3 December 1953

neo-orthodoxy can never destroy. When Schleiermacher stressed the primacy of experience over any external authority he was sounding a note that continues to ring in my own thought. However, I must admit that in the last two years, I have become much more sympathetic towards the neo-orthodox position than I was in previous years. By this I do not mean that I accept neo-orthodoxy as a set of doctrines, but I do find in it a necessary corrective for a liberalism that became all too shallow and too easily capitulated to modern culture. At this point I have found your article, “Liberalism and a Theology of Depth” quite influential in my own thinking. Neo-orthodoxy certainly has the merit of calling us back to the depths of the Christian faith.

My work here at Boston University is progressing very well. Both Dr. DeWolf and the late Dr. Brightman have been quite impressed with my work. I must admit that my theological and philosophical studies with you have been of tremendous help to me in my present studies. In the most decisive moments, I find your influence creeping forth.

I have completed my residence work, and at present I am in the process of writing my Dissertations. So far, my Dissertations title is: “A comparison of the conception of God in the thinking of Paul Tillich and Henry Nelson Wieman.” I am finding the study quite fascinating. If there are no basic interruptions, I hope to complete it by the end of the coming summer.

I have been intending to write you ever since I left Crozer, but like so many, I fell victim of that great thief of time, procrastination. I do hope that this letter finds you well. Please give my best regards to Mrs. Davis and your sons, and to the Crozer family in general.

Your former student,

[signed]
Martin L. King, Jr.

TALS. IGZ.

2. See King’s essay for DeWolf entitled “A Comparison of Friedrich Schleiermacher’s Christology with That of Albrecht Ritschl,” g May 1952, MLKP-MBU: Box 112.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project

From Ven and Joel Lawrence King

3 December 1953
Lansing, Mich.

King’s uncle, the Reverend Joel King, invites King, Jr., to preach at his church in January 1954.

1. Joel Lawrence King (1915–) was born in Stockbridge, Georgia. In 1927 he went to live with King, Sr., and Alberta Williams King in Atlanta to attend Bryant Preparatory School. He was
Dear M. L. and Coretta:  

Planned to write long ago but kept putting it off. Trust you both are well, happy and getting along nicely, which leaves us the same. We are just beginning to have some winter weather here, the month of November was exceedingly nice.

Am sure Brother enjoyed his trip to Boston, saw by the Atlanta World where he was back in his pulpit last Sunday.

I am sure you two are planning to go home for Christmas—would like to know if you are all engaged for the first Sunday in Jan. {(3, 1954)}—if not, would like to have you for our guest speaker, morning and evening,—nothing so eventful on that day—other than the climax of a rally for beautifying the interior of the church. Would be happy to have you with us on that day if possible. And if you are on your way from the South, bring the wife along too—happy to have you both.

Let us hear from you as to your plans.

Love,

[signed] Aunt Ven & Uncle Joel

ALS. MLKP-MBU: Box 117.

married in their home and licensed to preach by King, Sr. Joel King graduated from Morehouse College and Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta. He pastored sixteen churches in Georgia, South Carolina, and Michigan before becoming pastor of Mount Hermon Baptist Church in Mansfield, Ohio, in 1961.

From George W. Davis

7 December 1953
Chester, Pa.

Dear Martin:—

I was delighted to have your letter last week, mentioning the review of DeWolf's book and telling me at some length about your work. I am very grateful for your kind words and your confidence in the work I am trying to do here. Sometimes one wonders whether one's efforts are appreciated and whether they bear fruit. So your letter has heartened me considerably.

You have chosen an excellent dissertation topic. It presents striking contrasts in method and content and I think you can do a good piece of work with it. May I call your attention to an article in Theology Today for July, 1953, which it will profit you to read it you have not done so already. It is an article by Robert C. Johnson entitled "The Jesus of History and the Christian