

CONGREGATIONAL HERMENEUTICS: THE 16TH CENTURY CONTRIBUTION OF BALTHASAR HUBMAIER

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In my book, *Balthasar Hubmaier and the Clarity of Scripture*,¹ I describe how Hubmaier developed his hermeneutic by exploring the concept of the clarity of Scripture. I compared Hubmaier's concept of the clarity of Scripture with those of Erasmus, Luther, Zwingli, and the Anabaptist Hans Denck. In this essay I explore how Hubmaier's hermeneutic found expression in the developing practice of a congregational hermeneutic, first in his church at Waldshut on the Rhine, and later in Nikolsburg in Moravia. While tracing this developing practice, I will identify those situations that challenged his original understanding and led to modifications of his position, and eventually to his rejection of that position. Rather than being a purely historical-theological exploration, I propose that the various issues Hubmaier faced in developing and eventually rejecting a congregational hermeneutic find clear parallels for today's churches that are appropriating a congregational ecclesiology, and hence provides an opportunity for those churches to reflect on the possible outcomes that might flow from adopting specific hermeneutical responses to the challenges they face.

WHY BOTHER WITH THIS QUESTION?

Among those Christian traditions that share an ecclesiology of a gathered church of regenerate believers, the question of congregational or community hermeneutics remains a live concern. The idea that the whole of a congregation is involved in determining the meaning of Scripture is being challenged by the claim that it is the leadership of such congregations who have the authority and responsibility to determine the meaning of Scripture. Congregations only have authority to challenge leadership where there is a moral failure or theological error.² On the other hand, the house church movement³, some of the missional church groups,⁴

¹ Graeme R. Chatfield, *Balthasar Hubmaier and the Clarity of Scripture: A Critical Reformation Issue* (Eugen, OR: Pickwick, 2013).

² Mark E. Dever, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church*, 4th ed. (Washington, DC: IX Marks, 2005); Mark E. Dever, *A Display of God's Glory: Basics of Church Structure, Deacons, Elders, Congregationalism and Membership*, (Washington, DC: IX Marks, 2001).

³ Robert Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in their Historical Setting* (Homebush West, NSW: ANZEA Publishers, 1981).

⁴ Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch, *The Shape of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st-Century Church* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003); and Michael Frost, *Exiles: Living Missionally in a Post-Christian Culture* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006).

as well as Anabaptist influenced groups⁵ advocate congregational hermeneutics as the way to determine the meaning of Scripture and its application in the lives of believers.

THE GENESIS OF HUBMAIER'S MODEL

In the ferment of the early period of the 16th-century Reformations, the role of the congregation in determining whether they were being taught the truth from the Word of God was appealed to by both Martin Luther⁶ and Ulrich Zwingli⁷. Yet both these reformers, once their reformation of the church was established to their liking greatly diminished the role of the congregation, privileging the role of theologically trained clergy, particularly emphasising training in the original biblical languages and Latin.

In 1519 Balthasar Hubmaier, Doctor of Theology and one-time protégé of John Eck (the Eck who backed Luther into a corner at the Leipzig debate on the issue of the authority of Pope, Councils and Scripture), became an advocate of evangelical reform. He supported Ulrich Zwingli at the second Zurich disputation (26-28 October 1523) against the Roman Catholic representative Johann Fabri. Hubmaier was present when those who were to become the Anabaptist group led by Conrad Grebel argued against Zwingli's position to concede authority for the implementation of reform of the church in Zurich to the Zurich City Council.⁸

In 1523 Hubmaier shared with Zwingli what would become foundational hermeneutical principles among Protestants, that is, *sola Scriptura* and the perspicuity (clarity) of Scripture. Hubmaier typically conflates these principles in the phrase 'the plumbline of the bright clear Word of God'⁹. Between October 1523 and January 1524 Hubmaier also shared with Zwingli an insistence that preaching for the local congregation should be in the local language, in this case, German.¹⁰ Not surprisingly, such an insistence led to new translations of the Scriptures into German; Luther's New Testament in 1522, and Zwingli's full Bible in 1524. However, after the first believers' baptisms in Zurich (21 January 1525) Hubmaier emphasised the use of a German translation of Scripture as the basis on which the whole of the congregation can determine if their preachers are truly presenting the message of the gospel.¹¹ He also makes the point that the older

⁵ Stuart Murray, *Post-Christendom: Church and Mission in a Strange New World* (Milton Keynes, Bucks: Paternoster, 2004); and Stanley Hauerwas, *After Christendom: How the Church is to Behave if Freedom, Justice and a Christian Nation are Bad Ideas* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999).

⁶ Martin Luther, "That a Christina Assembly or Congregation has the right and power to judge all teaching and to all, appoint, and dismiss teachers, established and proven by Scripture, 1523)," trans. Eric W and Ruth C. Gritsch, in *Luther's Works*, vol 39. *Church and Ministry, I*, ed. J. J. Pelikan, H.C. Oswald, and H.T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1999), 301–14.

⁷ Ulrich Zwingli, "The Preaching Office," in *Huldrych Zwingli Writings*. Vol 2. *In Search of True Religion, Reformation, Pastoral and Eucharistic Writings*, Pittsburgh Theological Monographs, ed. H. Wayne Pipkin (Pittsburgh PA: Pickwick, 1984), 147–86.

⁸ Chatfield, *Hubmaier and the Clarity of Scripture*, 16.

⁹ Balthasar Hubmaier, "Statements at the Second Zurich Disputation," in *Balthasar Hubmaier: Theologian of Anabaptism*, ed. and trans. H. Wayne Pipkin and John H. Yoder, *Classics of the Racial Reformation* vol 5 (Scottsdale, PA and Kitchener ONT: Herald Press, 1989), 24. Writings from this volume of Hubmaier's works will be cited hereafter as "title of work," PY, page number.

¹⁰ Hubmaier, "Statements at the Second Zurich Disputation," in PY, 25.

¹¹ Balthasar Hubmaier, "On the Christian Baptism of Believers," in PY, 112–13.

German translations are more trustworthy than the new translations being produced in Zurich¹² as he insists Zwingli is “adding” to the Word of God to suit his own interpretation. Hubmaier cites Zwingli’s translation of Mark 10:14 where Jesus invites children to come to him as an example of Zwingli doing “violence” by adding a single letter and changing the text to read “of theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”¹³ Hubmaier asserts, “I will let every Christian congregation judge in the power of the read and heard Word whether it says ‘theirs’ is the kingdom of God or ‘of such’ is the kingdom of God.”¹⁴

While the foundation for Hubmaier’s congregational hermeneutic is the view that the local congregation has the role and authority to test the teaching of their priests and preachers by the “plumb line of Scripture,” there is evidence that Hubmaier’s understanding of this idea developed over his life time as a reformer. At the Second Zurich disputation (October 1523) when speaking to the topic of removing “idols” from the churches, he states “a whole parish congregation will gather and decide unanimously without disorder that the images shall be moved out.”¹⁵ In his *Theses Against Eck* (August 1524) he refines this view setting out the ground rules for resolving theological disputes. In such cases “which of two understands it [the disputed topic] more correctly is conceived in the church by the Word of God and born out of faith.”¹⁶ The need to maintain order leads him to propose that “three or four men shall be properly elected out of the church ... Not that they should stand in judgement over the truth of the Word ... but [to judge] which party comes closest to the intent of the divine Word or deviates from it.”¹⁷ These judges are to be “theologians, sound in doctrine, not hooded nor capped, but instructed in divine teaching by God himself.”¹⁸ There is a place for the “learned ones” who are to be listened to, but theirs is not an authoritative declaration as to who is correctly interpreting the Word of God.¹⁹ However, when the judges deliver their verdict it is not the end of the matter. Should something be “revealed” to a person in the church, they have the right to speak, and the judges are to remain silent while they speak.²⁰ The final verdict is reached when there is unanimity among the whole congregation, when ‘everyone becomes silent’.²¹ While this approach may reflect the examination process familiar from his previous university setting, it differs in giving the final say to the whole of the congregation in determining who more closely represents what the Word of God says on the disputed issue. Interestingly, Hubmaier does not call on the City Council at Waldshut to be the judges, as had been the case with Zwingli at Zurich.

Hubmaier established an Anabaptist church at Waldshut between Easter 1525 and 5 December 1525 when he was forced to flee that city, a congregation numbering no more than 400. While in Waldshut he wrote several booklets that describe his ecclesiology. However, he was unable to have them printed until

¹² Balthasar Hubmaier, “Dialogue with Zwingli’s Baptism Book,” in PY, 181, 190.

¹³ Hubmaier, “Dialogue with Zwingli’s Baptism Book,” in PY, 229.

¹⁴ Hubmaier, “Dialogue with Zwingli’s Baptism Book,” in PY, 230.

¹⁵ Hubmaier, “Second Zurich,” in PY, 25.

¹⁶ Balthasar Hubmaier, “Theses Against Eck,” in PY, 49-57.

¹⁷ Hubmaier, “Theses Against Eck,” in PY, 52.

¹⁸ Hubmaier, “Theses Against Eck,” in PY, 56.

¹⁹ Hubmaier, “Theses Against Eck,” in PY, 56.

²⁰ Hubmaier, “Theses Against Eck,” in PY, 54.

²¹ Hubmaier, “Theses Against Eck,” in PY, 54.

around July 1526 when he had established another Anabaptist church in Nikolsburg, Moravia. Nikolsburg had become a safe haven for religious refugees, including an estimated 2,000 Anabaptists of varying perspectives. One of these delayed publications *A Form of Christ's Supper*,²² demonstrates that the principles outlined in his *Theses Against Eck* were practised in the Waldshut congregation and the Nikolsburg congregation. The priest “sits down with the people” and explains the Scriptures to them.²³ Hubmaier explicitly states: “No one shall be coerced herein, but each should be left free to the judgment of his spirit.”²⁴ However, this is not licence to unaccountable male individualism (women were commanded to be silent in the meeting and to ask questions of their husbands later at home)²⁵. He goes on:

those who are present have the opportunity and the authority to ask, if at any point they should have some misunderstanding or some lack ... Then one to whom something is revealed should teach, and the former should be quiet without any argument and quarrelling. For it is not customary to have conflict in the church.²⁶

Nor is this instruction an open invitation to debate any topic at all as he carefully qualifies this authority to question by adding:

but not with frivolous, unprofitable, or argumentative chatter, nor concerning heavenly matters having to do with the omnipotence or the mystery of God or future things, which we have no need to know, but concerning proper, necessary and Christian items, having to do with Christian faith and brotherly love.²⁷

It was precisely the topics nominated by Hubmaier as excluded from public questioning during the church meeting that were topics he hotly debated with other religious refugees who had found sanctuary in Nikolsburg, specifically Lutherans whom he engaged in two treatises on *Freedom of the Will*,²⁸ and the Anabaptist Hans Hut, who was preaching about the imminent return of Christ, which Hut calculated for Easter 1528. Later he would also dispute with the Zurich Anabaptists (later known as Swiss Brethren) the relationship of church and state in his work *On the Sword*²⁹ (dedicated 24 June 1527), but these topics are not included in this list.

In July 1527, the Austrian authorities were able to have Hubmaier extradited to Vienna to face charges for sedition over his role in the Peasants' War of 1524–25, but to also examine his theology, as he was by this time recognised as a leader among the Anabaptists. A written *Apologia* dated 3 January 1528, provides the final evidence of development in Hubmaier's understanding of congregational hermeneutics.³⁰ In Article 17 “On the Church” he writes:

²² Balthasar Hubmaier, “A Form for Christ's Supper,” in PY, 393–408.

²³ Hubmaier, “A Form for Christ's Supper,” in PY, 394.

²⁴ Hubmaier, “A Form for Christ's Supper,” in PY, 395.

²⁵ Hubmaier, “A Form for Christ's Supper,” in PY, 396.

²⁶ Hubmaier, “A Form for Christ's Supper,” in PY, 396.

²⁷ Hubmaier, “A Form for Christ's Supper,” in PY, 396.

²⁸ Balthasar Humbaier, “Freedom of the Will, I,” in PY, 426–48; “Freedom of the Will, II,” in PY, 450–91.

²⁹ Balthasar Hubmaier, “On the Sword,” in PY, 492–523.

³⁰ Balthasar Hubmaier, “Apologia,” in PY, 524–62.

The authority the particular church now commends and gives over to its chosen, established, and ordained minister and priest, so that all things may be done in an orderly manner. ... Now whoever hears and is obedient to the priest is also obedient to the particular church as the daughter; whoever is obedient to the daughter is obedient to the mother; whoever is obedient to the mother is obedient to her bridegroom and husband Christ Jesus; whoever is obedient to Christ Jesus is obedient to his heavenly Father, who is the source of all authority.³¹

Hubmaier had consistently taught that authority was given by Christ to his church, and that authority remained with the church until the return of Christ. The church elected their priest or preacher or bishop (he uses the terms interchangeably, though he does not use the generic Catholic term *pfaffen* in a positive way until in the *Apologia*). Initially, it appears there is no topic that the congregation as a whole cannot consider. In his *Theses Against Eck* Article XVI, the church is to be heard in matters of offense or brotherly love, “but in matters of faith [decision shall be made] in no other way than solely according to the rule of Scripture.”³² This does not remove matters of faith from the congregation’s judgment, instead it places the congregation’s judgment under the authority of Scripture, and the formal process of determining who comes closest to the meaning of Scripture as described earlier in these *Theses* applies. By July 1527 in *The Form of the Lords Supper* the authority of the congregation to debate any topic has been qualified, though the process of coming to a consensus about who comes closest to the meaning of Scripture remains in place. Who determines the meaning of Scripture on the “reserved” topics is not clearly stated. Can they be debated in a gathering other than a worship service where the whole of the congregation engages in the debate, or have these topics been reserved to the elected priests and preachers of the congregation? In the specific case of dispute between Hubmaier and Hans Hut, Bergsten concludes that in fact two disputations took place; one before the whole congregation (where no conclusion was reached), and the other, at the insistence of Lord Leonard von Liechtenstein (a baptised member of Hubmaier’s Anabaptist church in Nikolsburg) before a closed group of nobles, resulting in the house arrest of Hut.³³

In his *Apologia*, Hubmaier has elevated the role and authority of the elected priest of a congregation, so that obedience to the priest is required of the congregation if they are to be obedient to the command of God. While the *Apologia* was written by Hubmaier during his imprisonment and therefore needs to be read cautiously, there is evidence that Hubmaier’s simplistic congregational hermeneutic was already being given a more nuanced understanding. Was this because he recognised theological flaws in his approach, or was it simply a pragmatic response to his changed context?

³¹ Hubmaier, “Apologia,” in PY, 547.

³² Hubmaier, “Theses Against Eck,” 54.

³³ Torsten Bergsten, *Balthasar Hubmaier: Anabaptist Theologian and Martyr*, ed. and trans. W.R. Estep (Valley Forge, PA: Judson, 1978), 363.

ECCLESIOLOGICAL UNDERPINNING

Underpinning Hubmaier's congregational hermeneutic is his ecclesiology. Brian Brewer in *A Pledge of Love* has demonstrated the sacramental nature of the interdependence of Hubmaier's teaching on baptism, the Lord's Supper, fraternal admonition and the ban as essential to defining the church, universal and particular.³⁴ Hubmaier himself provides a summary of his ecclesiology in his *Catechism*.³⁵ For Hubmaier faith and the oral confession of that faith proceeds water baptism. Water baptism is a sacrament, a pledge of obedience, made between the confessing candidate and God on the one hand, and the church on the other. The baptismal pledge:

is a commitment made to God publicly and orally before the congregation in which the baptised person renounces Satan and all his imaginations and works. He also vows that he will henceforth set his faith, hope, and trust solely in God and regulate his life according to the divine Word, in the strength of Jesus Christ our Lord, and if he should fail to do so, he thereby promises the church that he would dutifully accept brotherly discipline from it and its members.³⁶

The church for Hubmaier is identified as the universal Christian corporeal church and fellowship of the saints, assembled only in the Spirit of God, the mother church, and bride of Christ, and:

each separate and outward meeting assembly or parish membership that is under one shepherd or bishop and assembles bodily for instruction, for baptism and the Lord's Supper. The church as daughter has the same power to bind and loose on earth as the universal church, her mother, when she uses the keys according to the command of Christ, her spouse and husband.³⁷

The church is based on the oral confession of faith that Jesus is the Christ, since in Hubmaier's view, "although faith alone makes righteous, it does not alone give salvation."³⁸ Water baptism of a person who orally confesses faith in Christ is the outward sign of the church using the power of the keys given to it by Christ at his ascension whereby sins are forgiven, and the gates of heaven are opened to them. Participation in the Lord's Supper is the sign that indicates the church has used that same power of the keys to forgive the sins of those members who have confessed their sins, repented and sought forgiveness and have renewed their pledge of love for their fellow believers. However, that same power of the keys can be used to exclude a member from participation in the Lord's Supper and refuse to renew their pledge of love, thus to ban them from the fellowship, and close the gates of heaven to them until such time as they repent and demonstrate that repentance in changed lifestyle, after which they can be readmitted to the church.

³⁴ Brian Brewer, *A Pledge of Love: The Anabaptist Sacramental Theology of Balbasar Hubmaier*, Studies in Christian History and Thought (Milton Keynes, Bucks: Paternoster, 2012).

³⁵ Balbasar Hubmaier, "A Christian Catechism," in PY, 339-365.

³⁶ Hubmaier, "A Christian Catechism," in PY, 350-351.

³⁷ Hubmaier, "A Christian Catechism," in PY, 352.

³⁸ Hubmaier, "A Christian Catechism," in PY., 352.

This authority of the church to bind and loose sins, to open and close the gates of heaven is according to Hubmaier given directly to the church, and not via the leadership within the church.³⁹ This is clearly demonstrated in Hubmaier's declaration of the ban on a recalcitrant member of a congregation:

Therefore, our Christian congregation and assembly has reason, is moved and obliged by the earnest command of God and our Lord Jesus Christ to behave toward you according to his divine command ... Therefore in our congregation we conclude unanimously with our spirit concerning you who have thus behaved, in the name and in the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, and give you over to the devil for the destruction of the flesh so that the spirit might be saved on the day of the Lord Jesus.⁴⁰

Clearly, there is a major shift in Hubmaier's thinking about congregational authority by the time he writes his *Apologia*, where he explicitly states that the authority the church receives from Christ has been given to his "chosen, established, and ordained minister and priest," and that obedience to the priest is now the requirement of all in the church, since obedience to the command of the priest is the equivalent to obedience to God our heavenly Father, the source of all authority.⁴¹

FLAWED OR AHEAD OF ITS TIME?

What drives this shift in Hubmaier's thinking about the authority of the congregation; his restricting congregational consideration to prescribed topics? Hubmaier does not fundamentally change his ecclesiology in the *Apologia*. Despite being imprisoned and facing execution, he maintains his stance rejecting infant baptism and affirming public and oral confession of the Christian faith takes place prior to baptism. He also maintains his view on the Lord's Supper, and on the ban.⁴² He concedes that he will "postpone" teaching on these articles until the next Christian council, or if the King doesn't want to wait till then, he will defend his position before the king's council and universities to be "judged according to the Word of God".⁴³ Given his "obstinacy" on the major topics of baptism and the Lord's Supper, Hubmaier's change in his understanding of where authority lies in the church does not appear to be a concession made to his Austrian inquisitors by which he thought to gain his freedom. Theologically he continues to understand the church as being formed of those who publicly confess faith in Christ and then are baptised as an expression of that faith, who covenant together to live out that faith and accept the discipline of the church if they sin. His emphasis on "good order" appears to drive his change to identify the authority of the church as now residing in the office of the duly elected priest or bishop. The movement towards this change was evident in Nikolsburg but is stated plainly in the *Apologia*. Was it simply the context of increasingly strident and intractable opposition within his congregation that initiated a pragmatic response; a response Hubmaier appears to regard as not constituting a theological shift?

³⁹ Hubmaier, "A Christian Catechism," in PY, 412.

⁴⁰ Balthasar Hubmaier, "On the Christian Ban," in PY, 417.

⁴¹ Hubmaier, "Apologia," in PY, 547.

⁴² Hubmaier, "Apologia," in PY, 555–57.

⁴³ Hubmaier, "Apologia," in PY, 558.

Hubmaier's pragmatic solution to intractable critics fundamentally changes his ecclesiology. If Hubmaier was correct to argue that the authority of Christ has been given to the church as a whole until the return of Christ, he must, if he is to be true to his key hermeneutic principle, find a clear command of God that states this authority has been passed to the elected priest or bishop of the congregation and that the congregation retains no residual authority, for that is the outcome of his view about the authority of the elected priest or bishop in his *Apologia*. In short, he has arrived at a place Cyprian would endorse; not only is there no salvation outside the church, a statement of Cyprian Hubmaier is fond of quoting, but also now the idea 'where the bishop is, there is the church'.⁴⁴ It would appear that Hubmaier has to either concede his Anabaptist hermeneutic is flawed, or this pragmatic response does not have a basis in Scripture.

ISSUES TO ADDRESS TO APPLY HIS MODEL TODAY

The above assessment of Balthasar Hubmaier's congregational hermeneutic identifies several key issues that face any group seeking to implement a congregational hermeneutic. Hubmaier argues that the Scriptures, translated into the vernacular of a people group, are the basis for knowing what God commands Christians to believe and do and that this can be known by any individual Christian reader, attracts the counter-argument of unchecked individualism, where every believer can arrive at their own valid interpretation of Scripture.

Hubmaier was aware of this counter-argument and initially insisted that the members of the visible church, to whom the individual had voluntarily agreed to be under its authority in terms of faith and conduct, effectively controlled this individualism by requiring unanimity of the whole church on debated issues. Nor was this a gathering of shared ignorance, as he explicitly has a place for those who are learned in biblical languages to assist the congregation in the explanation of darker passages. He is careful to insist that the congregation is not held hostage by those who are learned in the original biblical languages and Latin. To do that would be to "establish another 'Papazare'[papacy]".⁴⁵ The "learned" also bring to the conversation insights from the teachers of the church, ancient and contemporary, and that material is also subject to the "plumbline of Scripture."

However, Hubmaier's experience alerts us to a further challenge to a congregational hermeneutic, the reserving of topics and authority to elected leadership. Initially, the congregation was still permitted to engage in actively determining understanding of topics not reserved to the elected leaders and to be the authority to impose discipline within the church. However, by the time of his *Apologia* (1528), Hubmaier had removed all authority from the church, who he claimed had handed that authority to their elected priest or bishop. In effect, he had established another authority over the visible church other than the congregation.

⁴⁴ Cyprian, "Letter 66 (69), 8 to Florentius Pupianus," <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/050668.htm>.

⁴⁵ Hubmaier, "Christian Baptism of Believers," 143.

Within the last ten years, people from ‘free church’ traditions have re-discovered Hubmaier and are looking to apply his insights to their existing churches. For example, Simon Goncharenko, in his book *Wounds that Heal*,⁴⁶ argues for a restoration of church discipline in the church along the lines of Hubmaier’s fraternal admonition and ban, where the baptismal pledge places the church member voluntarily under the discipline of the church. For Goncharenko authority to discipline is exercised on behalf of the church by its elected Bishop. This was a pattern he had seen working effectively in his Russian Baptist church and urges contemporary Southern Baptist churches to adopt this model. While he advocates adopting Hubmaier’s model of congregational discipline, my concern is that he ignores the legitimate role of the congregational hermeneutic that was essential to Hubmaier’s congregational ecclesiology.

Stuart Murray has argued that the failure of Anabaptism in the sixteenth century was mainly due to the dominance of Christendom, one key feature of which was the linkage between membership in the church through infant baptism and citizenship. He argues that in a post-Christendom setting, our present setting in the western world, where this link has been removed, it is time for Anabaptist congregationalism and, its related hermeneutic, to flourish and contribute to the ushering in of the kingdom of God.⁴⁷ However, voluntarism has not necessarily proved fertile ground to develop Anabaptist type congregationalism and hermeneutic, and Hubmaier’s experience suggests that even if a group establishes itself along congregational lines, pragmatic responses may undermine the coherence of the hermeneutic, and the gathered church ecclesiology it espouses. Hubmaier’s experience should act as a salutary warning for all who advocate a gathering church ecclesiology that incorporates a congregational hermeneutic.

⁴⁶ Simon Goncharenko, *Wounds That Heal: The Importance of Church Discipline with Balthasar Hubmaier’s Theology* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011).

⁴⁷ Murray, *Post Christendom*, 21.