Nor need it be a staged pattern, with one type of approach succeeding the other. Worship could come first and then deeper understanding, or repeated interactions between the two. For example, it is unlikely that a viewer will discover an incarnational reading of the Canterbury depiction of Adam on first viewing, but repeated viewing of the form of Adam's representation (strong and confident) and of others in the same window (for example, Elijah ascending to heaven) should gradually lead to this conclusion.

These comments should not be taken to indicate hostility to icons, only that greater fairness is needed in comparing and contrasting their role and function as compared with Western art. Non-Orthodox churches now often introduce them to produce a more meditative or 'holy' atmosphere but there is no reason why a similar result could not have been produced through re-educating congregations on the aims of Western religious art. However that may be, if they are to be introduced, careful attention needs to be given to their placement, to ensure that they function as augmentation to the religious message of the building as a whole rather than as an admission of its presumed failure to achieve a sense of the holy on its own. It is worth recalling that in the Orthodox tradition the desired effect is achieved not by one or two icons but by a complex scheme that includes, together with painted walls and cupola, the building in its entirety witnessing to a single vision of the Orthodox account of the Christian faith.[21] Occasionally, this has been achieved in a Western church when it was first built, but in the main there is not only considerable variety of approaches across such buildings but also quite often an amalgam of different styles and approaches even within the same building. So significantly different questions are raised about the integration of art and architecture in the typical Western church, and it is to that issue that I therefore now turn.

Congregation and Art in Its Architectural Setting

So far, I have been exploring only individual paintings or windows, and not how they relate to the church building as a whole. Again, as with the treatment of stained glass as wallpaper, my worry would be that the building may be seen by priest or minister and parishioners alike as simply a place to meet, with the view taken that any other suitable building would do just as well, preferably, though, perhaps less expensive to heat! Such attitudes are widespread. When the new Coventry Cathedral was being built, the then dean infuriated the architect, Sir Basil Spence, by remarking that 'whether they were Gothic or just tin shanties, the essential purposes of a cathedral could be proved in any context'.[22] Admittedly, there is a clear sense in which this is true, but there are also other equally clear senses in which the architecture does make a difference. Indeed, in the nineteenth century, this was a matter of passionate debate, with defenders of the revival of Gothic like John Ruskin and Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin arguing that Gothic was the only legitimate Christian style.[23] There is not space to go into the

competing arguments here, except to note that each of the major styles has a language and meaning that we ignore at our peril because the building will almost certainly subliminally communicate something, and to most people, even though they may well not be properly aware of what is happening.

Very roughly speaking, Europe witnessed four major styles of architecture which historically succeeded one another: Romanesque at the turn of the first millennium, Gothic, which dominated the high Middle Ages, Classicism, which attempted to recover the architectural styles of ancient Greece and Rome, and finally Baroque, a style particularly associated with the Counter-Reformation that is essentially Classicism modified to engage more effectively with the drama and wonder of the Christian story. All experienced revivals from the eighteenth century onwards. So, especially in a country as young as the United States, it is possible to find representatives of all these styles within a short compass, such as in New York City and Washington, DC.[24]

Such variety might suggest indifference in the choice of style at the point of commissioning, and so the inappropriateness of any proposed restraints on what kind of art that might be subsequently introduced into the building, or in the style of liturgy and preaching deployed. But in fact each of the styles has its own particular logic, and so, even if the subsequent traditions of the Church move in a different direction, this does not mean that such divergence is an uncomplicated matter. In fact, the wider architectural environment will continue to have an impact, in implicit messages that may effectively either support or undermine what is said or done. Some examples should make the point clearer. Suppose the preacher is in a Gothic church and urges the congregation to find Jesus entirely or even chiefly in this world and not in the next. Whether such a message is appropriate or not, it is certainly the case that the building will be seen to advocate a quite different response, for the thrust of Gothic architecture is all heavenward, with its pointed arches, tall spires and so on. The result is that, whatever may be said, the congregation will view what the preacher says in support of such a this-world message with a measure of scepticism for, to put it bluntly, the building tells them to think quite differently. Or again, think of a church in the Classical style and of a preacher enamoured of a perspective on the gospel of the type advocated by Tertullian or Kierkegaard as going well beyond what the world regards as reasonable. In the words of Tertullian, 'I believe because it is absurd', or Kierkegaard on paradox, 'A thinker without a paradox is like a lover without a passion.'[25] No matter how powerful the preacher's rhetoric is for the rejection of reason, the congregation will find him or her odd and unconvincing for the beautiful proportions and balance of the building in which they are sitting will tell an altogether different tale, of the eminent reasonableness of Christianity.

While one might conclude from such reflections that clergy and worshippers are effectively trapped by the particular building in which they happen to worship, that is not at all my intention. My point is simply that in anything

one says or does it is important to take account of the logic of the building. So, if one wants to run counter to the building's own internal logic, this needs to be faced rather than ignored, since the congregation will be receiving subliminal messages to the contrary that arise naturally from the setting, even if they have never previously been brought explicitly to the surface. However, this does not mean necessarily attacking the building as such. This is because, taking a broader historical perspective, it is possible to observe such conflicts occurring in the past, and means being found for their resolution. Indeed, so far from seeing the four major styles as inherently and implacably opposed to one another, another way of reading them is to view them as introducing one aspect of the divine reality that then needs somehow or other to be complemented by its opposite. That is because Christianity wants to affirm that God is both transcendent and immanent (both Gothic and Romanesque, as it were); and both simple and ordered as well as playful and mysterious (Classical on the one hand and Baroque on the other). In other words, each style addresses some aspect of our standing before God, and so the trick is to discover how to present such complementarity in a way that takes seriously the existing appearance of the building, and the meanings already implicit in its forms.

Probably then the best way of accessing an appropriate technique for achieving such an aim and so resolving the tension is to look to history. Certainly, both Romanesque and Gothic architecture did in fact seek to complement the building with a quite different sort of art: that is, with the building allowed to pull in one direction and the art in quite another. Thus all that Gothic upward thrust was complemented by a strong emphasis on Christ's immanence in the Eucharist, nowhere seen more conspicuously than in the central moment of the medieval mass, in the elevation of the host and the priest's declaration, 'Behold the Lamb of God': in other words, God now come down rather than us having to be pulled up. But it was not only the Eucharist that was used to make this point, equally art was harnessed to the same aim. That is why Gothic religious art is so humanistic and empathetic. The Christ Child, for instance, rather than interrogating us with a forward-looking hieratic glance (as in earlier art) instead interacts with his mother, playing, for instance, with her veil. Indeed, even angels are given a human smile, as at Reims. Nor is this balancing act an accident, for central to the medieval vision was a two-way traffic, to and from heaven. And that complementarity is also exactly what you would expect if sufficient attention is paid to the meaning of the two main descriptive words in this case, transcendence and immanence, for of course they are not real opposites, since God as a being not limited by space can be at one and the same time both active in our world (immanent) and beyond it (transcendent).

So it should come as no surprise that Romanesque adopted a similar strategy, though in reverse. Whereas Gothic architects did everything to try to make their buildings soar (which is why they so often fell down!),[26] Romanesque architects were so relieved that the world had not come to an

end in AD 1000 that their stress was instead on a massive stability, heavy buildings obviously meant to last with a great downward thrust, with huge piers, for example, often compared to oaks and the building's ceiling to the sky. But with that downward thrust went an art that, unlike Gothic's, soared: bodies unnaturally elongated that looked as though they were seeking to soar heavenwards. The contrast with Gothic is well illustrated in France's most famous body of Romanesque art, in the cathedral at Autun in Provence. Gislibertus, the artist, leaves us in no doubt of a reference elsewhere, to a world beyond our own.[27]

So, if wise choices have been made in the decoration of the interior the preacher can have it both ways, using the architecture to draw an otherworld reference, and the art, a this-world. Equally the same would be true for Romanesque, though in reverse, with the art this time pulling upwards and the architecture back to earth. Romanesque, however, is often thought to be a more difficult case since, while Gothic and neo-Gothic artefacts survive in profusion, the passage of time has not treated Romanesque art nearly so well. Even so, even today there are contemporary artists working in this tradition. A conspicuous example is Peter Eugene Ball (b. 1943), who has achieved huge popularity in England through his re-creation of Romanesque-type sculptures.[28] However, if something looking rather more modern is preferred, it is salutary to observe that the greatest artist of the twentieth century also acknowledged his debt to Romanesque and indeed kept in his studio one such Spanish painting.[29] So, although Picasso's own religious paintings are disappointing, there is no doubt that some of his many styles could be adapted for the purpose. Indeed one of his most famous early paintings clearly evokes just such a style.[30]

In the case of Classical buildings there was no such tradition of an accompanying opposing art, but that does not mean that one could not be created, though careful consideration would need to be given to how this might be achieved. One possibility is some form of abstract art, though by no means all. Jackson Pollock, for instance, with his arbitrary and rough casting of the paint on the canvas would only badly jar. But the work of many another, perhaps especially the two Americans, Barnett Newman and Mark Rothko, could work well. Thus it is no accident that some of their works are to be found in modernist buildings that followed the so-called International style, where simplicity and proportion is again the chosen ideal as with Classicism, though of course expressed quite differently from the earlier style in the materials chosen, concrete and steel. The point is that whereas the European abstract simplicity of Piet Mondrian had been used to suggest the underlying simplicity of all reality, Rothko and Newman both wanted to hint at mystery, the simplicity being employed to suggest something rather more.[31] So it would be not so much a matter of deploying the oppositions inherent within the two major medieval styles, as of thinking at a tangent, using a continuation of the same style, the simplicity and proportions of abstract art used to open out onto something more.

Indeed, even during the heyday of Classicism it is sometimes possible to find a similar way of lateral thinking. Note, for instance, how in Protestant Ireland, the Classical cathedral at Waterford was given in 1779 a reredos that automatically suggested an element of mystery since it has the divine Tetragrammaton as happened also (but less successfully), at about the same time with St Martin in the Fields and St George's, Bloomsbury.[32]

Finally, there is Baroque. This is a style more familiar in southern Germany or Poland than in the English-speaking world, though Sir Christopher Wren's St Paul's Cathedral in London offers a moderate example. Indeed, until the interior redecoration by Sir James Thornhill it must have been quite hard to see what the building shared with more theatrical representatives of this type, like St John Nepomuk in Munich, where wonder, drama and playfulness are to be found to exuberant excess. Baroque well illustrates how it is not just preachers who can err in relation to the logic of a church building. Even professional liturgists can go badly wrong, as any holiday in continental Europe subsequent to the reforms of Vatican II immediately confirmed. Following the injunctions of the Council, simple westward-facing, rectangular altars were introduced but immediately jarred in a building that was otherwise dominated by curves and meandering lines. Yet clergy were surprised by the resultant hostility of congregations. Fortunately, in more recent years greater sensitivity is now being shown on this issue. Yet even in a country like Poland, where people and clergy are still unusually close,[33] a new form of the problem has emerged. To encourage congregational singing, words are projected onto a screen, but lurid rectangular white ones are deployed without any thought given to how they might be made to fit better their environment. The glaring black and white looks totally out of place amidst the riot of curve and colour elsewhere. The example could be taken to argue that unlike the other three styles, Baroque does not easily yield to complementarity: that, in short, its natural position is one of extremes. Yet this does not seem to me to be necessarily the case. Traditional Baroque liturgy, for example, could scarcely be described as simple, but it could plausibly be upheld as a model of order. Indeed, it is its very control and order that allows the sense of mystery to reach its proper culmination, with, for example, everyone carefully placed at the elevation of the host. In a similar way, then, it would be possible to envisage a screen that still conveys the necessary information but which was set, for example, within curved borders and softer fabric that thus linked the words on the screen with the same God proclaimed by the building as a whole. It is probably also in any case worth reminding readers that Baroque is not in principle opposed to order, but instead in many ways builds upon it since it grew out of Classicism. The point is thus getting the right dynamic between intricacy and movement on the one hand and balance and order on the other, well illustrated in architecture like Versailles or music like that of Johann Sebastian Bach.

So I end by appealing to my fellow Christians to take more seriously the logic of the building in which they worship. We all like our homes to

be comfortable and to express something of ourselves. Historically, temples were conceived as homes for the divinity concerned. While that is not the right way to think of a church, it is true that, whether we like the image or not, the building and the art it contains will say something of the God who is worshipped there. So we need to pay heed to our surroundings and the implicit messages they contain, no less than the words heard from the pulpit or the other acts we perform within the building's confines. A church is not simply a space to gather in but one which reflects the totality of who we are as Christians, one in which our eyes and bodies should be responding no less effectively than our minds.[34]

Notes

1 In the Preface to *Mere Christianity* he writes that one 'must be asking which door is the true one, not which pleases you best by its paint and panelling'. Of course, pleasure is an inadequate motive, but in assuming that to be the reason, Lewis implicitly deprives art of any ability to contribute to truth.
2 Sallman's work is given extensive consideration in David Morgan, *Visual Piety: A History and Theory of Popular Religious Images* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). For the actual image, which sold in the millions, 2, fig.1.
3 For an excellent discussion of the painting, Andrée Hayum, *The Isenheim Altarpiece: God's Medicine and the Painter's Vision* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989). The painting, which was once housed in the Antonite Hospital at Isenheim (in Germany), is now in the museum at Colmar (France).
4 'The Art of Fiction', in Henry James, *The Art of Fiction and Other Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), 3–23, esp. 5–6.
5 This is, for example, the view taken by Michel Quenot, *The Icon: Window on the Kingdom* (London: Mowbray, 1992), 72–83, esp. 80. Similar sentiments are expressed by Paul Evdokimov in *The Art of the Icon* (Redondo Beach, Calif.: Oakwood, 1990), who is even prepared to declare that 'once past the middle of the 16th century the great painters … painted images with Christian themes but with a total lack of religious meaning'. Bernini is numbered among the condemned: 73–95, esp. 74–75.
6 The painting is now in the National Gallery in London.
7 For a detailed discussion of the painting, see my 'God in the Landscape: Michael Ramsey's Theological Vision', *Anglican Theological Review* 83 (2001), 775–792.
8 A fuller version of the context can be found Gesa Thiessen, *Theological Aesthetics* (London: SCM, 2004), 47–48.
9 See Richard Marks, *Stained Glass in England during the Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 1991), 61. Ignorance of the meaning of the images at Canterbury Cathedral is emphasised by one of the stories added to *The Canterbury Tales*. See *The Tale of Beryn* (Early English Texts, extra series, vol. CV, 1909), 6.
10 Thomas Beckett had been recently martyred during the reign of Henry II.
11 See Madeline Harrison Caviness, *The Early Stained Glass of Canterbury Cathedral* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 107–115. For Adam illustration, no. 6; for precedents in Origen, 111.
12 This is the argument of Wolfgang Kemp as applied to windows at Chartres and Bourges in *The Narratives of Gothic Stained Glass* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 22–33; 91–101. Controversially, he suggests that expanding the narrative becomes the primary motivation, and indeed boldly talks of the stained-glass version as 'at a far remove from the Bible story and