” It had grown in part out of Art Freeman’s regularly teaching a course on the “New Testament Theology of Prayer and

Religious Experience” at Moravian Seminary in Bethlehem. In this manuscript Art Freeman set forth the conclusions he had arrived at regarding the centrality of “the disciplined life of prayer” for the doing of theology:

In simplest terms, it is my belief that the intellectual and critical doing of theology must be brought into a dialectical relationship with Christian experience and action. In this way the intellectual, critical, historical study is informed and corrected by experience and action...and experience and action is challenged and qualified by historical study. This means that the study of N.T. Theology can never be seen as merely a historical task. The historical task is essential, but one does not really understand unless one comes to know and experience the real “subject matter” of the historical material. In this understanding of the process of doing theology I feel that the disciplined life of prayer is absolutely essential, because this is a primary way of relating to the subject matter of the text.³⁶

This manuscript is already a rather rich exploration of the New Testament theology of prayer drawing especially on the work of Joachim Jeremias, but also presenting Art Freeman’s own studies directly in the New Testament texts. An opening chapter examines critically the state of Biblical Theology, both in terms of a crisis of subject (“loss of faith in the relevance of the biblical materials as its historically-conditioned nature becomes

apparent”) and crisis of method (“what satisfies the mind does not always satisfy the heart”).

Later chapters explore at some depth the practice of prayer in the Judaism of Jesus’ day and in the early church, the Gospel portrayals of the place of prayer in the life and teachings of Jesus, an in-depth study of the Lord’s Prayer, and the Christology implied in New Testament terms such as “Son of Man” and “Kyrios,” as well as that embodied in the accounts of the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus. There is also an examination of Christian anthropology focusing on the relational nature of human existence and a final appendix with “Suggestions for the Practice of Relationship with God.”

In light of our particular concern here, we may look especially at the place given to Mark 4 in Art Freeman’s manuscript (and in later writings by Art Freeman as well) as a key to the understanding of the presence of the Kingdom of God as a mystery. The parables of the “sower who went out to sow,” with its attendant explanation, and of the Kingdom of God as a “mustard seed,” are seen by Art Freeman as “quite illustrative of the problem of understanding” when Jesus spoke of the Kingdom:

In the parables of the seed growing and the mustard seed Jesus describes the Kingdom as present as a seed (but nevertheless really present), growing according to the slow and mysterious process of growth, and as coming to fruition in a time beyond human control. Jesus’ contemporaries could not identify with this portrayal of the Kingdom, but saw it in more

Apocalyptic terms. Jesus presented the Kingdom as really present in ways other than power. Its presence was a mystery in the sense that one might debate the reality of its presence. To accept it as really present was an act of faith; an act of one who had ears to hear.³⁷

Even the disciples in this passage, although aware in some way of the mystery of the Kingdom, seem to have little understanding of the parable and its meaning and are in need of further instruction. Parables are not easy to understand, at least in part because they make a point which runs contrary to the grain of contemporary Jewish understanding.

Jesus' contemporaries were expecting the Kingdom to come in a demonstration of God's power. For Jesus, in Art Freeman's understanding, the present existence with all of its limitations was to be seen "as the scene of God's presence and activity." Jesus embodied the paradox of the righteous sufferer (cf. Job, Psalm 22, etc.) and God would therefore be found in a life where he seemed absent. God's presence would be found in a life that "partook of all the suffering of this world and wrestled with the question of God's will and presence."

Jesus' cry of abandonment on the cross was the "cry of a man in a world where suffering makes God seem absent," but whose resurrection was a vindication of his faith. The early church was aware that although God had created the world, the world was now under the dominion of demonic and satanic powers and was "groaning in travail" (Romans 8:22)

as it awaited its new birth. Yet until that time, God was present "in all of the tragic of life to hold us in his love (Romans 8:28–39)." Like Christ, Christians bore within themselves the power of the Gospel and of the Spirit, but also in imitation of Christ, they bore within their lives "the paradoxical presence of both God (the Spirit) and suffering (I Thess. 1:6; 2:13–16)."³⁸

Otto Piper was also taken with Mark 4 as a key to understanding the parables and a clue to the mysterious presence of the Kingdom of God. He even preached on this passage in Bethlehem, PA, at one point, and focuses on it in his article on "The Understanding of the Synoptic Parables."³⁹ The typescript of a report on a seminar he gave on the "Parables of the Kingdom" on January 5, 1939, contained the following remarks:

The nature of all the parables is basically mysterious for there is an element in them that goes beyond human reasoning... There is an apparent contradiction in Jesus' saying that the Kingdom is at hand, for He did not possess all the pomp and circumstance that the Jews expected of the Messiah. So it is that we see the mysterious character of the Kingdom. The apparent contradictions of the Kingdom become reconciled only to those to whom Jesus reveals the mystery. The final answer and meaning of the parables of the Kingdom are to be found in the Person of Christ Himself... The Kingdom is a reality but its development is a paradox... To His own [Christ's] work appeared small as yet but they knew it would develop into the

Kingdom for He had revealed to them the inner meaning of His words.

Like the planting of the seed of the Kingdom by the preaching of the Gospel, the results might be quite different in different persons. Yet as the parable of the mustard seed shows, from a small seed may come a great result.

The encounter of Art Freeman with the teaching of Otto Piper at Princeton Theological Seminary was clearly a formative event for his spiritual development as well as for the career path he would follow. Yet it was certainly not the only major formative event in his adult life. Arthur Freeman's work for many years as a part of the Lilly Endowment Project for the Deepening of the Spiritual Life of the Seminary Faculty, a program under the direction of Charles Whiston, was clearly another such event. Out of it grew much of his later work on the topic of Spiritual Formation, building on his earlier work on a New Testament Theology of Prayer.

His writings in the fields of spirituality and psychology and spirituality and health reveal the mastery of entirely new fields of literature that went far beyond the material he had studied in his graduate work in New Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary. Still, much groundwork had been laid, as can be seen, for instance, in the section on "Healing in the New Testament" in his book *Healing: A Rainbow of Hope* (Bethlehem: 2001).

I would like to bring this essay to a close with a few remarks from Otto Piper which seem particularly appropriate as we celebrate the role Art Freeman has played as a teacher, mentor and spiritual friend in our own lives. After setting

out his discussion of "Modern Problems of New Testament Exegesis," Piper suggests that it is one thing to set forth a vision of our calling and its tasks, but "a long rough way from the vision to its realization." None of us, he remarks, "who are teaching here in the Seminary will see his vision come completely true. We shall all die by the wayside. All we can do is this one thing; that coming out of a great tradition we hand the torch on." In some ways, we may rightly be dissatisfied. (Piper sees a certain amount of dissatisfaction with things as itself the work of the Holy Spirit prodding us on.)

Not much seems to be achieved thereby. Yet doing this for the succeeding generations is not a hopeless and futile thing. For we have the assurance that our life-work will not be lost. If we erect it on the solid ground, which is Jesus Christ we shall be living stones in the temple He is building here on earth. Not every one of us can be a pillar or an ornamental frieze. But each stone is needed for the perfection of the whole building. Suffice it that on the day of His glorious coming the Lord will say to us: "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!"⁴⁰

Kenneth Woodrow Henke, archivist in the Special Collections Department, Princeton Theological Seminary Library.

Endnotes

¹ Arthur J. Freeman, *An Ecumenical Theology of the Heart: The Theology of Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf* (Bethlehem: The Moravian Church in America, 1998), pp. v and 1.

- ² All biographical materials concerning Otto Piper in this and subsequent paragraphs, including quotations, are taken from various unpublished documents located in the Otto Piper Collection, Special Collections, Princeton Theological Seminary Library, unless otherwise noted.
- ³ Piper takes up this same theme a number of different times in his writing and speaking. Cf., for example, “Hellenistic and Hebraic Mentality,” *The Seminarian*, Official Student Publication of Moravian Theological Seminary, Bethlehem, Pa., Vol. 9, No. 1 (Fall, 1954), pp. 3–4.
- ⁴ for an example of Müller’s academic writing see *Der Persönliche Christentum der Paulinischen Gemeinden* (Leipzig: J.S. Hinrichs’sche, 1898); for a sample of his more popular writings, see *Die Reden Jesu verdeutscht und vergegenwärtigt* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1909) and *Die Bergpredigt verdeutscht und vergegenwärtigt* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1911).
- ⁵ Otto A. Piper, “Modern Problems of New Testament Exegesis,” *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 36, No. 1 (1942) p. 15.
- ⁶ see Otto A. Piper, “Principles of Graduate Study in Theology,” *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 38, No. 1 (1944), pp. 21–25.
- ⁷ “Otto Alfred Piper: 1891–1982,” *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 4, New Series, No. 1 (1983), p. 54.
- ⁸ James I. McCord, “Otto Piper: An Appreciation,” in William Klassen and Graydon F. Snyder, *Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation: Essays in honor of Otto A. Piper* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), p. xiii.
- ⁹ Arthur James Freeman, *The Hermeneutics of Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf* (Princeton: 1962), p. 3.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 227.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.* p. 228.
- ¹² *Ibid.* p. 229
- ¹³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 243.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 244.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 245–246, 257.
- ¹⁸ Otto A. Piper, “Principles of New Testament Interpretation,” *Theology Today*, Vol. III, No. 2 (July, 1946), p. 193.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 201.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.* p. 203.
- ²¹ *Ibid.* p. 204.
- ²² Piper, “Modern Problems of New Testament Exegesis,” p. 9.
- ²³ Freeman, *The Hermeneutics of Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf*, p.119.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 141.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 231.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 128.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 212.
- ²⁸ Arthur Freeman, “Our Theological Journey,” *TMDK*, 25 (2002), pp. 59–60.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 60.
- ³⁰ Piper, “Modern Problems of New Testament Exegesis,” p. 9.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- ³² Freeman, *The Hermeneutics of Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf*, pp. 346–351.
- ³³ Piper, “Modern Problems of New Testament Exegesis,” p. 13.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 13–14.
- ³⁵ James K. Mead, *Biblical Theology: Issues, Methods, and Themes* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), pp. 39–48.

³⁶ Arthur James Freeman, *Prayer and the Doing of Theology* (Bethlehem: n.d.), p. i.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.11.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 12–13.

³⁹ Otto A. Piper, “The Understanding of the Synoptic Parables,” *Evangelical Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (January 15, 1942), pp. 33–34.

⁴⁰ Piper, “Modern Problems of New Testament Exegesis,” p. 14.

The next issue of *The Hinge* will focus on the theme of religion and violence and will feature reports from different provinces of the Unity.

Special Feature

My Life in the DDR

Bishop Theo Gill

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As I am one of those people who has lived in Socialist East Germany for almost the whole era of forty years, I am often asked about our life as citizens, as Christians during that time. And the second question is: How do you see the difference between then and now? I must admit that I feel a bit embarrassed by such questions, because all the quick answers may be true, but often the contrary is also true. Life is more complex than ideologies.

If you should have the same questions: How did you live in *Herrnhut*, in East Germany twenty years ago, and how is life today? — please do not expect a detailed response. I can give at best a few sidelights from my own memory, compared with my present feeling.

In three sections I will quote three characteristic sentences, spoken by partners from the West twenty or thirty years ago, and I'll tell how I thought about it at that time — and what I think nowadays.

The first one: A visitor from West Germany said — maybe in the seventies — “Next week we shall have elections. This time *I really don't know for which party I shall vote.*” I could hardly understand that. How glad would we be to have real elections! What was called elections in our part of Germany was rather a roll-call. You had to put your ballot into the box, the best

was openly. On the paper was only the list of the “National Front.” It was almost impossible to mark the ballot as negative or void. So it was always a matter of conscience: shall I go to the polling station or shall I stay at home? Not to vote was considered as affront against the state. Well, I could dare that, but the majority of the population was dependent on state factories or organizations and could hardly take the risk of missing the roll-call.

In 1990 we enjoyed the big event of free elections some months before the end of the German Democratic Republic. It was really a feeling of joy and satisfaction to have the possibility of choosing between several names and parties. Fifteen years have passed, years of economic reconstruction, organization of democratic institutions, the West German legal system, many things which were a real improvement compared with those we had before. But we had to learn also the lesson of election campaigns: all the programs and promises before the election and the reality after. To cut it short: Now I understand very well my West German visitor thirty years ago: “We shall have elections, and this time *I really don't know for which party I shall vote.*”

The second: In 1974 I had the privilege to travel to Jamaica as a delegate to Unity Synod. Such participation in international conferences

was one exception of the rule that citizens of the GDR should rather stay home. Another exception was granted for elderly people to visit relatives in the West for special occasions. On my way home from Jamaica I passed the USA. At the Kennedy Airport in New York one of our Moravian ministers came to say good-bye. I remember we stood there and talked, and suddenly he saw my luggage standing in a distance of seven or ten meters, and he said. "Oh, take your baggage, watch it — *we are in an open society!*" At that time I did not see any connection between society and a suitcase standing some steps from its owner. Maybe I was too much accustomed to our *closed society*. We were watched and observed very carefully, by police and secret service and other dear people who wanted to care for us that we might live in safety.

It was a wonderful feeling after 1990 when we could travel to our friends in West Germany without visa and could telephone without the suspicion that there might those in the background who controlled us. But it is also true that in the closed society some things went easier. For instance we had not many problems with keys. Often apartments and even house doors were not locked during the night. Now we live in an open society, we are thankful for its opportunities and facilities. But everybody has to look after his own safety. You have to watch your possession by a dozen of keys, and you have to watch your keys which watch your possession. Safety first! Insurances look after your safety. There is abundant richness in our country, but safety? I do not want back any kind

of closed society. But a couple of years ago I was shocked by a question of a guest from Tanzania, a young man. One evening he was to go five minutes within Herrnhut. He anxiously asked: "Is this here a safe quarter?" So I accompanied him for his safety. I was aware that not far from here a man of African origin had been knocked down in the evening — in our *open society*.

The third: It was not long before the end of the socialist regime. A Moravian brother from West Germany who helped for some months in one of our congregations heard the daily complaints and discontent of the people about the political and economic situation and the praise of all the good things in the rich West. When he tried to correct the black-white picture and said: "*we have so many unemployed*" the answer was: "oh, I should like to be unemployed in the West, must not work and get money from the state!"

Now we belong to the West, have many unemployed, but I don't think there is anyone who can really be happy about this.

These were three examples indicating the circumstances in which we used to live and in which we live now. A closed society where everything was under one rule, one party, no unemployed, so to speak a reform boarding-school with a big fence around. And now an open society, a global playground with winners and losers — I suppose more losers than winners.

This is not the end of my speech. I know you may ask: "What is the difference for Christians and churches who live under such

circumstances? Why didn't you tell us more about that?" Dear sisters and brothers, the longer I live on the "western" side of the globe, the more I am convinced: our task and mission in this world is — despite all difference and contrast — always and everywhere the same. We have to live under the heavenly Lord and in his daily presence and guidance in a world which tries to live without God. We have to resist, and we have to cooperate with those in power. Our resistance is necessary wherever power is being abused. Our cooperation is first of all prayer. And secondly it is participation in all efforts which help people to live in physical and spiritual health and dignity, and to be a voice for the voiceless.

And if you ask me: "How can we distinguish and decide how to act and react in a given situation? How can we find out, when

and where do we have to stand back and let the experts do their job, and when and where do we have to take a clear stand for and against, as ambassadors for Christ, as advocates for people?"

I do not have a formula as a guarantee to do the right thing. There is no formula, but there is a person, a divine person whom Christ has sent to his Church. The Holy Spirit — Zinzendorf would say: the Mother of the Church is ready to guide us in our decisions and deliberations, to help and comfort us in our troubles and struggles. This is my wish and prayer for you who bear a special responsibility in the Church and in her Mission: that you may trust and believe in God's guidance step by step, that you may be *steadfast in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain* (1.Cor.15:58).

Letter to the Editor

Craig,

I read the article and the accompanying responses and I enjoyed reading the thoughtful perspectives. I felt compelled to send a few thoughts that I did not see represented on why America has the death penalty and what the Moravian response should be.

First off, the American death penalty — through the separation of church and state — is divorced from the Christian ethic of revolutionary forgiveness, which means that if the legal and judicial systems put in place procedures and policies for ending human life, these are not framed in a Christian context. Christians need to operate within this society and can therefore work to have the death penalty abolished. Christ taught this perspective with tithing to give to Caesar what is Caesar's and give what to God is God's. Not knowing a great deal about the European systems of government, I would wonder how distant religion as a whole and Christianity specifically is from government and the legislative process in European societies.

Second, I agree completely with the mindset that America is a land of freedoms and with great freedoms (which we possess) comes great responsibility and accountability (under which we labor). To stay off of death row, put simply, one need only make a different choice when the moment arrives. If a government has a death penalty absolutely no one has to suffer under it. They have a choice to avoid the road that leads to a potential death penalty by not behaving in specified ways. If an individual chooses to act in ways the law prohibits, they are implicitly agreeing to accept the consequence if they are caught. This, to me, is the essence of the implied social contract. If someone doesn't want to face the possibility having the state end their life, they can choose not to behave in certain ways.

I recognize that this is a simplistic example and that there are many more external factors that influence an individual's behavior, and that is where the second point comes in. I was a bit surprised that none of the responses included a proactive intervention in troubled communities and schools by Moravians to help counsel, guide, and be a good Christian witness so that troubled, disenfranchised, poor youths can see a different future as revealed through our teaching of Jesus Christ. If protesters who stand outside a jail at execution time wanted to end executions, would they not be better served by ministering to the most at risk populations before they commit such heinous crimes? This approach would seem to emulate what Christ did during his time on earth and keeping in step with the Great Commission.

Whether one believes the death penalty should be made illegal or not, the tragedy of life being lost has already happened and the question has turned to whether it should be compounded by taking the life of the perpetrator. We are called to go and make disciples of all the nations... that includes America and there is a great way yet to go. If the great Moravian tradition of missionary work was focused on our most at-risk population segments here in our own country, what reduction in murder and rape could we bring about? Our success rate would always double because when we reach one person who does not go and commit crime, the would-be victim lives a life uninterrupted by this would-be tragedy.

— Nathan Foster
Member, Little Church on the Lane, Charlotte, NC

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