



St Mark's
Review

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No. 232, July 2015 (2)

Perspectives on disability



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Editorial

In a previous role, when I was in contact with a large network of Anglican churches, I embarked with some others upon a magnificent ideal: we would help these churches become friendly to people with disability. Like most idealists, we were woefully underprepared for what we found.

We surveyed these churches and found much well-meaning intention-
alism. ‘Of course we’re friendly to people with disability,’ was a common response, ‘because we’d welcome them if they came. But we never see any.’ ‘Do you have a ramp out the front, so that they can get in? Do you have an Auslan interpreter and a hearing loop, so that they can understand?’ ‘No,’ came the typical reply, ‘we don’t need all that, because we don’t have any people with disability.’

Like good idealists, we attempted this ‘project’ with almost no resources beyond high-minded charity; and, as I discovered to my humiliation, few intellectual and theological resources either. I could barely even conceptualise the fact that ‘people with disability’ encompassed many more than those in need of ramps and loops.

At least during this process we discovered *Luke 14*, a knowledgeable group who provide churches with practical manuals on making church plant accessible; tips for welcomers; and materials that assist in shifting attitudes within church communities. (In this volume, Louise Gosbell introduces *Luke 14* by way of a reexamination of that biblical chapter. She rejects later spiritualisations of it, and shows how its firm footing in the experience of first-century disability retains a call upon us today for hospitality and welcome to all comers.)

Of course, we also found exceptions to the norm: churches where many people with disability were simply other people at church, in buildings and cultures designed to include them. But in general, the whole episode revealed how far Christian communities have drifted from the reflex inclusivity of the early Christian centuries, when marginalised people were drawn to churches as their most obvious place of belonging.

This edition of *St Mark’s Review* is designed to help us begin again. It seeks to regard people with disability from several perspectives, so that

whoever you are, you can connect with others in new ways. If you are a person with disability, we hope this edition of *St Mark's Review* will equip you better to communicate and translate your situation, and the self that you inhabit. If you don't yet have an obvious disability, we hope this edition will enable you to reframe the way you engage with those who do. Finally, may it help prepare you for the time when you, like almost all of us, will experience disability in the years prior to your death.

The Old and New Testaments are shot through with powerful injunctions to embrace and assist those whom Jesus described as the 'poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind' (Luke 14:13). Yet sustained theological thinking about disability is a relatively recent phenomenon. Several contributors in this volume challenge 'ableist' readings of the Bible, which degenerate into forms of charity-paternalism toward—or the medicalisation of—people with disability. Several contributors also take issue with a dominant alternative to those models, the 'social constructivist' approach to disability, where the able-bodied become in essence the 'disablers' of others, by propelling them into the role of 'the disabled'.

Whatever kernels of truth are contained in these 'ableist' and 'medicalised' models, none of them is properly theological. Several seminal articles here wrestle theologically to discern whatever may be disclosed by God about the being of people with disability. Two 'poles' turn out to recur in this discussion. The L'Arche community of Jean Vanier is uniformly regarded as theologically exemplary in important respects. Nancy Eiesland's influential 'disabled God' theology, which gives due attention to the brokenness of Christ on the cross and in the Eucharist, nonetheless attracts some robust engagement.

Amos Yong of Fuller Theological Seminary lays out some important categories of discourse in disability, and then calls for a much more serious account of the Spirit's eschatological work to describe the restoration of people in all our uniqueness—whether or not we regard ourselves as having a disability—into the life of God. A rising young Australian theologian, Jacqueline Clark, examines Eiesland and Yong's accounts from the perspective of classic Trinitarian theology, and invites us to consider how the fecundity of God's loving simplicity might be better news for people with disability than the well-intentioned 'conflations' of economic and immanent Trinity that she sees in the contemporary literature.

John Swinton of the University of Aberdeen reminds us that in the particular disability of dementia, no properly theological account should

allow itself to be cornered into the conceit of the Lockean autobiographical self, with its privileging of our cognitive and rational faculties. Despite our ‘hyper-cognitive society’, as Swinton puts it, ‘knowing God, like loving our family ... is something that we do with the whole of our bodies.’ Swinton shows how easily this enfranchisement of the body is seen in New Testament anthropology. There are peculiarly modern forms of exclusion in our failure to regard the embodiment of others.

This burgeoning scholarship on the theology of disability coincides with the introduction of Australia’s groundbreaking National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Three significant articles unveil and engage with the NDIS. These treatments orient us to the strengths of its operation, to narratives around disability of which we should be aware, and to what such a scheme can never achieve. An astute reading of these treatments will enable Australian Christians to position themselves more effectively in this new social landscape.

For economist Brendan Long, the NDIS is a ‘Good News’ story. Long makes the case for the economic soundness of the NDIS. (He reminds us how, even in this case where grassroots support and ethically motivated goodwill carried the cause forward, it was finally a set of strong economic arguments that warranted the scheme’s adoption.) For Jacqui Hiller-Broughton and Geoff Broughton, of interest is the different narrative surrounding the inception of the NDIS as compared to the unsuccessful attempt to implement an equivalent in the 1970s. In the earlier case, the narrative was centralist and bureaucratic; in the recent case, a more personalist narrative of care. For all of these authors, the NDIS offers the opportunity for churches and theologians to engage with care in new ways.

This opportunity, however, could easily be squandered, particularly given the passivity of Australian Christians towards care once government intervenes in a social space. A searching and deeply personal article by Shane Clifton, who received a disabling injury as an adult, shows that the NDIS actually speaks back to churches that which churches should, arguably, have already known. For Clifton, ‘[i]t would certainly be an achievement if engaging with disability caused the cultural values of individualism to be reframed by notions of interdependence ... [T]hese are themes that are (or should be) central to the identity of the church, and it is precisely here that the church has opportunity to speak to and even challenge and reframe the society of which we are a part. Of course, this will only be possible if we model what

we preach.' In this respect, Monica Short's article reminds us that, from an Australian social work perspective, there is not a great deal of intelligent and supportive inclusion of people with disability on the Australian Anglican landscape, even if some bright spots are evident.

Religions, it seems, change. We may be a long way from the glory days of the early Jesus-movement, when apologists could slyly show up Romans by pointing to the radical revaluation of individual humanity as practised in myriad ways by Christians. This drift is the tenor of the contribution in this edition by Brian Brock of the University of Aberdeen. Brock lays out some important tropes in recent theological ethical discourse: that modern conceptions of 'bioethics' do little service in upholding the matrices of care that we have inherited, and how the theological emergence of human solidarity unpinned these matrices of care. His groundbreaking conclusions are, first, that the existence of disabled people is not to be regarded as a special epiphany, but as another straightforward aspect of human solidarity. People with disability are, simply, us. Engaging the thought of Stanley Hauerwas with that of John Vanier, he discerns that actually, the natural affection of family toward people with disability remains a person's best bet, rather than the practices of the Church. Our Church may now have its textual tradition, but no real practical tradition of caring.

This sad terminus returns me to the project above. It turns out that we were discovering a church culture whose capacity in this regard had reached a low ebb, despite its textual traditions and its well-intentioned idealist aspirations. That is a conclusion echoed in these pages by Brock, Clifton, Short, the Broughtons and Long.

It could be regarded as a difficult or depressing conclusion. However, a problem can only begin to be solved once it has been accurately observed. And, as in all things with the broken and spiritually disabled people of God, the restoration of our careful inclusion of people with disability may begin with some restoration of our selves, under the fecund God who gave us Jesus Christ and still graciously gives the Spirit.

May these pages give back to us the beginnings of what we need to find: new practices of connection with these several others, and they with us.

Andrew Cameron
Chair, Editorial Committee, *St Mark's Review*
Director, St Mark's National Theological Centre

Disability, the human condition, and the Spirit of the eschatological long run

Toward a pneumatological theology of disability¹

Amos Yong

The task of developing a truly viable Christian theology of disability is still in its infancy.² The goal of this essay is threefold: first, to explain why we have not made much progress toward a Christian theology of disability by explicating the dominant biblical motifs that have informed traditional Christian views of disability; second, to describe how recent Christian approaches to theology of disability such as Nancy Eiesland's *The Disabled God* (1994) have begun the important task of exploring new understandings of disability more appropriate to our time; and third, to provide what I call a 'pneumatological assist' to Eiesland's model that appreciates her contributions but also retrieves, reappropriates, and revises neglected biblical themes, especially

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those which concern the eschatological hope at the heart of Christian faith. The three main sections that follow engage these objectives in order.

The Bible and disability: anticipating the biomedical and socio-moral paradigms

While there has been a noticeable shift in the rhetoric and framework of Christian theology of disability over the past generation from a biomedical to a social understanding, I suggest that both models have deeply biblical roots. In this section, I will explicate the scriptural underpinnings of both approaches in order to situate the entire project of Christian theology of disability at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Up until recently, most Christian theologies of disability have been framed predominantly by biomedical categories. At the heart of the biomedical paradigm is the notion that disability is a bodily affliction that is part and parcel of life in a fallen and imperfect creation.³ In the Hebrew Bible, the book of Job suggests that there are cosmological forces such as *ha satan* (the accuser) which are responsible for our bodily ills (cf. also Mk. 3:22–26), and that enduring the suffering body is part of the fallen human condition.⁴ Building on this, the New Testament contrasts the mortal body of the present life with the immortal body of the afterlife. Whereas the fallen human body is perishable, dishonorable, and weak, the resurrection body is imperishable, glorious, and powerful (1 Corinthians 15:42–44). In this framework, disability is a bodily aberration which calls forth a Job-like response, albeit one that is now informed by the hope of the redemption of the body:

So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal. For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (2 Corinthians 4:16–5:1).⁵

The life and ministry of Jesus understood in its plainest sense does not seem to question this biomedical understanding of disability. Central to the

gospel as announced and lived by Jesus is the healing of the human body as a sign of the coming kingdom. In response to the disciples of John the Baptist who were sent to ask if Jesus was the one to come, Jesus answered: ‘Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me’’ (Luke 7:22–23). Four comments are pertinent in this regard. First, disabilities are bodily conditions suffered by individuals.⁶ Second, the good news—the *evangelion*—is that persons with disabilities can experience healing, the redemption of their bodies. Third, read within the larger context of Luke and the other synoptic gospels, Jesus’ healing of disabled bodies is not only a sign of the in-breaking of the coming kingdom into the present world, but also a sign of the fulfillment of the promised restoration of Israel.⁷ This means that the ‘correction’ of bodily aberrations is not only a mark of the life to come, but also to be expected wherever Jesus’ power is active in the present life. Finally, then, the followers of Jesus who minister in his name may also be expected to be conduits of the healing power of God. So while we live in a fallen world characterised by the disabled body, the gospel announces the arrival of the redeemed world characterised by the restored body.

This restoration of Israel foretold by the prophets of old also included, of course, the restoration of the disabled body. Ancient Israel was led to expect that in the Day of the Lord, ‘the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert’ (Isaiah 35:5–6). While some⁸ might wish to argue that this and other passages like it throughout the Bible should be read metaphorically rather than literally, Christian theologies of disability that rely on the plain sense of the Bible would be less likely to adopt such an interpretation given the association of disability with suffering; the New Testament’s insistence that there will be no mourning, crying, or pain in the world to come (cf. Revelation 21:4); and the uninterrogated ableist assumptions most readers bring to the text.

The convergence of these biblical motifs has resulted in a view of disability as an affliction located in the individual body. The proper able-bodied Christian response is to pray for the healing of persons with disabilities, and also to alleviate as much suffering as possible in anticipation of the

eschatological healing of God.⁹ In modern times, medicine and medical technology are gifts of God that mediate the healing of the disabled body. Hence, I suggest that at least the modern religious or theological perspective which localizes disability as a biological and medical condition is but an extension of the more ancient biblical idea of disability as a bodily affliction characteristic of life in a fallen world.

More recently, social models of disability have arisen in prominence.¹⁰ In contrast to biomedical approaches that emphasise disability in individual and bodily terms, social views of disability focus on how oppressive attitudes, policies, and structures discriminate against persons who are constituted by different physical and mental capacities. In other words, bodily impairments are only disabling within a wider social matrix. I suggest, however, that contemporary social views of disability also have antecedents in the world of the Bible wherein disabilities (more accurately: impairments) have social implications and moral consequences.

To see how this is the case, consider first how persons with disabilities were excluded from the social and religious institutions of Israel. Most obvious and long-repeated in the history of Jewish and Christian thought is the Levitical injunction against priests with disabilities serving the sacrificial offering:

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to Aaron and say: No one of your offspring throughout their generations who has a blemish may approach to offer the food of his God. For no one who has a blemish shall draw near, one who is blind or lame, or one who has a mutilated face or a limb too long, or one who has a broken foot or a broken hand, or a hunchback, or a dwarf, or a man with a blemish in his eyes or an itching disease or scabs or crushed testicles. No descendant of Aaron the priest who has a blemish shall come near to offer the Lord's offerings by fire; since he has a blemish, he shall not come near to offer the food of his God. He may eat the food of his God, of the most holy as well as of the holy. But he shall not come near the curtain or approach the altar, because he has a blemish, that he may not profane my sanctuaries; for I am the LORD; I sanctify them (Leviticus 21:16–23).

It is important to note that persons with disabilities were not barred from the priesthood or from eating the priestly meals, but only from offering the sacrifices. Further, the rabbinic tradition interpreted this set of injunctions in terms of disabilities either being so obvious or as causing behavioral peculiarities such that the people are distracted from the solemnity of the liturgy.¹¹ Still, most important is the rationale that the altar of the Lord is not to be profaned by the blemishes of persons with disabilities. Physical impairments become one of the decisive criteria that prohibit entry into YHWH's holy presence.

Of course, this prohibition is but only one part of the Levitical purity code. Persons with physical blemishes were not only a specially segregated class in regard to the sacrificial offering, but were also subject to the laws of uncleanness related to childbirth, contagious skin diseases, and bodily discharges, all of which applied to everyone. Within the Levitical framework, then, physical impairments and blemishes become socially defining and stigmatizing. At best, persons with disabilities were marginalised from central aspects of ancient Israel's social and religious activities; at worst, they were excluded altogether.

But we have only begun. While disability was understood to be no respecter of righteous persons (as in the case of Job), more often than not disability was connected to the presence of sin in the life of the individual or of his or her ancestors. Not only did YHWH promise to visit the sins of the parents 'the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me' (Ex. 20:5; cf. Deut. 5:9), but the curses for disobedience clearly included incurable boils, ulcers, scurvy, blindness, mental illnesses, and many other kinds of lasting afflictions, maladies, and impairing conditions (Deut. 28:20ff.). In this way, the connections between preexistent sin, divine punishment, and disability were made plain. This was, of course, the obvious diagnosis of Job's friends: that hidden sin had brought about his physical afflictions. And although Jesus on one occasion denied that a man's blindness was due to preexistent sin (John 9:3), on another occasion he seemed to accept the connections between a man's lifelong invalidity and his sin (John 5:14). Hence disability becomes a physical marker (a curse) that is religiously and theologically significant (the punishment for sin).

In this context, disability also serves as a moral signifier. Persons with disabilities were not only ritually unclean and socially stigmatized, but they were also morally dubious. For ancient Israel, discourses of disability

reflected social attitudes and practices regarding the separation of 'insiders' (the ritually clean and morally upright) from 'outsiders' (the unclean and the malefactor). In many ways, these exclusionary discourses in the biblical world foreshadow and even fuel the oppression of persons with disabilities that contemporary social models of disability are calling attention to.

Put in contemporary parlance, then, I suggest that the dominant rhetoric of disability in the Bible anticipates both biomedical definitions that emphasise the curing of individual impairments on the one hand, and social-constructivist models that highlight the socio-political oppression produced by the discourses of disability on the other. There is certainly overlap between these two biblical perspectives: one that descriptively calls attention to various dysfunctions that plague the human condition (thereby occasioning the manifestation of God's healing power) and the other that equates disabilities with moral defectiveness or sinfulness (thereby demarcating the holiness of YHWH from that which is unholy). The questions today are manifold: Are these our only options for a contemporary theology of disability? Even if not, should these remain as the primary framework around which to construct a contemporary theology of disability? Or are there alternative biblical resources from which to rethink theology of disability in our time?

Nancy Eiesland's *The Disabled God*: elements of a new liberatory theology of disability

The operative question motivating this paper concerns the possibilities of developing an alternative mode of theologising disability that includes but is not limited by the aforementioned traditional readings of the biblical narrative. Prominent and helpful in the literature on religion and disability is Nancy Eiesland's model of Jesus Christ as the 'disabled God'. In what follows I will show how Eiesland creatively develops the social model in ways that make a positive political difference for persons with disabilities, even as I identify the omissions in her approach that will set up my own contribution in the final section of this essay.

In contrast to social constructions of disability which are marginalising and oppressive of persons with disabilities, Eiesland's goal as a sociologist of religion and theologian is an inclusive and 'liberatory theology of disability' (the subtitle of her book). Toward this end, Eiesland suggests, first, that any theology of disability cannot only speak *to* persons with disabilities, but must

also speak *with* them and, more specifically, learn from them. This means, second, that the dominant biblical motif of disability as a bodily condition is retrieved but revised at one crucial point: rather than understood primarily in terms of disability afflicting the body, disability becomes a bodily site of alternative knowledge. Here, Eiesland draws not only on her lifelong experience of disability (from a degenerative bone disease), but also from the experiences of others as well—Diane DeVries, a congenital amputee, and Nancy Mairs, who self-identifies as one crippled by multiple sclerosis.¹² In contrast to the traditional biomedical view of individuals with disabilities as passive recipients of the charity of the able-bodied, Eiesland emphasizes persons with disabilities are historical agents and producers of knowledge in their own right.

This strategy also leads Eiesland to retrieve the traditional social view of disabilities but revise it in the direction of being politically liberative. Because disabilities are socially and environmentally negotiated, the experience of disability is never isolated but is always interpersonal and institutionally situated. Hence Eiesland goes beyond describing the social reality of disability to articulating a socio-political approach that transforms our interpersonal and institutional lives into one of inclusion. Whereas both society and church have been largely inaccessible to persons with disabilities, a new kind of ‘body politics’ needs to be formulated that not only critiques and resists the segregation, stigmatisation, and discrimination of the status quo against persons with disabilities, but also frees up our communities, institutions, and churches to become sites of healing for all persons.

Yet Eiesland’s project is not merely political, but is also deeply theological. She recognizes that apart from a revised theology of disability, reforms of ecclesial politics and practices will remain largely ineffective. Hence an inclusive ecclesiology cannot be content to merely revise the traditional biblical theologies of disabilities since they are too deeply shaped by the motifs of bodily affliction, sin and punishment, and exclusion emergent from a plain-sense or ableist reading of scripture. So what we need is a new theological paradigm, one which locates disability not only in human bodies but also in the very life of God.

Eiesland’s proposal derives from the truth ‘embodied in the image of Jesus Christ, the disabled God.’¹³ This image is informed along three lines of christological reflection. First, the incarnation of the Son of God means that Jesus ‘had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect’

(Heb. 2:17), without comeliness, despised and rejected, even to the point of an ignominious death on the cross. This christologically defined *imago Dei* would thus be inclusive rather than exclusive of the human experience of disability. Second, and building on the first, Jesus' resurrected body also bore the marks of impairment left by the sword in his side and by the nails in his hands and feet (Luke 24:39–40 and John 20:24–28). This subverts any notion that the body is resurrected according to idealised notions of human perfection. Finally, the perennial Christian celebration of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ in the Eucharist also calls attention to the brokenness of the body of 'the disabled God.' Christ's broken body not only unites the fragmented ecclesial body, but also heals the brokenness of our individual bodies precisely through including each person around the Eucharistic fellowship regardless of his or her in/ability.

The result is, contrary to the biomedical definition of disability derived from the Bible, that persons with disabilities also bear the image of God just as Jesus represents the fullness of that image and its restoration to the human race. Further, contrary to social-constructions of disability in ancient Israel, persons with disabilities can and should be fully included in the redeemed community of God, not only as 'weaker' members, but also as full participants who minister out of their 'weaknesses' even as Jesus saves through the cross and resurrection. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Jesus Christ as the 'disabled God' has theological implications about divine holiness as including rather than excluding impairing conditions. Persons with physical and mental impairments are healed not only after they are cured (as is suggested by the gospel pericopes and the visions of the Hebrew prophets) but insofar as they included by Jesus in his parable of the eschatological banquet just as they are (cf. Luke 14:15–24).

The value of Eiesland's model has been widely recognized. It may be less helpful, however, with regard to the eschatological hope to which Christian life and faith is oriented. In perhaps the only place in her book where she expresses her eschatological views, Eiesland presents the following implicit revisioning of the biblical scene of the throne in heaven (Revelation 4):

I had waited for a mighty revelation of God. But my epiphany bore little resemblance to the God I was expecting or the God of my dreams. I saw God in a sip-puff wheelchair, that is, the chair used mostly by quadriplegics enabling them to

maneuver by blowing and sucking on a strawlike device. Not an omnipotent, self-sufficient God, but neither a pitiable, suffering servant. In this moment, I beheld God as a survivor, un pitying and forthright. I recognised the incarnate Christ in the image of those judged ‘not feasible,’ ‘unemployable,’ with ‘questionable quality of life.’ Here was God for me.¹⁴

When combined with the biblical witness to the impairments on Jesus’ resurrected body, Eiesland’s model suggests (without requiring, necessarily) that the bodily impairments of this present life may extend into the next. On the one hand, this ‘carryover’ signifies both that God accepts human beings just as they are, disabilities notwithstanding, and that redemption means not the dissolution of our personal identities forged in this life but their transformation. On the other hand, however, how comforting will it be to individuals with disability that the marks of their impairment will follow them even in the eschatological long-run?

Eiesland’s eschatological theology of disability may resonate with many members in the disability community. But some persons with disabilities continue to hold to fairly traditional eschatological notions that understand salvation in terms of the resurrected body (which assumed the reconstitution of an able body), the beatific vision (which assumed sightedness in some respect), and the communion of saints (which assumed full inclusion of all participants), among other conceptualisations. Without denying the need to rethink our eschatological symbols from generation to generation, these images of the traditional eschatological hope have comforted persons with disabilities throughout the centuries. Do not the Pauline images of the resurrected body as imperishable, glorious, and powerful suggest a transformation of the disabled body in the eschaton? But such a redeemed body not only takes into account the biblical witness, it also acknowledges the hopes of persons with disabilities such as Diane DeVries, who believes that God will heal her ‘in His own eternal time.’¹⁵ Finally, the redemption of the body is not limited to Christian eschatology, but also infuses Jewish and Islamic perspectives on the afterlife.¹⁶ These views are therefore important for any attempt to develop an interfaith theology of disability, also called for by Eiesland’s theological project.¹⁷

In the last part of this essay, then, I present what I call a ‘pneumatological assist’ to Eiesland’s proposal, in order to accomplish several objectives. First,

I wish to complement Eiesland's christologically elaborated model with a pneumatological perspective focused on the Holy Spirit as the dynamic and redemptive power of God. The goal here is to forge a theology of disability that is more fully trinitarian than heretofore attempted. Further, I hope to extend Eiesland's liberative theology of disability by providing her vision for an inclusive ecclesiology with additional theological and pneumatological grounding. In this way, we further rescue the traditionally understood social model of disability and deepen its redemptive capacities. Finally, I believe a dynamic and pneumatological paradigm can also inform Christian hope in ways that not only rehabilitate traditional theologies of healing but also complexify traditional notions of eschatological perfection. This move enables a more sophisticated and critical eschatological viewpoint than is currently available in critical theologies of disability.

The Spirit, the Church, and the eschatological long run: toward a p(new)matological theology of disability

The pneumatological assist I am proposing is informed in large part by the recent renaissance in pneumatological theology in the academy.¹⁸ In my own work, I have sought to rethink traditional doctrines concerning salvation and the church, among other theological loci, from a pneumatological starting point. Such efforts in pneumatological soteriology and a pneumatological ecclesiology, as I have argued at length elsewhere, feature the Pentecost narrative's vision of the Holy Spirit's being 'poured out on all flesh' (Acts 2:17) as central to the saving work of God and the constitution of the ecclesial community.¹⁹ Three elements of this narrative are crucial for our purposes. First, the outpouring of the Spirit not only invites but also liberates the many tongues and languages of humankind to declare the wondrous works of God (Acts 2:11). There remain no marginalized, oppressed, or unredeemed voices in the new economy of the Holy Spirit. Second, and building on the first, the gift of the Spirit establishes a new community constituted by difference. The multiplicity of tongues is preserved rather than erased (Acts 2:6) in the new community that also includes what the ancients considered to be 'non-persons': daughters, youth, and men- and maidservants (Acts 2:17–18). Finally, the coming of the Spirit also inaugurates the 'last days' (Acts 2:17a), the 'now-and-not-yet' period during which God's eternity breaks into history, redeeming human bodies, transforming human lives, reconciling human communities and relationships, and even sanctifying

the cosmos (Acts 2:19–20). These elements combine to present a view of the Holy Spirit as the dynamic healing power of God, understood more in terms of reconstituting creaturely relationship than in terms of curing bodily ‘imperfections’ or ‘abnormalities.’

How such a pneumatological vision can enrich Eiesland’s ‘disabled God’ theology should be obvious from the preceding. Insofar as the diversity of languages is redeemed for the glory of God, so are the witnesses of all persons, including the Diane DeVrieses and Nancy Mairses of this world, who are caught up in this ‘pentecostal’ economy of the Spirit.²⁰ But insofar as the diversity of languages is not homogenized, so also are the witnesses of persons with disabilities preserved in all their differences. The miracle of Pentecost is the redemption of ‘weak’ bodies and lives in all of their diversity, not the creation of a new community according to able-bodied standards of ‘normalcy.’²¹ Salvation in this scheme of things is not so much the *curing* of biomedical afflictions, but the *healing* of human lives and relationships so that each redeemed vessel can now witness to the saving work of God uniquely in his or her language. Insofar as the gift of the Spirit empowers such witness to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8), so are persons with disabilities are now also empowered as historical voices and agents. Insofar as the gift of the Spirit also forms a new ‘body politic’ (the church), so also is this new community one of righteousness, justice, and peace (cf. Isaiah 32:15–17). Insofar as the Spirit is no respecter of persons, so also is each member of the community a medium for the many gifts of the Spirit. More to the point, if in the incarnation and the Eucharist God identifies with the broken bodies and broken lives of humankind, in and through Pentecost God redeems such brokenness in ways that allow stammering tongues to declare his glory; in ways that allow broken jars of clay to be conduits of the life of God; in ways that allow all finite bodies to sufficiently mediate divine power; in ways that allow what St. Paul calls the ‘less honorable members’ to be indispensable to the health and mission of the ecclesial body; and in ways that empower the foolish, lowly, shameful, and despised of this world to embody the saving works of God (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:26–31, 12:12–26, and 2 Corinthians 12:7–10). Pneumatological perspectives hereby provide further theological grounding for various aspects of Eiesland’s ‘body politics’ resulting in a more inclusive trinitarian theology of access.²²

Notice then how such a pneumatological and trinitarian theology of disability works with Eiesland’s ‘disabled God’ theology to retrieve and

redeem the traditional understandings of disability derived from more plain sense or ableist readings of the biblical text presented above. The traditional social view of disability framed by shame and exclusion is subverted in this proposal, and that precisely by reclaiming and proclaiming how incarnation and Pentecost inaugurate a new community that upsets the status quo, that turns the marginalised into new centers of divine power, and that sees disability as central rather than peripheral to the saving works of God. Further, the traditional biomedical view of disability framed by individualistic suffering is also subverted by reclaiming and proclaiming how incarnation and Pentecost inaugurate a new social and relational salvation understood in terms of reconciliation, healing, righteousness, justice, and peace. In short, we have not rejected the scriptural witness but only certain (individualistic) biomedical and (exclusionary) social readings of that witness in favor of a pneumato–theological understanding of the gospel and the church as the new people of God.

However, I have not forgotten that my primary criticism of Eiesland's 'disabled God' model was its undeveloped eschatological perspective. Can my 'pneumatological assist' provide an eschatology that says more than what Eiesland has said on the one hand, but that does not relapse into a simplistic biomedical view that sees persons with disabilities as second-class citizens of the kingdom of God until or unless they are cured on the other? I suggest that the key to any revised doctrine of afterlife reformulated in pneumatological perspective is a shift from a static to a dynamic view of eternity. Throughout the biblical text, the Spirit is understood as the elusive, shifting, and energetic wind (*ruach* or *pneuma*) of God, whose ways we can neither fully discern nor anticipate (cf. John 3:8). Further, the scriptures testify to the Spirit as the conduit and conveyer of the new and unexpected works of God—for example, hovering or sweeping over the new creation, empowering the resurrection to new life, ushering in the forever anticipated year of the Lord, and serving the invitations to the New Jerusalem. Together, these pneumatological characteristics suggest that life in the Spirit is forever the 'arrival' of a new creation, the engaging of new and ever-receding horizons, and the surprising transformation from glory to glory into the new image of Jesus. In this life, Protestants and Catholics have called this the process of sanctification, while Orthodox Christians have used the language of deification (*theosis*).

I suggest that there is no reason to see this pneumatological motif as terminating with the end of this life, and every reason to rethink our eschatology within this dynamic frame of reference. Fortunately, those of us looking for help with this idea can find it in the Christian tradition in Gregory of Nyssa's (d. 385–386) view of eternal life as the soul's being forever drawn deeper and deeper into the divine reality (*epectasis*).²³ For Gregory, the afterlife is an unending journey of the individual as he or she is transformed from perfection to perfection into the glorious and infinite goodness, knowledge, and love of God. This conception assumes two Neoplatonic ideas in the background of fourth century Cappadocian theology: that of God understood as infinite and unlimited, and that of the spiritual life as an ascent into the infinite depths of the divine being. For Gregory, eternal life involves our ever intensifying participation in the goodness of God without ever losing our status as creatures. Further, there is perpetual growth in the knowledge of God without ever becoming omniscient (an attribute of divinity alone). Finally, if human experience reveals the possibility of ever-deepening love tomorrow without deeming yesterday's love as inferior, so also will be the relationship of the soul in its eternal journey toward and with God.

What does a pneumatological approach add to Gregory's vision of *epectasis* and how does this impact a theology of disability considered in the eschatological long run? Three comments can be made in this regard. First, a pneumatological perspective broadens the more individualistic focus in Gregory's eschatology to include the more corporate conceptions of his theological anthropology.²⁴ The experience of salvation culminates in the communion of the redeemed, the 'fellowship of the Spirit,' and the reconciliation of all creation with God. In this eschatological community, there will be a healing of broken relationships, a vindication of the oppressed, the exacting of justice on oppressors, the forgiveness of sin, and the reconciliation of all persons, including victims and victimisers.²⁵ In this scenario, of course, persons with disabilities are often the oppressed, but sometimes they are also the victimizers of others. That all of these can be accomplished together is impossible in human perspective, but may point to the unfathomable miracle of the gospel. When set in the more dynamic pneumatological framework, however, I suggest that this eschatological reconciliation is better conceived as an ongoing work of the Spirit which continually forms the new 'body politic' of individuals and communities who ever increasingly realise and actualise the healing and saving grace of God in eternity.

But second, a pneumatological approach does not neglect the redemption of human bodies (Romans 8:23–25) amidst accomplishing the reconciliation of human persons. This is the eschatological hope anticipated by all human beings, not only persons with disabilities. Yet the combination of Eiesland's theology of the resurrection body and Gregory's theology of *epectasis* suggests that the Spirit's healing of the human body retains some continuity with the present life even amidst its transformation. In reflecting on the life of his sister, Macrina, Gregory suggests that she would bear the scars of a healed tumor in her resurrection body since her cadaver retained the scar visibly. This scar, in life, death, and eternal life, is 'a memorial of the divine intervention, the result and the occasion of perpetual turning toward God through the action of grace.'²⁶ Is it possible to conceive that the glory and power of the resurrection body will derive not from some able-bodied ideal of perfection but from its mediating the gracious activity of God? In this case, might not the unending journey of the resurrection body also be from glory to glory and from perfection to perfection?

Set in this dynamic pneumatological perspective, a number of traditional theological conundrums regarding the nature of the resurrection body would be resolved. Might we be permitted the following speculations? Deceased infants—whether healthy, microencephalic, or otherwise disabled, whether dead from natural or other causes—would have a glorious and powerful resurrection body not measured by Arnold Schwarzenegger or Miss USA in their prime, but measured by their nestedness in the communion of saints and by the redemptive caregiving in the eschatological community.²⁷ Hence there is continuity and discontinuity with the resurrection body: on the one hand, infants are recognizably infants in the eschaton, although, on the other hand, their bodies are no longer subject to decay even as we are unable to fully anticipate the mysterious transformation of the resurrection body. But the work of the eschatological Spirit also means that infants do not stay infants eternally, but also are unendingly transformed along with other members of the eschatological community in and toward the triune God.²⁸

Against this background, I further speculate that persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities—for example, those with Down syndrome or triplicate chromosome 21—will also retain their phenotypical features in their resurrection bodies. There will be sufficient continuity to ensure not only recognizability, but also self-identity. So, the redemption of Down syndrome, for example, would consist not in some magical fix of the 21st

chromosome but in the recognition of their central roles both in the communion of saints and in the divine scheme of things. Of course, the ongoing work of the eschatological Spirit means that persons with Down syndrome will also make continual increase in goodness, knowledge, and love, both *vis-à-vis* the communion of saints and the triune God, all of which will have implications for bodily transformation as well. Similar speculations would apply for all persons—from the young to the elderly—along with their differing bodily afflictions and conditions, whether that be the wide range of intellectual or developmental disabilities, Alzheimer's, chronic illness, polio, multiple sclerosis, Lou Gehrig's disease, congenital amputees, and so on.²⁹

Yet my proposal also invigorates Christian hope: even if there will be continuities between our present embodiment and the resurrected body, there will also be unfathomable discontinuities when we are transformed in the eschaton. If the continuities enable both self- and other-identification, the discontinuities reflect our hope in the redeeming grace and transforming power of God. To be sure, as previously noted, persons with disabilities have their place at the eschatological banquet (Luke 14:12–23), and there are other strands of the Hebrew prophets that indicate eunuchs will be accepted in the Day of YHWH (Isaiah 56:3–5), as will be the blind, lame, and others with physical impairments (Jeremiah 31:8, Micah 4:6, Zephaniah 3:19).³⁰ This is not to imply, however, that persons with disabilities will stay merely blind, lame, and crippled, etc., in the eschatological long run. Eschatological salvation means not only that there will be no more oppression, marginalisation, or discrimination because of physical or mental impairments, but also that there will be unexpected transformations—both suddenly and in the eschatological long run—that are now inconceivable to us.³¹

As important, in the case of every individual life, our healing will cut across the many dimensions of our lives. Our embodiment; our affections; our moral selves; our interpersonal relationships with family and friends; our biological, political and structural relationships with preceding and succeeding generations and with all others whose lives are impacted directly or indirectly by our actions and vice-versa because of the interconnected web of relations within which humans live, move, and have their being; and our relationship with the triune God—each of these domains will be transformed over the eschatological long run. Hence for every life, each 'impaired' in its own way, there will be increasing growth in goodness, knowledge and love mediated by the resurrected and transformed body, with each individual

experiencing the paradox of full salvation with the communion of saints in the presence of God on the one hand, but yet being 'on the way' in fully realising and actualising the many dimensions of God's transforming power on the other hand. Hence a pneumatologically conceived eschatology emphasizes the wholeness of the redeemed community (rather than the mere healing of our bodies), both the continuity and the discontinuity of our resurrected bodies (enabling recognition of self- and other-identity, but resisting our images of how things should or must be according to either ableist or disabled assumptions), and the eternal (rather than once-for-all) transformation of our lives in the eschatological long run.

I need to clarify, however, that this eschatological vision does not mean that there will be hierarchies in 'heaven.' Here Gregory's Neoplatonic metaphysics of ascent is misleading because it implies that those higher up are closer to God than those lower down. But what if we worked with a participatory metaphysics of true infinity wherein the actual infinite contains all within 'itself' even as it is impossible for us to 'reach' that infinitude by mere counting? In this metaphysical framework, no matter how high up the 'ladder' one 'climbs,' there remains an equal distance between all rungs on the 'ladder' and the infinite gloriousness of the divine nature. Nevertheless, two caveats are important. First, that all rungs of the 'ladder' are equally distant from the unlimited nature of the divine does not mean that all persons are indistinct and that individual differences are effaced in the afterlife. Rather, individual characteristics are preserved precisely as each person perpetually engages others and the divine life in varying degrees of depth and intensity at each level.³² Second, the *epectasis* is not self-defeating and hence completely unlike Sisyphus (who was condemned to endlessly pushing a boulder up to the summit only for it to tumble back down and have to begin again) because, paradoxically, individuals at each rung of the 'ladder' participate in the glory of God to the full extent of their capacity as creatures at that level, even as the divine gift of their self-transcending nature also ensures that their desires for God will always respond to the divine lure which in turn deepens their experience of God at the next level. In short, differences are preserved in the eschatological long run even as there is no 'room' in the eschatological 'body politics' of God for hierarchical relationships of oppression.

Transitional conclusions

My proposal has been to complement Eiesland's 'disabled God' model with that of the Spirit as the 'dynamic healing power of God.' A pneumatologically informed theology begins with the Spirit of God as orchestrator of a new community and as bringer of new things from the old. Such a model, I suggest, is able to appreciate and even rehabilitate the biblical discourses of disability related to healing and the construction of communal identity. On the one hand, the Spirit imparts miraculous gifts of healing and wholeness that empowers a quality life even amidst adverse circumstances. On the other hand, because the Spirit both diversifies and empowers the contributions of *all* of the 'weak' (including persons with and without disabilities) to the body of Christ, the social, political, and religious meanings of bodily impairments are effectively redefined (accepted) within an ecclesial community that is being transformed into the image of God. Precisely because we cannot simply conflate contemporary understandings of disability with ancient viewpoints, we must carefully work to retrieve biblical themes and understand them afresh in our time.

However, the Spirit is the dynamic healing power of God not only in the present life but also in the life to come. As such a pneumatological theology emphasizes the eschaton in dynamic terms, I suggest that the Spirit continues transforming the communion of saints in the eschatological long-run so that the people of God always approach the gloriousness of the infinite God even while never actually fully attaining to that glory—that is what distinguishes creatures from the creator. In this perspective, individuals will also be transformed both in relationship to one another and to God, and the simplistic dichotomy between 'disabled' and 'non-disabled' is overcome, not because the marks of impairment disappear but because all creatures face, paradoxically, an equally infinite journey toward the triune God through Christ by the power of the Spirit. More important, since our eschatological visions often have very palpable consequences in the ways that they inform and shape our this-worldly political structures and relationships, the pneumato-eschatological theology of disability I am proposing has concrete implications for the ways in which we envision both church and society in the here and now. Put pointedly, individuals and the particularities of their personal identities are both (again, paradoxically) accepted and transformed, even as the communion of saints is itself enriched by the many gifts of its diversely constituted members. Hence, a pneumatological theology

of disability framed by the Spirit as the dynamic healing power of God is able to acknowledge both biomedical and social approaches to disability, but also has the potential to transform, even redeem, these perspectives within a broader theological and eschatological framework.

Endnotes

1. This article was originally published as Amos Yong, 'Disability, the Human Condition, and the Spirit of the Eschatological Long Run: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Disability,' *Journal of Religion, Disability, and Health*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2007, pp. 5–25. *St Mark's Review* is grateful to the journal's editors for permission to reprint the article here.

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2. Prominent in disability literature is an emerging technical nomenclature that distinguishes *impairments* (physical or mental conditions) from *handicaps* (when impairments affect certain human functions negatively) from *disability* (when handicaps are socially and environmentally situated). While helpful in certain respects, these distinctions are not unproblematic. In this essay, however, I use *disability* in a general sense to include impairments and handicaps, even if I will at times use *impairments* in specific situations.
3. When I say 'bodily' here and elsewhere in this essay, I include the cognitive domain of the human mind since intellectual disabilities are also rooted in neurological processes.

4. We await a new interpretation of Job from the perspective of contemporary disability studies.
5. Unless otherwise indicated, all biblical quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version.
6. I realise that it is anachronistic to assume that contemporary experiences of disability are identical to similar conditions in the biblical period. However, my concern here is not the phenomenology of disability but the theology of disability: how Jesus' healing of paralytics, the blind, and the deaf has shaped traditional Christian thinking about disability in terms of bodily afflictions. For a re-reading of Jesus' healing in light of recent developments in disability studies, see W Graham Monteith, *Deconstructing Miracles: From Thoughtless Indifference to Honouring Disabled People*, Glasgow and Edinburgh, Covenanters Press, 2005.
7. Max Turner, *Power from on High: The Spirit in Israel's Restoration and Witness in Luke–Acts*, Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.
8. S John Roth, 'The Blind, the Lame, and the Poor: Character Types in Luke–Acts', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, Supplement Series 144, Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.
9. Joni Eareckson Tada and Steven Estes, *When God Weeps: Why Our Suffering Matters to the Almighty*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.
10. See, for example, Ann Brechin, Penny Liddiard and John Swain (eds), *Handicap in a Social World: A Reader*, Sevenoaks, Kent, Hodder & Stoughton, 1981; Michael Oliver, *The Politics of Disablement: A Sociological Approach*, London, Macmillan Education, 1990; Colin Barnes, Geoff Mercer, and Tom Shakespeare, *Exploring Disability: A Sociological Introduction*, Malden, Mass. and Cambridge, UK, Polity Press, 1999; and Mark Rapley, *The Social Construction of Intellectual Disability*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004.
11. Judith Z Abrams, *Judaism and Disability: Portrayals in Ancient Texts from the Tanach through the Bavli*, Washington, DC, Gallaudet University Press, 1998, ch. 2.
12. Eiesland quotes Nancy Mairs, *Carnal Acts: Essays*, New York, HarperCollins, 1990, p. 96. Note, however, that Mairs elsewhere (*Waist-High in the World: A Life among the Nondisabled*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1996, pp. 12–14) distinguishes between her being a cripple but being 'hardly disabled at all, since, thanks to technology and my relatively advantaged

circumstances, I'm not prevented from engaging in the meaningful activities and relationships that human spirit craves.'

13. Nancy L Eiesland, *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability*, Nashville, Abingdon, 1994, p. 90; Burton Cooper, 'The Disabled God', in Lewis H Merrick (ed.), *And Show Steadfast Love: A Theological Look at Grace, Hospitality, Disabilities, and the Church* Louisville, Presbyterian Publishing House, 1993, pp. 56–70.
14. Eiesland, *Disabled God*, p. 89.
15. See Gelya Frank, 'On Embodiment: A Case Study of Congenital Limb Deficiency in American Culture', in Michelle Fine and Adrienne Asch (eds), *Women with Disabilities: Essays in Psychology, Culture, and Politics*, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1988, pp. 41–71, at p. 43.
16. See, for example, Dan Cohn-Sherbok, 'The Resurrection of Jesus: A Jewish View', in Gavin D'Costa (ed.), *Resurrection Reconsidered*, Oxford, Oneworld, 1996, pp. 184–200, at pp. 188–89; Farnáz Ma'súmián, *Life after Death: A Study of the Afterlife in World Religions*, Oxford, Oneworld, 1996, pp. 80–81.
17. See Nancy L Eiesland, 'Changing the Subject: Toward an Interfaith Theology of Disability', *Journal of Religion, Disability and Health*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1999, pp. 55–62.
18. See, for example, Clark H Pinnock, *The Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit*, Downers Grove, Intervarsity Press, 1996; D Lyle Dabney, 'Systematic Exposition', in Gordon Preece and Stephen Pickard (eds.), *Starting with the Spirit*, Hindmarsh, Australia, Australia Theological Forum, and Adelaide, Australia, Openbook Publishers, 2001, pp. 3–110; Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.
19. Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: World Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology*, Grand Rapids, Baker Academic, 2005.
20. I distinguish Pentecostal (capitalized) from pentecostal (uncapitalized); albeit not unrelated, the former is a noun referring to contemporary renewal movements derivative from the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles (1906–08), while the latter is an adjective describing the events related to the Spirit's outpouring on all flesh recorded in Acts chapter 2.
21. Compare Lennard J Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the Body*. New York and London, Verso, 1995.

22. Compare Jennie Weiss Block, *Copious Hosting: A Theology of Access for People with Disabilities*, New York and London, Continuum, 2002.
23. The doctrine of *epectasis* appears throughout Gregory's works, especially in his commentary on the Canticles, *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, trans. Casimir McCambley, OCSO, Brookline, Mass., Hellenic College Press, 1987. For a succinct statement, however, see Gregory's ascetical manual, 'On Perfection', in Virginia Woods Callahan (trans.), *Saint Gregory of Nyssa: Ascetical Works*, The Fathers of the Church 58, Washington, DC, The Catholic University of America Press, 1967, pp. 95–122. A cursory overview is provided by Jean Daniélou SJ, 'Introduction', in Herbert Musurillo, SJ (ed. and trans.), *From Glory to Glory: Texts from Gregory of Nyssa's Mystical Writings*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961, pp. 3–71, esp. 56–71. For an overview of Gregory's eschatology, see Brian E Daley, *The Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 85–89.
24. Compare also Rowan A Greer, *Christian Life and Christian Hope: Raids on the Inarticulate*. New York, Crossroad, 2001, ch. 2.
25. Miroslav Volf, 'The Final Reconciliation: Reflections on a Social Dimension of the Eschatological Transition', *Modern Theology*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 2000, pp. 91–113.
26. Cited in Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336*, Lectures on the History of Religions 15, New York, Columbia University Press, 1995, p. 86
27. See David Keck, *Forgetting Whose We Are: Alzheimer's Disease and the Love of God*, Nashville, Abingdon, 1996, ch. 5.
28. Compare Colleen McDannell and Bernhard Lang, *Heaven: A History*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1988, pp. 268, 286.
29. This account preserves not only the recognition of many parents of Down syndrome children, who after careful reflection acknowledge that their children would somehow need to retain the phenotype in order to remain who they are as individuals (see Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden (eds.), 'Biblical and Theological Reflections on Disability', in *Idem, Mission as Transformation: A Theology of the Whole Gospel*, Oxford, Regnum, 1998, pp. 429–37, at p. 435; Roy McCloughry and Wayne Morris, *Making a World of Difference: Christian Reflections on Disability*, London, SPCK, 2002, p. 73; and Robert Perske, 'The Theological Views of Some of My Mentally Retarded Friends', in William C Gaventa Jr. and David L Coulter

- (eds.), *The Pastoral Voice of Robert Perske*, New York, Haworth Pastoral Press, 2003, pp. 129–33, at p. 132), but also the self-understanding of other persons with disabilities who have come to accept themselves as whole precisely with rather than without their impairments (for example, Nancy Eiesland, 'Liberation, Inclusion, and Justice: A Faith Response to Persons w/ Disabilities', *Impact: Published by the Institute on Community Integration (UCEDD)*, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 2–3 and 35, [available online at: <http://ici.umn.edu/products/newsletters.html>]).
30. Compare, also, Sarah Melcher, '“I Will Lead the Blind by the Road They Do Not Know”: Disability in Prophetic Eschatology', paper presented to the Biblical Scholarship and Disabilities Program Unit, Society of Biblical Literature, 20–24 November 2004 [http://www.sbl-site.org/congresses/Congresses_AnnualMeeting_SeminarPapers.aspx].
 31. See, for example, Jerry Walls, *Heaven: The Logic of Eternal Joy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 112 [<http://clicnet.clic.edu/search/m236.24+W215h+2002/m236.24+w215+h++2002/-2,-1,,B/browse>].
 32. See F LeRon Shults, *Reforming Theological Anthropology: After the Philosophical Turn to Relationality*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2003, pp. 186–88.