

Doing theology is like rabbit-hunting (from the rabbit's point of view). When the hunter spots a rabbit he just makes himself comfortable on the nearest log, gets his gun ready, and then waits for the rabbit to come by, because rabbits run in circles.

- But there are important differences: although, like the rabbit, the theologian circles the same terrain many times as the years pass, each time s/he spots some new landmarks, which grow in clarity each time we pass them.
- And with each pass, the relationship of the landmarks to each other becomes clearer, so that the overall structure of theology begins to take shape, as the dependence of all of its parts on each other become clearer. Here are ten landmarks or insights which have marked the theological work of the rabbit named John Dwyer.

- 1 Scripture is the word of God, and God is really and powerfully present in his word.
- 2 The historical and critical reading of scripture is, at the same time, the most spiritual.
 - 2.1 This way of reading scripture shows that Paul's Christ of faith is the same person as the Jesus of history who emerges from a critical reading of Mark and of the Q tradition.
- 3 Church and scripture are two sides of the same event.
 - 3.1 The coming-to-be of scripture is the same event as the coming-to-be of the church.
 - 3.2 God's word in scripture judges the church till the end of time.
- 4 Jesus involves and implicates God in everything he says and does. He does not just reveal what had been decided and fixed in eternity; rather, in him, his words, and his actions, God really enters history, does something new, becomes someone new.
- 5 Faith is the act of knowing God by letting him be the one he wants to be for us.
 - 5.1 Faith is not a religious act made by a person who is already fully human. Without faith, full humanity eludes us.
 - 5.2 But it is possible to know God and to have saving faith without knowing his name, and the same is true of knowing Jesus; he can be known anonymously, i.e. without knowing his

name.

- 5.3 These «non-religious» versions of faith become real when we recognize the absolute claims which human values make on us and specifically, when we recognize the absolute and inalienable dignity of every human being.
- 5.4 The word «absolute» implies the rejection of moral relativism («it all depends on the way you feel» or «just do what you feel is right»). Such relativism could be called «the Auschwitz principle of morality.»
- 6 The cross is not the story of how a debt of punishment was paid to God; it is the story of how God participated in the brokenness of the human situation and stripped it of its destructive power.
 - 6.1 Theories which see the cross as an act of making satisfaction or reparation or propitiation to God have no NT basis, and they have created a distorted picture of God..
- 7 God's unconditional acceptance of us in Jesus Christ broke the power of sin and gives us true freedom.
 - 7.1 God's acceptance frees us from the prevalent misunderstanding of freedom, which sees it as the power to do what we feel like, and therefore the power to destroy the lives of others and our own lives.
 - 7.2 True freedom is the power to fashion the selves that God wants us to be and empowers us to be.
- 8 The church is the *body* of Christ in the sense that it plays the same role in history that his physical body played during his life on earth: it is the way he remains in communion and communication with his followers.
- 9 In moral theology, a principle of great importance is «you play the hand you've been dealt.»
 - 9.1 This principle overrides all talk about actions being «objectively sinful» etc.
- 10 The teaching of churchmen becomes the teaching of the church only when it is *received* by the faithful.
 - 10.1 The documents of the magisterium should be read historically and critically.