

August 1988

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Recommended Citation

Meilaender, Gilbert (1988) "The Luce lectures on Religion and the Social Crisis -- Morality in Plague Time: AIDS in Theological Perspective -- Lecture 1: Sickness and Sin," *The Linacre Quarterly*: Vol. 55: No. 3, Article 5.
Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq/vol55/iss3/5>

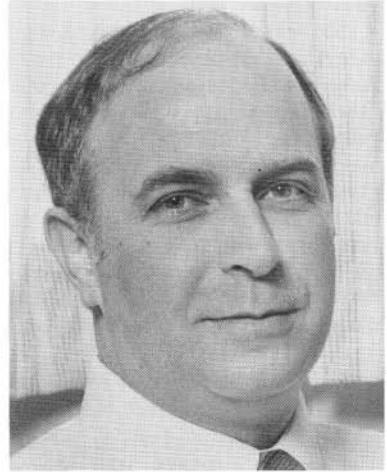
THE LUCE LECTURES ON RELIGION AND THE SOCIAL CRISIS

Morality in Plague Time: AIDS in Theological Perspective

Lecture 1: Sickness and Sin

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God may be more than moral goodness: He is not less. The road to the promised land runs past Sinai.¹

These lectures invite us to reflect upon “Religion and the Social Crisis”. The assumption, it would appear, is that there must always be a social crisis to which we can direct our attention! And I shall suggest, in just a moment, that this is even more true than we might first imagine.

Only slightly more than 80 years ago, in the first decade of this century, Walter Rauschenbusch published one of the classic works of the social gospel movement in this country, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*. It is both instructive and sobering to hear again the peroration of his concluding two paragraphs. Having granted that no perfect social order was attainable, Rauschenbusch nevertheless maintained that it was our duty to seek one, to approximate it as closely as we are able. And then he wrote:

And sometimes the hot hope surges up that perhaps the long and slow climb may be ending. In the past the steps of our race toward progress have been short and feeble, and succeeded by long intervals of sloth and apathy. But is that necessarily to remain the rate of advance? In the intellectual life there has been an unprecedented leap forward during the last hundred years. Individually we are not more gifted than our grandfathers, but collectively we have wrought out more epoch-making discoveries and inventions in one century than the whole race in the untold centuries that have gone before. If the twentieth century could do for us in the control of social forces what the nineteenth did for us in the control of natural forces, our grandchildren would live in a society that would be justified in regarding our present social life as semi-barbarous. Since the Reformation began to free the mind and to direct the force of religion toward morality, there has been a perceptible increase of speed. Humanity is gaining in elasticity and capacity for change, and every gain in general intelligence, in organizing capacity, in physical and moral soundness, and especially in responsiveness to ideal motives, again increases the ability to advance without disastrous reactions. The swiftness of evolution in our own country proves the immense latent perfectionability in human nature.

Last May a miracle happened. At the beginning of the week the fruit trees bore brown and greenish buds. At the end of the week they were robed in bridal garments of blossom. But for weeks and months the sap had been rising and distending the cells and maturing the tissues which were half ready in the fall before. The swift unfolding was the culmination of a long process. Perhaps these nineteen centuries of Christian influence have been a long preliminary stage of growth, and now the flower and fruit are almost here. If at this juncture we can rally sufficient religious faith and moral strength to snap the bonds of evil and turn the present unparalleled economic and intellectual resources of humanity to the harmonious development of a true social life, the generations yet unborn will mark this as the great day of the Lord for which the ages waited, and count us blessed for sharing in the apostolate that proclaimed it.²

Such a passionate optimism — even when, as with Rauschenbusch, tempered by recognition of the many obstacles still to be surmounted — seems strangely out of place in our world. The flower and fruit do not seem to have appeared. We live in a world in which it is more common to presume that there will indeed always be a new social crisis to which we must respond. And precisely that language — the language of social crisis — is not uncommon when people speak of AIDS. The spectre of plague time haunts us. And if we argue, as one might, that we need a new “Manhattan project” to deal with it, a commitment on the part of our best scientific minds to find a solution to the threat, we make clear just how serious the crisis may be.

These Luce Lectures, however, ought not — at least in my own interpretation — simply presume that there will always be a crisis to concern us. Rather, if our lectures are to deal with *religion* and the social crisis, we need to think about AIDS in the context of *the* social crisis — a crisis which is always with us, because it is the encounter with a God Who cannot be escaped at any moment and Who confronts us in the present moment. This is the *krisis* of which John’s gospel speaks. Jesus says in that gospel that the Father has given judgment (*krisis*) to the Son (5:22), and that it is for judgment (*krima*) that He has come into the world (9:39).

Raymond Brown writes that throughout the gospel, “Jesus provokes self-judgment as men line up for or against Him; truly His coming is a *crisis* in the root sense of that word³ The Jesus of John’s gospel also says, of course, that He does not come to “condemn” (*krinein*) the world (e.g., 3:17), but this “does not exclude the very real judgment that Jesus provokes.”⁴ His presence causes us to judge ourselves as those who love darkness and hate the light or those who come to the light (3:19-21). The crisis is a permanent one in our history; for the task of the Counselor-Spirit Whom Jesus sends is, among other things, to convince the world of judgment (16:8,11). Hence, the encounter with the God Who shows Himself to be compassionate in Jesus is always a crisis in which we determine once again whether we love darkness rather than the light. If, then, we want to reckon with the true crisis that faces us in the AIDS epidemic, we will have to think theologically.

Focus on Problems Will Come

In the second and third of these lectures, I will focus more directly on the sort of problems usually characterized as ethical. But at the outset, we should seek the broader theological context our topic demands. As with currency, bad theology often drives out good — and that may, to some degree, be true in many discussions of AIDS. Overly simple claims that AIDS is merely a “gay plague” visited by God upon sinners will not, as we shall see, withstand scrutiny. But neither will the equally simplistic response: that we need not think about divine judgment and should respond theologically only with the language of compassion. That, too, will not withstand reasoned inquiry, and I will begin by considering such an appeal.

How inadequate theologically is a hasty move to the language of compassion can be seen if we consider some of the arguments offered by Earl Shelp and Ronald Sunderland in *AIDS and the Church*.⁵ The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews, citing a psalm, once offered these words of encouragement to Christians facing suffering: “It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?” (12:7). But Shelp and Sunderland reject as “theological sadism” any attempt to think of sickness as divine visitation intended to discipline or teach us.⁶ If they are correct, and if the writer of Hebrews correctly depicted the relation of parent and child, we will have to conclude that God’s love for us must be radically different from one of the most intense and intimate forms of love we know. God’s love may be like the open-hearted acceptance shown by the prodigal’s father, but not at all like this other aspect of parental love we know so well. We need to ask ourselves whether such a view can say everything that needs, theologically, to be said.

Shelp and Sunderland argue that a view depicting sickness as punishment for sin is one that the Bible itself discards. Their telling of the

story may be summarized as follows: There has been within Jewish and Christian thought a tendency to connect sickness and sin. We can see this in the notion of ritual uncleanness or defilement found in the Old Testament. Any person suffering certain afflictions was “unclean,” unworthy to participate in the religious life of the people, “since it was axiomatic that the disease would not have occurred if the victim’s relationship with God was not disordered.”⁷ Jesus, however, was at pains to discard the ancient attribution of illness or disability as punishment for some act of disobedience of God’s law.⁸ And if Christians have not always themselves discarded it, they need more and more to learn to do so.

What is the New Testament evidence offered in support of this story? It is chiefly, of two sorts. First, Shelp and Sunderland appeal to several passages which are almost always mentioned in this connection. It is worth our looking briefly at these, if only to see that neither will prove very helpful. In Luke 13:1-5, Jesus is told of the Galileans “whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices”. We are not told exactly why their fate was raised, but we are told how Jesus responded.

He answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered thus? I tell you, No; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, No; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.

Clearly, Jesus here *does* suggest that we cannot, or cannot always, easily infer from the fact of suffering some unusually wicked sin for which that suffering is punishment. But He hardly denies the reality of judgment for sin, nor does He deny that it was judgment that fell upon those Galileans. He merely emphasizes that the crisis of divine judgment will encounter His sinful interlocutors also.

The other passage commonly cited is the story of the man born blind, told in the ninth chapter of John’s gospel. On this occasion, Jesus’ disciples, seeking an explanation for the blindness of the man from birth, ask, “Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” (9:2). And again Jesus rejects the notion that such a connection can always be drawn. “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, . . .” Jesus says. But He hardly implies that God does not use or send affliction for His purposes; rather, He simply suggests that those purposes extend beyond retribution. Indeed, His entire answer is this: “Jesus answered, ‘It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him’ ” (9:3).⁹

An Important Consideration

More important than these isolated passages, however, is a second consideration: the role that healing miracles play in the ministry of Jesus. When we take up a topic like AIDS, we should not suddenly forget the

lessons we have learned from students of the New Testament. Suppose, for example, we say that in healing the sick Jesus was “manifesting God’s compassion and love toward the afflicted.”¹⁰ No doubt this is true, but it is not all that should be said — or even the chief thing that should be said — about the healing miracles.¹¹ They are, fundamentally, signs of the presence of God’s rule in Jesus, not chiefly exercises of compassion, but attacks on the powers that hold humans in bondage. This is the meaning, for instance, of Mark’s programmatic description of Jesus’ ministry in word and in deed: that “he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons” (1:39). The point of each of these activities is the same. Each is assault upon the powers of evil. The point of the miracles is not simply or primarily the demonstration of compassion; it is, rather, that in Jesus, the rule of God announces its presence. Hence, it is the one with authority to say “Your sins are forgiven,” who can as easily cure the illness to which sinful human beings are subject and say to the paralytic, “Take up your pallet and go home” (Mark 2:9-11).

The ministry of Jesus gives us, then, no reason to assume that every instance of suffering implies a sin for which it is divine punishment. But that same ministry teaches, even encourages us not to sever the connection between sickness and sin. We are not to imagine that the compassionate God Who comes to us in Jesus encounters us any other way than in and through the *krisis* of judgment upon sin and the afflictions to which sinners are heir. Nor need we fear that recognizing such truths will dry up the wellsprings of Christian compassion. Shelp and Sunderland suggest that those who think of God as a “dispenser of judgment” will be unlikely to take steps to overcome the sickness thought to have been sent by God.¹² That this is manifest nonsense ought to be clear from much of Christian history. Indeed, they themselves are unable to hew consistently to such a line. They note, for example, that for the early Christians (who certainly had not entirely jettisoned a belief connecting sickness with divine judgment) it was a duty to attend the sick.¹³ They recognize that the “record of the church’s ministries of visitation, health care, and asylum demonstrates the seriousness with which the biblical examples and admonitions have been taken.”¹⁴ The problem with the “sickness as punishment” view cannot be, then, that it necessarily destroys or undermines compassion in those who hold it, and the theological task is not exhausted in speaking of compassion. As important as the message of compassion is, as surely as it must be the ultimate word Christians have to speak about the God revealed in Jesus, theological ethics calls for something more. It requires that we not refrain entirely from thinking about divine judgment upon sin.

If a quick move to the language of compassion is insufficient to satisfy the demands of ethical reflection, what shall we say about that other common move: that AIDS is divine judgment visited upon a sinner? We cannot, I think, simply deny all connection between behavior and illness. It is true enough that sickness often strikes almost at random — that is part

of its pathos and tragedy, part of the reason for holding that not all physical suffering can be directly correlated with moral evil, part of the argument often given for holding that a society should ensure medical care to any of its members stricken with disease. But it is also true that this is not always the case. Not all illness strikes at random. The incidence of lung cancer (and some other sicknesses) is strikingly correlated with cigarette smoking. And there's not much point in denying that we can discern similar connections between illness and behavior in the case of AIDS. Not in every instance, of course, just as it's quite possible for one who never smoked to get lung cancer, but still, in far too many instances simply to deny the connection. The spread of AIDS, at least in this country, has been in large part associated with behavior Christians have not traditionally endorsed — abuse of drugs, homosexual activity. And even granting what some think we have gradually learned — that the disease may become widespread among those who are heterosexual and are not drug abusers — this hardly solves the moral problem.¹⁵ For AIDS remains a sexually transmitted disease, and its incidence is inevitably correlated with sexual promiscuity. The greater the number of sexual contacts, the greater the likelihood of transmission of the disease. If anything about it is certain, that is, and Christian thought has never endorsed casual sexual contact or promiscuity.

A Piece About Plague

In order to detach ourselves a little from the clamor of current concerns and pressures, to get a little critical distance on this problem, I want to start somewhere else — with perhaps the most famous piece ever written about plague: Daniel Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year*.¹⁶ The *Journal* purports to have been written by a citizen of London, a saddler who had remained in the city throughout the great plague of 1665. One episode related by the saddler offers us a useful way to consider the problem of sickness as visitation for sin. The saddler is writing about some men at a tavern — men who, to his shock and dismay, mock and make fun of the grief of those mourning the death of loved ones in the plague. And contemplating their lack of compassion and their almost barbaric attitude toward the mourners, Defoe's narrator writes:

I went home, indeed, grieved and afflicted in my mind at the abominable wickedness of those men, not doubting, however, that they would be made dreadful examples of God's justice; for I looked upon this dismal time to be a particular season of Divine vengeance, and that God would on this occasion single out the proper objects of His displeasure in a more especial and remarkable manner than at another time; and that though I did believe that many good people would, and did, fall in the common calamity, and that it was no certain rule to judge of the eternal state of any one by their being distinguished in such a time of general destruction neither one way or other, yet, I say, it could not but seem reasonable to believe that God would not think fit to spare by His mercy such open declared enemies, that should insult His name and Being, defy His

vengeance, and mock at His worship and worshippers at such a time; no, not though His mercy had thought fit to bear with and spare them at other times; that this was a day of visitation, a day of God's anger, and those words came into my thought, Jer. v. 9: "Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: and shall not My soul be avenged of such a nation as this?"¹⁷

This is an instructive passage. On the one hand, the saddler calls for compassion toward those who suffer, and he faults the men at the tavern precisely for their failure to show such compassion. But, on the other hand, this does not lead him simply to issue an undifferentiated call for compassion or acceptance. Quite the contrary. He *does* believe that sin brings divine punishment — and he concludes, therefore, that the plague will almost certainly fall upon those mocking men who so richly deserve such punishment.

Almost certainly. He does not believe that we can always trace a direct connection between sin and punishment. It is, he says, "no certain rule to judge of the eternal state of any one by their being distinguished in such a time of general destruction neither one way or other." He knows that the divine will uses suffering for more purposes than retribution. And he is, of course, willing to grant that God may, in His mercy, spare those who deserve punishment. He does not, therefore, imagine that our penultimate judgments can coincide perfectly with God's ultimate judgment. He sees all this — yet does not permit it entirely to paralyze his power of moral judgment. There are evils which seem to him to cry out for judgment — even, divine judgment. And this is, I think, the great strength of Defoe's saddler. He manages to hold together compassion and moral judgment. Our tendency, by contrast, is either to judge without compassion or to display a compassion that cuts the nerve of all moral judgment.

The tension between these is written into our Scriptures. From the Book of Job, we might well learn how hazardous are our attempts to trace God's judgment within nature or history, and we might be moved to compassion for human suffering. But we ought not forget that there is another piece of Wisdom literature within the canon. And the Book of Proverbs is rather more confident than Job that those who turn away from Wisdom "shall eat the fruit of their way" (1:31) and be "killed by their turning away" (1:32), whereas those who listen to Wisdom "will dwell secure and will be at ease, without dread of evil" (1:33). How ought we deal, theologically, with this tension?

A Plea for Compassion

Shelp and Sunderland, whose plea is for compassion, are themselves willing to say that illness "is a sign of disorder in God's creation" and "evidence of the activity of evil".¹⁸ They accept, evidently, some kind of cosmic relation between sin and sickness, though rejecting any conception of sickness as more direct divine visitation and judgment for sin. I do not wish to deny the profound theological truth that may be articulated in such

a view: All of us, when ill, suffer the fate of sinners in the sense that we “have fallen into death’s realm of power”.¹⁹ But such a view, even if theologically profound, is not necessarily our best guide for rendering judgment — for the decisions theological ethics requires. Commenting on Jesus’ reaction to the story in Luke 13, of the Galileans Pilate killed, William Countryman writes: “The differences of human merit, if they exist at all, are so slight in God’s eyes as to be of no use in governing the world.”²⁰ But exactly the opposite is true. These differences are surely not to be equated with ultimate difference of status before God, but they may sometimes mean a great deal when it comes to governing the world or thinking about what is just or unjust, right or wrong. Too hasty an appeal to the sinful condition we all share is one of the time-honored ways of erasing all moral distinctions from human life. Among the ironies Reinhold Niebuhr so deftly perceived, this was one of the most important.

The Pauline assertion: “For there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:22,23) is an indispensable expression of the Christian understanding of sin. Yet it is quite apparent that this assertion imperils and seems to weaken all moral judgments which deal with the ‘nicely calculated less and more’ of justice and goodness as revealed in the relativities of history. It seems to inhibit preferences between the oppressor and his victim, . . . between the debauched sensualist and the self-disciplined worker . . . Theologies . . . which threaten to destroy all relative moral judgments by their exclusive emphasis upon the ultimate religious fact of the sinfulness of all men, are rightly suspected of imperilling relative moral achievements of history.²¹

The point is a simple one to which Niebuhr, in fact, constantly returned in his writings: The ultimate religious truths for Christians are the equal sinfulness of all humans, and the forgiving compassion of God. But if we permit these ultimate truths to undermine or paralyze our capacity to render penultimate judgment, we fail to say all that we should about God’s governance of our world, God’s stake in our world, and God’s will for our world. Human reason, informed and transformed by faith, can render moral judgment which, though penultimate, is related to God’s own judgment. The Book of Job at times threatens to sever completely that connection. The Book of Proverbs comes close to recognizing no distinction between our penultimate and God’s ultimate judgment. We must affirm both connection *and* distinction.

The proper tone is easier to illustrate than to describe. But here is an illustration, from Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address:

Neither party expected for the war, the magnitude, or the duration, which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the *cause* of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God’s assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men’s faces; but let us judge not that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. “Woe unto the world

because of offences for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offences which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South, this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offence came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a Living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope — fervently do we pray — that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue, until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "the judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether."²²

These are the words of a man steeped in the Bible, and they indicate how much our present-day biblical illiteracy has cost us both in loving treatment of our language and in moral insight. Lincoln does not claim to know exactly how God's judgments will work themselves out, but he believes he has discerned, at least dimly, the working of God's providential governance within human history. He does not pretend that any of us can be completely free of the need for confession and repentance, but that realization does not cut the nerve of his ability to render moral judgment and to see slavery as an offense that merits divine judgment and is receiving it within our history.

One might ask, or even demand, at this point more than an illustration — a system or method for making such judgments. But I think such a request or demand would be misplaced. What we need is not a method, and I doubt that Lincoln had one. What we need are powers or moral discernment, which he may have had in considerable measure. The ability to discern an evil as "the woe due to those" through whom offense has come, to see the providential hand of God at work, cannot be made subject to any method. Karl Barth quite rightly emphasized that Christian belief in providence is faith in the strictest sense: that it is faith in God, and "no human conception of the cosmic process can replace God as the object of belief in providence."²³ This is what Barth wrote:

The belief in God's providence undoubtedly consists in the fact that man is freed to see this rule of God in world-occurrence This does not mean that faith becomes sight. It will know how to separate itself from a supposed and arrogant and certainly deceptive sight. Yet this does not mean that it is blind When a man believes in God's providence, he does not know only *in abstracto* and generally that God is over all things and all things are in His hand, but he continually sees something of the work of this hand, and may continually see God's will and purpose in very definite events, relationships, connexions and changes in this history of created being.²⁴

That I take to be the theological insight and claim illustrated by Lincoln's words about our attempts to probe the providence of the "Living God." Divine governance — both rule and judgment — of our world means that the believer is set free to discern God's rule in history. It does not mean, as Barth says, that we can never be mistaken in our attempts to do so. But it

does mean, as Barth also says, that the believer is not blind. This power of discernment comes not from any method or philosophy of history. Its source, Barth writes, is far more simple, and he quotes Psalm 119:105: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." This word can enable the believer to see — "to see something of God's rule, not His universal plan or total view, but God Himself at work at various points."²⁵

Seek the 'Krisis'

We must therefore not simply plead blindness. We must seek to discern the *krisis* that is present in the AIDS crisis. Herbert Butterfield, the eminent English historian, once wrote that "we can hardly avoid the conclusion that moral defects have something to do with the catastrophes that take place" in history.²⁶ He affirmed, that is, the connection between sin and suffering. But what we should conclude, Butterfield held, is that when great suffering comes — when a crisis occurs — it is not simply this or that person who is guilty. It may be that, but also something more: "an inadequacy in human nature itself which comes under judgment".²⁷ Perhaps that should ring true for us in the present crisis atmosphere surrounding AIDS. The best our culture seems able to manage in response to such a crisis is instruction about "safe sex," instruction which deliberately brackets moral considerations and norms, instruction which — by excluding morality — dooms itself to misunderstanding the significance of sexuality for human personhood. We have accepted — and, often, glorified — promiscuity. Perhaps we should, in an honest moment, wonder whether divine *krisis* may not be working its way in our history. Perhaps we cannot, with impunity, regard sex simply as a "natural function". Perhaps we cannot, with impunity, ignore what natural reason illumined by faith has discerned about the goods toward which our sexuality is directed — goods quite different from the self-fulfillment our culture exalts: the good of faithful companionship between those who, though different, are pledged to union; the good of children who call us away from our individual pursuits in order to serve the next generation; the good of chastity, whereby our appetites are disciplined and transformed.

Only then — as we discern the divine *krisis* — are we truly prepared to speak of compassion. Only then can we appreciate the One Who "suffers with" our humanity gone astray by entering into and bearing that divine *krisis*. We can contemplate with some understanding, but with still greater awe, the "great exchange" that takes place between the sinner and the sinless one. Having discerned, or so he thought, divine judgment within history, Herbert Butterfield went one step further. He pointed to the Christian claim, deeply rooted in the Hebrew prophets, that the common catastrophes of human life — the burdens of our shared sinful nature — are borne by One Who suffers vicariously.²⁸ Only such vicariousness can finally make sense of the human drama and give us confidence to believe

that the judgments of history — even the divine *krisis* under which we may live today — are an interim report and not the final judgment itself.²⁹

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3. Brown, Raymond E., S. S., *The Gospel According to John (i-xii)*. The Anchor Bible. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966), p. cxvii.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 345.
5. Shelp, Earl E. and Sunderland, Ronald, *AIDS and the Church* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1987).
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 69f.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
8. *Ibid.*
9. It is, therefore, difficult to understand what Shelp and Sunderland mean when they write: "Jesus rejected the notion that God had deliberately disabled this man — and, conceivably others — on account of sin, or merely to provide an opportunity to demonstrate God's power" (p. 62).
10. Shelp and Sunderland, p. 55.
11. Cf. D. E. Nineham, *The Gospel of Mark* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), p. 84: "The true significance of all the words and mighty works of Jesus is that they 'proclaim' . . . and usher in the kingdom. Any response to them, however favourable, which does not recognize that as the essential truth about them is unacceptable . . ." Cf. also C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (Cambridge University Press, 1966), p. 83: "According to Jesus himself his miracles are the activity of God, wrought by God's Spirit or 'finger', and the manifestation of God's kingdom . . ." Cranfield does make clear (p. 85) that compassionate response to particular need is not to be ruled out as a motive for Jesus' healing miracles. (Cf. also Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke* (NY: Harper & Row, 1961), p. 192.) "The part played by miracle in Luke is not adequately explained by reference to a 'seeking for wonders'. It is true that this is a feature of the age, which Luke shares, but we must not overlook the fact that he seeks to include the Christological aspect of miracle within the framework of his general conception. Jesus' deeds are for Luke the evidence of the time of salvation, which has 'arrived' with Christ."
12. Shelp and Sunderland, pp. 18, 116.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
15. This premise, now commonly granted, may prove incorrect. Cf. Michael A. Fumento, "AIDS: Are Heterosexuals at Risk?" *Commentary* (Nov., 1987), pp. 21-27.
16. Defoe, Daniel, *A Journal of the Plague Year Written by a Citizen Who Continued All the While in London* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1908). Everyman's Library Edition.
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19. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
20. Countryman, L. William, "The AIDS Crisis: Theological and Ethical Reflections," *Anglican Theological Review*, 69 (April, 1987), p. 126. Jesus knows better. He does transgress the impurity boundaries — as, for example, in healing lepers. But He also recognizes the limits within which governing authorities must work in their attempts to do justice, and He sends the cleansed lepers to the priests as the purity laws require.
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26. H. Butterfield, *Christianity and History* (NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), p. 53.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 86f.
29. My thanks to David H. Smith and Ronald Thiemann for their comments on an earlier draft of this essay.

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