tifies it as "the inseparable union between the cross of Christ and the cross which is laid upon us," as "a theology of word and faith" (5). By now it has become clear that the author wishes to play with the concepts of objective, historical actuality of salvation (word) and subjective, existential appropriation and experience of it (faith). Having thus ascertained a set of categories which as criteria can be imposed on a variety of phenomena in the history of theology, he is able to polemicize against a "theology of the cross without the word" and a "theology of the word without the cross" (5 ff.).

To be sure, Prenter is faintly aware that he simplifies complex issues to the point of becoming simplistic. Just the same, he boldly proceeds to identify the former with the medieval piety of an *imitatio Christi* mysticism and the latter with post-Lutheran orthodoxy where the "objective doctrine of the cross" is so much emphasized that faith turns out to be a mere "intellectual affirmation" (6). In modern times the same respective onesidedness is found – no surprise! – in the existentialist theology of Bultmann where "the entire stress is placed on whether or not the individual makes the cross of Christ his own" (10), and conversely in an all-pervasive Christological concentration of a Barthian type which, for instance, breaks church and state apart in a two-realm theory, or starkly contrasts history and history of salvation (14 ff.).

As a remedy for such aberrations, it is suggested that we see the theology of the cross in a trinitarian perspective, i.e., revealing and effecting our salvation by the three divine persons in the cross, as "providence, redemption and salvation" (13 ff.). Consequently, a course between the Scylla of medieval mysticism and the Charybdis of Lutheran scholasticism, a theology of word *and* faith between Bultmann and Barth is mapped out for Lutheran dogmatics – a view which, according to Prenter, is congruent with both Luther and the Scriptures.

What shall we say then? Our review copy is replete with critical marginal notes, and it would take perhaps as much as Prenter's text itself to voice one's discomfort with his stereotyping in order to demonstrate onesidedness on either side. The level of uneasiness is especially high when we see medieval ethics and Bultmann's thought twisted to provide straw-men to be burnt on the stake of orthodoxy. The only reason to let it go with that is perhaps that the Lutheran Church herself apparently needs that kind of polemical type-casting to become aware of its own inherent tendency to fall out of Luther's paradoxical dialectic into a hardening of absolutes on one or the other side. For this purpose Prenter's article serves well.

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Gerhard Ebeling. *Luther: An Introduction to His Thought*. Trans. R. W. Wilson. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970. Pp. 287.

The chapters of Ebeling's book were originally lectures delivered in 1962-63 at the University of Zurich and repeated in part at Drew University in 1963. From the moment they were published in German in 1964, they were regarded as a significant achievement in contemporary Luther studies, and it seems superfluous to celebrate that achievement again

here. What is particularly distinctive of Ebeling's "introduction" to Luther is that he concentrates on the underlying structure of Luther's thought rather than on particular themes or doctrines. The structure is antithetical: philosophy-theology, letter-spirit, Law-Gospel, etc. Ebeling is at pains to show how these antitheses are inclusive rather than contradictory of each other. "Only a practiced ear can appreciate its [Luther's theological] harmonies" (p. 33). The antitheses are required by true theology, theology of "decisive assertions" (p. 245).

For Luther theology was nothing if not a message, an "assertion," addressed to man in a crisis-situation. It was thus an "existential," "practical" theology (p. 228), "a truly theological theology" (p. 77). It was meant to meet real, not academic, problems. As such, it has a certain relevance for us today, and we read Luther best when we read him speaking to us and for us. The author's purpose, therefore, is perhaps best described as an effort to transpose Luther into the twentieth century rather than to transpose himself into the sixteenth.

Ebeling writes of his subject with assurance and even with some veneration. His appreciation for Luther's theology is great, and his promise of a novel approach overcomes our reluctance to sift through the familiar categories once again. His interpretation of Luther, and indeed of the Reformation, as a "speech-event" (*Sprachereignis*: "linguistic innovation") is incisive (pp. 27-28, etc.). But despite his success in disclosing the structure of Luther's thought and setting it into a new and clearer relief, Ebeling's implied claim that the basic premises of Luther's theology are the basic premises for every true theology will not satisfy all readers. As Luther faces his critics, every objection is resolved in his favor. In other words, some treatment of Luther's limitations would reassure the skeptical. Moreover, even under Ebeling's skillful handling, this peremptory voice from the sixteenth century often speaks with a strange and distant accent.

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W. Fred Graham. *The Constructive Revolutionary: John Calvin and His Socio-Economic Impact*. Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1971. Pp. 251. \$7.95.

It has been nearly a decade since anything significant has appeared in English concerning the social ethics of the Genevan Reformer. John Knox Press issued a translation of Andre Biéler's *L'humanisme social de Calvin* but although this was a gem it was only a summary of his other more important works on the economic and social thought of Calvin. Thus Graham has rendered an important service to Reformation Studies and to social history. His is a work that corroborates the position of such scholars as Brinton and Little who contend that Calvinism is one of a few great revolutionary ideologies of modern European history.

Briefly, the book consists of three parts - the Genevan scene at the time of Calvin (5 chapters), the influence of Calvin on the city life (5 chapters), and the later and more comprehensive influence of Calvin on the Western World (2 chapters). In some respects, I think that chapter XII might have made a better introduction to the book since it provides a very concise and provocative account of "where we are" in modern secularity and how we got there.