
*“The unexamined life
is not worth living”*

–SOCRATES

Adventure of Ideas

MOST THEOLOGICAL TEXTS BEGIN WITH AN INTRODUCTORY SECTION or *prolegomena*, in which the author sets out his or her theological *modus operandi*. This then becomes the template for the substance that follows. One theologian who has adopted a different approach to “doing theology” is the German Protestant theologian Jürgen Moltmann, whose method may be described as a “theology in dialogue” or, in his own words, like a road that has emerged as he has walked along it. And that walk has been necessarily shaped by his own personal history and by his own *Sitz im Leben* (or life context). An extended quote from Moltmann’s preface to his *Experiences in Theology* is worth reproducing here:

For me, theology was, and still is, an adventure of ideas. It is an open, inviting path. Right down to the present day, it has continued to fascinate my mental and spiritual curiosity. My theological methods therefore grew up as I came to have a perception of the objects of theological thought. *The road emerged only as I walked it.* And my attempts to walk it are of course determined by my personal biography, and by the political context and historical *kairos* in which I live. I have searched for the right word for the right time. I have not written any theological

textbooks. The articles I have contributed to various theological dictionaries and encyclopaedias have seldom been particularly successful. I was not concerned to collect up correct theological notions, because I was much too preoccupied with the perception of new perspectives and unfamiliar aspects. I have no wish to be a disciple of the great theological masters of past generations. Nor have I any desire to found a new theological school. My whole concern has been, and still is, to stimulate other people to discover theology for themselves—to have their own theological ideas, and to set out along their own paths.¹

A theologian friend of mine once said, “I’d rather be a catalyst than a dogmatist!” Moltmann clearly wants his theological writings to serve as a catalyst for others to “do theology” for themselves. As made clear in the quote above, he sees his writings not so much as *textbooks* as reflections that stimulate further thought. Theology, for Moltmann, is an “adventure of ideas,” “an open, inviting path.” Here I am reminded of Douglas John Hall’s insight that “theology was made for human beings, not human beings for theology.”² And that is what it should be for all of us in our desire to deepen our understanding and experience of God in our lives. Rigidity in our theology is something that needs to be eschewed in favor of an aliveness to the Spirit who teaches us as we travel “on the way,” which is always a *personal* way, and a way that necessarily embraces the insights of fellow-travellers.

My concern, then, is to encourage us to be more audacious and exploratory (though not in a cavalier manner) with regard to the way in which we make judgments and arrive at conclusions about life and living, which of course includes what we think about such weighty matters as God, the gospel, the church, culture, and pastoral ministry. It is with this in mind that we now consider the vital matter of thinking, and specifically *how* we think. Students of psychology and communication theory will recognize a number of thinking styles identified throughout this chapter, a number of which have been recently explored by Frank Tucker in the context of intercultural communication for Christian ministry: abstract-concrete, analytical-synthetic, linear logical-analogical, rational-intuitive, and auditory-visual.³ Tucker notes that “some understanding of how people think will facilitate the communication of the ultimate truth

1. Moltmann, *Experiences in Theology*, xv.

2. Hall, *Thinking the Faith*, 63.

3. Tucker, *Intercultural Communication*, 202–31.

of the Word of God.”⁴ It will also, critically, help us to appreciate how very differently people with divergent ways of thinking *interpret* Christian doctrine and the message of the Christian gospel.

An example from church history will help us here. In the fourth-century debate about the deity of Christ Arius taught that Jesus was a lesser “god”—not True God—on the basis that, *humanly* speaking, you can’t have three the same as one. Athanasius replied that you can’t read into Scripture on the basis of a *human* way of thinking. So we need to think from a different perspective—we need to consider what Athanasius called the scope (*skopos*) of Scripture, in which (in his Christological example) we find a “double account” of Jesus threading through the text. In Athanasius’ words, “that He was ever God, and is the Son, being the Father’s Word and Radiance and Wisdom and that afterwards for us He took flesh of a Virgin, Mary Bearer of God, and was made man,”⁵ a paradox that remains at the heart of Christ’s being as the God-man.

Athanasius’ point, of course, is that the two truths hold together. So it is *how we think* that generates our doctrine of the Trinity. This is a specific example of what we might call “both-and” thinking, to which reference has already been made in chapter 1. Before focusing on this particular perspective, however, we might note a number of other ways of “thinking about thinking.”

In the Western tradition the discipline of thinking is cognitive, so that apprehension of truth is seen to take place at the level of the mind. We may trace this orientation to the classical philosophical ideas of Plato, whose dualistic thinking has been recapitulated in different forms at various stages of Western civilization, most recently in the rationalism of the Enlightenment and in contemporary scientific materialism. However, the inclination towards a postmodern view of reality opens us up to a perception of thinking that embraces the heart as well as the mind, reflecting a more holistic—and Hebraic—understanding of anthropology.

An example of this may be found in John Grisham’s book *A Time to Kill*, based upon the author’s experience of witnessing the traumatic testimony of a twelve-year-old victim of rape. In Grisham’s book, Jake Brigrance, a young white lawyer, is defending Carl Lee Hailey, a black man accused of killing two white thugs who had grossly violated his little daughter. The lawyer, making his closing address to a rigged all-white jury in a small Mississippi town beset by racial tensions, challenges the

4. *Ibid.*, 231.

5. Athanasius, “Select Works and Letters,” 1034.

members of the jury to think about the nature of truth not just with their minds, but also with their *hearts*. In Akiva Goldsman’s transcript of the book’s storyline, Jake speaks these words to the jury:

Now, it is incumbent upon us lawyers not to just talk about the truth, but to actually seek it, to find it, to live it. . . . What is it in us that seeks the truth? Is it our minds or is it our hearts? I set out to prove a black man could receive a fair trial in the south, that we are all equal in the eyes of the law. That’s not the truth, because the eyes of the law are human eyes, yours and mine, and until we can see each other as equals, justice is never going to be even-handed, it will remain nothing more than a reflection of our own prejudices, so until that day we have a duty under God to seek the truth, not with our eyes and not with our minds where fear and hate turn commonality into prejudice, but with our hearts where we don’t know better.⁶

Different Standpoints

How do we think? The ancient Hebrew understanding of the heart saw it not only as the seat of all our emotions, but also as the seat of our *thinking*. We need to rediscover this more holistic perspective as we are confronted with the complexities of life today. As we journey through life, we need the humility to acknowledge that we often fail to think through issues as carefully and holistically as we should. If this is an important insight with regard to all of life, then it is irresponsible to ignore it in the context of our understanding of and approach to both theology and ministry. How we think is a measure of our willingness to change. Killen and de Beer argue that life experiences are an invitation to reflection: “The contours of our world do not allow us simply to accept answers to our questions handed down to us by communal or religious authorities. The challenges confronting us and the pluralistic world in which we live demand that we reflect on questions of meaning and value.”⁷ They insist that, as human beings, and not just as Christians, we are called to transformation if we are to live authentic lives.

Many people are caught in the trap of living what I call “routine lives” rather than “reflective lives.” A routine life is one that draws from

6. Goldsman, “A Time to Kill,” paras. 1–2.

7. Killen and De Beer, *Art of Theological Reflection*, 1–2.

previous patterns of behavior, repeating them unthinkingly because “that is the way I’ve always done it.” On the other hand, a reflective life draws from past experience, but is excited by the prospect of identifying alternative approaches to living life, and engaging with others on the journey of life. Reflective living has to do with seeing life as an adventure. The Swiss psychiatrist Paul Tournier observes that the instinct for adventure “may be cloaked, smothered, and repressed, but it never disappears from the human personality. The timidest pen-pushing clerk will disclose under psychoanalysis, and particularly in the analysis of his dreams, a secret nostalgia for the adventure which he has sacrificed for security.”⁸ A suburban church in Adelaide, South Australia, famous for its eye-catching slogans promoting its Sunday services, once offered the following thoughtful aphorism: “Some people never sing; they die with all their music still inside them.”

As Christians, those who are indwelt by the pentecostal Spirit of God, we should of all people be excited by the gospel promise of transformation, the promise of being transformed from one degree of glory to another (2 Cor 3:18). Transformation has to do with our *whole* beings, with our minds as well as with our hearts. Paul writes in Rom 12:2 that we are to be transformed by the renewal of our minds, and though his concern was to enlighten his readers about how to live morally and spiritually, we may reasonably suppose that his words apply equally to how we approach the task of Christian ministry.

In their text on theological reflection, Killen and de Beer present two very different standpoints that we may adopt as we seek to direct our lives, standpoints that inform the way in which we might engage in the practice of ministry. The first is called the standpoint of certitude, from which we are inclined to see what may be unfamiliar to us only in terms of what we already believe.⁹ The result is that we fail to test new experiences against the view of life that we already hold—our mind is made up, tradition is on our side, and if “some aspect of the new landscape is too difficult to fit into the picture we wish to see, we bulldoze it until we are satisfied that the world is as we know it ought to be.”¹⁰ Killen and de Beer offer a biblical illustration of this in the apostle Paul’s religious certitude prior to his Damascus Road experience, as recorded in Acts 9:1–10. The

8. Tournier, *Adventure of Living*, 5.

9. Killen and De Beer, *Art of Theological Reflection*, 4–9.

10. *Ibid.*, 4.

consequence of adopting the standpoint of certitude is that all we hear is an echo of ourselves, rather than the voice of the Spirit leading us in the direction we should go, whether in our practice of ministry or, more fundamentally, in our theology.¹¹ The danger is that we end up as ideologues rather than theologians, engaged in *repetitive* or *routine* ministry rather than *reflective* ministry.

We must not assume that the use of the word “routine” above eliminates the need to serve others in the ordinariness of daily living. A pastor once dreamt that he was in a fairground, enjoying the many different rides on offer; he was especially captivated by the thrills of the huge roller-coaster and was making his way towards it when he found himself being re-directed to the merry-go-round. The dream persisted, and he woke up with the scenario fresh and alive in his mind. The pastor was considering his future, and was keen to explore exciting new vistas in ministry; through this dream the Lord called him to rededicate his life afresh to the ongoing task of ministry in the local community (the merry-go-round). Like many in ministry, the attractions of running towards the big thrills of “roller-coaster ministry” are tempting, especially if the merry-go-round becomes predictable and boring. But it is in the very routine of everyday life that we are called to make a difference, and that is where the Spirit of God is pleased to minister his grace and hope.¹²

In the present context, however, the word “routine” is adopted to refer to *unreflective* ministry—unthinking actions, which do not bear the stamp of maturity, where “we have no ears to hear what God might be saying to us in our experience.”¹³ But experience, of course, may also be a danger for us, especially when we rely *solely* upon what we are currently feeling and thinking. This is what Killen and de Beer define as the standpoint of self-assurance, a biblical example of which may be found in Mark 10:17–22, where the rich young man, confident in his own understanding and wishing to stay in control of his life, fails to respond to the freedom of the gospel offered to him by Jesus. This standpoint, in which personal experience and perspectives override that which stands objectively over and against us, “dulls our awareness of how much we are shaped by our contexts and communities . . . and denies the tradition’s integrity and

11. For an example of an evangelical approach to theological revisionism, see Grenz, *Revisioning*.

12. First cited in Buxton, *Dancing*, 292–93.

13. Killen and De Beer, *Art of Theological Reflection*, 9.

blocks our openness to the tradition's revelatory power."¹⁴ It is evident that the two standpoints of certitude and self-assurance correlate with the two classical approaches to the relationship between experience and theology (within the quadrilateral of reason, tradition, Scripture, and experience): the first is that experience provides a foundational resource for Christian theology; the second is that Christian theology provides an interpretive framework within which human experience may be interpreted.

Permission to Wrestle

The cost of being imprisoned in these two standpoints is immense, and contributes in some measure to the failure of the Christian community to effectively incarnate the life and ministry of Christ in the world. "As adult Christians we are called to more than mindless obedience to authority or totally self-determined thought and action."¹⁵ Arguing that doubt is feared by many Christians as truth's mortal enemy, Daniel Taylor invites us to consider the narrative of God's command to Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac (Gen 22). "The pious Christian version of Abraham often turns him into an automaton. . . . Abraham, eyes glazed, mind dormant, body stiff, says in a slow, robotic monotone, 'Yes, Master. Whatever you say, Master.' This, for many inside and outside the church, is the Christian view of faith." But, Taylor continues, "Didn't he, rather, gape at the enormity of it? Didn't he argue, plead, question, object? Are we to believe nothing took place between the command in verse 2 of Genesis 22 and the departure for the sacrificial mountain in verse 3? Is Abraham a greater or lesser man, a greater or lesser example of faith, if we suppose he received the command calmly?"¹⁶ Abraham was clearly a man of faith, to which the biblical witness attests again and again: Paul writes in Rom 4:20 that "he did not waver through unbelief." But through his life experiences with God, such as his doubt about Sarah providing him with a son in her old age, Abraham's doubts were woven into the tapestry of his growing faith. So for us today: if we eliminate doubt in our pursuit of certitude, regarding it as the enemy of faith rather than its necessary companion, we will likely end up with a faith that is shallow. All Christians need to give themselves permission to wrestle at times not only with the false

14. Ibid., 13.

15. Ibid., 15.

16. Taylor, *Myth of Certainty*, 80.

gods and idols that threaten true faith but also the real doubts that are too quickly suppressed in the name of certainty.

Of course, we may not think that we are embedded in one or other of the two standpoints proposed by Killen and de Beer—however, many Christians are surprisingly oblivious to their theological or ministry orientation, and need to hear the age-old injunction of Socrates, who once soberly declared that the unexamined life is not worth living. So Killen and de Beer direct us towards a mediating position, which they call the standpoint of exploration, involving a conversation between tradition and experience, allowing each to inform and illuminate the other. This is the way of transformation.¹⁷ The American pastor Jerry Cook once wrote a book entitled *A Few Things I've Learnt Since I Knew It All*; we are called to be learners (the Greek word disciple—*mathetes*—literally means a learner), and a learner is one who is thrilled by the prospect of discovering new truths, new insights, and new ways of living.

The position we are advocating here is that of “open inquiry.” In his book *Let Ministry Teach* Robert Kinast describes theology as “God-Word,” understood in at least three ways.¹⁸ “Word-from-God” expresses God’s self-communication, usually understood in terms of revelation. Here we are invited through theological reflection to consider how God makes himself known to us, and the limits of that self-revelation. Have we placed limits on God’s self-revelation? Does a particular ministry situation or event challenge us about our perceptions of how God reveals himself, and about what aspects of his being and work he may be opening up to our understanding?

“Word-to-God” is Kinast’s language for Christian living, the human response, in terms of understanding and action, to “Word-from-God.” This perspective may find us asking: what does a particular incident teach me about my approach to ministry? Perhaps our church practices and beliefs need to be re-evaluated, and we may find ourselves facing questions at a deeply personal level regarding our own response to and relationship with God. Thirdly, in order to make sense of God’s self-revelation, we attempt to organize that which we receive by faith through a process of confessional acknowledgement, open inquiry, and systematic presentation, what Kinast calls “Word-about-God” (involving confession, interrogation, and investigation). At this level—our organization of

17. Killen and De Beer, *Art of Theological Reflection*, 16–19.

18. Kinast, *Let Ministry Teach*, 5–6.

faith-material—we are often anxious to preserve our systematic presentation of “God-knowledge,” based upon our confessional acknowledgement of that which we receive as truth from God (revelation) for the purpose of Christian living (response). However, the step of “open inquiry” is often short-circuited, to the detriment of truth-discovery, personal growth, and ministry practice.

Our discussion so far has identified a number of different ways in which we might think about thinking: “both-and”/“either-or”, cognitive/intuitive (head/heart), and routine/reflective. To these we might add the distinction between “bottom-up” and “top-down” thinking: is our instinct to start with a particular phenomenon or experience and seek to build our understanding of reality from that (the “bottom-up” approach)? Or do we prefer to start with broad, general principles, and then work downward from there (the “top-down”)? The two approaches need not imply conflict, because they are both, in different ways, tackling the same sort of questions. Both are attempting to get to grips with the nature of reality. The “bottom-up” approach relates closely to the scientific way of looking at things. “Bottom-up” thinkers “feel it is safest to start in the basement of particularity and then generalize a little.”¹⁹ The “top-down” approach presupposes some form of metaphysical framework—such as a Christian theistic framework—within which to interpret the nature of reality. The theoretical physicist-cum-Anglican priest John Polkinghorne acknowledges that he is naturally a “bottom-up” thinker rather than a “top-down” thinker. In other words, although his Christian framework requires a “top-down” approach, he instinctively builds up from observable phenomena in the “one world of human experience and human understanding that we are trying to come to grips with.”²⁰

Still others have distinguished between convergent and divergent thinking. Divergent thinking opens the imagination to all possibilities, while convergent thinking analyzes and chooses from among those possibilities.²¹ Divergent thinking is more imaginative and outward-focused, a form of brainstorming characterized by creative “big-picture” thinking, whereas convergent thinking looks inward, seeking to resolve problems through a process of inductive logic, often drawing from a range of givens. Whilst both have their place in generating ideas and arriving at deci-

19. Polkinghorne, *Science and Christian Belief*, 11.

20. Polkinghorne, *Serious Talk*, 1.

21. See *SmartStorming*, “Power of Divergent and Convergent Thinking.”

sions, divergent thinking clearly resonates with a more exploratory and open thinking paradigm. In his foreword to Scot McKnight’s book, *The King Jesus Gospel*, Tom Wright writes:

The Christian faith is kaleidoscopic, and most of us are colour-blind. It is multidimensional, and most of us manage to hold at most two dimensions in our heads at any one time. It is symphonic, and we can just about whistle one of the tunes. So we shouldn’t be surprised if someone comes along and draws our attention to other colours and patterns that we hadn’t noticed. We shouldn’t be alarmed if someone sketches a third, a fourth, or even a fifth dimension that we had overlooked. We ought to welcome it if a musician plays new parts of the harmony to the tune we thought we knew.²²

Parallel Thinking

The more holistic, divergent model of thinking has been addressed by the well-known “guru of thinking,” Edward de Bono, in a number of interesting books, one of which is called *Parallel Thinking*.²³ De Bono’s starting point is to make a distinction between “searching” for truth in order to fit data into our pre-determined boxes and moving forward in an exploratory way, with an emphasis on creativity and design. Accordingly he proposes two alternative models of thinking. The “search” model is based on analysis of data in order to discover those things that will fit into our boxes, rather like prospecting for gold. The key word here is *judgment*: we judge whether or not something is “true” according to its fit, and accept it if it is suitable within our existing frames of reference.

Traditional thinking, according to de Bono, has a lot to do with our perception of what is true. He is not epistemologically rigorous in his discussion, as he is interested in truth only as it affects the way we think: so truth is “the admittance label that allows things into your mind or into consideration. Truth is a party badge, a badge of membership. At the door everyone is checked. Only those with the truth label are allowed in; the rest are turned away. Then the thinker proceeds to organize those who have been allowed into the room.”²⁴ It might be apparent to observ-

22. Wright, Foreword in McKnight, *King Jesus Gospel*.

23. De Bono, *Parallel Thinking*.

24. *Ibid.*, 62.

ers of contemporary Christendom that de Bono's words apply to the way some people direct the affairs of the local church!

The second model—de Bono's concept of *parallel thinking*—is predicated on “design” rather than search: “We seek to design a way forward. You need to design and construct a house. You do not discover a house.”²⁵ In parallel thinking attempts are made to reconcile what initially appear to be contradictions, instead of assuming that they are irreconcilable: the key word is *exploration*. In parallel thinking judgment is not discarded. It is a matter of sequence: do we tend to judge first, or are we willing to explore options and then make appropriate judgments after we have explored? De Bono offers a simple example of a motorist who ignores a turning to the left of a narrow road because it leads backwards. But a view from above shows that the side road leads to a much wider, and probably better, road going in the same direction as the narrow road. So we may need to travel south to go north. The question posed by de Bono is: how open are we to other possibilities?

Peter Hampson, an English psychology professor, quotes the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, who once wrote that “an honest religious thinker is like a tightrope walker. He almost looks as though he were walking on nothing but air. His support is the slenderest imaginable. And yet it is really possible to walk on it.”²⁶ Suggesting that “the tightrope charts a route with naïve, fundamentalist belief on one side and naïve rationalism or scientism on the other” (both positions reflecting an unhealthy reductionism), Hampson argues that one reason why Christians wobble from time to time may be that “creation is ambiguous and Christianity paradoxical; while these are both strengths, they easily appear as weaknesses, and we're tempted by the apparent certainty on one side or the other.”²⁷ In other words, we opt for “either-or” rather than “both-and.”

In their best-selling book on management entitled *Built to Last*, Collins and Porras define *the tyranny of the OR* as “the rational view that cannot easily accept paradox, that cannot live with two seemingly contradictory forces or ideas at the same time.” Their antidote is *the genius of the AND*, defined as “the ability to embrace both extremes of a number of dimensions at the same time. Instead of choosing between A OR B, they

25. *Ibid.*, 216.

26. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 84.

27. Hampson, “How to Walk,” para. 2.

figure out a way to have both A AND B.”²⁸ This is the genius that I am proposing in this book. The reality is that many people in Christian ministry are happier with certainty than with uncertainty. And whilst certainty is not to be dismissed, it may also be the midwife of ministry myopia.

Over the years, I have talked with Christians from all walks of life—many of them occupying positions of leadership and responsibility. I have become aware of the need many of them have—as I suggested in the Introduction—to give themselves permission to live with the tensions of ambiguity, paradox, and mystery that lie at the very heart of the Christian faith and its outworking in the world today. We do well to remember that sincerity and humility are indispensable handmaidens in our response to the difficult questions that confront us in our life of faith. One of the most prolific theological writers today is the English theologian and public intellectual Alister McGrath. In one of his most recent books, *The Passionate Intellect*, he invites us to embark on a quest of wrestling in a vigorous and exciting way with God and his world:

Theology is . . . about *discernment*, seeing reality in a certain way and attempting to resolve its ambiguities through this interpretative framework. But how are we to visualize this changed way of seeing the world? How are we to grasp it with the power of the imagination, rather than simply comprehend it with our minds? In what ways does the Christian gospel so enhance our capacity to behold things that we may discern the footprints of God in the sand, the tracks of his passing in the walkways of life and his presence and power in our everyday experiences? While we should never neglect the importance of reason and understanding, we must also value the power of the human imagination as the gatekeeper of the human soul. . . . Theology is an activity of the imagination as much as of reason, in which we seek to transcend the boundaries of the given, pressing upward, outward and forward. Theology frames the landscape of reality in such a way that our everyday existence is set in a wider perspective. The world, formerly an absolute end in itself, now becomes a gateway to something greater.²⁹

28. Collins and Porras, *Built to Last*, 43–44.

29. McGrath, *Passionate Intellect*, 46, author’s italics.

A Landscape to Explore

When we start defining the Christian faith in the generous language of a landscape to explore rather than a set of propositional statements to sign up to, when we speak of “doing theology” rather than inheriting a given theology, when we adopt the language of exploration, imagination, and mystery as an antidote to the safe haven of “this is what I’ve always believed,” there may be a real concern amongst some that we are in danger of straying into heretical territory. That, of course, is understandable, and not one of us is exempt from the dangers of re-orienting ourselves on shaky theological ground. Indeed, a few of the topics discussed in this book may alarm some readers. But the cost of not being willing to acknowledge our human finitude is to collapse into the sort of fundamentalist dogmatism that would have deeply troubled the more adventurous and exploratory theological minds of earlier centuries.

Earlier I cited the innovative ideas of Theodore Levitt, the American business guru, whose concept of “marketing myopia” was an important catalyst for this present volume. Another of his ilk is the modern-day entrepreneur and bestselling author Seth Godin, whose ideas have been challenging corporate leaders all over the world. In his book *Tribes* he likens a heretic to a unicorn in a balloon factory, and the parable is a striking illustration of the challenge to the *status quo* brought by those who are willing to prick a few hallowed balloons.³⁰ This, of course, begs the vital question: which balloons need to be punctured within Christendom’s balloon factory? G. K. Chesterton once observed that all heresy is a narrowing down unduly of what is essentially a complex reality. While this view has its limitations, it is certainly an appropriate insight in the context of the way in which the church has too frequently been content with a single interpretation of what is essentially a multidimensional and complex reality. In recent years, for example, there have been some radical reappraisals of the doctrine of the atonement, and of the belief in “hell” as “eternal conscious torment.” And church history teaches us that from time to time balloons have been not so much punctured as slowly deflating. For example, “the age-old dogma that God is impassible, that is immutable and therefore incapable of suffering, is for many no longer tenable. The ancient heresy that God suffers has, in fact, become the new orthodoxy.”³¹ Subsequent chapters of this book will explore some of these issues.

30. Godin, *Tribes*.

31. Green, *Beating the Bounds*, 8.

In our Christian lives, we need to acknowledge that we inhabit what C. S. Lewis once described as the “shadowlands” before God makes all things new. But as we journey in our Christian faith, we do well to acknowledge that some of our treasured balloons need to be pricked in order to rupture the rigid “either-or” dichotomies that we so love to erect in our Christian edifices. And as we travel this more inclusive and ultimately more charitable path, we will find ourselves more readily embracing—or, more likely, being embraced by—the mystery of faith that characterizes this side of ultimate glory.

SAMPLE