

faith' that murder was implicitly permitted by the Fifth Commandment, or that Christ did not rise from the dead. If so, then what makes it different in kind from our logic? And in any case, how are we to find out *what* laws it contains?

On the whole, the book is easy to read, though there is the occasional re-sounding tautology—for example: 'The present, fruit of the past, is pregnant with a future which in its turn will become present and then past'. Père Rondet's style seems to have embarrassed the translator, so that in places the English version obscures the sense of the original more effectively than it masks its idiom.

ANTHONY KENNY

*DELIVERANCE TO THE CAPTIVES*, by Karl Barth; translated by Marguerite Wieser; S.C.M., 12s. 6d.

Karl Barth is said by many to be the greatest theologian of this age, but what is certain is that none can really claim the title of theologian unless he has considered and wrestled with the searching questions which Barth has been putting to Christianity for the last forty years.

But Karl Barth is more than this. In the book before us he is seen as a preacher, and not just preacher in the sense of lecturer or reader of learned papers, but as a pastoral preacher, and one preaching to an audience of critical and sceptical nature. The short sermons contained in this book were in fact preached to the prisoners in the gaol at Basel.

Amongst many other qualities they have one which strikes the reader, and certainly should strike the would-be preacher, as outstanding and of fundamental importance. This is that all his moral teaching springs from and depends upon a theological and doctrinal presentation. What he is out above all to show is the great and mysterious fact that God has spoken to us in his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, and that it is through him that we are saved. And although perhaps one must say that one feels his theological position making him give insufficient weight and significance to human nature as such, nevertheless it is because of their firm theological rooting that his moral 'dos' and 'don'ts' go home, as they went home so successfully to that original and critical audience.

Not only will this book give a picture of a great mind engaged—and yes, perhaps even fulfilling itself—in true evangelism, but it could also be a great help to any wishing to devote their own lives in the same way.

GILES HIBBERT, O.P.

*READING THE WORD OF GOD*, by Lawrence Dannemiller, s.s.; Burns and Oates, 21s.

There is a most welcome increase lately in books on scripture by Catholic scholars, but they do not seem to have led to any significant increase in Bible

reading as opposed to mere interest in the Bible. To some, unfortunately, books on the Bible seem more interesting than the Bible itself. Fr Dannemiller has put us greatly in his debt in giving us a book which leads us directly to the sacred text.

The main body of the book is a sort of lectionary in which we are given 150 units of scripture to look up and read. Each unit, which takes about 15 minutes, comprises three (sometimes four) main passages to be read by lectors, with shorter texts mostly from the psalms interspersed for reading in chorus. The units are for group use, with a leader, three principal readers, and a number of others. The leader announces each passage and reads an introduction; each unit is concluded with a prayer which gathers what has been read into a petition, affirmation of faith, or act of contrition.

The units start with the creation, and leading through the Fall, the call of the Chosen People, take us through the whole sweep of the history of salvation, the incarnate Life, on into the Church. Then comes life in the Church—the sacraments, our Lady, the apostles, prayer, the virtues, the commandments, sin, ending with the Last Things. However, often even individual units give a whole vista of a biblical theme. Thus 'Christ the Lamb of God' starts with a reading from Exodus about the Passover Lamb. The second reading is St John the Baptist pointing out our Lord as the Lamb of God, and the third takes us to the blessedness of those saved by the Lamb in the Apocalypse. The concluding prayer is a threefold recitation of the *Agnus Dei*, linking us with the mass. The very titles of other units gives some idea of their richness: 'The presence of God in the cloud', 'Christ the New Adam', 'Christ the Temple of God', 'The Church, the Ark of Salvation', 'The Church as a Vineyard', 'Mary, the daughter of Sion', 'Priesthood'.

The juxtaposition of different parts gives a wonderful impression of the unity of scripture, and helps us to acquire the 'feel' of the Bible. It throws into relief the unity of God's purpose in redemptive history, enabling us to see the wood for the trees. No one can now complain of scripture as an impenetrable jungle. Then also it brings out the different literary forms in a far more convincing way than any commentary. (A commentary explaining a literary form reminds me of a man explaining a joke.)

I have tried out several units with training college and university students. Various things emerged: both the lections and the choral readings must be well prepared—lack of preparation takes a great part of the value away. Perseverance is required; first impressions did not generate immediate enthusiasm. The time taken to find the choral readings would be an obstacle to the successful use of this book at our Sunday evening services. The congregation would have to be well drilled over a period of time. If a book could be produced just giving in full the texts to be recited together (like a *Liber Usualis*, without the epistles and gospels), congregational use would be more of a practicable proposition—although something would be lost in the people not handling an actual Bible. However, Fr Dannemiller has given us a magnificent spiritual feast, opening

up immense treasures, and it deserves a serious effort on our part to make it our own.

R. A. NOEL

CHURCH ORDER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, by Eduard Schweizer; S.C.M. Press, 16s.

This latest translation in the *Studies in Biblical Theology* series (No. 32) is an important contribution to the contentious debate on the ordering of the early Church. Professor Schweizer shows reverence, scholarship and clarity in his study. Although his arguments are on the strongly Protestant lines one would naturally expect from a former minister of the Reformed Church of Switzerland, this book confirms the respect which his earlier studies have already earned him. His explicit concern here is not so much with the historical development of the Church as with what he calls the 'theological problem of how the Church understood itself, and how it expressed that understanding in its order'. Church history, he says, can help in the task of interpretation, but it cannot absolve us from constantly returning to the source in scripture; for it may be that the history of the Church reflects its *misunderstanding* of its own nature and function. After an opening chapter justifying reliance almost exclusively on scripture (oral tradition as a source is implicitly discounted), Schweizer examines the conception of the Church held by Jesus himself and also by the primitive Church in Jerusalem, before leading us, in the main part of the book, through a fairly detailed treatment of the views on Church order exhibited by the various parts of the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers. A shorter second part of the book contains studies of particular aspects of the scriptural problem, such as the notions of office, charismatic ministries and apostolic succession.

The New Testament contains two diverging lines on which the conception of the Church developed, Schweizer believes. On one line, Luke's recognition that the Church is the *subject* of a history, filling out the time between the resurrection and the parousia, led to further development in the Pastoral Epistles. Here, as in Luke, the Church is seen as living through an extended history while awaiting the coming of the Lord; but its own existence it now feels to be a static one rather than a developing historical factor. Now that it is firmly established, it is the Church's function to remain as it is and to hold on to what has been attained: it is primarily a guarantor of the truth and a custodian of right doctrine. Timothy and Titus are appointed as reliable and orthodox bearers of the Word. Schweizer sees this trend towards consolidation extended to the ordered structure of the Church in the First Letter of Clement to Corinth. Here he discerns a hierarchy of non-charismatic ministry that is purely technical in character, since this is all that is required for being reliable and free from risk. This line of development is characterized by loss of touch with the risen Christ, and by an over-valuation of office and order that leads to separation between an active priesthood and a passive laity.