
Introduction: “In Accordance with the Scriptures”

Local Church as “Living Bible”

Christian doctrine is what the church believes, teaches, and confesses as it prays and suffers, serves and obeys, celebrates and awaits the coming of the kingdom of God.

—Jaroslav Pelikan

PLAYBILL: LOCAL CHURCH MAKES “LIVING BIBLE”

This is a book about learning doctrine for the sake of acting *out* what is *in* Christ: call it the *drama of discipleship*. Nothing in the world is more important than this project: living to God with one another in Christlike ways “in accordance with the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3). This is the way the people of God come to know and express their love for God: by conforming their lives—hearts, souls, minds, and strength (Mark 12:30)—to his will, on earth as it is in heaven. Doctrine gives direction for bearing faithful witness, for *speaking* understanding. Moreover, if action “speaks” louder than words, then faith speaking understanding involves both verbal and nonverbal modes of communication: words and deeds.

Scripture gives authoritative witness to the identity and significance of Jesus Christ. Disciples thus speak understanding when they talk and walk “in accordance with the Scriptures.” Living in accordance with the Scriptures—being *biblical*—is thus the disciple’s prime directive. To be a follower of Christ is to be a follower of Scripture, in all three senses of “follow”: (1) to understand the meaning of what Christ says in Scripture, (2) to respond to his instructions with obedience, and (3) to go after Christ or along “the way” of Christ.

Being biblical is thus a matter not only of theory but also of practice. It is one thing to have a view of biblical authority, quite another to grasp God's word and formulate its truth systematically, and still another not only to state the truth but also to do or *embody* it. Too often, doing theology according to the Scriptures does not include this latter sense. The present proposal works with a robust sense of being biblical that includes all three dimensions: holding a high view of Scripture, using Scripture as a source and norm of Christian doctrine, and embodying Scripture in forms of everyday life. Doing theology "in accordance with the Scriptures" is ultimately a matter of being transformed by the Spirit in order to conform one's heart, mind, and soul to the Bible such that being biblical is indeed a matter of the strength of one's very *being*.

It has been said that church history is essentially the history of biblical interpretation.¹ This is obviously true on one level inasmuch as many important turning points in church history involved conflicting interpretations over particular biblical texts (e.g., the Arian controversy featured disagreement over the meaning of the Son's being "the firstborn of all creation" [Col. 1:15]). It is also true on another level insofar as the story of the church is essentially the story of its attempts to interpret Scripture "bodily," that is, through the shape of its life together. The church is biblical, therefore, when it seeks to embody the words in the power of the Spirit and so become a living commentary. The church is thus not only the "people of the book" but also "the (lived) interpretation of the book."

Followers of Christ seek to be biblical in response to Jesus' prayer: "Thy will be done." God's will is expressed in God's word, and no part of Scripture more resembles a script to be performed than the Law. Yet biblical wisdom too functions like a script to the extent that it asks to be embodied in the life of the people of God. Indeed, there is something intrinsically representational, and thus dramatic, about doing God's will "on earth *as* it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). The *as* provides a warrant for thinking about the church's embodied interpretation as a performance that seeks to represent on earth the rule of God as it is in God's own realm. How, then, should the people of God perform "in accordance with the Scriptures"?

In 1985 First Presbyterian Church in Libertyville, Illinois, performed the Scriptures, in public, for the first time. They continued to do so over a span of evenings, once a year for several years. The "Living Bible" became an annual event eagerly anticipated by the whole community. The basic idea was simple: spectators could walk around the church building and see a series of thirteen tableaux, staged for three blocks around the parish hall, representing key moments in the biblical story, including Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, Noah's ark (with goats, horses, etc.), the nativity, the crucifixion, and the resurrection. The production involved more than 600 actors and 200 volunteers working behind the scenes: there was a director for each scene, set decorators, actors, stagehands,

1. Gerhard Ebeling, "Church History Is the History of the Exposition of Scripture," in *The Word of God and Tradition: Historical Studies Interpreting the Divisions of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968), 11–32.

prop makers, painters, costume makers, people to work with sound and light, and so forth.

Performances of the Living Bible ran continuously for two hours on each of the three nights, with shifts of actors taking turns. The actors did not have lines, but they played their parts in silent pantomime to musical accompaniment and prerecorded biblical passages. The centerpiece is the scene depicting the Last Supper, modeled after Leonardo da Vinci’s famous painting. Great care was taken to ensure that the hairstyles, tableware, and food corresponded to da Vinci’s canvas: “Everything will be true, right down to the round loaves of bread on the table. The painting was meant to capture the moment after Christ told his disciples, ‘One among you will betray me.’ Our actors will personify as exactly as possible their expressions of disbelief.”² The thirteen actors in the scene would be moving about and gesticulating and then suddenly freeze, creating a nearly exact replica of the disciples’ postures and expressions in da Vinci’s painting. It was a very effective moment, often taking the spectators’ breath away.³

The Living Bible was an effective means of evangelism, of showing the way in which the basic story line of the Bible converges on the event of Jesus Christ. In this sense it was a success. Nevertheless, the present book takes the model of performing the Scriptures in another direction. I am more concerned with the latter half of the Great Commission: with making disciples not in the sense of converting them to Christ but rather in the sense of cultivating in them the mind of Christ, “teaching them to observe” the supreme authority of Christ in every situation (Matt. 28:20 KJV). The church is to be a Living Bible, yes, but not by staging literal repetitions (copies) of biblical scenes. This is one kind of faithfulness, to be sure, that of photographic reduplication. The long-term challenge for disciples, however, is to represent the gospel not by seeking literally to duplicate past scenes but rather by continuing to follow Jesus into the present, in ways that are both faithful and (necessarily) creative. It is ultimately the difference between repristination (“dead” theater) and fitting participation (i.e., theater that is vital and vibrant).

Being biblical is a Spirit-enabled way of being that is both generated and governed by God’s word. It is a matter of coming to know God through his word and of loving God by doing his word. Theology exists for the sake of God’s word, ministering understanding, and this for the purpose of growing disciples. Theology is a response to Paul’s injunction: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly” (Col. 3:16). The rest of this book attempts to make good on this claim. Part 1 shows why the theatrical model offers important resources for conceiving the challenge of being biblical. Part 2 examines a number of doctrines and shows how they help prepare disciples to play their part in the living Bible, or better, the living body of Jesus Christ.

2. H. Lee Murphy, “Cast of Hundreds Celebrates Bible in Church’s Tableaux,” reporting an interview with Rev. James Glenn, *Chicago Tribune*, September 18, 1987, http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1987-09-18/entertainment/8703100871_1_scenes-painting-la-grande-jatte.

3. First Presbyterian relaunched the Living Bible program in September 2012.

PROGRAM NOTES: WHAT THIS BOOK IS ABOUT

Faith Speaking Understanding uses a theatrical model to discuss the various ways in which doctrine shapes Christian understanding and forms disciples. Theology serves faith's vocation of speaking and showing understanding, of bringing biblical Christianity to life. The present book seeks to advance this all-important project for the sake of the church's well-being. This is a daunting task that involves several interconnected matters. The present book therefore has nine interrelated themes, each of which serves its principal thesis.

It Is about Being Biblical

The church is "a people of the book" in a dynamic way, bringing it to life by entering into the drama of the Christ that the Scriptures attest "in many and various ways" (Heb. 1:1). Here we may recall what Hans-Georg Gadamer says about interpretation as entering into the "play" of the text, which "always involves something like performing a drama, for the player who takes the play seriously interprets it from within, by belonging to and playing a part in it."⁴

Being biblical means attending to the whole as well as the parts, and to the relationship between them. Let us call the kind of scholarly analysis that focuses on particular passages *biblical reasoning in its workday mode*. It is familiar to theologians who view their task as studying the data of Scripture to see what the whole Bible (by which they mean the collation of the parts) has to say about a particular topic. Yet synthesis—keeping the big picture in mind—is just as important and requires imagination: the ability to incorporate the individual parts of Scripture into unifying patterns. Imagination is *biblical reasoning in its Sunday best*, lost in wonder at the creativity of the Creator. Being biblical is a vital means of transformation by the renewing of our minds.

It Is about Theology

Theology is a science in that it pertains to knowing God, but "science" may not be the best label for describing this knowledge, or why doctrine matters to disciples. In the secular realm, *science* means the mastery of some domain, summarized in a system of knowledge. To know something scientifically is to be able to control it, use it to our advantage. One does not "master" the project of living blessedly with others before God.

Theology admits of many definitions, but in this context it primarily concerns the process of seeking, finding, and then demonstrating wisdom. We will only be able to rehabilitate doctrine if we are able to view doctrine itself as a helpful bridge that spans the debilitating divide between theory and practice. Theology

4. Joel Weinsheimer, "Hermeneutics," in *Contemporary Literary Theory*, ed. G. Douglas Atkins and Laura Morrow (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989), 126. See also Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Continuum, 2002), 147–48.

helps disciples to display the *lived* knowledge of the gospel: the mind of Christ embodied and embedded in particular situations. Theology is the art and science of enacting the mind of Christ everywhere, at all times, and to everyone.

It Is about Church Doctrine

We may need to change our picture of doctrine if we are to see it as playing a necessary role in growing disciples.⁵ Doctrine refers to the deposit of authorized teaching entrusted to the church’s care (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:14), yet it is more than a body of knowledge. It is instruction whose aim is to form, inform, and transform disciples into doers who can speak, act, and think the way Christ did. Doctrine serves as a finishing school for disciples by helping them to view their lives as Christ did his, as caught up in the great drama of redemption.⁶ Doctrine, then, is not simply an inert body of knowledge; rather, it intends an active bodily doing. Church without doctrine to direct it is dazed and confused; yet doctrine without the church to embody it is arid and empty.

It Is about the Gospel of Jesus Christ

The gospel is the good news that Jesus has blazed the way to eternal life with God, making good on God’s covenant promise to forgive old sins (Isa. 53:5), give new hearts (Ezek. 36:26; Jer. 31:33), and renew creation (Isa. 65:17; 66:22). The gospel is the joyful proclamation that God has done something to good effect. *God has done something*: the drama of redemption reaches its climax when the Son pours out his life on the cross (Acts 2:23) and when the Father raises him from the dead (2:24) and when the Son again pours out his Spirit (2:33). *To good effect*: those who put their faith in the risen Christ are saved from their sins and have a share, through his Spirit, in his life and sonship (2:38).

It Is about Life

Too many people, even those in the church, dismiss doctrine as dry and dusty, unrelated to the rough and tumble of real life, and perhaps even a little bit unspiritual to the extent that it encourages division in the church, as if logic cannot but assault faith (as if “Blessed are those who believe without thinking!”). Sadly, there is more than a little truth to these caricatures. The fault lies not with doctrine itself, however, but with a misunderstanding of its nature and purpose. A false picture of doctrine, as lifeless, has held sections of the church captive for too long.

5. Matthew Myer Boulton’s *Life in God: John Calvin, Practical Formation, and the Future of Protestant Theology* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2011) makes a similar claim.

6. To be sure, transformation requires more than studying doctrine. Saints are not always good students (and vice versa). At the same time, doctrine is one of the ways in which the Holy Spirit ministers the word of God.

What does the church have to say and do that no other institution can? Nature and society alike abhor a vacuum, and there are many ideologies and agendas waiting to rush in and fill the hearts and minds of the uncommitted. Doctrine orients the church's life by teaching it how to live and what to live for. Indeed, doctrine orients the church to the abundant and eternal life found only in Jesus Christ. For life is more than a matter of biology, more than sheer physical existence: it is a matter of being in fellowship with the triune God. Doctrine forms disciples when it helps the church to act out its new life in Christ. Far from being removed from real life, then, we see that doctrine concerns energies and events that are as real and powerful as anything known in physics or chemistry, energies and events that can turn the world upside down (Acts 17:6).

It Is about the Reign of God

What turned the Thessalonian Jews' world upside down had to do with the apostles' proclamation: "there is another king, Jesus" (Acts 17:7 RSV). The lordship of Christ continues to be disruptive, breaking ideological strangleholds, subverting corrupt loyalties, and exposing idolatry well beyond Thessalonica. The kingdom of God is the breaking in of God's reign to defeat the powers of darkness and disorder. Liberating the oppressed is God's signature mark: Christ's setting the captives free is the highpoint of the dramatic conflict between Satan and the Son of God on a stage that includes both heaven and earth.⁷

It Is about the Church

The church is the place where Christ rules by his word, which dwells in disciples' hearts. The kingdom of God is the domain of Christ's word, that bounded area where Christ's word rules and is joyfully accepted. The church is thus a royal theater: a lived exhibit of the word of truth, grace, and love. In particular, the church is that peculiar place where men and women freely and joyfully do the will of God on earth as it is in heaven.

"I believe in . . . the holy catholic church." This is a bold, often counterintuitive confession of faith, especially in an age where the flaws of various church leaders are all too apparent, and where so many people express disappointment in their actual experience of church. Yet bold faith in the reality of church is just as important now as it has always been. The church is the visible presence of the invisible, the tangible experience of the kingdom of God on earth: "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth" (Matt. 6:10). We cannot help but believe in church: it is the firstfruits of the Father's answer to the Lord's own prayer and petition.

7. Timothy Gombis describes Jesus' victory over the powers and principalities as having cosmic scope (*The Drama of Ephesians: Participating in the Triumph of God* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010], 24).

Of course, it is not enough merely to believe that the church exists. One must also belong to it, be an active member. What is the nature of this activity? Doctrine aids disciples in discerning what they must say and do in order to be church. In later chapters I will expand upon the claim, as bold as it is relevant, that the people who make up church are the place where the reign of God becomes most visible. The local church is a parable of the kingdom when it acts out the new creation in Christ amid the old here and now. As we shall see, the church is not an empty space (Peter Brook’s metaphor for the theater), but a *peopled place* where God exhibits his gospel. What fills the empty space is the body of Jesus Christ.

It Is about Public Theology

Public theology is the church’s demonstration of life in Christ—to the glory of God and for the sake of the world. When the people of God display a flourishing life in obedience to Christ in the power of the Spirit, they both glorify God and demonstrate the power and wisdom of the gospel to the world. This penultimate theme encompasses the prior seven claims of “what this book is about.”

It is commonplace to think of religion as a quintessentially “private” affair, and of Christianity as about one’s own personal relationship to Jesus. However, to think that what God has done in Christ is simply to make it possible for individuals to go to heaven is severely to truncate and even distort, the gospel. The good news is not only that individual souls can go to heaven but especially that God has established a kingdom of priests, a holy nation (1 Pet. 2:9; cf. Exod. 19:6; Rev. 1:6), and that he has established social peace in reconciling Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 2:14). There is therefore a public aspect to the gospel: on the cross of Christ, God displayed his wrath against sin *and* “disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it” (Col. 2:15 RSV mg.). In the words of the King James Bible, God “made a shew of them openly.”

There is therefore a public dimension to the gospel. The relatively new discipline of “public theology” studies ways in which Christian faith should impact public life. The assumption is that the gospel has a significant bearing on all people, not Christians only. Much of what the church says and does takes the form of public witness.

Theology is public in another sense as well. To learn Christian doctrine only from textbooks rather than from participating in the communion of saints is like reading Shakespeare but never encountering a live performance: it may be informative, but it is rarely transformative. Disciples best learn how to *practice* doctrinal truth through *paideia*, an apprentice-based pedagogy that involves following the examples of (i.e., imitating) others who are further along.

Theology is public, finally, inasmuch as it seeks both to demonstrate and participate in the expansion of God’s reign in the world. How should it accomplish this vital task? What criteria can we use to determine what demonstrations of the

kingdom ought to look like? Can we hope that even successful demonstrations will change the world? These are challenging questions, but the short answer is that doctrine is an essential aid to such demonstrations, to such corporate discipleship.

Can the church's demonstration of the gospel change the world? If so, does this have more to do with changing human hearts or social structures, ideas or institutions? In his work *To Change the World*, James Davison Hunter has argued that what changes the world are not simply great men with great ideas but rather ideas embedded in culture-producing institutions. For better or for ill, the church in North America no longer figures on that list. Not to worry. According to Hunter, the church should be less concerned with seizing social power than with being *faithfully present*: "The vocation of the church is to bear witness to and to be the embodiment of the coming Kingdom of God."⁸

The key term here is *witness*. If the very *existence* of the church, as the "body" of Christ, represents a standing witness to the truth of the gospel, how much more does its *activity* (i.e., its bodily *movement*) do so? It is important to speak the truth, to be sure. Yet to demonstrate the truth of the gospel, the church must both speak and show its understanding. Culture-producing power is "the capacity to define what is real."⁹ The church does this by enacting God's word in particular times and places, for it is God's word that defines what is ultimately real.

To witness to God's word is thus not simply to repeat it but also to embrace it as one's framework for seeing and interpreting the reality of God, oneself, others, and the world. All that disciples say and do should therefore bear witness to renewed minds and transformed hearts: "Changing our world depends on changing our hearts: how we *perceive, name, and act* in the world."¹⁰ The drama of doctrine is never more on display than in disciples' lives as they seek to communicate "the life that is God's life in and for the world,"¹¹ thus giving evidence of changed minds and hearts.

This is how doctrine directs the church to turn the world upside down: by urging Christians to *do* what they *know*, displaying in the lives of disciples and in local churches the wisdom of Jesus Christ.¹² The church is (or ought to be) a public display of the good news, the supreme good that is found only in union with Jesus Christ. This has been the charge to the church since the beginning: to live out the way, truth, and life of Jesus Christ. The result is a "politics" of the gospel whereby the church engages in public practices for the public good, practices that also characterize the distinctive use of power in the coming reign of

8. James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 95.

9. *Ibid.*, 178.

10. Mark Labberton, *The Dangerous Act of Loving Your Neighbor: Seeing Others through the Eyes of Jesus* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 23.

11. *Ibid.*, 27.

12. For an extended argument to this effect, see C. Kavin Rowe, *World Upside Down: Reading Acts in the Greco-Roman Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), esp. chap. 4.

God—such as gathering together, confessing Jesus, peacemaking, truth-telling, and doing justice.

It Is about Reality

There are plenty of doctrines in the world, and plenty of disciples for various causes. What makes Christian doctrine unique, however, is its single-minded and single-hearted focus on knowing God and oneself in Jesus Christ and in directing disciples to demonstrate their understanding of this ultimate reality.

Christian doctrine grows disciples by teaching them to perceive, name, and act in ways that demonstrate the reality of the gospel, speaking and showing *what is* “in Christ.” This is also the public, and Pauline, face of the church’s mission: “to make the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now made manifest to his saints, . . . Christ in you” (Col. 1:25–27). The church is the public revelation of the mystery of salvation. Doctrine exists to aid the church and disciples, not to withdraw from the world into their own enclave, but rather to *get real*. Public theology in the sense I am using the term is all about getting real: displaying the real *in Christ*.

PLOT: A BRIEF SYNOPSIS

Faith Speaking Understanding has a two-part structure. Part 1, “Before the Curtain Rises,” sets out the contours of the theatrical model for thinking about doctrine and theology as well as my reasons for choosing it.

I begin by expounding the book’s title. By speaking understanding, faith begins to *do* the word. Speak-acting is the language of the theater. It also corresponds to the Bible’s injunction to be a doer as well as hearer of the word. The obedience of faith, and faith’s demonstration of understanding, involves speech and action alike. I then develop the theatrical analogy further, defining key terms and drawing a number of important conceptual distinctions, especially between Scripture and “script.” I also explain my subtitle and distinguish between three different but related senses of “drama of doctrine.” Next, I consider whether “theatrical” theology is intended only as a metaphor or as an analogical model for the nature of theology and its subject matter. I consider (and rebut) two objections to the theatrical model, an exercise that makes several important advances beyond my argument in *The Drama of Doctrine* (chap. 1 below).

The next chapter confronts a potentially fatal stumbling block to the theatrical model: perhaps it encourages us to think of the church either as thespians performing for a world from which they are separated or, equally disastrous, as a gathering of passive spectators. In response, I suggest that we view the church as an interactive theater in which there is no “fourth wall” separating actors from audience. As to the problem of encouraging passive spectators, I use 2 John as a template in which to show how doctrine urges disciples to abide not only in

truth but also in love, and this means active engagement. The audience itself is thus the staging area for the action, and the site of the drama, for the urgent issue—the matter on which the whole play (life itself) turns—is whether disciples take the doctrine of Jesus Christ to heart. The church is the proper domain of doctrine, for it is in the church that the truth of doctrine is learned and demonstrated (chap. 2). This brings part 1, my case for thinking about theology in theatrical terms, to a close.

Part 2 is a constructive proposal for how doctrine functions in the church to make disciples. Every doctrine contributes in one way or another to the church's overall understanding of *what is in Christ* and *what is happening in Christ*. It is the burden of part 2 to draw on doctrine both to understand the church's task—right participation in the drama of the Christ—and to equip disciples to demonstrate that understanding in forms of wise, loving practice.

Part 2 begins where we are, with the church on the twenty-first-century stage, and examines the present crisis of authenticity: Whose words and acts count, and why? What does the church have to offer to the world? In response, I offer the bold claim that the church offers speech and action that accord with the created order (i.e., reality) and thus give true testimony to the meaning of life (chap. 3). Doctrine helps us to view God as God presents himself, and the world as God views it. The doctrine of human being and sin helps to clarify the precise nature of the dramatic conflict: the clash of finite and infinite freedoms, human faithlessness and divine faithfulness. Fallen creation is the backdrop for the divine playwright's entrance onto the stage of history in order to execute his dramatic plan of salvation (chap. 4).

To this point the focus has been on how doctrine defines disciples, their nature and purpose. The rest of part 2 deals with how disciples do or perform doctrine. I begin by considering what is perhaps the most obvious objection of all to the theatrical model—that it encourages playacting or hypocrisy—and argue in response that Christian doctrine rather shows us who we truly are in Christ (chap. 5). As I have already argued, Christian faith is not a private affair for individuals but a community-building project. Accordingly, the next two chapters turn their attention to ecclesiology. The role of doctrine in the church is to assist pastors and other church leaders to mount local productions that serve as living parables of the kingdom of God. The church is a place where disciples of Jesus gather to learn his teaching and to practice what they learn, not least by acting out their union with Christ, especially in baptism and the Lord's Supper, two central scenes that rehearse the high point of the drama of redemption (chap. 6). The ministry of word and sacrament not only edifies church members but also prepares them to bear witness to Christ's reign to the wider world, especially by performing spontaneous words of truth and works of love wherever two or three are gathered in Jesus' name (chap. 7).

A brief word about the structure of part 2 is in order. In grammar, we say that a verb is in the *indicative* mood when it expresses simple statements of fact (e.g., “she took of its fruit and ate”; “Jesus wept”). Verbs in the indicative

mood *indicate*: they show something; they are symptoms of something. We get the English term from the Latin *indicare* (to point), from which the term *index* finger also derives. In addition to *show* or *state*, the verb *indicate* can also mean *suggest a course of action*, especially in a medical context (e.g., “the presence of symptom *x* indicates treatment *y*”).

Each chapter in part 2 sets forth one or more doctrines that indicate some aspect of *what is in Christ*. Following the example of the apostle Paul, each of these indicatives is followed, under the rubric of “recapitulation,” by an imperative that makes explicit what is already implicit in the particular aspect of *what is in Christ* under consideration. The imperative is simply a statement of what kind of behavior should follow in order to be indicative of *what is in Christ*. These six imperatives give *direction for the church’s self-presentation in everyday life, direction for keeping in step with the truth of the gospel* (Gal. 2:14). They also serve to restate the basic argument in more traditional (i.e., nontheatrical) terms.

Part 2 concludes by considering the ongoing dramatic conflict in light of the drama’s climax (victory in Christ) and urges disciples to abide in doctrine in order joyfully to endure until the end (chap. 8). The book concludes with a plea for grateful realism, two exhortations that should govern demonstrations of faith’s understanding always, everywhere, and by all, and with a reminder that the process of making disciples involves awakening sleepers to the new creational kingdom inaugurated in Christ. For readers who require further convincing of the merits of a dramatic approach to doctrine, I include an appendix that examines both historical and contemporary objections to drawing theological water from a theatrical well.