

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Evangelical Quarterly* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_evangelical_quarterly.php

Max Turner and Gary M. Burge

The Anointed Community: A Review and Response

*Dr. Max Turner, currently Lecturer in New Testament in the University of Aberdeen, suggested that the author of *The Anointed Community* might like to respond to his extended review of his book, and we are grateful to both of them for entering into this dialogue on the place of the Holy Spirit in the Johannine tradition.*

There has been no major monograph in English on John's understanding of the Spirit since the important, but virtually unobtainable work by D. E. Holwerda (Kok 1959), and the more readily-available, but rather idiosyncratic study by G. Johnston (CUP 1970). Eskil Franck's Uppsala dissertation *Revelation Taught* (Gleerup 1985), while a useful account, concentrated almost exclusively on *the Paraclete* in the Gospel of John. The time was therefore ripe for the publication of a work that would not only critically and reliably survey the voluminous literature on the Spirit but also relate John's concept of the Spirit carefully to his christology, eschatology, view of sacraments, and understanding of mission. We must be grateful to Dr. Burge for providing just such a study in the publication of his Aberdeen doctoral thesis (*The Anointed Community: The Holy Spirit in the Johannine Tradition*, Exeter: Paternoster, 1987. xviii + 269 pp. pb. £16.35). As one would expect of a piece of work with such origins, it is a careful, thorough, detailed, and critically penetrating analysis. In this short review and response we shall give an outline of his main findings, and then pose critical questions to his synthesis, especially as it is presented in the two most significant and controversial chapters; those on christology and eschatology.

Burge's Position in Outline

Burge begins with an overview of Johannine scholarship on the Spirit in John. Not unnaturally, most of the space in this long chapter is devoted to research on the Paraclete. The central problem is that the title and the tasks ascribed to the Paraclete

seem at first sight to be out of step—the title most strongly suggests a forensic and primarily defensive function, while the actual role ascribed to the Paraclete appears to be the prosecution of Jesus' case against the world, and revelation to the disciples.

A study of the possible background for the Paraclete finds the OT and Intertestamental Judaism interest in angelic advocacy to provide the closest analogies, both linguistically and conceptually. But Müller has correctly identified the Paraclete discourse in form critical terms with Jewish Farewell discourses, with their interest in how God's initiative through the departing figure will be continued, and the personal metaphors involved in John's picture of the Paraclete are not derived by simple transformation of some Jewish angelic intercessor (contra Betz (*et al.*)), but from John's understanding of the Spirit's relation to Christ and his work.

When we turn to John's use of the Paraclete material, the persecution context (15:18–16:4: cf. Mk. 13:11 and //s), the parallels between Christ and the Spirit-Paraclete (making the latter the means of the continuing presence of Christ, if not collapsing Jesus' Parousia into the gift of the Spirit), and the revelatory functions of the Paraclete are the most striking features. Burge (as Holwerda) sees these as united in the Johannine Christocentric and cosmic trial—Jesus had borne witness to the world, revealing the Father, now the disciples and the Paraclete (in whom Christ is present) continue the witness, revealing and glorifying Christ (see also 141f.).

How does the Spirit-Paraclete material relate to the Spirit material elsewhere in John? Porsch saw that Jn. 6:63 almost identifies Jesus' revelatory word with the gift of the Spirit, and this offers an important (if over-emphasized) link with the revelatory function of the Paraclete. But the link provides its own problems. Does it mean Jesus' discourses conveyed the Spirit-Paraclete within his own ministry? Or does Jesus' discourse only become revelatory after his glorification? Or are the discourses a foretaste in the ministry of the revelation achieved through glorification and giving of the Paraclete? Burge does not answer, or even raise, such questions at this stage.

Chapter 2 examines the relation of Spirit to Christology in John. Kümmel, Windisch and Schweizer have each affirmed that John plays down Jesus' endowment with the Spirit in favour of his own Logos christology: Jesus does not need the gift of the Spirit to reveal the Father, he does so as the incarnation of the Son eternally united with the Father. Against this, Burge urges:

(a) there are definite remnants of the older view of Jesus as an 'anointed figure' (1:29–34; 3:34 (arguing convincingly against Porsch that John affirms God gives Jesus the Spirit, not Jesus the believers); 6:27(!) and 1:51(!)), but John emphasizes the Spirit as the power of revelation rather than the power to perform miraculous works.

(b) 'The ultimate union of Spirit and Christ is by far the most prominent theme in John's pneumatology. The Spirit is not a power impulsively resident in Jesus but an attribute of his own person' (87). This is said to be justified by the evidence that John *Jesus alone* can distribute the 'living water' (=Spirit: 4:10, 14), and it is water which is alive within (and flowing from) *him* (7:37f.), dispensed only through the cross (7:29 and 19:34), and proves to be *his* breath (20:22).

(c) John has especially bound word and Spirit (cf. 3:31–36, esp. 3:34; ch. 4); the Spirit is the power and convicting authority of Jesus' revelatory word—most notably 6:63. This tie between word and Spirit is said to be rooted by John in his development of the motif of Jesus as the eschatological prophet (6:14; 7:40: cf. Burge 107ff.), and this in turn is regarded as the best explanation of John's presentation of Jesus as God's Agent: the one sent by God as his representative.

Chapter 3 explores the eschatology of John. His position could be summed up as an expansion of Barrett's conclusion that the Spirit 'is the means by which the historical past and the historical future (in the two "comings" of Jesus) are brought to bear upon the present in such a way as to determine the significance of the immediate, spiritual presence of Jesus'. But for Burge, this does not mean John has developed the Paraclete emphasis as a *substitute* for an abandoned Parousia hope (so Bultmann). Nor, on the other hand, do the findings of the previous chapter entail the Spirit is given to the disciples in and through Jesus' *historical* ministry (so Jeremias). The Spirit cannot be given until Jesus is glorified (7:38f.), and that (for Burge) means the Spirit is definitely given in Jn. 20:22. The whole of his chapter is devoted to showing how alternative exegeses of this event make less sense of John's emphases: it is not simply a *symbolic* act promising some future giving of the Spirit (against e.g. Carson); nor an ordination gift for the Twelve (against Holwerda); nor a climax of the experience of life through the Spirit-empowered words of Jesus, the attainment of authentic faith in and through the death and resurrection of Jesus while not yet the giving of the Paraclete (so

Turner); nor the giving of the Spirit that would only later *become* the Paraclete (so Porsch), nor simply a Johannine substitute for Luke's Pentecost (so Dunn).

Burge wishes to argue instead that 20:22 is the giving of the Spirit-Paraclete. The Paraclete is not merely a 'post-ascension' figure, as the gift of the Spirit in Luke, but more precisely he is involved in the dynamic of the ascension itself. Yes, Jesus must 'go away' before the Paraclete can come, but '*The prerequisite departure of Jesus does not refer to his necessary absence when the Paraclete appears. It refers to the preliminary death and glorification of Jesus for which the Spirit must wait (7:39).*' Thus John stresses the continuity of Paraclete and Christ: the disciples are saved from becoming orphans . . . because of the immediacy of the exchange (14:15-24; 16:7)' (133).

Chapter 4 addresses the question of the relation of Spirit and Sacraments in the Johannine community. He rejects both Cullmann's wholesale sacramentalist eisegesis, and Bultmann's anti-sacramentalist interpretation of John, in favour of a *via media* that sees John as emphasizing the Spirit (as the Spirit of Christ) and faith rather than water (the latter drops from view even in 3:5; as in 1:29-34), bread and wine (the 'flesh' avails nothing; it is the Spirit that gives life (6:63)). Chapter 5 turns to the themes of Spirit, mission and anamnesis. The disciples are sent, as Jesus was sent, and so are secondary divine agents. Integral to their sending is the gift of the Spirit-Paraclete who (a) reminds them of Jesus' revelatory word, (b) leads them into the true significance of it, and (c) brings further revelation from the *risen* Jesus, albeit only such revelation as coheres with what 'was in the beginning' (against Porsch who limited the functions of the Paraclete to (a) and (b)). These three functions maintain the unity of the church, and drive its witness to the world.

Burge's is a detailed and lengthy work, the texture and argument of which cannot be done justice in a short review. But it may be worthwhile to ponder some questions about its more important theses.

(1). Spirit and Sacraments (Chapter 4)

While agreeing entirely with Burge's criticism of Cullmann, we must wonder whether he (as many before him) has not found it too easy to deduce the Johannine attitude to the Christian sacraments from John 3 and John 6. With respect to the former passage, it seems that arguments that birth of 'water' and Spirit (3:5) refer to Christian baptism (or John's baptism as an

anticipation of it) are far from secure. It is a great pity Burge did not give Linda Belleville's detailed arguments against the hypothesis an adequate hearing. She concludes that the 'birth of water and Spirit' Nicodemus is supposed to recognize is the (metaphorical) cleansing by water and regenerating gift of the Spirit promised in Ezek. 36. This perhaps best fits the structure of John's hendiadys but it eliminates any (direct) reference in the words to water baptism as such.

As for John 6, we fail to see how vv. 51–58 can be used as a springboard for examining the Johannine view of the Lord's Supper. To be sure, eucharistic 'language' is used—but the reference of John's metaphor is Golgotha, not loaves of bread or cups of wine on Palestinian (or Ephesian tables).

John seems to move from asserting that the divine wisdom which Jesus hearers are invited to eat and drink (6:35) is Jesus' revelation of his unity with the Father in salvation—he is the life-giving counterpart to the gift of manna in the wilderness—to the more specific assertion that the divine wisdom is most sharply expressed in the Son's revelatory *death* on behalf of men (his giving of flesh and blood: 51c–58). But if John's point is that hearers can only eat and drink God's wisdom by (and *in*) believing the proclamation about the self-giving of Jesus at the cross, then it is not easy to see how one can reach assured conclusions from this complex imagery about John's theology of the Lord's Supper as such. The attempt to do so may simply result in a confusion of vehicle and tenor in John's metaphor (a frequent disease amongst theologians: for the remedy see M. Soskice's excellent *Metaphor and Religious Language*). That he has incorporated traditional eucharistic language into his wisdom metaphor for the revelation at the cross may be *suggestive* of certain understandings of the Lord's Supper, but barely more than that.

(2). Spirit and Eschatology (Chapter 3)

This is perhaps Burge's most original chapter, and any new attempt to understand the relation of Spirit and eschatology in John should be welcome, if only because of the all-too-apparent difficulties that face present views. Nevertheless, we need to ask if Burge's alternative is more convincing, and it may be worthwhile at least to point out some of the problems that face his own view (and the reader should be warned that the reviewer's published views are amongst those attacked by Burge; so perhaps all questions raised should be regarded as mildly polemical!).

We have every respect for his attempt to set forth 20:22 as the definitive giving of the Spirit-Paraclete—it would make obvious sense of 7:38f., as well as of the other places where John ties the Spirit theologically to the cross (principally 3:15f. and 6:61–66), and it would cohere well with the Johannine understanding that fully authentic faith was not possible before the cross. But is the price Burge has to pay for this not too high? Those of us who have, in one way or another, rejected the view that 20:22 is the giving of the Spirit-Paraclete have done so not chiefly out of a desire to harmonize with Acts 2 but because the incident in 20:22 and what follows does not seem to correspond to what is earlier promised of the Paraclete, nor to fit the conditions for the granting of the gift.

As to the former reason, the point is that the Paraclete (as Burge himself so admirably clarifies) is promised as a replacement for Jesus' presence, a replacement that mediates the Father and the Son (cf. 15:15–30, and the careful parallels between Jesus and Paraclete noted by Brown and others), and one that more than compensates for Jesus' own withdrawal to the Father (16:7). But none of this is suggested by 20:22 and what follows (*pace* Burge's insistence Jesus' breath is his personal presence!). It is not the newly-given Spirit *replacing* Jesus, and mediating his presence, that convinces Thomas (whether directly or through the witness of the disciples) and later speaks with and commissions the disciples—Jesus *himself* must do it. The distinctive functions of the Paraclete are not being fulfilled. It was for precisely this reason that Felix Porsch, in his magisterial thesis (*Pneuma und Wort*, Knecht 1974) came to describe 20:22 as the giving of the Spirit *that would later become* the Paraclete (though, as the reviewer has argued elsewhere, this seems linguistically infelicitous: 'to receive the Spirit' in the biblical tradition *means* the inception of the intended *activities*). Burge rather lamely defends himself with the assertion that to describe the Paraclete as active was perhaps no part of John's purpose. Perhaps, but to describe Jesus himself as doing the very things the Paraclete is promised to do, more naturally implies a real absence of the Paraclete.

We may return to the question of whether the conditions for the giving of the Paraclete are fulfilled by Jn. 20:22. They are basically two: Jesus' departure (16:7 etc.) and his glorification (7:38f. etc.), though to these one might also add his 'ascension' (6:62). As is well known, in John these terms are all closely related, and John portrays Jesus' death on the cross as fully part of his 'glorification' (e.g. Jn. 12:23–26) and 'exaltation/ascension' (3:14f.; 8:28f.; 12:32). As noted above, it is Burge's distinctive thesis that as Jesus'

death and resurrection are both described as 'glorification' and 'ascension', the conditions for the gift of the Spirit are met by 20:22. There is then no reason in John (according to Burge) why Jesus should not be present at the gift of the Paraclete, for he has departed (in death), and is glorified (even if that glorification/ascension is as yet incomplete). By portraying Jesus as breathing the Spirit into the disciples (echoing Gen. 2:7) the gift of the Spirit is seen the more clearly as Jesus' own vitality and life (a redactional emphasis, according to Burge), and as the completion of Jesus' glorification.

This is a fascinating and original development of Dodd's proposal, but some of its difficulties should at least be pointed out.

(a). While John does regard Jesus' death as part of the denotation of his 'departure', that language surely applies primarily to Jesus' return to pre-incarnate heavenly 'glory' (17:5), and the cessation of any form of his bodily presence with the disciples on earth. It is this latter glorification, not merely Jesus' death, which provides the rationale for the gift of the Spirit as Paraclete—i.e. in order to replace Jesus' presence and mediate it. The Paraclete appears redundant in Jn. 20–21 precisely because Jesus *himself* appears and acts; he has not yet truly 'departed'.

(b). Jesus' own post-resurrection insistence that he has *not yet* ascended (20:17), would not only tend to confirm the point just made, but also suggests John was pointedly emphasizing that Jesus was neither yet fully 'departed', nor fully 'glorified', and so the condition for the giving of the Spirit in fulness not yet met (cf. 7:39). Burge's claim, in this context, that Jesus bestowal of the Spirit completes the 'ascension' (137–139), comes perilously close to setting 7:39 on its head—i.e. to making Jesus' gift of the Spirit the condition of his glorification rather than *vice versa*.

(c). Burge's assertion that there is no (Johannine) reason why Jesus could not be present at the bestowal of the Spirit-Paraclete not only appears questionable in the light of the focused character of the Paraclete as Jesus' replacement and the substitute for his presence, but it also entails a most unnatural reading of 16:7. While granting that 'send' (*pempô*) in some contexts might merely carry the sense 'commission' without implying a spatial separation between 'sender' and receivers, the collocation of 'Unless I *depart* . . . the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go away, I will *send* him to you' precisely suggests Jesus will *not* be present at the giving of the Paraclete—and so 20:22 would seem to be something other than the giving of the Paraclete.

(d). We may question whether the tantalizingly brief single-verse description in 20:22 was indeed intended to depict the definitive gift of the Spirit. There is little enough hint of it, except perhaps in the allusion to Gen. 2:7 ('he breathed (the breath of life) into them'). There is no reaction in the disciples, no Paraclete activity through or in them in the following scenes, nor any indication as to whether Thomas received this definitive gift. If one surmises John was compelled either to describe the coming of the Paraclete or specifically to state that it would be given later, then 20:22 would have to be the former—but the surmise is unjustified, and arguably John 14–16 as clearly state that the Paraclete will come beyond Jesus' removal from bodily presence to the disciples as could possibly be required.

(e). Burge's attempt to claim 20:22 gives the personal presence of Jesus, in his 'breath', and so the Paraclete, not only gives the impression of special pleading, but, if it is taken literally, verges on the conceptually and theologically grotesque.

(f). And this is our biggest bleat, by making John 20:22 the one and only giving of the life-giving Spirit, and of the Spirit as Paraclete, Burge is in danger not only of bringing the Paraclete on stage too soon, but simultaneously of chasing out *all* experience of the Spirit by the disciples before Jesus' resurrection. In doing so he virtually evacuates all elements of realized eschatology *within* the ministry of Jesus before the cross. Now, we may readily affirm with Burge that John ties the life-giving spirit theologically to Jesus' death (3:14f.; 6:61ff.; 7:38f.), and regards fully authentic faith as a possibility only after Jesus' glorification. But in our view Burge rides that observation too hard and in the wrong direction. He is unable to make easy sense of those occasions where Jesus implies that the gift he offers is available then and there to be received. This is a problem which cannot simply be confined to the discussions of the Spirit material in John, but it is amply demonstrated by it. One thinks immediately of such assertions as Jesus' to the Samaritan woman, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink" you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water' (4:10). Burge is surely right to think the gift of living water referred to entails an experience of the Spirit, but the tense of Jesus' verb much more naturally implies he spoke of it as an immediate possibility than as a purely post-ascensional one. This seems confirmed by Jesus' further words that 'the hour is coming *and now is*' when true worshippers shall worship in Spirit and truth (4:23f.); which may suggest that 7:39 is not an *absolute*

statement, but a relative one: i.e. that the Spirit that would only be poured out in fulness as rivers of living water after Jesus' glorification, was already experienced (in Jesus' Spirit-imbued teaching 6:63?).

Similarly, while the gift of life is tied to death and ascension in 3:14f. and 6:61–66, the plural 'we' in 3:11 already incorporates Jesus' disciples in the life-giving knowledge and witness in at least an anticipatory way, and the assertion in 6:64 that some (who otherwise seem to) do *not* believe carries the implicature that some others *do* already believe in a way that experiences Jesus' revelation as Spirit and life (6:63). A similar significance perhaps attaches to the claim Jesus' disciples are 'already clean' before the cross (13:10; through Jesus' word 15:3), when it is guarded by the qualification 'but not every one of you' (13:11). If John meant such statements to be true only of a *purely* future cleansing by Jesus's word, he need not have bothered to state the exceptions.

Burge is not unaware of these problems. He is not even prepared outright to reject the affirmation that, 'Had they asked Jesus, Nicodemus presumably would have been born anew, the Samaritan woman would have discovered living water, and the worshippers at Tabernacles would have found the drink of life' (115), and he willingly affirms in another context 'we probably should say that this fluid chronological perspective means that chiefly later experiences are present in an incipient and anticipated way before the cross' (192). But he clearly regards the former as disastrously one-sided, and he does not spell out the latter. Burge (arguing against the reviewer's position) maintains there is only incipient faith, not incipient experience of the Spirit in the ministry—but how can these two be separated in view of the way John ties Spirit to revelation? Indeed, does he not himself allow precisely the possibility he later denies the reviewer when he states:

'The Spirit was an integral and inseparable part of Jesus' earthly life. The living-water motif makes this clear. This water, which is the Spirit (7:39), is another gift just like light . . . or bread. . . . To receive these is to believe, accept, and commune with Jesus. Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman *do have access to this aspect of the Spirit in all its immediacy while Jesus is before them*. But at the same time . . . : the cross is the watershed that fully releases the Spirit' (100—Reviewer's italics).

(3). Spirit and Christology (Chapter 2)

The reviewer felt this to be the least tightly argued of the chapters,

even if it was also often stimulating. Dr. Burge is probably right to insist John thinks of Jesus as 'anointed with the Spirit' (though whether either 6:27 or 1:51 should be used to support this is doubtful), and right too to argue that John has made the Spirit the power of revelation more than the power of miracles. But he surely presses beyond the evidence, and becomes less than lucid, when he goes on to affirm John has made the Spirit an attribute of Jesus' own person (87–100)? It leads him to some very difficult assertions: such as (for example, and the examples could be multiplied) that 'the Spirit appears to be the life of the Messiah himself after and before the resurrection' (99), or 'Son and Spirit cannot be experienced distinctly and simultaneously' (100—what about at 1:32 and 20:22?), or 'The Spirit of Jesus which departs at the cross in death will be the same Spirit which brings life at Pentecost (sic!)' [100—did he rather mean Easter? And does he mean Jesus had the Holy Spirit in the way other men have 'anthropological spirit'? And what, in that case, did Jesus have before his baptismal anointing?].

Burge's chief evidence for the case is derived from Jn. 7:37–39 and Jn. 4:1–15. He argues the former to depict Jesus (not the believer) as the source from within which shall flow the living waters of the Spirit. This widely-held christological interpretation of the passage is extremely attractive—and the reviewer once held it—but J. B. Cortes (referred to as Cortez by Burge), gave strong linguistic (and other) reasons for rejecting it in favour of the traditional view that the Spirit flows from the *believer* (the messianic community being thus seen as the embodiment of the eschatological temple from which the renewing waters flow (cf. Ezek. 47)—while allowing Jesus is naturally understood as the ultimate source), and neither Burge nor any other (as far as the reviewer is aware) has yet drawn the teeth of Cortes' argument. And even *had* John intended the christological sense, it would still push his imagery excessively literally to deduce John sees the Spirit as an attribute of Jesus' person.

As for 4:1–15, this may make Jesus the giver of living water, but it does not equate that offer of water with an offer either of Jesus himself (so Burge 98) or of the Spirit *simpliciter* (as 97 almost suggests). Burge can only argue for such a conclusion by (temporarily) ignoring the wisdom imagery in which (as he later points out) the passage abounds. Once admit the wisdom motifs (which dominate from the Prologue onwards) and the reader is virtually certain to understand the 'living water' as a metaphor for divine wisdom, and then the connection with word and Spirit is transparent: *to offer living water is simply to offer Spirit-imbued*

revelation (as Burge himself later is prepared to affirm, 104). That observation may also be pertinent to 7:37–39, applied to the believer endowed with the Paraclete—i.e. ‘living water’ (=Spirit-empowered witness about Jesus) flows from the messianic community, as, in his ministry, it has from Jesus (3:34). Neither passage has made it more probable that John ‘unites Spirit and Christ’, or makes the former an attribute of the latter, both are more easily interpreted as referring to Spirit-empowered revelation of Jesus.

A more exegetically robust section (101–109) discusses the relation of Word and Spirit in John’s christological understanding. But even here one must wonder whether the pertinent Johannine evidence is not simply too meagre to justify the surprising conclusion that ‘John’s interest in word and Spirit follows from a christology developing the motif of the eschatological prophet’ (109). And we may query whether 6:63 is appropriately glossed ‘because these [Jesus’] words supremely reveal God, they can lead to life and the Spirit’ (106). If this is another attempt to shift experience of the Spirit into the future beyond the cross and resurrection, it should surely be resisted. Jesus’ assertion is much more naturally to be taken with 3:34, 4:1–15, and indeed the wisdom emphases of Jn. 6 as a whole, to mean that a true hearing of Jesus’ words is an experience of Spirit and life (if only a partial one), because the Spirit engages the hearer in the divine wisdom/revelation imparted by the one anointed with the Spirit for this very purpose.

Burge may not be the first writer whose position would be slightly more comfortable had the Johannine Jesus rather said ‘The words I have spoken to you *shall be* Spirit and life’, but we submit the present tense in 6:63 is entirely unproblematic in the Johannine context, and need in no way threaten the equally Johannine emphasis that the Spirit is truly released only after Jesus’ glorification. In so far as Jesus’ revelatory wisdom/word is active and shaping the faith of Jesus’ hearers, this *has* to be understood as an experience of the Spirit with which Jesus is anointed. But equally the incomplete nature of their experience of the Spirit through Jesus is indexed by the partial nature of their understanding and faith which only fully crystallizes with the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Concluding Reflections

So much for the parts, as it were, but how does one put them together to make a coherent Johannine pneumatology? Burge

stresses the Spirit as the inner life of Jesus and the authority of his revelation, during his ministry, and then as the Paraclete that replaces Jesus and mediates his ongoing presence and activity, bringing life to the disciple, after the 'glorification' of the cross. That is perhaps the simplest model. But the reviewer suspects it does too little justice (a). to the Johannine understanding of 20:22 and its relation to the Paraclete promises, (b). to the motif of the Spirit as revelatory wisdom experienced by Jesus hearers within the ministry, and (c). to the relation of these to each other. To take these into account requires a more complex model. If 20:22 is *not* the giving of the Paraclete, and if it cannot be a merely symbolic act of some future coming of the Spirit (so Burge, correctly), then perhaps the easiest way to understand it lies in the (unprovable?) suggestion that the resurrection appearance of the crucified one, which completes the disciples' faith, may itself be regarded as that insufflation of the Spirit which reintegrates and climaxes the work the Spirit has already begun in Jesus' ministry in the gradual recreation of the disciples through Jesus' revelatory word. The arrival of the Paraclete beyond Jesus' full return to the Father then takes up and transcends these previously separate activities.

We must be grateful to Dr. Burge (and to the publishers) for his fine and challenging account of the subject, and readers of this journal will especially appreciate his attempt to elucidate the spirituality of the Johannine community and its implications for the church. If this review has dwelt on aspects that appear problematic, that is not in any way to demolish the proposed synthesis—for which reading of John has no problems?—far less to depreciate Dr. Burge's skill and competence as an interpreter of John; quite the opposite. The questions are asked of his thesis in the hope that one who has so clearly evinced his grasp of the relevant literature will be stimulated to elucidate matters further.

A Response to Dr. Turner

It was an unexpected surprise to be invited to respond to Dr. Max Turner's careful review of my 1987 contribution to Johannine theology. In fact, it must be every author's dream to write a brief review of one of his reviewer's efforts! Thus far I have read over 20 reviews of *The Anointed Community*. In each case, there is a mixture of appreciation for the complexity of the subject and succinct criticism where the interpretive suggestions I have made are more tentative (see the able review by F. F. Segovia of Vanderbilt University which appeared in the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 50, 1988, 711f.). Dr. Turner's essay is a model of insight and criticism. I appreciate the thoroughness with which he outlines the major themes of the book and his interest in accurately giving my views a hearing. Too often reviewers are quick to voice their own solutions to exegetical riddles while all along dismissing the efforts of the author. I commend this reviewer for his care.

Dr. Turner is no stranger to Johannine studies as his published works show. He has given us a major study on Luke's pneumatology. In 1976 he even published a lengthy journal article on the Johannine pneumatology. Thus it is not surprising that he comes to the present subject with firm commitments and is eager to contrast these with my own. But, as each of us knows, the exegetical puzzles in John are legion—witness the mountain of books and articles published annually. Commentators line up on every side of texts such as 3:5, 6:51–58, 7:37–38, and 20:22. And, more often than not, our individual bias begins to show through.

Take my discussion of 6:51–58 as an example. Dr. Turner is compelled to make Jesus' words refer to wisdom instead of the eucharist. This is a common view and is hinged to the awkward historical setting of the pericope. The book weighs the evidence for 13 pages and concludes that while wisdom certainly forms the background for 6:35–58, still the language of verses 51–58 betrays a eucharistic application. This is why one exegete after another has concluded that either (a). the unit is an editorial addition or (b). the horizons between the historical Jesus and the Johannine Church occasionally merge. Even Dr. Turner says that 'eucharistic language' is used here and that the metaphor suggests some special understanding of the Lord's Supper. What else, for that matter, could 'drink my blood' mean? It was a phrase that was patently offensive to Jewish ears and only occurs in the eucharistic setting. In fact, no wisdom text uses this metaphor probably

because of its offensiveness. Now if this is an allusion to the eucharist (and the reference to Judas Iscariot's betrayal points to this setting as well) 6:62–65 may provide Jesus' interpretation and critique of this metaphor. James Dunn made this case in an article published in *NTS* 17 (1970/71) 328–338. In fact, there is a pattern of sacramental allusion *and* sacramental critique in both John 3 and John 6 and each employs the Spirit in a critical, parallel way (3:5f., 6:63). My concern is that we read and interpret this difficult text as it stands without recourse to other exegetical presuppositions. The eucharistic setting must stand regardless of the chronological tension—and the full meaning of the Spirit allowed as a sacramental critique.

The question of the eschatology of John and its connection with 20:22 is an exegetical puzzle that will never be resolved to everyone's satisfaction. Dr. Turner is right on target when he identifies this theme as central to Johannine theology. But once again I wish to bring to John no presupposition from Luke's theology, nor any requirement that John's message fit a theology of my own construction. Let John be John. The crux is this: what is Jesus doing in 20:22 in light of 16:7 (Christ's prerequisite departure) and 7:37–39 (Christ's prerequisite glorification)? To make 20:22 a climactic event fulfilling the Paraclete promises satisfies some themes (e.g. numerous links with chapter 14 and 16) and indeed fits the larger fabric of Johannine theology, but it also raises other difficulties. However, one of these difficulties is *not* the absence of Paraclete tasks in 20:22. It has always struck me as an argument from silence to say that since the Paraclete is not mentioned in 20:22, then it cannot be there. Further, it is less than compelling to note half of 20:17—Jesus has not yet ascended—to say that the requirement of 7:39 is unmet. John 20:17b says more: *Jesus is ascending now*. Jesus' promise never to leave them orphans (14:18) aligns itself with what Johannine scholars understand to be the sweeping movement of Jesus' glorification. From the time of the betrayal to the hour of the cross Jesus is returning to the Father and his final gift is the Spirit-Paraclete promised throughout the period. Jesus never abandons his followers. He never leaves them alone. His final deed is to give them his own spirit.

Now when we see this larger theological tapestry of John—the substitution of Jesus by the Spirit which never leaves the disciples alone—then problematic texts begin to take their place. It is *perfectly natural* to read 16:7 as Jesus' declaration that he must die ('go away') in order for the Spirit to come. John is hardly telling us about Jesus' bodily locale when the anointing comes; he

instead is referring to Christ's prerequisite death (cf. 7:37–39). There is a rhythm and symmetry in John's message here, and one text, such as 16:7, cannot serve as the lens through which all else is placed in focus. When the incarnational life of the Lord is over, then a new medium, the Spirit-Paraclete, will be within them.

This brings us to 20:22. Any gospel that has so much to say about the Spirit—and then never records its reception is a mystery indeed! The burden rests with Dr. Turner and others to explain what 20:22 *does* mean if this is not a climactic anointing. Generally alternative explanations go wanting. (These are listed and weighed on pp. 114–131). The imagery of 20:22 is 'tantalizingly brief' but pregnant with meaning. Drawn directly from Genesis 2:7, this is Christ's recreation of humanity, the Spirit-generated renewal anticipated throughout the story. John has taken the notion of an impersonal Spirit and made it intensely personal: this is the breath or life of Jesus himself. John's culture was rich with vivid imagery, and it is the unfortunate occidental reader who can only see such images as 'grotesque' when taken literally. Exegesis which is controlled by the context should permit us to let John's world and its metaphors do the talking. This picture confirms the promises of John 14 and 16 that in the Spirit it will be Jesus himself being given in a personal and powerful way.

Making 20:22 a climactic giving of the Spirit does not eliminate the realized eschatology within the ministry of Jesus. Luke is able to describe a climactic anointing at Pentecost and still leave room for the activity of the Spirit years earlier. The same is true of John. But here, since the Spirit and Christ are so intimately associated, the Fourth Gospel emphasizes how even in the life of Jesus the Spirit is present. Nevertheless, this Spirit will find a fuller, exhaustive distribution in and through Jesus's glorification. It is interesting that in the many cases noted by Dr. Turner where Jesus seems to offer the Spirit (3:5; 4:10), the realized eschatology points us forward to the cross. No gospel points the reader forward to the 'lifting up of the Son of Man' as often as John. And yet while the cross is awaited, still, there is incipient faith, a seeming realization of the promises much earlier.

Perhaps the clue to the riddle of Johannine eschatology lies elsewhere—in John's christology. This is no doubt the most tentative chapter in the book, but if I am even near the target, then something important should not be missed. Again, Dr. Turner has underscored the right theme, but I regret that he did not give it fuller attention. A whole catalogue of evidence (pp. 49–110) led me to join with numerous scholars both ancient and modern who

sense a strain on the trinitarian system in the Fourth Gospel. And they do not lack lucidity when they note how the Spirit is vitally the divine life of Christ himself, making Jesus the ultimate Spirit-filled man and making the Spirit-Paraclete Christ's alter ego. John 7:37-39, 4:1-15, 19:30 and 19:34 may require a closer look.

To my mind there is a dialectic between Christ and Spirit which is the key to the logic of John's pneumatology. The Spirit gives definition to the person of Christ, and Christ gives meaning to the Spirit. Thus there is a theological symbiosis at work between christology and eschatology. And when this carefully nuanced balance is seen, greater clarity may come to problematic texts. John has radically personalized the Spirit, no doubt to say that Christians may know with confidence that Jesus is with them *despite* the anxiety of waiting for his return. But in doing this John *also* advanced this union into his christology making the Spirit appear unexpectedly early. Thus 3:34 takes pains to say that Jesus is indeed anointed—*without measure!* Jn. 1:33f. urges that the Spirit resided on him *permanently!*

No doubt 7:37-39 is the key passage in this argument. There is really no need to repeat my critique of Cortes' punctuation. I did, however, defend the christological punctuation at the Johannine section of the Society of Biblical Literature recently and was gratified at the enthusiastic support expressed there. At least it would be wrong to conclude with Dr. Turner that such exegesis and its theological implications are not strong possibilities. But if I am right that the water in 7:37f. flows from Christ, 7:39 becomes the key pointing to a variety of passages in chapter 3, 4, and 19.

I appreciate Dr. Turner's careful reading of my efforts. He has called attention to all of the essential issues which I was attempting to address in my study. And, he has helped us all move closer to the purpose and meaning of this enigmatic gospel. The author of the Fourth Gospel is probably to blame for these scholarly discussions. Choosing brevity in his gospel so that the world would not be swamped by books (John 21:25), John unwittingly gave birth to a flood of monographs and reviews trying to interpret what he did say. What we really need is a third rejoinder written by him!