



themelios

*An International Journal for Students of
Theological and Religious Studies*

Volume 39 Issue 1 April 2014

EDITORIAL: Do the Work of an Evangelist <i>D. A. Carson</i>	1
OFF THE RECORD: The Covert Thrill of Violence? Reading the Bible in Disbelief <i>Michael J. Ovey</i>	5
Editor's Note <i>Brian J. Tabb</i>	8
A Biblical Theologian Reviews Gerald Bray's <i>Systematic Theology</i> <i>Thomas R. Schreiner</i>	9
Response to Tom Schreiner <i>Gerald Bray</i>	17
A Systematician Reviews Tom Schreiner's <i>Biblical Theology</i> <i>Gerald Bray</i>	18
Response to Gerald Bray <i>Thomas R. Schreiner</i>	26
Revival Defined and Defended: How the New Lights Tried and Failed to Use America's First Religious Periodical to Quiet Critics and Quell Radicals <i>Collin Hansen</i>	29
Should Evangelicals Embrace Historical Criticism? The Hays-Ansberry Proposal <i>Robert W. Yarbrough</i>	37
PASTORAL PENSÉES: The Care of Souls: The Heart of the Reformation <i>Ray Van Neste</i>	53
Book Reviews	64

THE GOSPEL COALITION

themelios

DESCRIPTION

Themelios is an international evangelical theological journal that expounds and defends the historic Christian faith. Its primary audience is theological students and pastors, though scholars read it as well. It was formerly a print journal operated by RTSF/UCCF in the UK, and it became a digital journal operated by The Gospel Coalition in 2008. The editorial team draws participants from across the globe as editors, essayists, and reviewers.

Themelios is published three times a year online at www.theGospelCoalition.org. It is presented in three formats: PDF (for downloading and printing), Logos edition (for searchability and mobile access), and HTML (for greater accessibility, usability, and infiltration in search engines). *Themelios* is copyrighted by The Gospel Coalition. Readers are free to use it and circulate it in digital form without further permission (any print use requires further written permission), but they must acknowledge the source and, of course, not change the content.

EDITORS

General Editor: D. A. Carson
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
2065 Half Day Road
Deerfield, IL 60015, USA
themelios@thegospelcoalition.org

Managing Editor: Brian Tabb
Bethlehem College and Seminary
720 13th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55415, USA
brian.tabb@thegospelcoalition.org

Contributing Editor: Michael J. Ovey
Oak Hill Theological College
Chase Side, Southgate
London, N14 4PS, UK
mikeo@oakhill.ac.uk

Administrator: Andy Naselli
Bethlehem College and Seminary
720 13th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55415, USA
themelios@thegospelcoalition.org

BOOK REVIEW EDITORS

Old Testament
Jerry Hwang
Singapore Bible College
9-15 Adam Road
Singapore 289886
jerry.hwang@thegospelcoalition.org

New Testament
Alan Thompson
Sydney Missionary & Bible College
PO Box 83
Croydon, NSW 2132, Australia
alan.thompson@thegospelcoalition.org

History and Historical Theology
Nathan A. Finn
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary
P. O. Box 1889
Wake Forest, NC 27588, USA
nathan.finn@thegospelcoalition.org

Systematic Theology and Bioethics

Hans Madueme
Covenant College
14049 Scenic Highway
Lookout Mountain, GA 30750, USA
hans.madueme@thegospelcoalition.org

Ethics (but not Bioethics) and Pastoralia

Dane Ortlund
Crossway
1300 Crescent Street
Wheaton, IL 60187, USA
dane.ortlund@thegospelcoalition.org

Mission and Culture

Jason S. Sexton
Golden Gate Baptist Seminary
251 S. Randolph Avenue (Suite A)
Brea, CA 92821, USA
jason.sexton@thegospelcoalition.org

EDITORIAL BOARD

Gerald Bray, *Beeson Divinity School*; Lee Gatiss, *Wales Evangelical School of Theology*; Paul Helseth, *University of Northwestern, St. Paul*; Paul House, *Beeson Divinity School*; Ken Magnuson, *The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*; Jonathan Pennington, *The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*; James Robson, *Wycliffe Hall*; Mark D. Thompson, *Moore Theological College*; Paul Williamson, *Moore Theological College*; Stephen Witmer, *Pepperell Christian Fellowship*; Robert Yarbrough, *Covenant Seminary*.

ARTICLES

Articles should generally be about 4,000 to 7,000 words (including footnotes) and should be submitted to the Managing Editor of *Themelios*, which is peer-reviewed. Articles should use clear, concise English, following *The SBL Handbook of Style* (esp. for abbreviations), supplemented by *The Chicago Manual of Style*. They should consistently use either UK or USA spelling and punctuation, and they should be submitted electronically as an email attachment using Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx extensions) or Rich Text Format (.rtf extension). Special characters should use a Unicode font.

REVIEWS

The book review editors generally select individuals for book reviews, but potential reviewers may contact them about reviewing specific books. As part of arranging book reviews, the book review editors will supply book review guidelines to reviewers.

EDITORIAL

Do the Work of an Evangelist

— D. A. Carson —

*D. A. Carson is research professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical
Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois.*

“Do the work of an evangelist.” (2 Tim 4:5)

One of the odd things about the English language is how many words it has. For example, English has about three times as many words as French. That doesn’t mean that the working vocabulary of the average English speaker is larger than the working vocabulary of the average French speaker, of course. Most competent speakers of any language use only a small part of the total vocabulary of the language in which they are speaking. Nevertheless the difference in size of the total vocabulary is curious. The primary reason for the difference in vocabulary size between English and French lies in the different ways in which the two languages were formed. In keeping with other romance languages, French has depended on Greek and Latin for much of its word formation (though of course it has “borrowed” plenty of words from other languages). By contrast, English arose out of not only Greek and Latin, but Anglo-Saxon, with side input from Norse and Celtic languages.

The result is that English has many synonyms that have sprung up from separate linguistic heritages. These synonyms rarely share exactly the same semantic range; usage introduces distortions. The subject is *deep*, we say; it is very *profound*. In this context, it is difficult to discern a substantive semantic difference between *deep* and *profound*. On the other hand, we happily affirm that the well in the farmyard is *deep*; we would not say it is *profound*. Why not? Simply because we do not use *profound* in that way. By contrast, a French speaker will have no difficulty averring that both the subject and the well are “profond,” and will render both English *deep* and English *profound* by the French “profond.” If a scholar were trying to translate a French document into English, however, and came across the French word “profond,” he or she would have to think carefully about whether to choose *deep* or *profound*.

This is a rather roundabout way of reflecting on the fact that both translational and theological pitfalls lurk in the underbrush when moving from one language to another. In modern English, we distinguish *expiation* and *propitiation*. The former is the sacrificial act by which sin is canceled: the object of the action is the sin. The latter is the sacrificial act by which God is made propitious: the object of the action is God. Granted who the God of the Bible is, it is difficult to see how you can have one without the other: the same sacrifice that cancels sin by the sacrifice that God has ordained also turns aside his own the judicial wrath. Nevertheless it is useful to distinguish between the two notions. French has only one word, “expiation,” and it can convey both the cancellation of sin and the setting aside of the wrath of God, depending on the context. Competent French speakers simply do not have a word equivalent to the English *propitiation*. That is not to say that French theologians know nothing about the concept of propitiation, of course, for the concept depends on much, much more than the meaning

of a single word. But it is to say that they do not have one word that univocally means what English-speakers mean by *propitiation*. And that in turn means that the history of debate about what the cross achieves differs significantly in French and English scholarship.

Sometimes the fact that English uses two words where the French (and the Greek!) have only one can trip us up and focus our gaze in a slightly misleading direction. For the purposes of this editorial, one of the most telling examples is one so close to us we sometimes fail to see it. English has two words, “gospel” and “evangel,” where the Greek has only one, εὐαγγέλιον. *Themelios* is sponsored by an organization called “The Gospel Coalition.” What signals would be hoisted if, instead, we called ourselves “The Evangel Coalition”? We may say, “Evangelicals believe the gospel,” which does not sound entirely tautologous, but to say it as a first-century Greek speaker must, “Evangelicals believe the evangel,” would be passing strange. And then, of course, if we start to reflect on all the related words now used in English—evangelicalism, evangelism, evangelical, evangelist, evangel, evangelization, evangelize, evangelically, evangelicism—we observe that some of them have no Greek counterpart. Interestingly enough, the more-or-less synonymous *gospel* does not boast the array of cognates that *evangel* does. Most of us would not translate 2 Tim 4:5, “Do the work of a gospeller” or “Do the work of a gospelist.” To make matters more complicated yet, one or two of the Greek cognates of εὐαγγέλιον are sometimes rendered into English in ways that, on the surface, seem less than direct. For instance, one might have expected εὐαγγελίζομαι to be rendered “to evangelize,” but in most English Bibles, it is more likely to be rendered by “to preach the gospel” or “to preach the good news” or the like, equivalent to τὸ εὐαγγέλιον κηρύσσω. If this were another sort of editorial, it would be worth exploring why this is the case.

Which brings us to the text at the top of this note. Paul tells Timothy, “Do the work of an evangelist” (2 Timothy 4:5). That word “evangelist” (εὐαγγελιστής) is found only three times in the NT—once to designate Philip (Acts 21:8), once in a list of ministries (Eph 4:11), and here. I suspect that most of us read 2 Tim 4:5, “Do the work of an evangelist,” along some such lines as the following. Paul tells Timothy, in effect, that even when he is rightly involved in preaching, teaching, instructing, correcting, even when he is known for keeping his head in all situations and learning to endure hardship, he must not forget to do the work of an evangelist. Certainly it is easy for pastors in busy ministries to be so caught up in church-related service that they have few or no non-Christian friends. They may never share their faith and unpack the gospel to unbelievers from one month to the next. Seeing the danger, Paul commands Timothy to do the work of an evangelist—that is, preach the gospel to outsiders, share the gospel to outsiders, aiming to win converts. Make a priority of evangelism. Herald the gospel to outsiders, whether one-on-one, in small groups, or in larger contexts—this is what evangelism is, and this is what an evangelist does. In the midst of diverse and demanding ministry, do not forget to engage in evangelism.

Doubtless that is excellent counsel—but is this exactly what Paul is saying? Several factors must be raised.

(1) For some Christians, “the gospel” (equivalently, “the evangel”) is something you preach only to unconverted people. The gospel merely tips people into the kingdom; transformation and sanctification are sustained by discipleship. Once people become Christians, then the work of life transformation begins, often buttressed by various discipleship seminars: “Biblical Leadership,” “Learning to Pray,” “What to Do with Your Money,” “Christian Marriage,” and so forth—none of which falls under “gospel,” but only under post-gospel discipleship. In recent years, however, many preachers and theologians have convincingly argued that “gospel”/“evangel” is the larger category under which both evangelism and

discipleship fall. In the NT, gospel is not everything—it is not law, for instance—but it is a very big thing, precisely because it is the unimaginably great news about what God is doing in and through King Jesus, especially in and through his cross and resurrection. A careful reading of Scripture shows how often Christian conduct is grounded in the gospel itself. For instance, the gospel is to be obeyed (e.g., 2 Thess 1:8); certain behavior conforms to the gospel, while other behavior does not (1 Tim 1:10–11). Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her (Eph 5:25)—transparently, this is a *gospel* appeal. In short, in the NT the gospel is preached both to unbelievers and to believers. It calls unbelievers to repentance and faith; it calls believers to ongoing faith and conformity to Jesus.

In other words, gospel ministry includes but is not restricted to what we commonly call evangelistic ministry (note the two words, *gospel* and *evangelistic*, making the discussion confusing). Gospel ministry is ministry that is faithful to the gospel, that announces the gospel and applies the gospel and encourages people to believe the gospel and thus live out the gospel. If this is so, then why should “Do the work of a gospeller” mean something more restricted, like “Do that part of gospel work that addresses unbelievers (i.e., that to which *we* sometimes restrict “gospel ministry,” calling it “evangelism”)?

(2) The context of 2 Tim 4:5 suggests that it is this large view of gospel ministry that is in view. After Paul’s passionate command to Timothy to preach the word, spelling out what it means (4:2), he warns that a time will come when people will not want to listen but will prefer teachers “who say what their itching ears want to hear” (4:3). “But you,” Paul tells Timothy, “keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry” (4:5). This does not sound like a list of discretely defined chunks of ministry, as if Paul were saying, “Study hard for your preaching, visit the elderly, catechize the young, provide good counsel, do the work of an evangelist”—add them all together, and you will be a well-rounded minister. Rather, the list Paul provides focuses not on discrete ministries but on global stances throughout Timothy’s ministry: “keep your head in all circumstances” is not a discrete thing to do, something to be added, for instance, to “endure hardship.” No, all of the entries on this list are comprehensive. In this context, then, “do the work of an evangelist” simply means “do gospel work”—and that summarizes all of the instructions in the preceding lines. That’s what ministers do. They “discharge all the duties of [their] ministry”: they do gospel work. Doubtless that includes what *we* mean by evangelism. In that sense, “do gospel work” includes doing the work of an evangelist. But in this context it is doubtful that Paul is narrowing the field.

(3) Of course, a word might become more restrictive in its pragmatic use in a particular context. When Philip is designated “the evangelist” (Acts 21:8), does this mean “evangelist” in the modern sense? Perhaps. Luke might be remembering Philip’s ministry to the Ethiopian eunuch, in which he was certainly preaching the gospel to an unbeliever. Interestingly enough, however, this passage designates him as “one of the Seven” (Acts 21:8; cf. ch. 6). The work of the Seven was not Bible teaching and evangelism, though transparently some of them, including Philip, did engage in such word-ministry. It is difficult to tell if Luke thinks of him as an evangelist in the modern sense—a specialist in outreach. He may simply have exercised gospel ministry.

The use of εὐαγγελιστής in Eph 4:11 is a bit different. There the location of the word in a series of expressions all related to word-ministries suggests that what is in view is the kind of gospel ministry that we associate with “evangelism.”

(4) Though the argument is not worth much, we should note that there is inscriptional evidence of εὐαγγελιστής used in a pagan setting to refer to certain kinds of pagan priests, without any thought that such priests were trying to win converts.

In sum: Owing to the way in which two different English word-groups—gospel and evangel—are used to render one Greek word-group (εὐαγγέλιον and cognates), it is possible we have sometimes read into our English texts over-specifications that may not be there in the original. In its context in 2 Tim 4:5, a case can be made that εὐαγγελιστής is a prime example. “Do the work of an evangelist” may well be an exhortation to engage in evangel ministry, in gospel ministry, which includes what we today mean by evangelism but should not be restricted to it.

OFF THE RECORD

The Covert Thrill of Violence? Reading the Bible in Disbelief

— Michael J. Ovey —

Mike Ovey is principal of Oak Hill College in London.

One of the perils of being a middle-aged parent in England is that you have to attend school plays. By the time your children are in their mid-late teens, they no longer act in dubious juvenile versions of *The Lion King*, but any sense of safety this gives you is thoroughly spurious: they have been told by their drama teachers to do Shakespeare. However, Shakespeare in its raw form gives drama teachers cold feet, it seems. Thus it is that you can find yourself watching *King Lear* or *Romeo and Juliet*, but not in their tragic form: rather Shakespeare's tragedies are played for laughs. The thing is, Mercutio's agonised, dying, 'A plague o' both your houses! They have made worms' meat of me' does not really work as a gag. Trust me on this.

Now I have no doubt that the drama teacher who produced this comic adaptation of Shakespeare's tragedy was doing her postmodern best: 'witty', 'playful', 'imaginative', 'creative', 'rebellious-against-Shakespeare's-patriarchal-authorship', 'the reader-as-empowered-author'. Yet other adjectives seem more appropriate: cruel and violent. 'Cruel' because to treat Mercutio's death in this way is cruel and compassionless. 'Violent' because Shakespeare is not simply being gagged or silenced: he is being made a ventriloquist's dummy and being made to say words of trivial cruelty. George Steiner long ago appreciated that some modern reading strategies had exactly this quality: they had the 'covert thrill of violence'. 'Violence' because the reader make a ventriloquist's dummy of the author against his or her will, and 'covert' because this is carried out under the cover of 'witty', 'smart', 'playful' and indeed 'scholarly' reading of the author.

Obviously, we see these techniques applied to the Bible too. Equally clearly, I do want to pick up on Don Carson's brilliant book title *The Gagging of God*. Yes, there is a way in which God is silenced, but, going further, there is a sense in which our reading strategies make a ventriloquist's dummy of God, not simply gagging him, but putting our words into his mouth and then treating our words as if they are his.

Why would we do that?

I think Steiner's phrase 'covert thrill of violence' offers a critical clue here. You can read some-one *violently, violatingly*. A reading strategy can be a strategy for exercising violence. In particular, a reading strategy for the Bible can be a strategy for exercising violence towards God.

Let me explain further by drawing on the thought of the fourth-century bishop Hilary of Poitiers (flourished 360). Hilary was faced by those who denied that the Son was truly son, either by saying that he and the Father were really just masks for the one God (modalists) or that the Son was only a creature (Arians). On either view, the Son was not true son. Hilary feels that the true Sonship of Jesus is clearly

stated by the Bible, and yet his opponents persistently claim that they find support for their own views in the Bible. He feels he is faced with those who read in disbelief, and has to work through what right and wrong readings of the Bible involve. This leads him to discuss what we would now call presuppositions and the hermeneutics of suspicion.

What, Hilary muses, is this prior commitment which means modalists and Arians read the Scriptures as unbelievably as they do?

And yet our disbelief tilts even against obvious truth; we strive in our fury to pluck even God from His throne. If we could, we would climb by bodily strength to heaven, would fling into confusion the ordered courses of sun and stars, would disarrange the ebb and flow of tides, check rivers at their source or make their waters flow backward, would shake the foundations of the world, in the utter irreverence of our rage against the paternal work of God. It is well that our bodily limitations confine us within more modest bounds. Assuredly, there is no concealment of the mischief we would do if we could. In one respect we are free; and so with blasphemous insolence we distort the truth and turn our weapons against the words of God.¹

Hilary's point is that what humans really want is to do violence to God. Failing being able to do that in a physical way, we do it against what is available to us, his revealed word, because unlike the eternal incorporeal God, his word has physical presence in our world. Our treatment of God's word is the focal point of our violence against him.

This is a kind of hermeneutics of suspicion. Suspicion of both authors and readers can have its place: it is no doubt right and helpful to ask whether I read the Bible and write as I do because I am a person at least partly produced by a particular nation-state, in a particular class, in a particular place, of a particular gender and influenced by particular education. But Hilary raises the issue of *spiritual* suspicion. Hilary makes me ask whether I read as I do in my urge to do violence to God. Unnervingly, he makes me ask whether my basic disposition is precisely to want to distort the word of God, just because it is the word of God.

I suspect one response here is that this is too bleak. Certainly human motives can be mixed, including the motives for their hermeneutics and it is plausible to think that a human being can be both attracted to God and his word and yet simultaneously repelled. But the point is that this element of repulsion with its dimension of anti-God violence does exist, and this repulsion can be determinative in how we respond. Thus, Jesus analyses disbelief in him as arising precisely from the fact that he *does* speak words from his Father (John 8:45). And while he recognises that those who oppose him and his followers think they do God's will (John 16:2), in fact, he explains, this shows their alienation from the Father (John 16:3) and is in the context of hatred of both Jesus and the Father (John 15:24). Jesus comments that he has been hated 'without a cause' (John 15:25), that is, without good reason. And, finally, Jesus' all too real experience is precisely that humanity, when given the chance by Jesus' physical presence amongst us in the incarnation, murders God.

Murderers and would-be murderers are not necessarily the best readers of their victims' texts. That is obvious. Why would this not also be so when the one we would murderously love to be the victim is God?

¹*De Trinitate* III.21.

What follows from this? To begin with, we have to expect to fight the battle for the Bible in every generation because it has to be fought in every human heart.

Secondly, I need to be especially aware of the times when I have so mixed my inner desires and experience with what I claim is God's word, that God's word is merely a ventriloquist's dummy for my own thoughts—making doctrines out of my desires, as Hilary puts it. Perhaps I need to ask myself more carefully whether I *want* something I claim God says to be true. Perhaps I need to ask when God last said something in my reading that I did *not* like or that the world did not already say.

Thirdly, I need to return to the spiritual emphases of Athanasius, Hilary, Aquinas, as well as the numerous evangelical leaders who have stressed that reading the Bible is a spiritual exercise. I should read with prayer and with humility, but also, in view of the way that violent readings of God's word still strike a chord within me, I should read repentantly—repenting of my ongoing desire to lay hands on God.

Editor's Note

— Brian J. Tabb —

Brian Tabb is assistant professor of biblical studies and assistant dean at Bethlehem College and Seminary in Minneapolis, Minnesota and managing editor of Themelios.

Biblical and Systematic Theology in Dialogue

What is the task and focus of Christian theology? What are the distinctive contributions of biblical theology and systematic theology? In this issue of *Themelios*, a distinguished systematic theologian (Gerald Bray) and biblical theologian (Thomas Schreiner) address these and other questions. Schreiner reviews Bray's *God Is Love: A Biblical and Systematic Theology* (Crossway, 2012), with a response by the author. Then Bray reviews Schreiner's *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Baker, 2013), followed by a response from Schreiner. This dialogue began with papers presented at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in Baltimore (November 2013), and Schreiner and Bray have revised and expanded their papers for publication. Our hope is that this careful, charitable exchange will stimulate students, pastors, and scholars to further reflection within and across theological disciplines, leading to more penetrating insight into Scripture.

Update on the Themelios Editorial Board

We acknowledge and thank four retiring members of the *Themelios* editorial board: Drs. Oliver Crisp, William Kynes, Michael Thate, and Garry Williams. They have each served with distinction, and we wish them God's richest blessing as they step away from board responsibilities and invest their energy elsewhere.

We also welcome four new members to our editorial board. Dr. Lee Gatiss is Director of Church Society and Adjunct Lecturer in Church History at Wales Evangelical School of Theology and served recently as senior editor of *The NIV Proclamation Bible*. Dr. Paul Helseth is Associate Professor of Christian Thought at the University of Northwestern, St. Paul and author of *Right Reason and the Princeton Mind: An Unorthodox Proposal*. Dr. Paul House is Professor of Divinity at Beeson Divinity School, past president of the Evangelical Theological Society, and author of many articles and books on OT and biblical theology, including *Old Testament Theology*. Dr. Robert Yarbrough is Professor of New Testament at Covenant Seminary, president of the Evangelical Theological Society, and author of many publications, including "Should Evangelicals Embrace Historical Criticism? The Hays-Ansberry Proposal" in this issue of *Themelios*.

A Biblical Theologian Reviews Gerald Bray's *Systematic Theology*

— Thomas R. Schreiner —

Tom Schreiner is James Buchanan Harrison professor of New Testament interpretation, professor of biblical theology, and associate dean at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He is also a preaching pastor at Clifton Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky. He has published a number of books, including Romans (BECNT; Baker, 1998); Paul, Apostle of God's Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology (IVP, 2001); 1, 2 Peter, Jude (NAC; B&H, 2003); New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ (Baker, 2008); Galatians (ZECNT; Zondervan, 2010); and The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments (Baker, 2013).

* * * * *

Abstract: Gerald Bray has written in the evangelical and Reformed tradition a systematic and biblical theology that explicates the theme of God's love. The book doesn't interact with other scholars but represents Bray's own understanding of the biblical text. Even though the book is titled *A Biblical and Systematic Theology*, it represents the latter more than the former. The book is characterized by a lucid exposition of the biblical text and many excellent pastoral applications. Bray's work could have been improved by explaining more specifically how God's holiness relates to his love, and there are a few other areas where clarification or correction is needed. Overall, however, the book is an outstanding contribution.

* * * * *

Let me begin by saying how much I profited from reading Gerald Bray's *Biblical and Systematic Theology*.¹ It was an edifying experience both theologically and spiritually. Bray's work is learned, godly, evangelical, Reformed, and practical. Especially those of us in biblical studies should not forsake the reading of systematic theologies, for as the years pass, we actually forget what we once knew. Sometimes biblical scholars are guilty of spending so much time in the detailed exegesis of one or two biblical books that we fail to see the broader picture.

I would like to consider several elements in reviewing Bray's work. What kind of systematic theology is this and how did Bray go about the task? What insights are particularly helpful for scholars and pastors? Along the way, but particularly at the end, I will raise a few questions. The questions are mainly quibbles, for I read this book with enthusiasm and joy and learned much from a veteran theologian; but in a massive book like this I naturally have a few disagreements.

Let's think about the book as a whole. *God Is Love* is not a "light" treatment of its subject. Indeed, it is 768 pages of full text, with brief footnotes devoted almost exclusively to Scripture references. I have to admit that I was a bit surprised about the nature of the book. Given the book's title and size, I expected

¹Gerald Bray, *God Is Love: A Biblical and Systematic Theology* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 768 pp.

that Bray would interact regularly with other theologians who have exercised influence throughout the history of the church. For instance, Michael Horton's recent systematic theology carries on a regular dialogue with other theologians.² Bray, however, takes an entirely different course. He mentions theologians only when it is absolutely necessary. Arius, for example, receives attention because of his christological deviations, but Bray entirely passes over Athanasius's role in combatting Arius.

What I have written is a bit misleading because Bray informs us in the preface that he plans to write a companion volume in the future that interacts with other scholars and other views. He intended this volume to be an exposition of Scripture, accessible to ordinary Christians. Thus, it is likely that Bray will discuss some of the matters mentioned in this review in his forthcoming volume. In most cases, it isn't helpful to criticize authors for what they don't include in a book. Oftentimes reviewers complain that the author didn't write the book that they would have written, which seems like a rather churlish criticism. Anyone who knows Gerald Bray's work knows of his deep and massive learning, but Bray didn't write this book to display his knowledge of theology and church history. Here we have the work of a wise veteran, one who is deeply schooled in church history and theology. His learning and knowledge are kept in reserve, but they shine through every page.

Next, let us consider the subtitle of the book: *A Biblical and Systematic Theology*. I have already noted that Bray does not interact in any detail with other theologians. What kind of biblical and systematic theology is it? The section and chapter titles indicate that the book is arranged via systematic categories. The categories are investigated creatively under the rubric of God's love, but the arrangement of the book is familiar to those in systematics: the first section deals with theological prolegomena and Scripture; the second examines the doctrine of God and the Trinity; the third reflects on God the Creator and his creation of angels and humans; fourth, he considers the role of sin, though he includes interesting material not often found in other systematic theologies, with discussions on ethics, atheism, cults, and other religions; fifth, he plumbs the soteriology of the Scriptures; and sixth, he considers the gift of the Spirit, the Christian life, the church, and last things. It is quite evident that the ordering of topics fits with what is normally called systematic theology.

Even though the subtitle contains the words *Biblical Theology*, it isn't biblical theology in the sense that it sets forth the storyline of Scripture. Bray doesn't concentrate on the epochal nature of Scripture so that readers consider the progressive nature of biblical revelation.³ His work is informed by and rooted in biblical theology, but he doesn't trace out (in most instances) biblical themes historically. Bray's book is a biblical theology in the sense that it based on the theology taught in the Bible. He cites many texts but doesn't often engage in extensive exegesis or explanation of biblical texts. Instead his work reflects both the Reformation and evangelical appropriation of the biblical witness. Put another way, Bray appeals to the clarity of the Scriptures to support his case.

What is the best way to characterize Bray's work? John Frame's notion that systematic theology consists of an application of the Scriptures to today's world captures Bray's agenda. The practical and pastoral nature of the work is striking. Bray often applies the text to today's world and to Christians, and hence the book could have been titled: *God Is Love: A Systematic, Biblical, and Pastoral Theology*. Perhaps this is the place to comment on the words *God Is Love* in the title. Bray repeatedly emphasizes

² Michael Horton, *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010).

³ There are exceptions here and there, but in the main Bray doesn't unfold redemptive history in his discussions.

in the book the love of God. The heart of being a Christian, according to Bray, is an experience of God's love in Jesus Christ. Love is intrinsic to the nature of the Trinity and characterizes the way the different persons relate to one another (p. 176). The work of redemption stems from God's love: the Father sent the Son because of his love, the Son voluntarily and gladly gave himself for sinners because of his love, and the Spirit applies the work of redemption because of his love.

What can we say about a theology where God's love takes center stage? Why did Bray choose this theme? Why not choose covenant or kingdom or something else? Bray doesn't defend his choice of the love of God as the central theme of his systematic theology. Perhaps he will defend it in the forthcoming volume. Is he saying that every systematic theology should emphasize God's love to the same extent he does? Is God's love *the* central theme of the scriptures and the biblical storyline? Why didn't he choose another theme, like the glory of God or God's holiness? Incidentally, it is entirely legitimate to have a systematic theology that focuses on the love of God. It is really a brilliant choice, as long as one doesn't say that this is the only way one should write a systematic theology. In other words, systematic theology can be approached from a number of different perspectives. The focus on a particular theme helps us see the message of the Bible from a new and illuminating vantage point, enriching our understanding of biblical revelation. The content of the Scriptures can never be exhaustively mined, and so there is no one "right" approach. Hence, it is entirely fitting to have a systematic theology written with an emphasis on God's love, for it ties readers to one of the most important themes in the Bible. Furthermore, it seems especially apropos for a Reformed Christian like Bray, who believes God is sovereign in all things, to emphasize the love of God, for some mistakenly conclude that those who are Reformed privilege God's power over his love.

The practical orientation of the book should be highlighted. Bray has written this book for pastors and missionaries and Christians who want to know and love God. His work is filled with wise and orthodox theology, but what is striking is how he lingers over truths and applies them to the hearts of his readers. This feature of the book struck me from the outset. Bray says, "Our faith in God is not just a philosophical belief in a supreme being; it is a life-changing experience of the one who has made us what we are" (p. 19). He says about evangelism, "[W]e have a duty to tell them [non-Christians] what has happened to us can and ought to happen to them too. The treasure we have received is not for hoarding but for sharing, and it is our duty to go out and find those whom God has called to be his sheep" (p. 19). "No one who receives the gospel can keep it to himself; he will immediately seek to communicate it to others and join in fellowship with those who share his convictions" (p. 517). A church that "ceases to preach the gospel . . . will wither and die" (p. 518). How many other systematic theologies exhort readers to be involved in evangelism? These quotations characterize the work as a whole. Bray often reflects on the implications of systematic theology for the life of the church and the individual Christian. Such an approach is refreshing and spiritually invigorating.

Bray addresses many other theological and practical issues, such as the kind of work fitting for Christians, the role of leisure, how believers should respond to the environment, the use of drugs, and how Christians should relate to disabled people. I don't think I have ever read a theology that speaks to the matter of whether pastors should be matchmakers, but Bray speaks strongly against such a role, reminding us that singleness is a calling of God that should not be scorned (p. 313). Along the same lines, he warns readers more than once about a preoccupation with sports, which can be tantamount to idolatry. He rather amusingly says, "[I]t might even be argued that the pagans were better off, because their idols were a lot cheaper than ours!" (p. 650).

One of my favorite features of the work is the humility that pervades it. Sometimes systematic theologies, fairly or unfairly, get a bad rap. They try, as someone has said, to unscrew the inscrutable and to explain the unexplainable. In other words, they allegedly attempt to solve every conceivable problem. Bray does not go that route. He freely and often acknowledges that we don't know the answer to all our questions: "theology reminds us that our minds are limited" (p. 82), and "Theology is therefore a call to intellectual humility" (p. 82). After asking why a self-sufficient and perfect God created the world for his glory and how is it that his good creatures could rebel against him, Bray responds, "We do not know the answers to such questions. To pretend that we do is to manipulate and misinterpret God's word" (p. 89). We have to beware of forcing theology to fit a preconceived philosophy or rational way of thinking, so that we squeeze out paradox and anomalies (p. 82). "How time and eternity coexist is a mystery we cannot solve in our present state" (p. 731).

The Scriptures unequivocally and clearly teach not only the complete sovereignty of God but also the free will of man, according to Bray. The problem of evil, he says, "involves us in a mystery beyond our understanding" (p. 96). He remarks when discussing the problem of evil, "The ultimate reason for this is a mystery that is not revealed to us" (p. 145). Why good creatures rebelled against God is "a mystery that is insoluble in human terms" (p. 345). Why would God allow Satan to survive and to rule over the created world? Bray says, "we do not know why God has done this, and we do not understand why he allows evil to continue when it is against his revealed will for his creatures" (p. 353). What about natural disasters like tornadoes and tsunamis? "Christians do not accept that natural disasters are an arbitrary judgment from God or that they occur in spite of him, because we uphold his sovereignty in all things. We do not know why some people suffer from particular catastrophes while others are spared" (p. 272).

Bray asks, "Is there any way of knowing why he has chosen us and not others? The simple answer to this question is that we do not know" (p. 523). He emphasizes that no one deserves to be saved and that the salvation of any is due to God's love since all deserve judgment. Like those who survive a plane crash, we should be humble and grateful before God (p. 527). Since salvation is due to God's choice, we must not think we are better than others, nor should we ever give up on those who are far from God.

Bray has a learned study of the *filioque* (the Spirit proceeding also from the Son as he does from the Father) and the difference between Western and Eastern churches on this matter. As he reflects on the difference, which has not been resolved after all these centuries, he opines that this may "be a sign from God that our theologies, however reasonable they may seem to us, can never fully grasp the mystery of his [God's] eternal and transcendent being" (p. 221).

Bray's theology reflects not only deep humility but also an ecumenical character. I mean ecumenical in the best sense of the word. Bray writes as an Anglican and one of the virtues of evangelical Anglicanism is its emphasis on "mere Christianity." When it comes to controversial issues, Bray doesn't push any particular agenda. He claims that the scriptures aren't very clear on church government and sees virtues in different arrangements. He presents various views of baptism and the Lord's Supper but does not strongly endorse any of them. Bray's theology would be an excellent text for Christians in every part of the world, and it is a good reminder that we must beware of being dogmatic and uncharitable on doctrines and practices that have long been disputed.

The worldwide applicability of Bray's theology is evident in his excellent discussions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, atheism, and various cults. I will give the reader a little taste here. Bray says that the fundamental problem with Islam is christological, for it denies what Scripture teaches about Jesus Christ. Islam, he says, "is a religion of justice rather than of love, of fate rather than of forgiveness" (p.

433). Bray is unapologetic; Christianity is universally true and hence the exclusive truth about God for all people everywhere. He says, "When faced with the claims of other religions, the Christian response is to proclaim that everyone needs to have a personal relationship with God in Jesus Christ" (p. 439).

The pastoral focus of *God Is Love*, commended above, is striking in four areas. First, Bray reflects on the power of the Bible, affirming its authority, infallibility, and inerrancy. He says, "[T]he divine inspiration of the Scriptures is seen in the power they exert in forming and feeding the people of God" (p. 53). Christians respond to the Bible "because in it they hear the voice of the Lord speaking to them" (p. 53).

Second, he often reflects on what it is like to live the Christian life. "[W]hat really matters is the presence of Christ in our lives" (p. 100). "There is no substitute for a humble and contrite heart" (p. 100). "The key to the Christian life is knowing the love of God at work in our hearts" (p. 98). The Christian life is a battle: we must "die to ourselves, and that is not so easy" (p. 621). In our lives "there is still a lot of cleaning up to do, and that takes time and patience" (p. 621). The paradox of the Christian life is that the more we know about God and his will for us, the more we are conscious of our failure to live up to it and of the resistance to his will which is a fundamental part of our experience as fallen human beings" (p. 636). Bray also emphasizes the importance of prayer. "There is no aspect of the Christian life more neglected today than prayer" (p. 623). "Prayer is the lifeline that connects us with Christ and gives meaning to our relationship with him" (p. 623), and "the closeness of our union with Christ can be measured by the quality of our prayer life" (p. 623).

Third, he has wise words for ministers and missionaries. "What people hear from preachers comes from their heart, and if their heart [i.e., the heart of preachers] is not right with the Lord, they will hear nothing" (p. 99). "It is perfectly possible for a Christian to live in obedience to the commands of God, only to find that his efforts to preach the gospel have borne little or no fruit. Some missionaries have spent their entire lives in countries where virtually no one has responded to their message" (pp. 619–20). "God will not judge us by our results but by our faithfulness, and that is our hope" (p. 620).

Fourth, he has some important warnings for academics. "It is . . . tempting for Christian scholars to crave academic respectability, even when this can be had only at a great cost to their faith" (p. 651). "The sin of pride haunts academia, and Christians must flee it if they want to grow closer to God, remembering that he has chosen what the world sees as foolish in order to shame the wise" (p. 652).

Perhaps I have overemphasized the pastoral nature of Bray's theology, for the book is deeply and profoundly theological. There is a theological feast here for students and scholars. Bray's reflections on the Trinity are particularly helpful. He argues, for instance, that the early church did not cave to Greek thought in the early christological controversies. The church fathers did not engage in speculative theology but attempted to describe what had happened in the Christ event (p. 119). They created a new and distinctive Christian vocabulary with the language (Greek) that was available to them (pp. 108–9). They did not capitulate to Greek philosophy but "challenged the reigning philosophical theories of the time and put forward a belief that in many ways was the exact opposite of them" (p. 110). Their understanding of the Trinity was not shaped by Greek philosophy but the message of the Scriptures (p. 109), and hence the Chalcedonian formula (that Jesus is fully God and fully man) faithfully represents the teaching of the Bible.

Bray's commitment to evangelical orthodoxy is evident from the outset of the book. Some of those who claim to be Christians, he declaims, aren't truly sheep but goats (p. 18). He remarks that many theologians aren't truly Christian and "must be exposed and avoided" (p. 27). "The greatest enemies of

the Christian faith are not those who openly reject it but those who claim to accept it while denying everything it stands for” (p. 362). “To fail to proclaim Christ as the only way, truth, and life is not only to deny him to our own hurt but also to deprive others of the opportunity to hear the Word of God” (p. 95). He says, “That is the world we live in, where the chief obstacle we face as Christians is the unwillingness of most people even to talk about God, let alone consider his claim on their lives” (p. 396). Liberal societies are squeezing Christianity out of the public square, and “evangelism” is “ruled out on the ground that it infringes on the rights of others to think whatever they like” (p. 404). He laments that in the West people have lost their jobs “for offering to pray for patients” or even “for giving even the slightest hint that they are Christians” (p. 405).

Bray is evangelical and Reformational in his theology. He regularly critiques Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy for failing to measure up to the scriptural word and for promoting teachings that are contrary to the gospel. Justification is ours through faith instead of human obedience. To be righteous biblically means that we are in a right relationship with God. Faith “is a knowledge and experience of Jesus that can come only when he reveals himself to us. It has always been possible to know about Jesus without encountering him personally. It is even possible to believe everything in the Gospels and yet not understand what they are all about. . . . True conversion comes only by meeting Jesus” (p. 638). Bray writes, “[J]ustifying faith is not to be equated with belief in the right things, as important as that is” (p. 640). Justification doesn’t mean that we have changed “in an objective sense” (p. 640). Justification includes forgiveness of sins, but it also means that we also enjoy Christ’s righteousness, which is imputed to us because of our union with him (pp. 640–41).

His description of conviction of sin is insightful and profoundly evangelical. Conviction of sin “is the knowledge that the presence of sin in our lives is unbearable and that there is no escape from it other than in and through Jesus Christ. As long as a person thinks that he has his faults under control and that he can deal with them as required, there is no conviction of sin, and therefore no deep work of the Holy Spirit in him” (p. 607).

I have two disagreements related to justification, and one is more direct and the other is tangential. First, Bray says that even if we keep the Mosaic law, we are still not justified since justification is by faith not via the law (p. 555). This is certainly a possible reading, but it is more likely that Paul teaches that if we could keep the law perfectly, we would be justified through the law.⁴ But since no one can keep the law and all fall short of the glory of God, justification is only through faith in Christ. Second, Bray suggests that church membership should be granted if someone affirms that God is one’s Father who created the world (p. 685). If I understood him rightly, that is the only doctrinal belief essential for church membership. But I would have thought that one should also affirm the gospel of Jesus Christ, that no one would be admitted as a member who did not affirm that they were trusting in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins and the hope of eternal life. Such trust would manifest itself in baptism and repentance (Acts 2:38).

Let me comment briefly on some matters where I have some questions for Bray. He argues that God’s wrath is an expression of his love (p. 140). According to Bray, God hates us because he loves us, for he “cannot tolerate us in that condition” (p. 140). He suggests that God continues to sustain the existence of those who rebelled against him in hell because of his love for them and because they matter to him as creatures (pp. 353, 733). He also argues that a life sentence is milder than annihilation (p. 370)

⁴See Thomas R. Schreiner, *The Law and Its Fulfillment: A Pauline Theology of Law* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 41–71.

and that there is hope where there is life. First, attaching hope to those who are in hell seems strange since they have no hope for the future. Linking love with the judgment of those in hell is a step too far. The Scriptures don't indicate that God loves those in hell but punishes them and hates them because of his justice and holiness.

Bray's discussion of God's holiness is rather brief (pp. 159–62), and he doesn't linger on the theme. He calls upon readers to reflect often on God's love, but I think it would have been helpful to spend more time in the book considering God's holiness. We see the wrath of God in Noah's flood (Gen 6:5–9:17), the deaths of Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10:1–2) and Uzzah (2 Sam 6:6–7) and Ananias (Acts 5:1–11), and in the final judgment scene in Rev 19. Let me be clear: Bray doesn't deny such texts, but he focuses on God's love, and it seems that God's holiness isn't as prominent. For instance, Bray says, "The fact that God the Father sent his Son to die for us shows us just how important we are to him. It is a sign of his love for us" (p. 542). Even though some would disagree with this statement, I think it is correct. The cross does demonstrate God's love for us and indicates that we matter to God. Nevertheless, Bray doesn't emphasize sufficiently God's awesome holiness. At one point he speaks of God's love as transcending his goodness (p. 70). Such an expression could suggest that love triumphs over justice, but in the cross the holiness of God was satisfied and the love of God was expressed (Rom 3:21–26). At the end of the day, I believe Bray agrees with my point, for elsewhere he says that God can't just "forgive and forget," for that would be "a denial of his nature" (p. 515).

Could God have saved us another way? Bray says yes since he is all-powerful (p. 541). Perhaps Bray is right, but I wonder if there was any other way for the love and holiness of God to be reconciled apart from the atoning death of the God-man Jesus Christ. I am not suggesting that there is a law above God, but that the death of God's Son was the only way that God's attributes of love and justice could be expressed in judgment and salvation.

Let me mention a few matters briefly where it would be helpful to hear Bray's response. He claims that Jesus' resurrection was not a reward for his obedience. Instead, he was resurrected because he was God (p. 189). But why is an either-or posited here? Don't Phil 2:6–11 and Heb 1:8–9 clearly teach that Jesus' resurrection and exaltation were a result of his obedience?

When it comes to Christology, it is striking that Bray gives scant attention to Jesus as the Son of Man. He limits his discussion to two pages and says that this title indicates that Jesus was a human being. On the one hand, this shows how systematic categories dominate Bray's work, for Son of Man plays a major role in the Gospels but is virtually absent from Bray's work. On the other hand, there are indications in both Daniel and the Gospels that the Son of Man is also a divine figure (Dan 7:9–14; Mark 2:10, 28; 14:62), and hence it seems too reductionistic to limit the title to Jesus' humanity.

Speaking of Christology, Bray rightly rejects kenotic Christology (that Jesus divests himself of his divinity), but I was a bit unsure in his discussion (pp. 201–5) about his own solutions to some of the issues raised. Is he suggesting that Jesus did not exercise the prerogatives of deity, though these prerogatives were still his? He raises a provocative question about the meaning of John 17:5, asking how Jesus can be restored to the glory he once had if as the second person of the Trinity he has been reigning all along. He raises the question, but I am not sure in the course of his discussion what his answer is. In the middle of the discussion he appeals to mystery (p. 204), and so perhaps that is his answer. Along the same lines, I was confused when he speculates that one person of the Trinity could know something that the other persons don't (p. 571), but how does that fit with God's omniscience?

Bray has a learned discussion on the Son of God being begotten and the Spirit proceeding (John 14:16, 26; 15:26). The texts cited don't refer to inter-trinitarian, pretemporal relations but to relations among the persons of the Godhead in history. Bray seems to assume that all orthodox Christians agree on the interpretation of such verses, but isn't it possible to believe in the Trinity on other grounds without bringing in the language of the Son being begotten and the Spirit proceeding? Perhaps Bray's answer is that God's work in history corresponds with who God is "in his eternal self" (p. 219).

Bray says that the angel of the Lord in the OT can't be God or a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus because we know God didn't appear as a man before Christ and Jesus was not an angel (pp. 252–53, 256). But a number of texts indicate that we have a reference to God himself appearing to human beings before the coming of Christ (e.g., Gen 18:1, 10, 13, 22; 32:28–30; Judg 13:3, 18, 22). Was this the pre-incarnate Jesus? Was it the Father? It seems as if what Bray says elsewhere could very well apply here. We don't know how this works (it is beyond our understanding), but the text indicates that God appeared to them.

If I understand Bray, he seems to argue that death and natural disasters would have taken place even if human beings hadn't sinned (pp. 275, 385). But don't Rom 8:18–25 and Gen 3 suggest that the created order fell when human beings sinned? And hence such natural disasters should be explained as a consequence of the fall.

Bray seems to reject all remarriage after divorce, but many interpreters, like me, believe that the scriptures teach that remarriage is permitted if the marriage dissolved because of sexual sin or desertion. Bray doesn't interact exegetically with that interpretation, which is probably the most common evangelical view. I wondered why he believes the exception clause allows divorce for sexual infidelity but not remarriage. It seems that the exception clause most naturally relates to both divorce and remarriage and can't be limited to the former (Matt 5:32; 19:9). It would help if Bray were to explain why the exception clause pertains to divorce but not to remarriage.

Bray also says that the sin of Adam and Eve was "fundamentally a rejection of God's love for them" (p. 94). But wasn't their fundamental sin pride? I take it that the desire to be like God wasn't noble, contrary to Bray (p. 374), but betrayed a sin of independence and rebellion that was idolatrous.

Bray consistently affirms God's sovereignty in the strongest possible terms, so I was puzzled when I read these words, "Did God know when he created Satan that he would turn out this way? This is a question impossible to answer" (p. 347). Bray goes on to say that it wasn't God's intention that Satan would rebel. In one sense that is certainly true, but certainly God knew even before he created Satan what he would do. Even classical Arminians affirm that truth, and so I didn't know what to make of Bray's statement, which implies that God might have been surprised by Satan's rebellion, especially since it doesn't fit with the rest of the book.

I can't conclude my review with such questions. What a splendid and wonderful book! How nourishing theologically and spiritually! I believe this book will be read for many years to come, and I think Bray's wish that the book be read in the church worldwide will become a reality. It is probably already happening. Thank you, Gerald Bray, for a lifetime of reverent and faithful scholarship!

Response to Tom Schreiner

— Gerald Bray —

Gerald Bray is research professor of divinity at Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Alabama, where he teaches history and doctrine. He is a minister in the Church of England and the editor of the Anglican theological journal Churchman.

I am very grateful to Dr Schreiner for his kind and generous words about *God Is Love*. It is not a perfect book, and much has had to be omitted. The companion volume, *God Has Spoken*, which is due to appear in October 2014, will deal with the secondary literature and go at least some way to filling the gap which he has noticed.

On the specific points which he raises, I would say only the following:

1. Love is not just a matter of what God does but of who God is. God tolerates the existence of evil beings because he is love, but of course he hates it—the two things are not mutually incompatible. We may perhaps compare it with the ‘hate the sin but love the sinner’ dictum which we often hear today.

2. Dr Schreiner seems to have a view of holiness that is influenced by legal and moral considerations. If these were applied consistently, none of us would (or could) be holy as God is holy. I do not myself think that this is an adequate view of holiness, but I recognise that holiness is a problem for the modern church and do not claim to have solved it.

3. On divorce and remarriage, I fully accept that the latter is authorised in cases of adultery but not otherwise. My main concern is with Christian teachers and leaders: they should leave their ministry if they divorce and then remarry without legitimate cause (that is, except in cases of adultery). This is not to condemn them but to protect them from the dangers of ministry and maintain the witness of the church.

4. I firmly believe in the sovereignty of God, but I cannot believe that God intended Satan to rebel against him when he created him. This is a paradox, I realise, and I do not claim to be able to resolve it. It is a mystery beyond our comprehension. What matters to us is that Satan has rebelled and enticed the human race into his rebellion. God has dealt with this situation not by destroying Satan outright but by sending his Son to die and rise again for us—another mystery but one on which our eternal salvation depends.

5. Dr Schreiner has misunderstood my remarks about church membership. What I said about belief in God as Father was only a starting point—something that most people today could probably affirm but which is not enough. Whether we could be justified by keeping the Mosaic law is one of those unanswerable questions. Perhaps, but as it is impossible, it hardly matters one way or the other.

6. I think that Dr Schreiner was right to pick me up on my overly-analytical remark about the resurrection of Jesus being due to his divinity and not to his human obedience. It is not an either-or but a both-and, as he points out.

I think that is most of what I have to say. Thanks again for the opportunity to say it.

A Systematician Reviews Tom Schreiner's *Biblical Theology*

— Gerald Bray —

Gerald Bray is research professor of divinity at Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Alabama, where he teaches history and doctrine. He is a minister in the Church of England and the editor of the Anglican theological journal Churchman.

Abstract: Tom Schreiner has attempted to write a systematic theology based on the canonical order of the books in the English Bible. This review article argues that the method is faulty and that the conclusions are therefore wrong. A systematic biblical theology is possible but must be based on different principles and developed in a different way.

It is an honour to respond to Tom Schreiner's important book *The King in His Beauty*.¹ I have long known that Tom Schreiner is an authority on the NT, which I am not, and I feel both surprised and inadequate to comment on such a weighty tome. I must say that I am gratified to discover from the title that Tom, whom I suspect votes Republican at election time, is actually a closet monarchist, as indeed all Bible-believing Christians must be. For the Lord our God is sovereign. He brooks no rivals, but neither does he shut down the universe when he fails to get his way with his unruly creatures. His power in sustaining his creation and his love in redeeming it are the great themes of the Scriptures, and it is good to be reminded of this in such a comprehensive and reverent way. We are standing here on holy ground, and Tom never lets us forget the beauty of that holiness.

I also admire him for his spirit of self-denial in writing this book. For a NT scholar to devote two-thirds of his biblical theology to the OT and to refrain from recycling his already-published material in the remaining third is truly commendable. Furthermore, he has undertaken the very difficult task of trying to turn what is essentially an analytical approach to the Bible into a synthetic one. Biblical scholars are experts in taking the engine of Scripture to pieces, but they seldom show much interest in putting it back together again. They often see their task as tracing the source and meaning of every word and pericope in the text, and when they have done that, they rest from their labours. Tom has not done this. He has taken things several steps further by attempting to make coherent sense out of the bits and pieces, so that we do not become so obsessed with the details that we lose the overall picture. Schreiner focuses on the unfolding storyline of Scripture and argues that 'the "kingdom of God," if that term is defined with sufficient flexibility, fits well as a central theme of the entire Bible' (pp. xii–xiii).

¹Thomas R. Schreiner, *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 714 pp.

Tom does not underestimate the difficulties faced by this biblical-theological project. It is by no means clear in what order the various pieces of the scriptural story should be taken, nor can we easily say that they conform to a single master plan. As he points out, many people would question his preference for the English order of the OT books, as opposed to the Hebrew one which they see as more authentic and meaningful.² Others doubt whether the wisdom literature can be integrated into the same theological framework as the rest of the OT, which has a more obviously historical orientation. Schreiner and other biblical theologians hold that the Bible proceeds logically from the first to the second creation, from Genesis to Revelation. However, biblical theologians have difficulty knowing what to do with material that could fit almost anywhere along that timeline because it is essentially unconcerned with developments in the time-and-space universe, such as God's Trinitarian nature. These difficulties are real, and Tom knows as well as I do that many aspects of his work will be questioned for reasons like these. But in fairness to him, I think that we ought to allow him the way he has taken, rather than critique it and suggest some other road, whether it is more or less travelled than his has been.

I am also deeply impressed by his wide mastery of the secondary literature. Reading both his text and the accompanying footnotes is a reminder of the wealth and variety of modern evangelical biblical scholarship in particular. I have to confess that in some cases I have discovered for the first time what longstanding friends and colleagues of mine actually think. I suppose that when you know people personally, you tend to guess what goes through their minds and seldom think to ask them specifically about it. How Tom has found the time to plough through the vast and ever-growing store of information on the Bible that pours from the presses I do not know, but I can say that he has convicted me of the depth of my own ignorance by comparison. I only hope that one day I shall find the time, or be given a competent research assistant, so that I can do this too. I know that if I had had his book to hand when I was writing mine it would have been much improved, not least by drawing attention to the many cross-references that in my case went unnoticed because I could not recall them at the time and my copy-editor got fed up trying to fill in the gaps in my erudition.

I have learned a great deal from reading this book, and am grateful to the editors of *Themelios* for putting me in a position where I have had to read it in some detail at least twice, and in some parts more than that. So I hope that Tom will forgive me if I say that, on balance, I think that his ambitious project has failed. What he has given us is a comprehensive and generally reliable introduction to the contents of the Bible. Tom does not intend *The King in His Beauty* as a technical work for scholars, but he writes mainly for students, laypersons, and pastors (p. x), and these readers will likely benefit from his biblical survey. Even long-time believers sometimes find it hard to get a handle on parts of the OT, in particular, and many of the chapters in this volume will help them achieve that goal. This is good and useful. Where the book has failed is not at that level, but in its wider purpose, which is to construct a biblical theology organized around God's kingdom.

Theology is first and foremost about who God is and then about what he has done. But if we follow the approach of biblical theologians like Schreiner, most of the time we are forced to begin with what God has done and work back from there to who he is. Tom ably unfolds what God has done, but in my view he stops short of clearly synthesizing the biblical teaching about God's nature and purposes.

²See for example Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Biblical Theology of the Hebrew Bible* (New Studies in Biblical Theology; Downers Grove: IVP, 2003); James M. Hamilton, *God's Glory in Salvation Through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010); Jason S. DeRouchie, ed., *What the Old Testament Authors Really Cared About: A Survey of Jesus' Bible* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2013).

The narrative of the text does not easily lend itself to reflective meditation on the nature of the one it is about. It is not that the signs are not there but that they do not appear in any logical order. The world saw what God had done long before anyone came to know who he is in the way that Christians now do, yet we cannot understand the meaning of his acts unless and until we know him in a personal way. In other words, the key to understanding the Bible does not lie in the narrative but behind it. Tom concedes this at the outset of his project when he writes, ‘Scripture unfolds *the story* of the kingdom, and God’s glory is *the reason* for the story’ (p. xiii, emphasis original). It cannot be recovered by stringing events out one after the other, but only by following the clues that those events provide to the being of the God whose acts they were. These clues are not ordered in a systematic way, nor are they all equally revealing. We have to pick and choose, ordering and sometimes reordering the material to facilitate this process. This is what a narrative approach cannot do and is one reason why this book is not really theology at all. It is rather a prolegomenon to systematics, which is a different thing.

To illustrate what I mean, Tom begins by telling us that Scripture’s unfolding storyline may be summed up under the heading of the kingdom of God. To his mind the love of God is part of that kingdom, a manifestation of the way he behaves in relation to it. The trouble with this is that the kingdom of God is essentially external to him: it is something that he has created and over which he rules. The love of God, on the other hand, is something internal, which is not revealed to us before the coming of Christ and the sending of the Holy Spirit. Until that happens, we may see the love of God at work in his creation, but we cannot know that love as it is in his inner being and that we customarily express in the doctrine of the Trinity. Unfortunately, but again not surprisingly, Tom mentions the Trinity only once, in a brief comment about Gen 1:26 (p. 5). He says it is revealed in the NT, which is good and true, but his method means that it is not actually mentioned anywhere in the main body of the text. Even Matt 28:19 does not cut it, which is (to say the least) surprising. But from a narrative perspective it is possible to see why the Trinity would not be considered a NT doctrine because it is not revealed as such: it has to be worked out from the data, and the data are not presented in a conveniently systematic way. Thus, what we end up with is a confession of the doctrine in principle but with no sign of it in practice—an odd and ultimately untenable situation from my perspective as a systematic theologian.

Yet when we are united to Christ in the power of the Spirit, we come to see that the Son is co-creator of the universe with the Father and that all things have their being and purpose in him. Of course, we cannot say that the ancient Israelites had no idea what Gen 1 was about, but although they understood it in one way, they had no theology in the sense that we understand the term. Theology is essentially a Christian discipline, not a Jewish or Islamic one, although Jews and Muslims have taken to using the term in modern times and mostly under Christian influence. There is no exclusively *Old Testament* theology—the very concept is a Christian one that has been retrojected onto the Hebrew text. This is not because there is no God in the OT—there quite clearly is—but because the people’s understanding of him had not been integrated into that experience of the divine love that is unique to the person and work of the Son.

As Christians we feel that we are entitled to read the OT in the light of Christ because he taught us to do that, but we must be very cautious about how we go about it. For example, Tom considers that there may be a reference to the Trinity in the creation narrative because there God speaks in the plural both to himself and to others (Gen 1:26). There may be some ground for saying that Israelite monotheism was not as pure as it was to become in later times, particularly in reaction to Christian claims, but there is no reason for claiming that it presupposes a Trinity. The main reason for this is that

the plural is not limited to only three, whereas the Trinity is. Moreover, the doctrine of the Trinity was the solution to a problem posed by the revelation of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as God, a revelation that does not occur in Gen 1, except perhaps by Christian sleight of hand. Reading back into the text from hindsight, a practice justified by Tom as a “canonical” approach to biblical interpretation, is an unsteady guide at best. Perhaps it is justified in certain cases, but it cannot become a general rule for hermeneutics without falling into allegory and speculation. Of this, alas, there is rather more in this book than I am comfortable with. The early Christians undoubtedly had a concept of canon, but it was not used as a theological principle until very recently—even Calvin, for example, never mentioned it!

Let us begin at the beginning, with Adam and Eve in the garden. Tom is right to point out that the narrative conceals as much as it reveals, if not more. We are not told why God made the world, nor how evil entered into it, but both those things were givens by the time we get to our first parents. At the risk of being condemned by some, I would say that the creation story is a historical event told in a symbolic way. The Garden of Eden was not a place because if it were it would still be there. The trees of life and of the knowledge of good and evil are not known to biological science and never have been. As for talking serpents, they have never existed either. This does not make the story untrue but means that we have to read it in a different way. Tom writes,

[T]he serpent is most unusual because he talks with Eve, and talking is not normal for animals! The serpent is strikingly different from the other animals, for it is quite clear from 2:19–20 that Adam’s naming of the animals symbolized his dominion over them. . . . The other animals are not ‘crafty’ (3:1) and are unable to converse with Adam and Eve. Presumably, Adam and Eve were to evict the serpent from the garden by obeying the Lord. (p. 9)

What is going on here? Tom practically tells us that the serpent was not one of the animals, but then assumes that Adam and Eve were supposed to evict him from the garden as if he were some kind of squatter. It is an approach that manages to be literalistic and yet highly speculative at the same time, all because the true meaning has been overlooked or denied. What we are really dealing with here is a spiritual struggle between good and evil for possession of the soul of man, and it was Adam’s surrender to the latter that broke his relationship with the former. Yet this point gets obscured in speculation about the nature of the serpent!

It would be nice to think that this was just an unfortunate aberration, but sadly it is not. It is foundational to Tom’s whole approach to the Bible. For no sooner do we read about the fall than we come to the promise that the seed of the woman will bruise the serpent’s head (Gen 3:15). There is a long tradition that says that this is a prophecy of the coming of Christ, which Tom accepts though without elaborating on it. But he goes on to add that the world is now divided into the children of the serpent and the children of the woman, who are engaged in a kind of dualistic warfare that will last until the end of time, and this theological construct becomes one of the main themes of his exposition, if it is not the main thread that ties his whole project together.

The first example of this spiritual warfare comes in the story of Cain, who is presented as the child of the serpent, and Abel, who is supposed to be the child of the woman. In what sense can such a contrast be understood? It cannot be literal since if Cain were the child of the serpent in that sense, he would be a serpent too. But nor can it be figurative because Cain and Abel were brothers: they were both children of the woman, and they both inherited the fall into the serpent’s clutches that had driven their parents out of the garden. The serpent does not have children; he has slaves whom he has ensnared by temptation,

but for some reason that does not enter into Tom's account of the fall at all. The difference between Cain and Abel was not that one was intrinsically wicked while the other was righteous. Rather it was that Abel understood that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sin, whereas Cain did not. When his sacrifice was rejected, he responded by resorting to a blood sacrifice in the form of his brother Abel—a wicked act but one by which he unintentionally foreshadowed the sacrifice of Christ in a way that surpassed even Abel's efforts. Little though he realised it, Cain revealed the truth that the blood sacrifice of an animal was insufficient: it was only by the shed blood of an innocent man that human beings could be saved. There is a deep and tragic irony in this story that is missed by a simplistic division of humanity into two basic types. Like Cain, those who crucified Jesus did not know what they were doing, but it was by their sin that the purposes of God were brought to pass.

This misinterpretation of Cain and Abel is repeated throughout the text as a kind of *leitmotiv*. Noah appears as the child of the woman, the only one left in his generation. Later Pharaoh is called the child of the serpent, a role subsequently adopted by such diverse figures as King Saul and Haman. I am afraid that this is all fantasy, tied together by a fundamental error of interpretation. To go no further, Saul remained the Lord's anointed even in death, which was certainly not true of either Pharaoh or Haman. Furthermore, even if the latter two were enemies of God's people, the nature of their hostility was not the same. Pharaoh wanted to keep the Hebrews as his slaves and not lose them to the desert, where they were liable to perish, whereas Haman could not wait to get rid of them. The Israelites wanted to reject Moses and go back to Egypt where they felt safe: they were 'children of the serpent', if I can borrow the phrase, far more than Pharaoh ever was.

Equally odd, in my opinion, are the so-called glimpses of paradise that Tom tells us we get from time to time—in the story of Ruth, for example, or in the consecration of Solomon's temple. No doubt these were happy occasions, but although the history of Israel was gloomy in the long term, it was not a story of uninterrupted decline. Indeed, from another point of view, we might argue that it was not a story of decline at all. God was purifying his people, preserving them and preparing them for the coming of the Messiah. As Paul would later say, the outward body was wasting away, but the spirit was growing stronger. Solomon's reign may have looked good on the outside, but it was deeply corrupt. How a wise king could have married 700 women and been led astray by them Tom never properly explains, but it is clear that Israel's prosperity was not solidly grounded even in its golden age. David was a forerunner of Christ, who was known to contemporaries as his son, but Jesus was greater than Solomon and greater than David too. Furthermore, the Jewish people were more prepared to accept his coming when he appeared than they would have been a thousand years earlier. By the time he was born, Israel had expunged paganism from its midst and was consciously living as God's chosen people in a way that it had not done before the exile.

The story of Israel as God's chosen people is a complex one, but surely it is taking things too far to claim, as Tom does, that 'Like David, Jesus suffered and was later glorified. . . . David's obedience was remarkable, but it was not perfect, and thus it pointed forward to a king who surpassed him in righteousness' (p. 153). The difference between Jesus and David was not one of degree but of kind, an essential point that is overlooked in his analysis. The reason for that, I would suggest, is that Tom's narrative approach finds it almost impossible to accommodate theology in the true sense of the term. The result is that key differences are glossed over whereas things that are relatively insignificant are magnified and made to bear a weight that is beyond their capacity.

Tom's book is very long, but to my mind at least, it is surprisingly uneven in its treatment of different parts of Scripture. The historical books of the OT are outlined in great detail, with special attention being paid to odd incidents in the lives of men like Elijah and Elisha. In contrast to this, the twelve Minor Prophets are run together and it is sometimes hard to know which one of them he is talking about. The prophetic books present an unexpected challenge to his framework in that they are historical in one sense but not in another. Should Isaiah be slotted into 1–2 Kings, for example, in the chapters on Hezekiah? Should Jeremiah be regarded as an appendix or perhaps as a sequel to those same books? The minor twelve stretch in time over several centuries and are divided by the exile; does this not make a difference? In the NT, Tom deals with each of the Synoptic Gospels individually but then rolls all the Pauline epistles into one. How does this work? Another problem that is simply not addressed is that the epistles were generally earlier in date than the Gospels, even though the Gospels recount events that were earlier than either. What should we do about this, if there is a progressive revelation of God's sovereign purposes throughout the texts? The irony is that the earliest witness we have to Jesus is Paul, who in some cases was writing to people like Andronicus and Junia in Rom 16, who had known Jesus in a way that Paul never did. What does this mean, and does it matter?

The information that Tom gives us about the content and theological significance of individual books and sections of the Bible is interesting and important, but it can be properly understood only if there is a framework to undergird them. That framework cannot be historical narrative because the Bible does not come to us in that way. Tom senses this, but his approach makes it virtually impossible to penetrate more deeply into what is written and come up with a viable alternative. Instead, we have to rely on insights and extrapolations that lead us from the particular examples of God's dealings with people that are recorded in the narratives to the universal principles that lie behind them, but the method is tedious and unnecessarily repetitive. Do we really have to wade through pages of detailed commentary on the kings of Israel and Judah only to be told at the end that their failure proves that God is sovereign? Could Tom not have condensed that observation and others like it into a paragraph or two?

The wisdom literature, as Tom rightly remarks, is a challenge to any narrative approach, but he takes the position that it can be integrated into the bigger picture, even if it must remain somewhat anomalous in certain respects. There is not the time to examine the results of this in detail, but I cannot resist making some comments on the Song of Songs. That book is famous for the long tradition of allegorical interpretation that has been associated with it. Even today, congregations that sing, 'He brought me into his banqueting house and his banner over me is love' make the christological connection almost automatically and would be astonished to be told that it comes from a seduction scene in Song 2:4. Tom rejects this approach, as we would expect: 'Song of Songs is not an allegory; it describes in poetic terms the love between a maiden and King Solomon.' In a quotation from Duane Garrett, he adds, 'Song of Songs celebrates a woman's loss of virginity. Hence, the theology of the book differs dramatically from the view of many believers in history who have seen the path of asceticism as the path of holiness' (p. 317). He goes on to describe the Song as a paean of praise for the joys of married love and a glimpse of the coming Edenic Paradise, though I am unconvinced. Interestingly, although he rejects allegory, he cannot resist the lure of typology and reaches out to the ancient tradition in seeing at least some allusion to Christ and his bride, the church.

The Song of Songs is admittedly very hard to interpret, but somehow we seem to have found ourselves here in the 'happy ever after' world of middle-class evangelical morality, whose mythical character is betrayed by the rising incidence (and disgraceful toleration) of divorce inside the church. What the

Song tells us is that human love is a powerful but bittersweet emotion (8:6). The semi-Paradisiacal interpretation given here ignores one of the major themes of the Song: the fleeting nature of human love, the disappointment that will end in death, and the endless repetition of the cycle with no escape from it. In that respect it is closer to Ecclesiastes than many would want to acknowledge and light years away from both the historical Solomon (on the one hand) and Christian marriage (on the other). The Song obviously has nothing to do with Solomon or any one of his 700 brides, though Tom does not make this as clear as he ought to. Such an interpretation makes no sense and is contradicted by how the historical books present Solomon. But neither is it related to Christian marriage in any meaningful way. To go no further, Christian marriage is characterised by the interplay between sacrifice and submission, neither of which figures at all prominently in the Song of Songs and whose proto-Edenic qualities are unlikely to be appreciated by those called to put those principles into practice. To think that the Song is some sort of handbook for Christian sexual love is a fantasy, the tragic consequences of which are only too obvious in some evangelical circles. We have to conclude that the Song still awaits its interpreter and that an evangelical Christian will find it harder than most to come to terms with it.

There is not the time today to go through every theme in this very rich book, but one or two items call for comment. The first is Tom's repeated assertion that God was somehow leading his people back to the garden from which Adam and Eve had been expelled, intimations of which we have already remarked on. Tom explains this clearly: "Jeremiah teaches that a new covenant is coming, a covenant that is irrevocable, a covenant by which sins will be fully and finally forgiven, and by which a new David will sit on the throne. This king will be Israel's righteousness and will bring about a new Eden" (p. 364).

Related to this is the theme of the new temple in Ezekiel, of which Tom says,

The chapters on the new temple, which should not be interpreted literally, indicate that the glory of Yahweh will return to Israel. They will see the King in his beauty. When the Lord dwells among his people, the covenant of peace will be established, and a new creation will arrive. We have another hint here, which is picked up in Revelation 21–22, that the new creation and the new temple are two different ways of describing the same reality. (p. 386)

Unfortunately, when we turn to Rev 21–22, we discover that this is not the case at all. There is indeed an Edenic reference in those chapters, but it is to the tree of life, which now flowers in the midst of the city, not in the original paradise (22:2). Furthermore, the same passage tells us that there is no temple in the new Jerusalem, because 'its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb' (21:22). Not the creation, but the Creator is the temple, and between the Creator and his creatures there is a great gulf fixed.

The attempt to make the imagery of the OT carry over in this way to the final consummation of all things does not work. There is no return to the garden of Eden or to the innocence that prevailed there. When Adam and Eve fell, the knowledge of good and evil remained with them, and it is not taken away in Christ. The defeat of Satan is not his eventual expulsion from the garden but his dethronement and effective destruction (Rev 20:10).

It seems to me that the basic problem here is that the origin of evil is not explained in the Bible but is fundamental to our understanding of what God's revelation teaches us. The rebellion of Satan, mysterious as it was, was a spiritual phenomenon that occurred in the heavenly places before the creation of the world. Adam and Eve were created to be children of God but were tempted by the evil power of Satan, whose relationship to God is complex and in some ways unfathomable. Why does Satan continue

to exist? Why does he wield such power over God's creatures? Here we are dealing with mysteries that are never clearly explained in the Bible but that are fundamental to understanding its meaning. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ were the central acts in a cosmic struggle against this spiritual power just as much, and in some ways perhaps even more, than they were an atonement for the sins of human beings. This contrast is not an either-or, of course; it is a both-and, but our relationship with God in Christ cannot be properly understood without referring to our changed relationship with Satan: we have been delivered from his clutches and therefore become enemies of the world that still lies in his power.

The events that are recorded in the Scriptures, the promises that are made to God's people, the ups and downs of their earthly pilgrimage and the transformation of their identity brought about by Jesus Christ are all part of a spiritual drama that cannot be seen by the naked eye. When the Son of God came into the world, he was not recognised. The people of Nazareth chased him out when he told them who he was, and he had lived among them for three decades. Peter confessed the truth about him, but was immediately told that he was able to do that only because God the Father had revealed it to him. None of this invalidates the historical and earthly realities of the biblical stories, but it forces us to look through and beyond them to the underlying spiritual principles that they manifest.

This is ultimately why theology cannot be simply a running exposition of the biblical text, in whatever order it is taken. It must penetrate that text and reveal the foundations on which it is built, the principles that underlie the revelation that it contains. This search for meaning is not a departure from the Bible but an exploration of its hidden depths that will enable us to understand it better. Just as we look at how other people behave and try to work out from that what really makes them tick, so we read of the great acts of God among his people in order to understand better who he is and what his purposes are. The end result will be a systematic theology built out of the evidence culled from many different parts of the revelation and not simply an account of that revelation's contents. It is here I think that biblical scholars need to rethink their discipline, recognise what its limitations are, and accept that not only is a systematic theology necessary, but that it can be constructed only by using the evidence of the narrative and going behind it in ways that do not contradict but illuminate it better. I hope and pray that evangelical biblical scholars will come to appreciate this and that their magnificent efforts in analyzing the Scriptures may bear fruit in a deeper synthesis of what their message and their ultimate purpose is.

Response to Gerald Bray

— Thomas R. Schreiner —

Tom Schreiner is James Buchanan Harrison professor of New Testament interpretation, professor of biblical theology, and associate dean at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He is also a preaching pastor at Clifton Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky. He has published a number of books, including Romans (BECNT; Baker, 1998); Paul, Apostle of God's Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology (IVP, 2001); 1, 2 Peter, Jude (NAC; B&H, 2003); New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ (Baker, 2008); Galatians (ZECNT; Zondervan, 2010); and The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments (Baker, 2013).

I am grateful to Gerald Bray for his careful reading of my book and the questions he poses. Anyone who reads my review in this issue of *Themelios* knows how much I appreciate his own work. But space is limited, and I must get to the point. The fundamental problem with Bray's review is that he misunderstands both my book and biblical theology. He seems to think that I am trying to write a systematic theology, for he emphasizes that biblical theology is only a prolegomenon to a systematic theology. Here's the rub: I agree! Systematic theology is a culminating discipline that includes exegesis, biblical theology, historical theology, and philosophy. Bray critiques me as if I were attempting to write a culminating work, a systematic theology, and by doing so he veers off course from the outset of his review. I agree with Bray that Christian theology reaches its apex in systematics. I didn't think anyone would read my book as if I were trying to compose an alternative to a systematic theology.

Nor is it evident that Bray understands what biblical theology is in distinction from systematics, or perhaps he believes there isn't any place for biblical theology, because he doesn't commend it in his review. We need both systematic and biblical theology, for in the latter the story of scripture is rehearsed, the narrative of scripture is unfolded for the reader. Such attention to the historical outworking of God's plan (the establishment of his kingdom!) ensures that we are reading the scriptures contextually and canonically. For instance, Bray doesn't devote much attention to the historical unfolding of God's revelation in his book. But it is clear in reading the NT that the Mosaic covenant was an interim covenant, that it was meant to be in force for a limited period of time. We learn from this that it is imperative to read scripture epochally. We don't offer sacrifices or wear clothes with only one kind of fabric since such regulations are part of the Sinai covenant, and we aren't under that covenant since the new covenant has arrived in Jesus Christ.

To put it another way, systematic theologians need biblical theology, for otherwise they may make claims that violate the intention and purpose of the texts cited. Biblical theology as a mediating discipline supports systematics. Systematics may stray from the scriptures in constructing doctrines, and biblical theology serves systematics by tying us to the biblical text and by ensuring that we interpret the scriptures in its epochal framework. The structures and themes unpacked in biblical theology undergird (or should undergird) the work of systematic theologians. Biblical theology, like systematics, plays a vital role in our understanding of the scriptures. Let's take one example of what concerns Bray. He complains that I don't unpack the Trinity, but he misconstrues my book and biblical theology. The

Trinity is central to Christian theology, and any systematic theology that doesn't make the Trinity prominent is woefully deficient. But I didn't write a systematic theology, nor am I claiming that the work of biblical theology is a culminating discipline. Still, biblical theology provides the raw materials for the doctrine of the Trinity by showing that the Father, Son, and Spirit are all divine, while also emphasizing that the scriptures teach that there is only one God.

Let me address some of the specific criticisms of the book. Bray takes issue with the notion that the serpent has children. Genesis 3:15 says there will be enmity between the offspring of the woman and the offspring of the serpent, and I conclude from this that the serpent has offspring. Obviously, the offspring of the serpent aren't snakes! The language used isn't literal but figurative. I believe it is legitimate to conclude that Cain is the offspring of the serpent. Nor do I argue that some (like Abel) are automatically the offspring of the woman, for such a status is the result of God's grace. Bray rejects the notion that the serpent has offspring, but Jesus himself says to some of the Jews of his day, "You are of your father the devil" (John 8:44). Apparently, they were sons of the devil, children of the serpent. And Jesus clearly alludes to Cain in this verse, for he says the devil "was a murderer from the beginning," which almost certainly recalls the story of Cain murdering Abel. And in the parable of the wheat and the weeds (or tares), Jesus says that the weeds "are the sons of the evil one" (Matt 13:38). So I am unrepentant about saying that some are the offspring of the serpent, for it accords both with the OT and the teaching of Jesus.

Bray questions whether people are the children of the serpent because they act in different ways, but I don't think this objection logically follows. Why would we think that those who are the offspring of the serpent (which we are all by nature and birth [e.g., 1 John 5:20; Eph 2:1–3]) would display their hostility in the same way? Some like Pharaoh both enslave and try to destroy the people of God. Others like Haman or Herod try to wipe out the Jews or to kill the Messiah, respectively. Pointing out that Saul was the anointed doesn't contradict the point, for being anointed doesn't mean that one truly belongs to God. We know from the kings of Israel and Judah that all too many of them didn't truly worship Yahweh. Bray seems to think that pointing out that the children of the Israel were the offspring of the serpent like Pharaoh contradicts my point. I don't see how it does so. The story is complex and can't be reduced to simplistic formulas. Yes, many in Israel showed they were on Satan's side ultimately. Paul tells us in Rom 9:6–13 that there was always a winnowing process in Israel, that only a remnant is saved.

Bray also criticizes me for saying that the new creation to come is a new Eden. He doubts how this can be so, for the world to come is a city not a garden. I never imagined that anyone would interpret the language of a new Eden literally. After all, the book of Revelation describes the world to come as paradise (Rev 2:7; cf. Luke 23:43), and so in that sense what is coming is a new Eden! Many texts in the OT also portray the world to come with paradisaical language of a new creation. It is imperative to see that the vision of the heavenly city in Rev 21–22 is itself not literal language. We have apocalyptic images galore. One of the images is of the tree of life, but that doesn't mean we have literal trees of life in the new creation, but neither is there a literal city with golden streets! The evocative images and pictures of a new creation in Scripture (the language of a new Eden) point forward with symbolic language to the new world that is coming. What is coming is indescribably beautiful and beyond our capacity to imagine or portray. I would suggest that biblical theology helps us at this very point. The OT (and some NT texts as well) describe the world to come with Edenic language, with descriptions that resonate with paradise. But when we read the whole story we see that the fulfillment isn't literal. So also, the temple

in Ezek 40–48 isn't a literal temple but points to a new creation where the Lord and the Lamb are the temple, where the whole universe is the Lord's dwelling place.

Let me make a comment about the structure of the book. I am the first to say that other structures may be preferable. On the other hand, I still think there is merit in putting the Minor Prophets together because, even though they were written at various times, they share central themes. It seems even more natural to put the Pauline letters together since they were all written by the same author, for the goal is to set forth the theology of Paul.

Bray worries about my canonical reading, thinking it could lead to allegory and speculation. These are excellent cautions that must be heard. At the same time, the Bible is a unified book and story with a divine author. We must read the biblical text in both its historical context and its canonical context. We must pay heed to human authors and the divine author and read from front to back and from back to front. The task isn't easy, but we shouldn't eliminate the role of the divine author in reading the OT. Hence, I believe, as I explain in my book, that there is canonical and NT warrant for seeing the Trinity in Gen 1:26 and for interpreting the OT in light of the NT. There is the danger of reading the NT into the OT, but there is also the danger of reading the OT as if the NT doesn't exist.

Many more things could and should be said. May I again express my thanks to Professor Bray for his response and for his scholarship, which has taught me so much over the years.

Revival Defined and Defended: How the New Lights Tried and Failed to Use America’s First Religious Periodical to Quiet Critics and Quell Radicals

— Collin Hansen —

Collin Hansen is the editorial director for The Gospel Coalition and coauthor with John Woodbridge of A God-Sized Vision: Revival Stories that Stretch and Stir (Zondervan, 2010).

Abstract: Thomas Prince, editor of *The Christian History*—the first religious periodical in American history—could hardly have invented the Great Awakening, as Frank Lambert argues. Indeed, Prince and New Light allies such as Jonathan Edwards failed in their efforts to employ this growing medium to quiet critics and quell radicals. Their example actually refutes both the scholarly critics of revival, who doubt God’s supernatural blessing, and also modern-day radicals, who believe our actions guarantee God’s blessing of revival.

Jonathan Edwards knew from experience the power of the written word in promoting revival. His “Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God,” offered in a letter to Boston minister Benjamin Colman in 1736, inspired readers in both the American colonies and British Isles. Correspondents reported back that this account encouraged Christians and awakened sinners by encouraging them to seek a similar blessing of revival. But Edwards was just one man reporting spectacular events in just one frontier Massachusetts town, Northampton. Upon George Whitefield’s first colonial tour in 1739, revival began spreading throughout the colonies. The Calvinist pastors’ correspondence network on both sides of the Atlantic buzzed with anticipation of a more widespread awakening. Writing in 1742, Edwards envisioned a regularly published journal that would capture timely news of this revival’s progress, spread it throughout the English-speaking world, and bolster the awakening’s credibility against a growing chorus of critics:

One thing more I would mention, which if God should still carry on this work, would tend much to promote it, and that is that an history should be published once a month, or once a fortnight, of the progress of it, by one of the ministers of Boston, who are near the press and are most conveniently situated to receive accounts from all parts. It has been found by experience that the tidings of remarkable effects of the power and grace of God in any place, tend greatly to awaken and engage the minds of persons in other places. ’Tis great pity therefore, but that some means should be used for the most speedy, most extensive and certain giving information of such things, and that

the country ben't left only to the slow, partial and doubtful information and false representations of common report.¹

His vision was realized under the editorial guidance of Thomas Prince Sr. (1687–1758). Perhaps no minister was better positioned to execute this plan than Prince, pastor of Boston's Old South Church and a leader in the Great Awakening. Despite his advanced age, which hindered his ability to promote the revival through preaching, Prince kept up with the latest news through his extensive correspondence with other ministers. And as the author of the widely acclaimed *Chronological History of New England, in the Form of Annals*, published in 1736, Prince earned a reputation for perpetuating the Puritan cause by documenting its development. Prince recruited his son, Thomas Prince Jr., and together they accepted the challenge of documenting an awakening unlike any other in the Puritan annals. They published the first edition of *The Christian History* magazine on March 5, 1743. Modeled after the *Weekly History*, published in London by John Lewis, *The Christian History* ran until 1745. Its 104 weekly issues were bound together and distributed in two indexed volumes. Just as the Princes hoped, *The Christian History* became an unmatched compendium of primary sources documenting and defending the Great Awakening. Revered New England ministers loaned their credibility to the magazine, which also reported news of spiritual progress in England and Scotland, along with the mid-Atlantic and Southern colonies of North America.

However, I aim to show in this article that Prince failed in his goals to quiet critics and quell radicals. Far from inventing the Great Awakening, as some contemporary historians suppose, Prince could not protect and prolong the kind of revival that fellow New Lights² could support. He set out to employ a burgeoning medium to reach growing audiences with the hope and standards for revival he believed had been implanted in every true Puritan's heart. But once the Great Awakening broke out, Prince, Edwards, and other New Light pastors could not control the revival, as if they invented it. This failure actually refutes both the scholarly critics of revival, who doubt God's supernatural blessing, and also modern-day radicals, who believe our actions guarantee God's blessing of revival.

1. Old Light Skepticism and the Modern Invention Narrative

Few sympathetic pastors today know anything about *The Christian History*, the first religious periodical in American history. No doubt their ignorance of this landmark work owes something to historians of colonial America who view with skepticism the genre of journalistic history they encounter with *The Christian History*. Yet even in his own day, Thomas Prince Sr. accumulated a sizable stable of critics that only grew when the revival divided New England into competing camps of New Lights, Old Lights, and radicals. His chief detractors, Old Light ministers such as fellow Bostonian Charles Chauncy, who decried the awakening as delusionary enthusiasm, regarded *The Christian History* as a formidable means of spreading propaganda in support of the revival. Indeed, subsequent generations

¹Jonathan Edwards, *The Great Awakening*, vol. 4 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (ed. C. C. Goen; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 529.

²Old Lights and New Lights divided in New England over reaction to revival. Old Lights favored traditional order, going so far in Connecticut as to withdraw the right to religious dissent as a way of stemming the tide of church splits. New Lights favored the revival and advocated discernment in the unsettling bodily manifestations of religious enthusiasm and criticism of church leaders for not supporting the new movement of the Spirit. See George Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 275–80.

of revival historians revered *The Christian History*, starting with Glasgow minister John Gillies, who published *Historical Collections Relating to Remarkable Periods of the Success of the Gospel and Eminent Instruments Employing in Promoting It* in 1754. So great was the influence of *The Christian History* that until this day any credible account of the Great Awakening must peruse its contents.

Given Prince's unabashed support for the revival, these succeeding histories of the Great Awakening should be treated with due skepticism, according to Purdue University historian Frank Lambert, the most prolific modern critic of the Prince narrative style and agenda.³ "Historians, then, who seek to explain the state of religion in mid-eighteenth-century colonial America confront an array of fictions, inventions and counterinventions, from which they construct their own 'interpretive fictions.'"⁴ If the Great Awakening was an interpretive fiction, then Edwards was the preeminent storyteller, Lambert writes. "Jonathan Edwards's *Faithful Narrative* lies behind Prince's outline, serving as a script upon which other pastors modeled descriptions of local awakenings. . . . Sometimes Edwards's *Narrative* was a script both for staging a revival and for reporting it."⁵

Lambert describes *The Christian History* as the first successful magazine in America. The newspaper market had expanded in the colonies when the first paper mill was constructed in Massachusetts in 1730, as domestic printers no longer needed to rely on expensive imported paper. By comparison, newspaper competition had flourished in England since 1695 when the Licensing Act expired and the cost of a single issue fell from two-times to about one-half the price of a bread loaf.⁶

Then as now, readers clamored for news of friends, family, global politics, and gossip of all kinds. Yet we must not anachronistically judge these periodicals by the standards of contemporary journalism. Lambert's critique of Price falters at precisely this point. Prince never presumed to offer an undiscerning collection of revival stories, something akin to a modern-day newsmagazine's claims to objectivity. Indeed, Prince and his son compiled *The Christian History* with unabashedly apologetic aims. Analysis of all 104 installments reveals their intent to collect the most credible revival stories from trustworthy ministers who had earned the respect of their communities and clerical colleagues. Periodicals of this era did not boast a team of paid reporters. Rather, they depended on unpaid contributors writing about themselves, something they witnessed, or something they heard. Evangelist George Whitefield, for example, wrote in the third person and noted the historic nature of his travels as he offered accounts of popular response to his preaching. Perhaps the most illustrative example is James Robe, one of Prince's most trusted reporters and a fellow participant promoter with a shared understanding of true revival. The Kilsyth minister supplied many of *The Christian History's* reports from Scotland, which amounted to one-third of the magazine's content in its run from 1743 to 1745.⁷

³ See Frank Lambert, *Inventing the 'Great Awakening'* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); idem, *Pedlar in Divinity: George Whitefield and the Transatlantic Revivals, 1737–1770* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

⁴ Lambert, *Inventing the Great Awakening*, 179.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 147–48.

⁶ Lambert, *Pedlar in Divinity*, 56.

⁷ Susan O'Brien, "Eighteenth-Century Publishing Networks in the First Years of Transatlantic Evangelicalism," in *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700–1900* (ed. Mark A. Noll, David W. Bebbington, and George A. Rawlyk; New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 50.

The Princes apparently believed such handpicked accounts might persuade Old Lights to rethink their criticism. But *The Christian History* also offered New Lights a platform to criticize radical excesses and teach the true marks of revival. Thomas Prince Sr. believed these telltale signs of awakening had been handed down through generations as part of the Puritan legacy that endured in England, Scotland, and New England. He did not aim to spread novel theology.

Nor did he need to innovate his publishing medium. The Princes could look across the Atlantic for a model. Calvinist Welshman John Lewis was active in the London Tabernacle and Fetter Lane Society, where on popular Letter Days crowds would gather together to hear stirring news from far-away lands. Here he had the idea to start an evangelical magazine. He reorganized his first attempt, the weekly penny paper *Christ's Amusement*, in 1741 as *The Weekly History: or, An Account of the Most Remarkable Particulars Relating to the Present Progress of the Gospel; By the Encouragement of the Rev. Mr. Whitefield*. He covered many American events, including Whitefield's famed 1740 colonial tour often cited as the catalyst for the Great Awakening.

But by the time Prince launched *The Christian History* in 1743, Mark Noll surmises that he could sense the revival slipping away. According to this hypothesis, Prince was less concerned to manufacture revival than to preserve a record of the remarkable events so future generations would never forget. In the meantime, he aimed to help hold the revival community together, encourage new converts, and prompt new ones. Still, his eye was firmly fixed on the future. "Robe and Prince showed that they wanted to make their magazines permanent records of what had so recently occurred by publishing indexes, numbering pages consecutively for annual volumes, and by carefully editing published material."⁸ In this regard the magazine succeeded by offering subsequent generations of readers invaluable eyewitness accounts of spectacular spiritual events that transformed colonial America. But they could not invent a revival that had already begun to wane in the face of persistent criticism and radical exuberance.

2. Rise of Periodicals Expands the Correspondence Network

The Puritan experiment hatched in New England had separated kin and compatriot across the Atlantic. So they developed a correspondence network—a "community of saints" according to Susan O'Brien⁹—that maintained the ties binding Puritans together. Longing for revival was one of those distinguishing marks of Puritanism that appeared regularly in their letters, alongside reading suggestions and theological inquiry. As community leaders with unmatched access to the outside world, pastors wielded tremendous influence. Especially when they received encouraging letters that reinforced their public teaching, pastors sought a wider audience for the correspondence. There was a natural progression from personal letters to chain messages read aloud to printing reports in a periodical.

With time, the colonial American correspondence networks grew ever more expansive, transcending the Puritan community. Boston minister Cotton Mather, for example, shared letters with the Pietist leader Augustus Francke of Halle. So when Thomas Prince Sr. organized *The Christian History*, including reports from Scotland and England, he built on this preexisting network. It was no stretch for him to publish a letter from Howell Harris in Wales, a report from the East Indies, and even

⁸ Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2003), 117.

⁹ Susan O'Brien, "A Transatlantic Community of Saints: The Great Awakening and the First Evangelical Network, 1735–1755," *The American Historical Review* 91 (1986): 813.

an excerpt from Francke's *Pietas Hallenis*, or *An Historical Narration of the Orphan House*. Writers were already skilled in the tasks of collecting the news, verifying its accuracy, and spreading it through public channels—precisely the journalistic process Prince followed in compiling *The Christian History* every week. Similarly, New England ministers had already honed a sense for news judgment in their correspondence. Sources close to the events, who had previously won a reputation for accuracy and timeliness, became the most popular correspondents.

But an altered situation in the revival's later years demanded a new strategy in the shift from letters to magazines. Letters offered more basically descriptive accounts of local revivals between 1740 and 1742. When the awakening spread, however, criticism mounted, as did strange excesses. Periodicals supporting the New Light cause would need to answer these challenges directly. So Prince relied on fellow ministers such as Robe who wanted to defend the revival against critics, protect it from radicals, and extend it to other people in distant lands. Their journalism served this cause, and they did not pretend otherwise.

Indeed, Prince listed his principal guideline for submission on the first page in the first issue of *The Christian History* on March 5, 1743. He pledged to publish "Authentick Accounts from Ministers and other creditable Persons."¹⁰ On the very next page, Prince issued his invitation for ministers and other reputable sources to submit their accounts to him. Yet he also issued further detailed instructions for how ministers should organize their accounts. They should avoid personal reflections; Edwards was apparently excepted from this clause. They should likewise avoid "angry Controversy." But mostly, they must include their names. "Since to a *nameless Relation of Matters of Fact*, no wise Man can give any Credit; as he knows not but the Writer may be one of the least creditable Persons on Earth, and would be known to be so, were his Name divulged."¹¹ Because the revival was a public affair, these ministers staked their reputations on defending it as valid. Critics could challenge their discernment as faulty, but they could not successfully prove that the events described in *The Christian History* were fabricated.

3. The Christian History Changes Strategy

As a sign of the magazine's shift from straightforward accounts to exhortation and even direct challenge, Robe confronted revival critics with a conundrum in just the second issue of *The Christian History*. Robe asked his readers how ministers should respond to crowds lamenting their immoral behavior and searching for grace. Should the ministers tell them the Devil makes them see their evil as offensive to God? Or should they say that Satan is leading them to inquire about the state of their souls and long for relief from Christ?

Though as Jonathan Edwards clearly articulated in a letter he sent to Prince on December 12, 1743, the New Lights did not regard all supposed evidence of revival as equally valid, based on their interpretation of Scripture and understanding of history. Prince published Edwards's letter on January 28, 1744. We see in this article perhaps the clearest sign that the Great Awakening had entered a new, more tenuous stage, at least from the New Light perspective. Edwards had been seared by the memory of Northampton's spiritual declension in the 1730s just as readers around the colonies and British Isles began to read his *Faithful Narrative*. So when revival returned, Edwards learned his lesson. His letter to Prince included a copy of the church covenant Edwards drafted and Northampton church

¹⁰ Thomas Prince Jr., *The Christian History* 1, no. 1 (March 5, 1743): 1.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

members signed on March 16, 1742. They committed to treating one another with honesty, justice, and uprightness and to avoid backbiting.¹²

Nevertheless, Edwards noted that almost immediately thereafter in the summer of 1742, the people's affections for religion dimmed. The great preacher's inability to keep the revival fires stoked should caution us against any sweeping pronouncements about how he and fellow New Light ministers manufactured the revival.

4. New Lights Counter Radical Threat to Revival's Progress and Credibility

Even if the revival had dimmed in Northampton and Boston by 1743, it continued to flare elsewhere. But Edwards and Prince were concerned about the growing number of reports indicating radical excesses that could not be biblically justified. Edwards had seen the problem encroach upon Northampton even under his expert care. From 1740 to 1741, Edwards regarded the revival as even purer than the renowned local awakening in 1735 and 1736. His congregation seemed to learn from their former mistakes and understood themselves more clearly. They displayed even more affection for God while also appearing more solemn, humble, steadfast, and holy in their conduct. Yet that situation had changed by late 1742:

The Work continued more pure 'till we were infected from abroad: our People hearing, and some of them seeing the Work in other Places, where there was a greater visible Commotion than here, and the outward Appearances were more extraordinary; were ready to think that the Work in those Places far excell'd what was amongst us; and their Eyes were dazzled with the high Profession and great Shew that some made who came hither from other Places. That those People were so far beyond them in Raptures and violent Emotions of the Affections, and a vehement Zeal, and what they called Boldness for CHRIST; our People were ready to think was owing to their far great Attainments in Grace, and Intimacy with Heaven; They look'd little in their own Eyes in Comparison of them, and were ready to submit themselves to 'em, and yield themselves up on their Conduct, taking it for granted that every Thing was right that they said and did. These Things had a strange Influence on the People, and gave many of them a deep and unhappy Tincture, that it was a hard and long Labour to deliver 'em from, and which some of them are not fully delivered from to this Day.¹³

By this time, Edwards had already published a classic defense of the revival, *Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God*, in 1741. And he would publish a timeless analysis of religious belief with *The Religious Affections* in 1746. But between releasing these major works, he used Prince's platform in *The Christian History* to augment his effort to steer the revival back down a more defensible path. He argued forcefully that one may not accurately discern grace in another person's life only by judging the degree of his or her zeal, joy, or other religious affections. Rather, a discerning spirit examines the nature of those affections.¹⁴

¹² Thomas Prince Jr., *The Christian History* 1, no. 48 (January 28, 1744): 378.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 379–80.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 380.

Though pilloried by the revival's opponents, chiefly Charles Chauncy, Edwards displayed scarcely more tolerance than they did for dramatic demonstrations of the Spirit's work that were not accompanied by the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22–23). Directly countering radical claims, Edwards argued that this evidence—not adherence to any precise set of methods—should determine the validity of conversion. Nor was it enough to ask whether someone had committed scandalous sin, Edwards contended. He fully expected that many members of his congregation who claimed to experience conversion during the revival and behaved well in public were not actually true believers. Despite these serious reservations, shared by the Princes as they closely followed the revival's progress in Boston, Edwards concluded his letter on a high note. He had enough evidence to conclude that many had encountered God's grace. There were signs that Northampton had been reshaped by the revival, with less division, more careful speech, and willingness to solve public disputes reasonably.

Edwards's contribution to *The Christian History* was just one example of New Light unease over the revival's radical turn. A more prominent one came from the assembly of New Light ministers in Boston on July 7, 1743. Boston's leading New Light ministers, including Benjamin Colman, Thomas Prince Sr., William Cooper, and Thomas Foxcroft, staked their reputations on publicly testifying to the progress of genuine revival. But even their ability to control the revival was clearly limited. Discernment was the crying need of the day.

Indeed it is not to be denied that in *some Places* many Irregularities and Extravagancies have been permitted to accompany it, which we would deeply lament and bewail before GOD, and look upon ourselves oblig'd, for the Honour of the HOLY SPIRIT, and of his blessed Operations on the Souls of Men, to bear a public and faithful testimony against; tho' at the same Time it is to be acknowleg'd with much Thankfulness, that in *other Places*, where the Work has greatly flourish'd, there have been few if any of these Disorders and Exceses. But who can wonder, if at such a Time as this Satan should intermingle himself, to hinder and blemish a Work so directly contrary to the Interests of his own Kingdom? Or, if while so much good Seed is sowing, *the Enemy should be busy to sow Tares?* We would therefore, in the *Bowels of Jesus*, beseech such as have been Partakers of this Work, or are zealous to promote it, that they *be not ignorant of Satan's Devices*; that they *watch* and *pray* against Errors and Misconduct of every Kind lest they blemish and hinder that which they desire to honour and advance.¹⁵

Prince published a blockbuster story in a late issue of *The Christian History* that revealed the deep New Light concern over perceived radical excess. The most notorious radical, Long Island minister James Davenport, confessed and retracted his sins during the revival in the September 22, 1744, issue. In a letter forwarded to Thomas Prince Sr. by Solomon Williams, written by Davenport on July 28, 1744, he confessed to following extrabiblical impulses, urging separation, encouraging lay exhortation, and calling out ministers as unconverted. By publishing an unequivocal confession from Davenport, Prince acknowledged the validity of some Old Light criticism even as he underscored the New Light plea for discernment.

In the case of Davenport, *The Christian History* affords us a glimpse into behind-the-scenes efforts by New Light ministers to protect the revival from what they regarded to be destructive influences. Prince's magazine magnified their maneuvering by spreading credible revival accounts and radical retractions to

¹⁵Thomas Prince Jr., *The Christian History* 1, no. 21 (July 23, 1743): 162.

audiences who were not privy to private pastoral correspondence. Thus, Prince's new medium offered New Light ministers a powerful new tool for expressing their hope and standards for revival, which they believed placed them firmly in line with Puritan history. At the same time, *The Christian History* testifies to these ministers' limited ability to control or invent the revival, notwithstanding the Davenport exception. The revival grew increasingly radical, only emboldening critics, as time progressed.

5. Conclusion

Ever since the Great Awakening, evangelicals have been known for their effective use of emerging media. Evangelical magazines in American and Great Britain proliferated in the mid-nineteenth century. Today, self-promotion by so-called revivalists hardly strikes evangelicals as incongruous, so comfortable have we become with the circus of publicity. Discernment takes second billing to "fruitfulness," measured just as the world does—in numbers.

But when Thomas Prince Sr. worked with his eponymous son to launch *The Christian History* in 1743, they experimented with a novel medium. They succeeded for several years at a time when so many other magazines quickly failed. They effectively applied the new medium to a pre-existing correspondence network excited with news of revival. Colonial evangelicals capitalized on new technology to form an enduring movement. Thomas Kidd observes, "It appears that the rising availability of public information and print, which scholars have seen as so central to the creation of nationalism, also helped create and sustain world evangelicalism."¹⁶

Though amateur journalists, the Princes demonstrated the characteristic New Light concern for discernment, honed by study of Scripture and Puritan history. Such skill equipped them to edit a journal that encouraged the revival's supporters. They offered revival critics accounts corroborated by credible ministers and published classic Puritan sermons that supported New Light points. They warned radicals against seeking bodily manifestations and empowering lay exhorters who depended on impressions more than Scripture. They worked behind the scenes to rehabilitate radical leaders such as James Davenport.

Even so, articles in *The Christian History* alone could not entirely quiet the critics or quell the radicals. Nor can we expect today that even our best efforts to share the pure gospel and teach the unvarnished Word will guarantee the success of our cause. No less than the apostle Paul's patient instruction failed to fix what ailed believers in Corinth who sought prophetic powers but lacked love (1 Cor 13:2). Our Lord Jesus himself carefully explained that the Son of Man would be rejected, killed, and raised from the dead. Yet even his own disciples failed to understand the purpose of his ministry (Luke 9:22).

We do not always understand the mysterious purposes of God, especially when his cause appears to falter. Indeed, the publishers and readers of *The Christian History* must have been disappointed that the revival eventually dimmed. But they could not have been surprised. For this outcome, too, fit their biblical and theological understanding of revival: Just as no one can manufacture revival, so also no one can ensure its indefinite progress.

¹⁶Thomas S. Kidd, *The Protestant Interest: New England After Puritanism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 173.

Should Evangelicals Embrace Historical Criticism? The Hays-Ansberry Proposal

— Robert W. Yarbrough —

Bob Yarbrough is professor of New Testament at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, an editorial board member of Themelios, co-editor of the Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, and past president of the Evangelical Theological Society. His books include 1, 2, and 3 John (BECNT, 2008), The Salvation-Historical Fallacy? Reassessing the History of New Testament Theology (2004), and Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey (coauthored with Walter Elwell; 3rd ed.; 2013). He has been involved in theological education in Eastern Europe since 1990 and in Africa since 1995.

Abstract: *Evangelical Faith and the Challenge of Historical Criticism*, edited by Christopher Hays and Christopher Ansberry, argues that evangelical scholars have failed to embrace historical criticism to the extent that they could and should. This review essay surveys the book's argument by chapters, asks how its claims should be evaluated, and arrives at the conclusion that while the Hays-Ansberry proposal marks a significant step in discussion of these matters, it is not always a step in a helpful direction.

A new book has appeared on wings of urgency and promise: *Evangelical Faith and the Challenge of Historical Criticism*.¹ The urgency is voiced on the back cover by Professor Daniel Block at Wheaton College. He declares that the book “is addressed to all, including seasoned scholars, to pull their heads out of the sand and stop pretending that the results of historical-critical scholarship cannot and should not contribute to our understanding of Scripture—a charge I have personally heard.” It sounds like craven obscurantism on a massive scale has overtaken an entire generation, including its scholars. A book that exposes this is welcome indeed. The promise is voiced by Australian NT scholar Michael Bird, who states, “This is the type of discussion on faith and criticism that evangelical scholarship has needed for years. Thankfully, an intellectually rigorous and theologically sensitive approach to these matters is finally upon us!” It sounds like ideas heretofore unknown have suddenly emerged into public view. A book that achieves such a noble end deserves careful scrutiny and a broad hearing.

This essay proceeds in three steps. First, it surveys the argument of the book's nine chapters. Second, it notes that the book claims to champion “the Church,” though it cancels out many things people in churches have always believed and in most church settings still do. We raise the question of how “the

¹Christopher M. Hays and Christopher B. Ansberry, eds. (London: SPCK; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013). Parenthetical numbers below refer to this book. This essay cites the British edition. Editor's note: See also Robert W. Yarbrough, “The Embattled Bible: Four More Books,” *Them* 34 (2009): 6–25, available at http://thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/article/the_embattled_bible_four_more_books.

Church” should view this book’s arguments. Third, the essay offers concluding evaluative comments, though some evaluation is unavoidable throughout the essay.

1. The Argument of the Book

Co-editor Hays pens the opening chapter (and contributes to four others): “Toward a faithful criticism.” Hays earned multiple degrees at Wheaton College before completing a DPhil at Oxford, studying at St. Andrews and Bonn along the way. He begins by pointing out how “conservative scholars” are hampered in their study of the Bible by “a dual commitment to apprehending its theological message and affirming its factual integrity” (p. 1). “Historical critics” also have a dual commitment, but in Hays’s view it is a more honest one. Like conservatives they seek to understand the text’s message. But they are also open to the possibility that there is “slippage between the way that the Bible describes historical events and the way those events actually occurred in time and space” (p. 1). In other words, they exercise freedom to determine that the Bible does not always get things right. It is clear, then, that these “dual commitments” are not symmetrical, as the conservatives are bound to affirm the text is true while “critics” labor under no such trammels. This queering of the pitch, in which evangelicals are embarrassingly retrograde and critics inclined to valid and compelling results, is a recurrent feature of the book.

It is no wonder, then, that Hays sees value in becoming more like the critics. “*This book discusses the theological challenges that confront the biblical interpreter who engages with historical criticism*” (p. 5, Hays’s emphasis). It is not historical critics who may need to defer to God and Scripture; it is evangelicals who need to realize that historical criticism demands (and should be given) authority to qualify and adjust their historical and ultimately theological convictions, beginning with their understanding of the Bible itself and then on to things the Bible has normally been thought to affirm, leading Christians to affirm those things, too.

Evangelical engagement of these challenges is presented as a new and somewhat unprecedented enterprise. As we point out below, interpreters as far back as Jonathan Edwards have been engaging historical criticism in its modern form (in some respects it is as old as Celsus)² for nearly 300 years,³ so at first this makes no sense. But later in the chapter, Hays writes that “evangelical scholars, even our own colleagues and former professors, by and large have not embraced critical scholarship” (p. 19). Apparently, “embrace” does not mean learn about, come to terms with, utilize certain findings of, profit from the insight of, examine, understand, interact with, or the like, for as §3 below points out, evangelicals scholars at the co-editors’ alma mater Wheaton College (to name just one place) have been engaging historical criticism and in that sense embracing it for generations. “Embrace” apparently means accept the conclusions of and make doctrinal adjustments in response to. This book, then, is an apologetic for historical criticism at the expense of significant historic Christian (not merely evangelical) convictions.

²Celsus lived ca. AD 180. His attack on Christianity (and Judaism) anticipates modern historical criticism in many respects. See R. Joseph Hoffmann, ed., *Celsus On The True Doctrine: A Discourse Against Christians* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

³ On “Edwards’s fascination with higher criticism,” see Douglas A. Sweeney, “Jonathan Edwards, the Harmony of Scripture, and Canonical Exegesis,” *TJNS* 34 (2013): 173, with references to a number of secondary sources.

Hays sees no reason not to take these steps, for he trusts J. D. G. Dunn that there is no “slippery slope” in which a Bible that contains frequent inaccuracies (since that is what historical criticism concludes and this book accepts) in smaller matters must be suspect in the really big issues like Jesus’s resurrection, God’s deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt (though not necessarily in the way Scripture describes), and God’s faithfulness to save his people (pp. 4–5). The big things are still true, though many lesser biblical affirmations are now in doubt.

Evangelicals, it turns out, are guilty of only “clubbing historical criticism on the head with our confidence in the unswerving factual accuracy of the Bible” and using “inerrancy as a cudgel” (pp. 13–14). Hays argues that evangelicals are “obligated to make a genuinely critical assessment of the historicity of those events” described in Scripture (p. 14), something they apparently have never undertaken before. In sum, “the book’s editors encourage a new generation of Christian biblical scholars” to achieve what previous generations did not: “a *faithful criticism*” (p. 23). This “criticism” admits “the sharpest challenges of contemporary research” (p. 23). The result will be a “critical faith” that modifies “traditional assumptions” (as if previous Christian beliefs and reasoned conclusions on historical matters were just “assumptions” rather than time-tested observations and doctrines) “in the light of new insights,” meaning the findings of historical critics (p. 23).

Chapter 1, like chapter 9, is a bookend for the entire volume. Chapter 2 is one of the book’s longest chapters and treats “Adam and the fall.” Authors Hays and Stephen Lane Herring note the widespread denial of the historicity of Gen 2–3. They then conduct a sort of thought experiment: “imagine what would happen to hamartiology if there were no Adam and no fall” (p. 32). They examine Second Temple views to establish what Paul as a Jew in that milieu likely believed. Paul’s insistence on revelatory knowledge (“I did not receive [the gospel he preached] from any man” (Gal 1:12; cf. 2 Cor 12:1–7; 1 Thess 2:13) does not factor in; Paul’s understanding must be analyzed on strict analogy with what critics reconstruct from contemporaneous sources. Accordingly, because the authors “do not find . . . among Paul’s contemporaries . . . the belief that humans are made guilty of what Adam did” (p. 36), Paul did not hold this belief, even though many through the centuries have affirmed that he teaches it in his writings and that it is the most compelling understanding of both Genesis and the appalling darkness and suffering that attends the human experience through the ages, including the ages storied in Scripture.

Hays and Herring proceed to rethink Rom 5:12–21. They affirm it may not matter for us whether Adam existed or not (though it admittedly did matter for Paul), so that “one can sustain a case that Romans 5 does not teach original guilt” and “that Paul’s [theological] argument in Romans 5 will still remain perfectly tenable” despite his faulty “ancient [historical] assumptions that we no longer countenance,” like Adam’s existence and its necessity (p. 45). The authors stress they are just “speculating, imagining, musing” (p. 54), but one wonders how much this is a rhetorical device to disavow responsibility for their definite and somewhat drastic proposals. They make passing mention of 1 Cor 15:20–49 (p. 37), but they do not deal with the clear statement about Adam’s role in all human sin found in that passage: “For as by a man [i.e., Adam] came death, by a man [i.e., Christ] has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Cor 15:21–22).

Chapter 3 by co-editor Ansberry is “The exodus: fact, fiction or both?” Ansberry, who received his PhD in Biblical Theology: Old Testament from Wheaton College, also co-authors chapters 4, 6, and 9. The shortest chapter of the book, chapter 3 casts maximalists like “evangelical Egyptologist” James Hoffmeier and others, including Iain Provan, V. Phillips Long, and Tremper Longman III, against

minimalists like Thomas L. Thompson and John Van Seters, for whom “the exodus never happened” (pp. 64–65). Well, did it happen (so the maximalists), or did it not (the minimalists)?

One might be inclined to turn to the Bible, but it is not much help here because while “a multitude of texts” speak of the exodus, their testimony is varied and ambiguous, creating “a variegated portrait that defies precise reconstruction” (p. 63n22). It seems that if we cannot precisely reconstruct historical events to which Scripture attests, we are justified in doubting whether they happened. Ansberry concludes by “suggesting” that “*some sort* of historical exodus occurred via divine intervention,” but he admits with this suggestion he has “moved beyond the realm of historical inquiry and entered into the realm of faith” (p. 72).⁴ This is because “we must recognize” because of historical critical protestations “that direct historical evidence for the exodus does not exist” (p. 72). Again, the Bible’s own witness cannot be decisive. And again, the demand for exact precision is a factor: “precise historical minutiae of the event will most likely not materialize in our lifetimes” (p. 72).

Space precludes lengthy recounting of all subsequent chapters. The general drift of the book is sufficiently clear from the three chapters highlighted above. In chapter 4, Ansberry and Jerry Hwang pose the question, “No covenant before the exile? The Deuteronomistic Torah and Israel’s covenant theology.” Historical criticism since W. M. L. de Wette (1770–1849) has concluded that the precursor of Deuteronomy (*Urdeuteronomium*) was not composed by Moses but traces its origin to the times of Josiah or perhaps Hezekiah (i.e., seventh or eighth century BC; pp. 76–78). Others argue that the document took shape during or after the exilic period (post 586 BC). In either case, at best historical criticism allows us to speak in faith (not historically and factually) of a Mosaic voice, not Mosaic writings in any direct and sure sense. But this is no loss for the believing evangelical, who accepts the verdict that “Deuteronomy’s authority as Christian Scripture is located in the content of the document in general and the Holy Spirit’s work through authorized tradents in particular” (p. 94), Moses himself not being among the authorized, of course.

And so the pattern continues throughout the book. Chapter 5 (“Problems with prophecy,” by Amber Warhurst, Seth B. Tarrer, and co-editor Hays) shows how often biblical prophecies are mistaken (pp. 99–104). Or they take place after the event (*vaticinium ex eventu*; pp. 104–13). Even Jesus made a false prediction (pp. 116–17). Yet because these mistaken projections are in the canon, “the preservation of seemingly⁵ inaccurate prophecies as the word of the Lord reflects their character as trustworthy prophecies in the sense that they faithfully reflected the outworking of God’s plan” (p. 104). It seems that whereas we used to think of the Bible’s predictions as unerring truths and evidence of God’s unflinching faithfulness—for he alone knows the end from the beginning (Isa 46:10)⁶—we must now think of many as true only because they had or have a noble intention or outcome.

Chapter 6 (“Pseudepigraphy and the canon” by co-editor Ansberry, Casey Strine, Edward Klink III, and David Lincicum) shows how historical critical study casts in doubt the origin of numerous biblical books: the Pentateuch, Isaiah, John’s Gospel, and many if not most of Paul’s letters. Critics’ conclusions are termed “historical evidence” (evangelical scholars’ conclusions, which are almost totally ignored,

⁴ My italics here, but the words “some sort” are italicized in an earlier occurrence (p. 69). For Ansberry it becomes clear that we can speak factually only of “some sort” (see also pp. 65, 71 [3x], 72 [“some form”]) of an exodus deliverance and nothing more.

⁵ The word “seemingly” misrepresents their argument: they argue the Bible *does* err, not that it *seemingly* errs.

⁶ Cf. John 14:29 ESV: “I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.”

are, by contrast, just their beliefs) and require evangelicals to construct “new models” so they can “make sense of pseudepigraphical compositions that may at some level have an intention to deceive, but still function as canonical Scripture” (p. 154). To think authorship matters is to subject “Scripture to our own autonomous standard of perfection” (p. 155). The writers hector readers with other dire charges like idolatry (p. 156) if they doubt the historical critics; more on this below.

Chapter 7 treats “The historical Jesus” (by Michael J. Dalinger and co-editor Hays). They lament the personal ties of apostolic witnesses who gave us the four Gospels: “Unfortunately, any information we have about the self-awareness of Jesus is conveyed to us by the testimony of those whom Jesus affected during his lifetime” (p. 159). Those who did or do not follow him are apparently capable of superior insight. The authors ask whether “it is theologically necessary that Jesus possessed or disclosed awareness of his own divinity” (p. 164). Their answer: “Probably not” (p. 164). Not all miracles reported in the Gospels may be factual (p. 168). Happily, the authors think the virgin birth and Jesus’s resurrection are theologically necessary and even to some extent historically true: “Critical study of the historical Nazarene possesses ample room for the faith of the Gospels, Nicaea and beyond” (pp. 180–81). What critical study forbids as empirical affirmation is still permitted in the ecclesial and worship setting. It may be doubted whether the patristic church would ever have arrived at the stunning creedal affirmations of “Nicaea and beyond” if they had taken such a dim view of the veracity of so many things the Bible asserts.

Chapter 8 (“The Paul of Acts and the Paul of the epistles,” by Aaron J. Kuecker and Kelly D. Liebengood) deals with chronological and theological problems arising from contrasting statements found in the Pauline corpus, on the one hand, and in Acts, on the other. Acts was written “between 20 and 40 years after Paul’s death” (p. 198), essentially ruling out Lukan authorship; if many of Paul’s letters are pseudepigraphical (see ch. 6), it is no wonder that there are going to be discrepancies, as both corpora would contain a great deal of hearsay rather than the direct testimony of parties on the scene.

Yet discrepancies should not be overplayed (p. 198), for “canonical critics” teach us that “the Church” formed a canon to express its theology and Barth teaches that “God’s self-revelation does not emerge from history” but vice versa (p. 199). As a result, “the faithful Church” must not “always relentlessly harmonize the discrete voices of Acts and the epistles” (p. 200). Rather, the basic question, to which the authors answer yes, is whether “*Luke’s Paul and the Paul of the epistles bear witness to the same Messiah Jesus who pours out the Spirit and makes known the Father*” (p. 202, their italics). There may be discrepancies in details, but “the chief claim of Christianity is not that God has given us a book of doctrine [who suggests this is Christianity’s chief claim?] but that God has acted in history in and through Jesus of Nazareth” (p. 203). Additionally, God “takes into account human limitation for writing, speaking or thinking about an infinite God” (p. 203). Whereas Christian thought has often affirmed God’s hand in assuring the veracity of Scripture, since Scripture itself teaches this and figures like Jesus affirmed it, the authors concede that God’s written word cannot transcend the error that dogs all human production. (Is there a tension here with chapter 2’s assertion of human freedom from original sin?)

Chapter 9 (“Faithful criticism and a critical faith”) by the co-editors contains few surprises. It assures “conservative Christian seminaries and academics” that “they can cease their embargo of historical criticism” (p. 206). While the limitations of that criticism are fleetingly affirmed (e.g., p. 210), overall it is Christian teaching and belief over the centuries (and especially among evangelicals now) that call for adjustment. This is to be a true “disciple” (p. 211), one who discerns that and how the Holy Spirit through historical criticism disabuses us of the old notion that all of Scripture is true in all that

it affirms, rightly interpreted. For if we do not “participate in historical-critical inquiry” in ways this book calls for, we not only repudiate a divine mandate to seek truth (about which the Bible, woodenly believed, often misleads): we impose “our own terms on how God can speak through the process of biblical interpretation” (p. 212). To affirm Scripture’s comprehensive veracity is idolatrous; to concede its pervasive erroneousness is the mark of the informed disciple, as Kenton Sparks and Peter Enns have shown (pp. 214–15). The authority of the Scripture lies in how “it reveals God truly to us” (p. 217), not in factual details. I am not sure the authors ever tell how they came to know so much about the invisible, eternal God’s identity and nature, given that Scripture is not the sure source once thought.

The writers conclude by calling for piety (pp. 218–20) and venturing an allegorical reading of portions of Heb 12 (p. 222) in which coming “to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem . . . to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly” is likened to doing “faithful criticism with a critical faith” as espoused in this book (p. 221).

2. What Should “the Church” Believe?

In some ways one can only affirm this book’s central imperative, one echoed in a German monograph that appeared in 2012.⁸ We need a Christian faith that is not obscurantist nor ruled by populist demagogues out of touch with historical research. And we need a criticism that is not allowed to destroy or otherwise supplant a living Christian faith that results in fulfillment of our love for God and others (e.g., p. 212). I wish to underscore the potentially positive impact of the Hays-Ansberry proposal if it be carried out aptly and wisely: Bible believers and especially those who lead congregations or otherwise teach or preach the Scriptures do well to be aware of critical theories about the Bible and reasons why so many think it is a book of fables or even fabrications. Christians not made aware by their church leaders of critical objections to Scripture may feel betrayed and tempted to leave the church when they first learn of problems on CNN or in their freshman college humanities class. This is not only a matter of learning about critical objections either: a workable view of the Bible’s truth needs to be instilled, one that can handle the manifest tensions, apparent discrepancies, and unsolvable questions that surface when one begins to pore over Scripture in a careful and systematic fashion.

At the same time, questions about the book arise. At the mundane level, why no author index? Books wishing to be taken seriously by academics need to grant the time-saving favor of providing this significant information.

More seriously: a major theme of the book is how many facts once thought to be important (like Pauline authorship of his epistles, John’s authorship of the Fourth Gospel, the historicity of the Gospel miracles, Jesus’s freedom from errors like false prophecy) are really not so important any more. Only a couple of really essential facts are, like the incarnation and Jesus’ resurrection. But why *those* facts, since the authors admit they are in the end theological beliefs, not realities or events to which “historical evidence” can or does convincingly attest? I sense throughout the book a strong affirmation of old-fashioned Kantian faith (formulated in lasting fashion by F. D. E. Schleiermacher, with innumerable

⁷“Church” is frequently if not always capitalized in Hays-Ansberry. This essay adopts their usage when speaking about this “Church” in their terms.

⁸ Siegfried Zimmer, *Schadet die Bibelwissenschaft dem Glauben? Klärung eines Konflikts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012). Like Hays-Ansberry, this book champions historical criticism and seeks to school the reader in relaxing convictions about the Bible’s testimony necessarily being true.

permutations since) in which “faith” is defined in ultimately non-empirical and non-doctrinal terms and in which “knowledge” is limited to the empirical facts affirmed by the hegemony of a guild (the book favors an entity it calls “historical criticism”). One problem here is that our (biblical) sources combine events supernaturally caused with eyewitness observation and testimony concerning those events. Early Christians affirmed what they had seen, heard, and handled (cf. 1 John 1:1–3) and wrote these things down in documents quickly acquiring the “Holy Scripture” status that OT writings already possessed. They did not just “believe” things but actually observed them.

This book concedes that historical criticism “problematizes”⁹ the Bible’s factual claims but wants to hang on to *something* historically rooted, which to “problematize” would be to deny Christian faith its legitimacy. How can the authors salvage *these* historical facts? And why do they even need them? In their hermeneutical system, it is the ahistorical truth of Christianity’s essential claims, not the historicity of factual details, that matters. It seems that the authors overlook that we can already trace about a 200-year history of various implementations of their proposal.¹⁰ They likewise were not able to access recent books by a pair of prominent German NT scholars exposing the bankruptcy of historical criticism as it has been applied to the Bible since the rise of the Enlightenment.¹¹ The results in the form of the severely eroded Protestant churches (“the mainline”)¹² in North America and in their British and European correlates, all long ruled by Kantian hermeneutics, are not encouraging.

But rather than raise more questions along these lines, I thought I would take a cue from the book and think about the response to this book by “the Church,” a term that occurs fifty times or more in this work. This “Church” is usually presented as being on the side of this book and its authors, and they cast themselves as defending its integrity and aiding its mission.

Yet consider the basic claims that the book’s seven central chapters make. To get credit for “embracing” historical criticism and holding a faith that is sufficiently critical, both of which evangelicals “must” do, evangelicals are called on to make the following concessions:

1. Perhaps Adam’s sin did not cause his descendants to sin. In other words, the Western Christian teaching of “original sin” is unbiblical. Every person sins on their own and is guilty based on that and their own evil desire, not on anything having to do with Adam (or Eve).
2. Perhaps much of the story of the exodus (God’s delivering his people out of Egypt) is not true. God did deliver his people somehow, but the stories told about this in the Bible contain much myth, legend, and folklore.

⁹The word (with or without -s) occurs on pp. 5, 50, 126, 156, 206. This is invariably greeted as a good thing, as when “historical criticism” provides “the Church with exciting and significant resources” as it “problematizes our modern construing of history and authorship” (p. 206). The book obscures the fact that this “modern construing” of the Bible as factually true is congruent with most of the church throughout its history until Enlightenment skepticism began dictating the church’s hermeneutics.

¹⁰For a positive presentation of the history’s foundational ideologies, see Gary Dorrien, *Kantian Reason and Hegelian Spirit: The Idealistic Logic of Modern Theology* (Chichester, West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012).

¹¹Ulrich Wilckens, *Kritik der Bibelkritik* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Theologie, 2012); Klaus Berger, *Die Bibelfälscher: Wie wir um die Wahrheit betrogen werden* (Munich: Pattloch: 2013).

¹²Commented on journalistically, with emphasis on the years since the 1960s, by Ross Douthat, “Can Liberal Christianity Be Saved?” *New York Times*, July 14, 2012, online: http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/15/opinion/sunday/douthat-can-liberal-christianity-be-saved.html?_r=0, accessed January 14, 2014. For an older but illuminating take by a scholar, theological educator, and pastoral leader in the mainline, see John H. Leith, *Crisis in the Church: The Plight of Theological Education* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997).

3. Perhaps Moses didn't write Deuteronomy, even though Jesus and the NT writers thought he did. Rather, a thousand years or more later, someone or some groups put together the information found in Deuteronomy.

4. Perhaps Jesus made a mistake in prophesying that he would return soon (see Matt 16:27–28; Mark 13:24–30). There are other prophecies in the Bible that did not come true, too. Still, many prophecies are true, and we believe God still saves through the message of the Bible even when some of its predictions have turned out to be unreliable.

5. Perhaps Isaiah did not write all of Isaiah, the apostle John did not write the Gospel of John, and Paul did not write all of the “Pauline” letters. Rather, later individuals or groups wrote in the names of these famous people. This is the process the Holy Spirit used to give us what the church later came to call “Scripture.”

6. Perhaps some of the miracles in the Gospels did not happen. The incarnation and the resurrection are really the only two biblical miracles that *must have* happened in order for Christian faith to be true. Whether other miracles in the NT are true can be debated.

7. Perhaps Acts and Paul's letters make conflicting claims at some points—there are discrepancies that amount to historical errors. But they both witness to Jesus as the Messiah, and that remains true even if there are errors in the details of their writings when we compare them.

It is clear what “the Church” consisting of this book's authors and their favored intellectual leaders (e.g., Hans Frei, John Webster, Brevard Childs, James Dunn, Karl Barth) think of the seven points above. The Church demands that evangelicals “embrace” (i.e., accept as true) their conclusions. This might not disturb “evangelical faith” in the sense of the personal faith (*fides qua creditur*) of the book's contributors—time will tell. But it would mark a decisive break with the high view of Scripture's authority associated with confessional Christianity through the ages, including but not beginning with or limited to the “evangelical” era however that be defined.¹³ “The” Christian faith (*fides quae creditur*) flourishes in symbiotic relation with Holy Scripture that defines and sustains it.

To get a second opinion from “the Church” on the wisdom of “embracing” historical criticism as this book proposes, I sent out an informal questionnaire to Christians with a wider frame of reference. For the book seems dominated by a perspective in which “the Church” is what some postgraduate students from a few British universities and their mentors, living or deceased, say it is. It cannot have escaped their notice that “the Church” that has given up on the full truth of the Bible has withered in size in recent generations and often degenerated in faith and practice. Meanwhile, we are witnessing over roughly those same generations the largest numerical increase in history of another “Church.”¹⁴ In most cases this Church implicitly trusts all God's word understood as Scripture from Genesis to

¹³ See, e.g., John Woodbridge, “Evangelical Self-Identity and the Doctrine of Biblical Inerrancy,” in *Understanding the Times: New Testament Studies in the 21st Century* (ed. Andreas Köstenberger and Robert Yarbrough; Wheaton: Crossway, 2011), 104–38, along with Kevin Vanhoozer's contributions in James Merrick and Stephen Garrett, eds., *Five Views on Biblical Inerrancy* (Counterpoints; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013).

¹⁴ See, e.g., Patrick Johnstone, *The Future of the Global Church* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2011), especially 121–37 (“Evangelical Revivals and Awakenings”) and 138–60 (“Christianity: The Evangelical Explosion”). But the whole book is relevant.

Revelation—and not just in faith but in fact.¹⁵ In fact, “charismatic and evangelical Christian renewal movements” with a view of Scripture sharply contrasting with that of Hays-Ansberry “are the only religious movements in the world today that are growing through conversion.”¹⁶

So I asked some Christians known to me from domains where the Christian faith is experiencing growth the following questions. I intentionally chose people whose identity is not wholly determined by the “evangelicals” who are the main targets of the book under review. (I acknowledge this poll yields only anecdotal results skewed by my selection of contacts, but the results are no more arbitrary than defining “the Church” based on the range of authorities Hays and Ansberry cite.) I queried,

What do you think of this book’s argument? Is it important for our faith and ministry that all of the Bible be true? Or is it OK to admit that “critical” scholars may be right in many of their charges against the Bible’s truth? Evangelicals can admit that the Bible may contain some (or many) errors and mistakes. This does not change the main truth of what we believe and preach in the church and to the world.

One respondent was an Asian female PhD student (OT) in North America. Her answer to point 1 above (Adam and original sin) cites Rom 5:14–17 and adds, “I personally cannot see how it can pass the test of Paul’s argument that Jesus is the second Adam who is a cooperative representative of human beings.” In answer to point 2 above (the limited historicity of the exodus account), she writes, “1) Just because there exists literary similarity between the Exodus and ANE literature does not mean that they share genre. 2) It seems to me that one has to subscribe to Ernst Troeltsch’s philosophy of history (or something of this sort) to find the argument reasonable.” She finds all seven assertions dubious and concludes,

It is utterly important for our faith and ministry that all of the Bible is true. I’d agree that evangelicals cannot always convince the ‘critics’ that the Bible as traditionally interpreted is correct. But this is not sufficient for evangelicals to abandon traditional interpretation. It should prompt evangelicals to work more carefully in communicating Christian faith.

A second respondent hails from Muslim Africa. He has a PhD in engineering from a major British university; in part due to government persecution in his Sharia-law homeland, he and his family are now living diaspora-style outside of Africa. His first language is Arabic, so his answers in English lack literary polish. Yet they adequately communicate the response of a significant “Church,” the church languishing under the heel of bitter persecution:

First it seems that this is not the first time that followers of Jesus were faced with such accusations and claims against their Bible, or the Holy Spirit already knew that this would be the complaints that followers of the road will receive during their lifetime. It is always the work of the complainer to object, “Did God really say . . . ?” (Gen 3:1). It was happening before as testified by the first books written, from Moses to Revelation. These accusations are certainly raging at our present time.

¹⁵ Cf. Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). Note also Johnstone, *Future of the Global Church*, 123, commenting on “the influence of the Bible” in world church renewal since the 1960s.

¹⁶ Johnstone, *Future of the Global Church*, 129.

Next this African lay church leader states: “The Holy Spirit points us that in 2 Timothy 3:16: ‘All scripture is God-breathed’ and God uses his people to speak out as written in 1 Thess 2:13, Jos 1:7–9, 2 Peter 1:21, and 2 Peter 3:15. God also is the protector of his word as written in Rev 22:18–19 and Deut 4:1–4.” Hays-Ansberry pass over most of these verses; in the rare cases where they cite any of them, they leave untouched their possible implications for a doctrine of Scripture.

The same African respondent raises a historiographical point with an eye to Western history: “Witnesses and those who signed the Declaration of Independence vow [i.e., vouch] for its accuracy. Historical books that tell us about Europe and its wars were written by witnesses and historians. So how come witnesses and historians of the old times are all unreliable now?” And he makes a concluding doxological point: “As a scientist and engineering researcher, every day that passes that the world is amazed by the modern technology and how far it reaches, I get more affirmed that the miracles and power of our Lord are much more than I can imagine and foretell.” In other words, far from observed reality demanding that we claim less for God and Scripture, the more we discover, the more inclined we should be to affirm all Scripture teaches.

A third respondent is from North America but is married to a German and has lived much of his adult life in a Muslim country, where he has been arrested frequently for his witness. In recent years, and at this time, he is banned from that country (and hence from his wife and children who remain there), a banishment he is fighting with every legal and spiritual means so they can be reunited and their ministry together resume.¹⁷ For the record, he is a graduate of Wheaton College, just like Hays and Ansberry. But he has a different take than they do on the book’s findings:

. . . of course I disagree with them. Maybe some of these authors think their books are only being read by Westerners, but I can assure you from my years living in the Muslim world that these sort of books are eagerly read and studied and used by Muslim scholars intent on finding evidence to prove what they’ve already decided to believe, namely, that the Bible has been corrupted. In fact, in recent years a notable Muslim scholar in Turkey began writing scathing attacks on the Bible using evidence and lines of reasoning almost all of which were taken from these sorts of books.

A pastor in Istanbul, Turkey, has published a 770-page book in response to these attacks.¹⁸ Will the Hays-Ansberry proposal require him to write another?

This Wheaton graduate makes a second point:

The book you’re reviewing seems to be an attempt to build bridges between Evangelicals and historical criticism scholars, much like Schleiermacher tried to build bridges between Christianity and its so-called “cultured despisers,” and we know the bitter long-term results of that. Yet far from building bridges between Evangelicals and others, this book may well end up equipping Muslims to tear down the most important bridge to knowing Christ as Savior, God’s Word.

The same respondent goes on to say: “Another reaction: the book seems to think that in many situations some but not all of the miracles might be true. But in the time of the OT true prophets were

¹⁷ In the course of completing this essay, I received word that he has provisional clearance to return and be reunited. Whether short- or long-term remains unclear.

¹⁸ Carlos Madrigal, *The Gospels and Christianity Defended*; see http://www.christiankitap.info/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=411, available also in Turkish.

required to be right all the time, not just some of the time.” The point here (drawing, e.g., on Deut 18:22) seems to be that the historic Church views Scripture as prophesied via the work of God’s Spirit (see, e.g., 2 Pet 1:20–21) and accordingly unerringly true.¹⁹ But if it is false in many places like the Hays-Ansberry proposal affirms, it really loses the status of God’s divinely prophesied message to his people and the world.

This respondent’s German wife—valiantly upholding family and ministry in her husband’s absence—should be permitted a voice, as in email communication she expressed the following: “I am not a scholar, just a missionary wife and mother, but I wanted to say,” she explains, how thankful she is, that her “heart [is] filled with joy and hope” when scholars uphold the Bible’s truth. “In a context [i.e., that Muslim country] where day in and out I am confronted with the notion that the Bible is corrupted and has been changed and therefore not an authority to be taken serious and coming from a country [Germany] where unfortunately liberal theology originated and seeing the weakness of the churches as a result,” scholars “speaking out on the truth of the authority of the Bible are like a breath of fresh air!”

The question on the table in this section is: What should “the Church” believe? The answer would seem to depend significantly on who we take “the Church” to be. Is it those counseling demotion of the Bible’s authority on the authority of historical criticism? Ansberry and Hays cast themselves as ecclesial leaders, “theologians who are (we pray) rudders in the hands of a divine helmsman” guiding the Church “between the devil and the deep-blue sea,” meaning “anti-intellectual sectarianism” and “rigorous but apostate criticism” (p. 205).

But is “the Church” question more complex? In the Hays-Ansberry proposal, we can side with the devil evangelicals (all of whom except for them are cast as suspect), surrender to the deep-blue sea of extreme critics (disbelieving the Bible is not extreme but simple factual truth), or agree with Hays-Ansberry. Where does that leave the several hundred million not only in the West but in Africa, Asia, and elsewhere who see more compelling reasons—perhaps most notably divine sanction and mandate and the testimony of Scripture itself including Jesus’s own example—for continuing to uphold the Bible’s entire trustworthiness?

3. Concluding Observations

Many will thrill to this book’s approach, findings, and guidance. While as already stated I affirm its aims, and agree that growing believers throughout the world should learn from their Christian leaders the challenges and difficulties that inhere in affirming the Bible’s full trustworthiness, I have raised some reservations. In closing I offer four additional comments.

First, the book propounds the mystifying and erroneous notion that evangelicals have never embraced historical criticism before. Since Hays and Ansberry are both Wheaton College alumni and give the impression that their professors lived in denial of historical criticism’s claims, I would like to relate a different experience. I graduated from Wheaton, too (MA, ’82). One of my NT professors, J. Julius Scott Jr., after a Wheaton undergraduate degree in the 1950s, did his PhD under F. F. Bruce on the Jerusalem church AD 70–130. His major discussion partner was S. G. F. Brandon, author of *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church*. In it Brandon argued that Jesus was a political revolutionary influenced by the Zealots. The suggestion that Scott, in his doctoral work and in his lifelong teaching

¹⁹Cf. Woodbridge and Vanhoozer, n. 13 above. See also Peter A. Lillback and Richard B. Gaffin Jr., eds., *Thy Word Is Still Truth: Essential Writings on the Doctrine of Scripture from the Reformation to Today* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2013).

career, did not embrace historical criticism is silly. In his classes students read primary sources, Kümmel on NT introduction, Walter Bauer on historiography, J. D. G. Dunn on Christology, Bultmann on hermeneutics, Eduard Lohse on NT backgrounds, Van Harvey on historiography and Christian belief, and E. P. Sanders on Paul. This was over thirty years before Hays-Ansberry's claim that evangelicals, including professors at Wheaton, had yet to embrace historical criticism.

Neither Scott nor other professors in the Bible department at Wheaton back then (like Walter Elwell, John McRay, Norman Ericson, Andrew Hill, James Hoffmeier, Alan Johnson, and others) cut corners on requiring students to learn from and interact with—in a word, to embrace—historical criticism. In fact, when Wheaton professor Alan Johnson (now retired) gave his ETS presidential address in 1982, he explicitly argued for evangelical appreciation of and involvement with historical criticism.²⁰ Some years later Andrew Hill (still on the Wheaton faculty) published a distinguished commentary in a premier historical-critical series edited by David Noel Freedman.²¹ Current NT professor Douglas Moo's critically acclaimed commentary on Romans interacts at hundreds of points with “historical critical” interpreters including C. K. Barrett, James Dunn, Joseph Fitzmyer, Ernst Käsemann, Otto Kuss, Ulrich Wilckens, and many others.²²

Part of the appeal of the Hays-Ansberry book is that they cast themselves as courageous pioneers with sophistication to go where their fuddy-duddy predecessors never would or did. This may play well in British university seminars where stereotypes (often unkind) abound of the vast and varied world of “evangelicalism” especially in the U.S. The vision of an intellectually benighted “conservative” faith community culpably out of touch with the sure pronouncements of a sacrosanct elite is, however, inaccurate on several counts.

Nor is it just the Wheaton College heritage that the book misrepresents, for many colleges and seminaries in the evangelical heritage have been equally proactive in bringing students into dialogue with historical critical views. A widely used NT introduction, *designed specifically for college freshmen*, contains chapters on historical criticism.²³ But long before Wheaton College's founding in 1860, Moses Stuart was at work establishing his credentials as the father of biblical criticism in North America.²⁴ Stuart was, like Jonathan Edwards already mentioned, an evangelical. Princeton Seminary in the nineteenth and early twentieth century was fully cognizant of and in extensive interaction with historical criticism.²⁵ Down to the current time, there exist any number of major works by evangelicals which make use of and interact with historical criticism—but which Hays-Ansberry inexplicably ignore. George Ladd wrote a book on this very subject almost half a century ago.²⁶ In a discussion on miracles, how can one pass

²⁰ Alan Johnson, “The Historical-Critical Method: Egyptian Gold or Pagan Precipice?” *JETS* 26 (1983): 3–15.

²¹ Andrew Hill, *Malachi* (AB 25D; New York: Doubleday, 1998).

²² Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996).

²³ See Walter Elwell and Robert Yarbrough, *Encountering the New Testament* (3d ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), chs. 10–12.

²⁴ See J. H. Giltner, *Moses Stuart: The Father of Biblical Science in America* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988).

²⁵ For a fine account of Princeton's first century see David Calhoun, *Princeton Seminary* (2 vols.; Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1994–96).

²⁶ George Ladd, *The New Testament and Criticism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967).

over Craig Keener's recent and magisterial two-volume work?²⁷ Or any number of evangelical Gospels scholars and their numerous commentaries and publications on Jesus studies—Craig Blomberg, Darrell Bock, Don Carson, Craig Evans, Craig Keener, Andreas Köstenberger, Howard Marshall, Grant Osborne, Robert Stein, and many others? Wheaton's Richard Schultz (a student of Brevard Childs) has published significantly on the authorship of Isaiah,²⁸ but nothing is said of this in Hays-Ansberry. In exploring the Pastoral Epistles as pseudepigrapha (154–56), little is gained by leaving totally unmentioned the strong cases for Pauline authorship presented over recent decades by Donald Guthrie, Don Carson and Doug Moo, Philip Towner, L. T. Johnson, Robert Mounce, Stanley Porter, Eckhard Schnabel, and others.

Hays-Ansberry argue that evangelicals have failed to embrace historical criticism; some readers may feel that it is Hays-Ansberry who need to get up to speed on scholarship in the Christian tradition.

Second, on the subject of biblical scholars and academic theologians believing themselves to be the gatekeepers for the beliefs of the church (an issue touched on in the previous section), it is worth pondering Michael Legaspi's important monograph *The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies*.²⁹ The title speaks tellingly regarding what has happened to Holy Scripture under the watchful eye and often unsparing dictate of academic experts plying the hermeneutics of "historical criticism."³⁰ They are expert, to be sure, in the sources and lore and principles and methods and convictions of their guild. There always has been, and always will be, much to learn from their, as from all, true erudition. But Legaspi shows the essentially different Bibles that we are talking about when we speak of Scripture as historical criticism in the academy understands it, on the one hand, and Scripture as the Word of God as understood most frequently among Christians through the centuries, on the other. Should the two be in dialogue? Undoubtedly. Do they operate in strict isolation? Hardly.

But Jeffrey Morrow, commenting at length on Legaspi's book, has rightly recognized the character of much historical criticism as "secular allegory."³¹ That is, "precisely by denying the plain meaning of the text in search of more authentic history behind the text as we have it, historical criticism often results in fanciful reconstructions, more allegorical than literal, that would make Origen blush."³² He continues, "We need to unmask how claims that do away with traditional, patristic, medieval, spiritual exegesis and instead focus exclusively on the literal-historical level often mask a secular allegory at the service

²⁷ Craig Keener, *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts* (2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011).

²⁸ See, e.g., Richard Schultz, "How Many Isaiahs Were There and What Does It Matter?," in Vincent Bacote, Laura C. Miguélez, and Dennis L. Okholm, eds., *Evangelicals and Scripture: Tradition, Authority, and Hermeneutics* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2004), 150–70; idem, "Isaiah, Isaiahs, and Current Scholarship," in *Do Historical Matters Matter for Faith?* (ed. James K. Hoffmeier and Dennis R. Magary; Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 243–61.

²⁹ Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

³⁰ Cf. Paul Griffiths, "Commentaries (Genre), III. Christianity," in Hans-Josef Klauck et al., eds., *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, vol. 5: *Charisma–Czaczkes* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), col. 561: "From the 19th century on, scriptural commentary has continued to be written; but its principal institutional home has become the academy rather than the church."

³¹ Jeffrey L. Morrow, "Historical Criticism as Secular Allegorism. The Case of Spinoza," *Letter & Spirit* 8 (2013): 189–221. I am indebted to Professor Edwin Yamauchi for calling my attention to this article.

³² *Ibid.*, 191.

of another kingdom, not the Kingdom of God.”³³ Morrow argues in the service of Catholic teaching, but Protestants seeking to uphold an historic and evangelical *fides quae* (body of saving Christian doctrine) can concur with him: “We must be fully aware, when we engage in biblical exegesis, that we tread on sacred ground.”³⁴

I think it is fair to say that we catch not a whiff of this kind of reverence in the Hays-Ansberry volume with its one-sided deference to historical criticism. My sense is that the book under review wants to steer the church pastorally on the basis of (1) a hermeneutic that is ill-suited for this purpose and (2) an understanding of the Bible that does not take sufficient stock of what Legaspi uncovers and what 200 years of Western church history confirms.³⁵

This leads to my third point: I predict that the Hays-Ansberry proposal, with which the editors are obviously comfortable, will just be a starting point for many who receive it with enthusiasm. Benjamin L. Dueholm recently observed, “The sexual revolution once aimed to re-center sexual ethics on love rather than heterosexual marriage. But revolutions are loath to end where their early enthusiasts planned. More and more, the sexual revolution seems apt to turn on love itself as a norm.”³⁶ Hays and Ansberry aid and abet a movement that I suspect is bound to turn increasingly on the Bible itself.

This is because their book registers a vote for the biblical revolution set in motion by historical criticism and against those from whose ranks Hays and Ansberry hail and whose alleged opposition to historical criticism they reject. They pooh-pooh Ernst Troeltsch’s sober (and in hindsight prophetic) declaration that if you give historical criticism as it actually exists and functions your little finger, you must give it your entire hand,³⁷ as if either I or Gerd Lüdemann invented the claim (pp. 7–8, with notes 13–14). But it would be wiser to respect the persuasive power and essential construction of historical criticism not just as a set of methods (which it is not) but as an entire and totalizing worldview (which in its own understanding it is).³⁸ The history of movements sacrificing the whole truth of the whole Bible for the sake of extending an olive branch to parties not committed to the whole range of historic Christian conviction (God not being a piecemeal God) is not encouraging.

This is not to mention the disastrous pastoral and missiological implications of church leaders following Hays-Ansberry and suddenly announcing to Bible-honoring congregations, or proclaiming to the lost in the post-Christian West, to Muslims in the Middle East, or to Hindus in India (or anywhere),

³³ Ibid., 221.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Rethinking of historical criticism is ongoing: see, e.g., Sascha Müller, *Die historisch-kritische Methode in den Geistes- und Kulturwissenschaften* (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 2010). My thanks to Helmut Pehlke for alerting me to this book.

³⁶ Benjamin L. Dueholm, “Sex, love, and commerce,” *Christian Century* 131:1 (January 8, 2014): 33.

³⁷ “Wer ihr [i.e., to historical criticism] den kleinen Finger gegeben hat, der muß ihr auch die ganze Hand geben.” The quote is from Ernst Troeltsch, “Über historische und dogmatische Methode in der Theologie,” excerpted in Joachim Cochlovius and Peter Zimmerling, eds., *Evangelische Schriftauslegung* (Krelingen: Rüstzentrum Krelingen; Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1987), 174. Troeltsch’s entire essay is translated in Gregory W. Dawes, ed., *The Historical Jesus Quest* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox; Leidersdorf: Deo, 1999), 29–53. But the translation tones down Troeltsch’s statement by rendering, “Give the historical method an inch and it will take a mile” (35). That may be true, but it is an inference from, not a translation of, what Troeltsch wrote.

³⁸ Henning Graf Reventlow observed a generation ago that the historical-critical method as typically employed “is not to be viewed in isolation from a particular understanding of the world and of reality” (*Bibelautorität und Geist der Moderne* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980], 10).

that the Christian Bible long claimed to be true by “the Church” is now known to be, well, substantially less so. But believe our testimony to Christ (testified to historically almost no where else besides this Bible) anyway!

A fourth and final point is this. It may be that the Hays-Ansberry hope is that by playing along with the critical consensus, building bridges so to speak by severing ties with older convictions, evangelicals will not only be saddled with a lesser load of onerous convictions that non-evangelicals fault them for holding; they will also, possibly, be taken more seriously by the hegemony whose views they now feel compelled to embrace.

This is a noble hope, and I wish those well who feel it is their calling and destiny; there have been and are notable examples of scholars who have followed this track. But I was reminded of its dubious prospects for widespread success in reviewing a premier historical-critical work on John’s Gospel recently. The author concedes that the Fourth Gospel’s historical and theological claims were accepted as completely true throughout the centuries . . . until theology and history were set at odds by various Enlightenment convictions.³⁹ Almost overnight, “the authorship of the Gospel of John by an eyewitness became questionable” among key German interpreters whose views gradually gained traction.⁴⁰ John’s Gospel was interpreted as mythical (Strauss), philosophical (F. C. Baur), or allegorical (Jülicher).⁴¹ For Jörg Frey, these claims (despite being discredited by subsequent scholarship) are sufficient to demonstrate forever the fallacy of reading John as historically reliable and theologically authoritative. Evangelical scholars like Theodor Zahn, B. F. Westcott, Leon Morris, Don Carson, Andreas Köstenberger, Craig Blomberg, Craig Keener, and the like who defend John’s authorship, historicity, and theological veracity are guilty of intellectual dishonesty leading to “speculations that are foreign to the text and historically completely absurd, like the possibility of two temple cleansings.”⁴² People who still think like this are not to be taken seriously as discussion partners.⁴³ The price for admission to a place at the discussion table is accepting a predetermined menu of options, and the essential or even substantial truth of John’s Gospel as universally affirmed in the church prior to the Enlightenment is not on offer.

This reminds us that there is a historical-critical dogmatism as entrenched and dismissive as the closed-mindedness Hays-Ansberry seem to posit among evangelicals. I suspect that many of the historical-critical conclusions they entertain in their book (like non-Pauline authorship of the Pastorals) are the results of applying critical dogmatism to biblical and historical phenomena, not necessarily high scholarship or “critical” thinking in the best sense. L. T. Johnson demonstrates with respect to the authorship of 1–2 Timothy, “The authenticity of the Pastorals increasingly becomes a matter of dogma” in relatively recent times⁴⁴—and not church or “evangelical” dogma but “critical” convictions resistant to empirical challenge.

Evangelical scholars should continue to be maximal in their interaction with historical-critical sources, as Morris and Carson and Blomberg and Keener and others have been. But we should be clear

³⁹ Jörg Frey, *Die Herrlichkeit des Gekreuzigten* (WUNT 307; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 5.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 5–6.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 10–11.

⁴³ To his credit, Zimmer, *Schadet die Bibelwissenschaft dem Glauben?*, 222–23 (n. 8 above), takes to task “critical” scholars who are dismissive of Bible believers in this fashion.

⁴⁴ L. T. Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy* (AB 35A; New York: Doubleday, 2001), 52.

that it is often historic Christian affirmation that Scripture speaks truly about faith and history that is the chief object of critical rejection. (Sometimes it is poor evangelical scholarship, and that needs to be admitted and remedied.) The problem is not primarily some unyielding and embittered “evangelical faith” that arose in the last few generations and that we should now sweeten by intermingling a few (or many) spoonful of historical-critical conclusions (like no Adam). What evangelicals believe does not in itself establish, and will not change, things the Bible claims are true. Those things are the sticking point for many committed to historical-critical tenets; evangelical interpreters are simply witnesses to a manifestly plausible construal of the biblical texts, as they are called to be.

While the Hays-Ansberry proposal marks a significant step in discussion of these matters, many will conclude it is not always a step in a helpful direction.

PASTORAL PENSÉES

The Care of Souls: The Heart of the Reformation¹

— Ray Van Neste —

Ray Van Neste is professor of biblical studies and director of the R. C. Ryan Center for Biblical Studies at Union University in Jackson, Tennessee.

Abstract: Too often people think of the Reformation in terms of an abstract theological debate. While intensely theological, the Reformation was not merely about ideas; it was about correctly understanding the gospel for the good of people and the salvation of souls. This thesis is advanced by investigating Reformation leaders, primarily Luther, Calvin, and Bucer. As we seek to appropriate lessons from the Reformation for today, we must not miss the pastoral impulse that drove this recovery of the gospel.

The Reformation itself was a pastoral care movement growing directly out of care for the salvation of the soul.²

The Reformation is often dismissed as an academic discussion involving debates about the finer points of theology and lofty ideas of interest to some people but disconnected from real-life issues, struggles, and heartache. It is important for us to be rescued from such notions lest this important event in our history become yet one more dusty item on the shelf, pulled out for special occasions but otherwise forgotten.

The Reformation was a diverse movement. But at its center was a pulsing, yearning concern for the well-being of souls. Its leaders were pastors at pains to lead their flock—and others from around

¹This was originally delivered as an address for the Reformation Day chapel on October 31, 2012 at Union University in Jackson, Tennessee. I am grateful to Jim Patterson, who helped me chase down some sources for this essay. Not only is he a great colleague at Union, but he was my first church history professor. His class on the Magisterial Reformation was a joy and a formative influence, no doubt contributing to this essay beyond what I am aware.

²Ronald Wallace, *Calvin, Geneva and the Reformation: A Study of Calvin as Social Reformer, Churchman, Pastor and Theologian* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 169. So also John T. McNeill, *A History of the Cure of Souls* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951), 163: “In matters concerning the cure of souls the German Reformation had its inception.”

the world—to forgiveness before God and the resultant living hope, the knowledge of God’s care and presence in the real hardships of this world and the certain hope of resurrection.

1. Pastoral Care

One of the objects the Reformers most commonly attacked was the overly speculative theology of the medieval Scholastic theologians.³ Take, for example, the event pointed to as the launching pad of the Reformation: Luther’s posting his 95 theses. What provoked this? Not academic subtleties or political aspiration, but instead a moment of pastoral, “Oh, no you don’t!” The issue was that Johann Tetzel arrived telling Luther’s people they could buy God’s grace and forgiveness without any concern for faith or repentance.⁴ Tetzel was toying with the fears of the people and manipulating their emotions: “Are you so tight-fisted not to pay now so that dear grandma can escape the torments of purgatory? Are you so hard hearted as to not give your last penny to allow your dear, departed mother to find relief? As soon as a coin in the coffer rings a soul from purgatory springs!”

Luther, in light of his new understanding of justification, recognized this treachery and the damning effects it would have on unsuspecting souls duped by it. His opposition sprang from an earnest desire to shepherd souls and guide them safely to heaven.⁵

Luther elsewhere said of pastors,

Men who hold the office of the ministry should have the heart of a mother toward the church; for if they have no such heart, they soon become lazy and disgusted, and suffering, in particular, will find them unwilling. . . . Unless your heart toward the sheep is like that of a mother toward her children—a mother, who walks through fire to save her children—you will not be fit to be a preacher. Labor, work, unthankfulness, hatred,

³“The Reformation was a movement of applied theology and lived Christianity. It was not anti-intellectual, but it was antiabstractionist” (Timothy George, *Reading Scripture with the Reformers* [Downers Grove: IVP, 2011], 228).

⁴The indulgence sale was not authorized in the region where Luther ministered, but was authorized in the neighboring region. Tetzel plied his trade just across the Elbe River from Wittenberg, and people came from all around. Some of Luther’s famous 95 *Theses* explicitly address the sale of indulgences (e.g., 27, 28). For more on indulgences, Tetzel, and Luther’s opposition, see Bard Thompson, *Humanists and Reformers: A History of the Renaissance and Reformation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 394–400; F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, eds., “Tetzel, Johann,” in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (3rd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 1605.

⁵See the similar comment by George, *Reading Scripture*, 233: “It was his concern for the care of souls in his charge, as much as his scholarly work as a university professor, that propelled Luther to take a public stand on indulgences.” Owen Chadwick wrote, “The Indulgence he believed to be pernicious because it was misleading simple souls” (*The Reformation* [London: Penguin, 1972], 46). David Cornick assesses that Luther’s “reaction to the indulgence campaign of 1516/17 was that of a pastor” (“The Reformation Crisis in Pastoral Care,” in *A History of Pastoral Care* [ed. G. R. Evans; London: Continuum, 2000], 228). Cornick goes on to state, “Luther’s rediscovery of justification by faith spelt . . . a complete reordering of the way in which pastoral care was exercised” (229). See also Peter Brooks, “Martin Luther and the Pastoral Dilemma,” in *Christian Spirituality: Essays in Honour of Gordon Rupp* (ed. Peter Brooks; London: SCM, 1975), 98–99.

envy, and all kinds of sufferings will meet you in this office. If, then, the mother heart, the great love, is not there to drive the preachers, the sheep will be poorly served.⁶

It is this love for people that drove Luther's ministry. He not only wrote theological treatises, took on the powers of the world of his day, and endured death threats, but also counseled hundreds in person and in his letters and attended to countless aspects of daily ministry, including writing a guide for teaching children. Once his barber told him he struggled with prayer, so Luther went home and wrote a brief treatise on prayer for his barber! Luther opens with, "Dear Master Peter: I will tell you as best I can what I do personally when I pray. May our dear Lord grant to you and to everybody to do it better than I!" Luther directs him to the Psalms and other parts of Scripture to use in shaping his prayers.⁷

This was the concern of the Reformers, helping their people learn how to live and relate to God.⁸ They knew they had rediscovered the life-giving gospel and were surrounded by people in desperate need of it.⁹

Next we can turn to Calvin, of whom it was said, "Though he may be first thought of as a theologian, he was even more a pastor of souls."¹⁰ In 1538 the people of Geneva ran Calvin off; they kicked him out. The following year the city received a letter from a Catholic archbishop urging them to return to Rome. Unable to respond, they sought out Calvin, the pastor they had rejected just the previous year. We might understand if, in such a situation, a pastor said, "Forget it! I'm not bothering with you. You didn't want me, remember?" But that was not Calvin's response. Instead he wrote a careful, pointed response, protecting Geneva and giving them ground to stand on:

For though I am for the present relieved of the charge of the Church of Geneva, that circumstance ought not to prevent me from embracing it with paternal affection—God, when he gave it to me in charge, having bound me to be faithful to it forever. Now, then, when I see the worst snares laid for that Church, whose safety it has pleased the Lord to

⁶ Martin Luther, "Ministers," in *What Luther Says: A Practical In-Home Anthology for the Active Christian* (ed. Ewald M. Plass; 1959; repr., Saint Louis, MO: Concordia, 1994), 932.

⁷ Found in *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings* (ed. Timothy F. Lull and William R. Russell; 3d ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 33–38. This piece on prayer is a spiritual classic. See (1) a past *Themelios* editorial by Carl R. Trueman: "A Lesson from Peter the Barber," *Them* 34 (2009): 3–5, available at http://thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/article/a_lesson_from_peter_the_barber/; and (2) an illustrated children's book by R. C. Sproul: *The Barber Who Wanted to Pray* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2011).

⁸ "[T]he 'success' of his reform movement may in part be attributed to Luther's ability to meet the crisis of pastoral care caused by the medieval church's failure to address the spiritual needs of his contemporaries effectively" (Robert Kolb, "Luther the Master Pastor: Conrad Porta's *Pastorale Lutheri*, Handbook for Generations," *Concordia Journal* 9 [1983]: 179).

⁹ "[H]is proposals for liturgical renewal arose not merely out of speculation about what constituted 'correct evangelical worship' but out of care to see that the gospel was preached and celebrated in Wittenberg and among his dear Germans" (Timothy J. Wengert, "Introducing the Pastoral Luther," in *The Pastoral Luther: Essays on Martin Luther's Practical Theology* [ed. Timothy J. Wengert; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009], 12). This book is an excellent resource for pursuing this topic further.

For a moving account of the pastoral care given to and desired by Luther when he thought he was close to death see, Martin Lohrmann, "Bugenhagen's Pastoral Care of Martin Luther," *Lutheran Quarterly* (ns 24:2, Sum 2010), 125–136.

¹⁰ J. D. Benoit, "Pastoral Care of the Prophet," in *John Calvin, Contemporary Prophet* (ed. Jacob Hoogstra; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1959), 51.

make my highest care, and grievous peril impending if not obviated, who will advise me to await the issue silent and unconcerned? How heartless, I ask, would it be to wink in idleness, and, as it were, vacillating at the destruction of one whose life you are bound vigilantly to guard and preserve? . . . assuredly I cannot cut off that charge any more than that of my own soul . . . my ministry (which, knowing it to be from Christ, I am bound, if need be, to maintain with my blood).¹¹

This is no ivory-tower academician! This is a shepherd willing to spill his blood to protect his flock even when that flock despises his care for them.

Elsewhere, Calvin made this comment on pastoral care:

[W]e who have charge to teach the people must not only see what is profitable for them all in general, but we must also deal with everyone according to his age.

But we must mark also, that it is not enough for a man who is a shepherd in the Church of God, to preach, and cast abroad the word into the air, we must have private admonitions also. And this is a point that many deceive themselves in. For they think that the order of the Church was made for no other end and purpose but that they should come to Church one hour in the week, or certain days, and there hear a man speak, and when he has come out of the pulpit, he should hold his peace. Those who think so, show themselves sufficiently, that they never knew, either what Christianity, or God's order, meant.

For as we see in this passage . . . when he who has preached the word has taught the people, he must have an eye to those who have need to be warned of their faults privately. . . . And therefore, if we want to do our duty toward God, and to those who are committed to our charge, it is not enough for us to offer them the doctrine generally, but when we see any of them go astray, we must labor to bring him to the right way. When we see another in grief and sorrow, we must go about to comfort him. When we see anyone who is dull of the spirit, we must prick him and spur him, as his nature will bear.¹²

Calvin, and the other Reformers like him, was not an aloof preacher simply dispensing information.

¹³ They were shepherds involved in the everyday life of their people, seeing it as their task to help the people know God, pray, worship God, persevere, and one day die well with the hope of the resurrection.¹⁴ Calvin stated,

¹¹ John Calvin, "Reply to Sadoletto," in *A Reformation Debate: John Calvin and Jacopo Sadoletto* (ed. John C. Olin; New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 45.

¹² Sermon 37 in Calvin's sermons on 1 Timothy. This is taken from a forthcoming updated version of these sermons that is based on the 1579 English translation. Elsewhere in this essay I will cite the sermon number when drawing from this source.

¹³ Cornick demonstrates that Zwingli shared in this view: "the minister's work was not to be exhausted by preaching, for he must 'prevent the washed sheep falling into the excrement'" ("The Reformation Crisis," 235).

¹⁴ Scott Manetsch has provided a comprehensive study of the pastoral work of the pastors in Geneva including Calvin and Theodore Beza in his recent book *Calvin's Company of Pastors: Pastoral Care and the Emerging Reformed Church, 1536-1609* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). See especially his chapter "The Ministry of Pastoral Care."

Whatever others may think, we do not regard our office as bound within so narrow limits that when the sermon is delivered we may rest as if our task is done. They whose blood will be required of us if lost through our slothfulness, are to be cared for much more closely and vigilantly.¹⁵

David Cornick states that contrary to the Catholic understanding of the confessional, in the ministry of Luther and his followers the work of dealing with sins “was transposed into the relationship of pastor and people, and a pulpit ministry grounded in a genuine knowledge of the congregation.” As a result, “The healing of souls was taken into the home. Visitation became a significant part of the pastor’s life—especially to the sick, the dying and those in prison. As sacrificing priest became preaching minister, visitation became the locus of pastoral care.”¹⁶ Theodore Beza exemplifies this in his sermon on John 21:15, where Jesus charged Peter, “Feed my sheep”:

It is not only necessary that [a pastor] have general knowledge of his flock, but he must also know and call each of his sheep by name, both in public and in their homes, both night and day. Pastors must run after lost sheep, bandaging up the one with a broken leg, strengthening the one that is sick In sum, the pastor must consider his sheep more dear to him than his own life, following the example of the Good Shepherd.¹⁷

Examples abound, but one clear place to see this is in the coming of the plague. People died at an alarming rate, and the showing of symptoms was regarded as a sign of death. Many fled the cities. But these men stayed at their posts. Twenty-five percent of the people in Zwingli’s town died of the plague, and Zwingli was there ministering to them. He came down with the plague and almost died. When the plague came to Geneva and many fled, the pastors of Geneva met to ask who would visit the infected and care for them. Calvin volunteered, but the other ministers said they could not afford to lose him and held him back.¹⁸

¹⁵ Cited in Ronald Wallace, *Calvin*, 173.

¹⁶ Cornick, “The Reformation Crisis,” 233. See also Manetsch, *Calvin’s Company of Pastors*, 281; Wilhelm Pauck, “The Ministry in the Time of the Continental Reformation,” in *The Ministry in Historical Perspectives* (ed. H. Richard Niebuhr and Daniel D. Williams; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 110–47. Pauck writes, “there developed in Geneva, a regular practice of the *care of souls*. The Ordinances prescribed that each minister accompanied by an elder should regularly call in the homes of his parish. In 1550, an order was issued that the ministers should visit each home at least once a year. Beza commented on the effect of the order by saying, ‘It is hard to believe how fruitful it proved to be’” (136). Pauck goes on to say other towns attempted this model of annual visitation but rarely accomplished it. Still, the other towns did expect regular visitation in the hospitals and prisons and of those sick and dying at home.

¹⁷ Cited in Manetsch, *Calvin’s Company of Pastors*, 281.

¹⁸ Theodore Beza, *The Life of John Calvin* (trans. Henry Beveridge; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1909), 35. Writing to Viret, Calvin says that he stands ready to take the place of the pastor who is visiting the plague victims if he gets sick. Calvin says he is in agreement with Viret that pastors cannot shirk this dangerous duty because their suffering people need them: “as long as we are in this ministry, I do not see that any excuse will avail us if, through fear of infection, we are found wanting in the discharge of our duty where we are most needed” (cited in T. H. L. Parker, *Portrait of Calvin* [London: SCM, 1954], 81).

This pastoral care can also be seen in the Reformers' counseling, which we have recorded in their voluminous correspondence.¹⁹ One of Calvin's colleagues in Geneva wrote this of Calvin's pastoral ministry:

No words of mine can declare the fidelity and prudence with which he gave counsel. The kindness with which he received all who came to him, the clearness and promptitude with which he replied to those who asked his opinion on the most important questions, and the ability with which he disentangled the difficulties and problems which were laid before him. Nor can I express the gentleness with which he could comfort the afflicted and raise the fallen and distressed."²⁰

Calvin's correspondence is itself a primary evidence of his pastoral heart, both in how many letters he took time to write and in how he wrote. Many of these letters had to do with diplomatic issues involving nations and the church at large. But as Ronald Wallace notes, "even the diplomatic gives way entirely to an evangelistic motive and we find that his first concern is with his correspondent as a person. Is he or she keeping close to God, listening to his word continually, and likely to continue to resist the temptations of Satan in order to keep running well in the Christian race—in other words, how is it with your soul?"²¹

In one letter, Calvin wrote to comfort a father who was grieving the death of his son, a student whom Calvin had known well. His letter opens with these words:

When I first received intelligence of the death . . . of your son Louis, I was so utterly overpowered that for many days I was fit for nothing but to grieve; and albeit I was somehow upheld before the Lord by those aids wherewith he sustains our souls in affliction, among men, however, I was almost a nonentity.²²

This is no fatalistic, unemotional response. Neither is it a lame, impotent response of an ivory-tower academician. Calvin, as a faithful pastor, begins with joining his friend's grief and then moves to sharing with this father the truths of God's providential care that bolstered his own soul. Calvin points to the son's faith in the gospel and the way it obviously impacted his life so that the father can hope for reunion in heaven.

After reminding the father of these grounds of comfort, Calvin returns to the reality of grief: "Neither do I insist upon your laying aside all grief. Nor, in the school of Christ, do we learn any such

¹⁹ See also John Knox's correspondence with his mother-in-law as she struggled with assurance of salvation, available in *The Select Practical Writings of John Knox* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2011). You've heard Knox thunder. Listen here as he comforts a tender soul with the balm of grace. Douglas Bond's brief, popular-level biography *The Mighty Weakness of John Knox* (Sanford, FL: Reformation Trust, 2011) is also helpful on this theme.

²⁰ Des Gallars, cited in Ronald Wallace, *Calvin*, 180–81.

²¹ Wallace, *Calvin*, 170. Wallace's chapter, "The Pastor—The Cure of Souls," is very valuable. Wallace comments further, "Those who sought his counsel found in him, not only wisdom, but the strength that God often communicates to people through a trusted pastor" (181).

²² Cited in the helpful essay by Robert Godfrey, "The Counselor to the Afflicted," in *John Calvin: A Heart for Devotion, Doctrine and Doxology* (ed. Burk Parsons; Orlando: Reformation Trust, 2008), 88. Benoit also develops this theme further in his very helpful essay "Pastoral Care of the Prophet." Benoit states, "there was within him a humanity, a strength of sympathy, a warmth of soul, a pastoral concern which opened hearts to him" (67).

philosophy as requires us to put off that common humanity with which God has endowed us, that, being men, we should be turned to stones.”²³

Another example of pastoral care is Martin Bucer, who was a mentor to Calvin. Bucer wrote *Concerning the True Care of Souls*, a significant treatise on pastoral ministry, in which his typical phrase for pastors is “carers for Souls.”²⁴ His book is a gem, full of insight for the work of pastors.²⁵ His pastoral and evangelistic heart is seen throughout the book but especially in this lament:

Where are the innocent servants of Christ who bring Christ’s sheep nothing but the Lord’s voice and word, who are zealous to seek all the Lord’s lost sheep, to bring back those which have gone astray, to heal the injured, to strengthen the weak, to guard the strong and see them aright [Ezek. 34:16]?²⁶

Bucer warns,

[T]hose ministers of Christ who abandon the baptized . . . will find it difficult to give account for them to God and Christ our Lord. . . . [T]he Lord will accuse these unreliable and unfaithful shepherds with great dismay: *You have not searched for the lost* [Ezek. 34:4].²⁷

Bucer summarizes his aim with this comment: “those who are ordained to the pastoral office in the church are to be the principal physicians of souls and guardians . . .”²⁸

2. *Evangelism*

Care for people naturally leads to a desire that they be reconciled to God and find forgiveness of their sins. Authentic pastoral care is always evangelistic, and this is also true for the Reformers. Examples of evangelistic concern, labor, and fervor abound, though I will provide only a few here.²⁹

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Martin Bucer, *Concerning the True Care of Souls* (trans. Peter Beale; Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2009). See also Bucer’s comments on this theme in *De Regno Christi*, available in Wilhelm Pauck, ed., *Melanchthon and Bucer* (Library of Christian Classics; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1969).

²⁵ Andrew Purves stated, “Martin Bucer’s *On the True Pastoral Care* (*Von der waren Seelsorge*) is the principal Reformation text on pastoral theology” (*Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001], 76). It is “oriented to the practical care of souls” (76). Purves lists high praise given to this book by leading historians, including J. T. McNeill, W. P. Stephens, David F. Wright, and T. F. Torrance. Purves, like others, lamented that this book had not been translated into English and thus was little known among non-specialists. With the fine new translation (cited above), this article seeks to redress this lack of awareness.

²⁶ Bucer, *Concerning the True Care of Souls*, xxxii.

²⁷ Ibid., 89.

²⁸ Ibid., 121.

²⁹ For similar sentiments in Zwingli, see “The Shepherd,” in *In search of True Religion: Reformation, Pastoral and Eucharistic Writings*, vol. 2 of *Selected Writings of Huldrych Zwingli* (trans. H. Wayne Pipkin; Allison Park, PA: Pickwick, 1984).

Contrary to the impression or assumption of many, Calvin exhibited this evangelistic concern.³⁰ The Register of the Company of Pastors in Geneva records numerous people sent out from Geneva during Calvin's time to "evangelize foreign parts." The records are incomplete, and eventually, due to persecution, it became too dangerous to record the names of those sent out, although it numbered more than 100 in one year alone. Philip Hughes notes that Geneva became a "school of missions" that had as one of its purposes

to send out witnesses who would spread the teaching of the Reformation far and wide It [Geneva] was a dynamic centre of missionary concern and activity, an axis from which the light of the Good News radiated forth through the testimony of those who, after thorough preparation in this school, were sent forth in the service of Jesus Christ.³¹

In 1556 Calvin and his fellow ministers helped to support the first mission endeavor to target the New World, with a group sent to Brazil.³² When you consider the lack of resources, the resistance, the persecution (each man sent out knew he was likely to be arrested, tortured, and killed), this mission work is as impressive as anything we have to offer today.³³

Furthermore, Calvin's sermons reveal a pastor who regularly and earnestly urged his people to seek the salvation of the nations. In his sermons on 1 Timothy, Calvin regularly concludes with a prayer for the salvation of the nations. He calls on pastors to labor "mightily, and with greater zeal and earnestness" for the salvation of souls.³⁴ Even when people reject the salvation offered to them, Calvin tells pastors that they must continue to "take pains" in calling people to faith "and call as many to God as they can." Calvin urges, "we must take pains to draw all the world to salvation."³⁵

As Calvin expounds Paul's call to pray "for all men" (1 Tim 2), he applies this to our missionary responsibility to the world:

Saint Paul's meaning in this place is to show us what the children of God ought to employ themselves in doing, and it is this, that we should not travail unprofitably, but instead call upon God and ask him to work toward the salvation of the whole world, and that we give ourselves to this work both night and day.³⁶

³⁰ Indeed, Jean-Daniel Benoit could state of Calvin, "From the outset his theological work is an effort of evangelization and of witnessing" ("Pastoral Care of the Prophet," 51).

³¹ Philip Hughes, ed. and trans., *The Register of the Company of Pastors of Geneva in the Time of Calvin* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), 25.

³² Cf. R. Pierce Beaver, "The Genevan Mission to Brazil," in *The Heritage of John Calvin* (ed. John H. Bratt; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), 55–73. Editor's note: See Kenneth J. Stewart, "Calvinism and Missions: The Contested Relationship Revisited," *Them* 34 (2009): 63–78, especially §5.1: "The Genevan Calvinist Mission to Brazil" (70–71).

³³ See further, Philip Hughes, "John Calvin: Director of Missions," in *The Heritage of John Calvin* (ed. John H. Bratt; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), 40–54; Ray Van Neste, "John Calvin on Missions and Evangelism," *Founders Journal* 33 (1998): 15–21; Paul Helm, "Calvin, A. M. Toplady, and the Bebbington Thesis," in *The Advent of Evangelicalism: Exploring Historical Continuities* (ed. Michael Haykin and Kenneth Stewart; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2008), 205–8.

³⁴ Sermon 36 in Calvin's sermons on 1 Timothy.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

Throughout this sermon Calvin calls for fervent prayer and persistent action for the salvation of souls. He tells his people, “the greatest pleasure we can do to men is to pray to God for them, and call upon him for their salvation.”³⁷

Lastly, we should once more consider Bucer. His book *Concerning the True Care of Souls* is filled with evangelistic pathos and exhortation. He even rebukes the church for failing to mount a more serious missionary endeavor to the “Jews and Turks” and says that the current threat from the Turks is God’s judgment for their failure!³⁸ Bucer calls for earnest, zealous evangelistic labor. To pastors he says, “true carers of souls and faithful ministers of Christ are not to miss anyone anywhere out with the word of salvation, but diligently to endeavor to seek out all those to whom they may have access in order to lead them to Christ our Lord.”³⁹ Like Calvin, Bucer calls for perseverance in sharing the gospel with people who do not readily accept it: “faithful members of Christ are not to give up lightly on anyone.”⁴⁰ In fact, Bucer says, “one should be so persistent with people [in calling them to faith] that to the evil flesh it seems to be a compulsion and urgent pressing.”⁴¹ For Bucer, zealous missionary work is rooted in God’s desires and stirred by the example of Paul:

He [God] desires that they should be sought wherever they are scattered, and sought with such seriousness and diligence that one should be ready to be all things to all men, as dear Paul was [1 Cor. 9:22], and even to hazard one’s own life, as the Lord himself did, so that the lost lambs might be found and won.⁴²

Bucer affirmed God’s sovereign election of souls to salvation, but did not see this as conflicting with energetic missionary enterprise:

But it is not the Lord’s will to reveal to us the secrets of his election; rather he commands us to go out into all the world and preach his gospel to every creature. . . . The fact that all people have been made by God and are God’s creatures should therefore be reason enough for us to go to them, seeking with the utmost faithfulness to bring them to eternal life.⁴³

Combining the pastoral care noted previously and evangelistic zeal, Bucer prayed,

May the Lord Jesus, our chief Shepherd and Bishop, grant us such elders and carers of souls as will seek his lambs which are still lost, bring back those which have wandered, heal those which are wounded, strengthen those which are sickly, and guard and feed in the right way those which are healthy⁴⁴

This urgent, passionate call for evangelistic and missionary activity arises from a setting in which many of the men sent out as missionaries were killed. In one letter Calvin addresses men who had been

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Bucer, *Concerning the True Care of Souls*, 87.

³⁹ Ibid., 76.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 78.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., 77.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 193.

captured and imprisoned in Lyons for preaching the gospel. He had previously written and worked for their release. But once it was clear that all efforts had failed and their execution was imminent, Calvin wrote to encourage them to stand fast:

Now, at this present hour, necessity itself exhorts you more than ever to turn your whole mind heavenward. As yet, we know not what will be the event. But since it appears as though God would use your blood to sign His truth, there is nothing better than for you to prepare yourselves to that end, beseeching Him so to subdue you to His good pleasure, that nothing may hinder you from following whithersoever he shall call. . . . You know, however, in what strength you have to fight—a strength on which all those who trust, shall never be daunted, much less confounded. Even so, my brothers, be confident that you shall be strengthened, according to your need, by the Spirit of our Lord Jesus, so that you shall not faint under the load of temptations, however heavy it be, any more than he did who won so glorious a victory, that in the midst of our miseries it is an unfailing pledge of our triumph. Since it pleases Him to employ you to the death in maintaining His quarrel, He will strengthen your hands in the fight, and will not suffer a single drop of your blood to be spent in vain. And though the fruit may not all at once appear, yet in time it shall spring up more abundantly than we can express. But as He hath vouchsafed you this privilege, that your bonds have been renowned, and that the noise of them has been everywhere spread abroad, it must needs be, in despite of Satan, that your death should resound far more powerfully, so that the name of our Lord be magnified thereby. For my part, I have no doubt, if it please this kind Father to take you unto Himself, that he has preserved you hitherto, in order that your long-continued imprisonments might serve as a preparation for the better awakening of those whom He has determined to edify by your end. For let enemies do their utmost, they never shall be able to bury out of sight that light which God has made to shine in you, in order to be contemplated from afar.⁴⁵

3. Conclusion

This spirit of abandon for the sake of the gospel and the souls of people is the heritage of the Reformation, and we must maintain it.⁴⁶ Far from being unconcerned about gospel proclamation, the example of these men is a strong challenge—even a rebuke—to us in our comfortable setting. Thus, the

⁴⁵ John Calvin, *Letters of John Calvin* (ed. Jules Bonnet; London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co., 1857), 2:387–388.

⁴⁶ For further reading on this topic, in addition to items already mentioned in the footnotes, see the following: R. W. Scribner, “Pastoral Care and the Reformation in Germany,” in *Humanism and Reform: the Church in Europe, England, and Scotland, 1400–1643: Essays in Honour of James K. Cameron* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 77–97; Timothy J. Wengert, ed., *The Pastoral Luther: Essays on Martin Luther’s Practical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), especially Wengert, “Introducing the Pastoral Luther” (1–29); Theodore G. Tappert, ed., *Luther: Letters of Spiritual Counsel* (London: SCM, 1955)—Tappert’s “General Introduction” is quite helpful; Pamela Biel, “Personal Conviction and Pastoral Care: Zwingli and the Cult of Saints 1522–1530,” in *Zwingliana: Mitteilungen zur Geschichte Zwinglis der Reformation* 16 (1985): 442–69; Kenneth L. Parker, “Richard Greenham’s ‘Spiritual Physicke’: The Comfort of Afflicted Consciences in Elizabethan Pastoral Care,” in *Penitence in the Age of Reformations* (ed. Katharine Jackson Lualdi and Anne T. Thayer; London: Ashgate, 2000), 71–83.

writings of the Reformers are of far more than antiquated or nostalgic interest. They are examples and goads to us today as we too seek to live out the gospel and advance Christ's kingdom in a fallen world. We dare not fail to learn from their successes and failures.

So, Christian, does the gospel animate your life, making you a person deeply concerned for and carefully aware of those around you? This example of our forebears calls us to this sort of faithfulness.

Young theologs, if your main activity is discussing theology but it does not result in a deep love and concern for people, you are no heir of the Reformation, regardless of your theological positions.

Pastors and those who desire to be pastors, if your idea of pastoral ministry is limited to the pulpit, then you are no heir of the Reformation regardless of the length or theological weight of your sermons. The Reformers, mirroring Christ and the apostles, were deeply involved in the lives of their people, aware that they would be called to account for the oversight of their souls (Heb 13:17). A passion for souls requires the knowledge of specific souls and involvement in the messiness of their everyday lives.

Some others of you may have nothing more on your mind than Halloween. But how is it between you and God? Death and the realm of darkness are real. And sin weighs us down, separating us from God, dragging us down to hell, a reality beyond anything played with on this day. There is a real enemy of your soul who seeks to destroy you. But there is an even greater Champion, Jesus, who has defeated sin, death, hell, and the devil, and he will rescue you, adopt you as his own if you will simply turn from your sin and trust in him. The gospel we've been celebrating is no relic of history. It is the power of God unto salvation, salvation for you today if you will believe.

Book Reviews

— OLD TESTAMENT —

- Mark J. Boda and J. Gordon McConville, eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets*. 70
Reviewed by Jerry Hwang
- Richard S. Briggs and Joel N. Lohr, eds. *A Theological Introduction to the Pentateuch: Interpreting the Torah as Christian Scripture*. 71
Reviewed by Mark Francois
- David G. Firth and Philip S. Johnston, eds. *Interpreting Deuteronomy: Issues and Approaches*. 73
Reviewed by Eugene H. Merrill
- Terence E. Fretheim. *Reading Hosea–Micah: A Literary and Theological Commentary*. 75
Reading the Old Testament.
Reviewed by Michael B. Shepherd
- Brian N. Peterson. *Ezekiel in Context: Ezekiel's Message Understood in Its Historical Setting of Covenant Curses and Ancient Near Eastern Mythological Motifs*. 76
Princeton Theological Monograph Series 182.
Reviewed by Peter H. W. Lau
- Thomas Römer. *Dark God: Cruelty, Sex, and Violence in the Old Testament*. 77
Translated by Sean O'Neill.
Reviewed by David T. Lamb
- Boyd Seevers. *Warfare in the Old Testament: The Organization, Weapons, and Tactics of Ancient Near Eastern Armies*. 79
Reviewed by Charlie Trimm

— NEW TESTAMENT —

- Baker Academic Biblical Studies Bundle. 85 vols. 80
Reviewed by Andrew David Naselli
- Logos Bible Software 5 Platinum. 82
Reviewed by Brian J. Tabb
- Constantine R. Campbell. *Colossians and Philemon: A Handbook on the Greek Text*. 84
Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament.
Reviewed by Nijay K. Gupta
- Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes, eds. *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis*. 2nd ed. 85
New Testament Tools, Studies and Documents 42.
Reviewed by Benjamin Laird

Book Reviews

- Mark Forman. *The Politics of Inheritance in Romans*. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 148. 88
Reviewed by Jared R. Brown
- Sigurd Grindheim. *Introducing Biblical Theology*. 90
Reviewed by Matthew S. Harmon
- Nijay Gupta. *Colossians*. Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary. 92
Reviewed by John Frederick
- Douglas S. Huffman. *The Handy Guide to New Testament Greek: Grammar, Syntax, and Diagramming*. 95
Reviewed by Brian J. Tabb
- Michael J. Kruger. *The Question of Canon: Challenging the Status Quo in the New Testament Debate*. 96
Reviewed by Josh Chatraw
- Grant Macaskill. *Union with Christ in the New Testament*. 98
Reviewed by Bobby Jamieson
- Daniel Marguerat. *Paul in Acts and Paul in His Letters*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2.310. 100
Reviewed by Benjamin Wilson
- Douglas J. Moo. Galatians. *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. 103
Reviewed by John Anthony Dunne
- Richard Ounsworth. *Joshua Typology in the New Testament*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2.328. 104
Reviewed by Malcolm Gill
- Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts, eds. *The Language of the New Testament: Context, History, and Development*. Early Christianity in its Hellenistic Context 3. Linguistic Biblical Studies 6. 106
Reviewed by Eckhard J. Schnabel
- Charles L. Quarles. *A Theology of Matthew: Jesus Revealed as Deliverer, King, and Incarnate Creator*. Explorations in Biblical Theology. 108
Reviewed by Brandon D. Crowe
- Brian S. Rosner. *Paul and the Law: Keeping the Commandments of God*. New Studies in Biblical Theology 31. 109
Reviewed by Lionel Windsor
- Thomas R. Schreiner. *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*. 112
Reviewed by Christopher R. Bruno
- N. T. Wright. *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*. 2 vols. 113
Reviewed by Guy Prentiss Waters

- Yulin Liu. *Temple Purity in 1–2 Corinthians*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2.343. 117
Reviewed by H. H. Drake Williams III

— HISTORY AND HISTORICAL THEOLOGY —

- Annette G. Aubert. *The German Roots of Nineteenth-Century American Theology*. 120
Reviewed by Paul Kjoss Helseth
- John Behr. *Irenaeus of Lyons: Identifying Christianity*. 122
Reviewed by Eric Wickman
- Elesha J. Coffman. *The Christian Century and the Rise of the Protestant Mainline*. 123
Reviewed by Seth Bartee
- Jordan Cooper. *The Righteousness of One: An Evaluation of Early Patristic Soteriology in Light of the New Perspective on Paul*. 125
Reviewed by Brian J. Arnold
- Fulgentius. *Correspondence on Christology and Grace. The Fathers of the Church*. 127
Translated by Rob Roy McGregor and Donald Fairbairn.
Reviewed by Kyle Strobel
- Joel R. Beeke and Mark Jones. *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life*. 129
Reviewed by Nathan A. Finn
- Paul Hartog, ed. *Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians and the Martyrdom of Polycarp: Introduction, Text, and Commentary. Oxford Apostolic Fathers*. 131
Reviewed by H. H. Drake Williams III
- John D. Woodbridge and Frank A. James III. *Church History, Volume 2: From Pre-Reformation to the Present Day; The Rise and Growth of the Church in Its Cultural, Intellectual, and Political Context*. 133
Reviewed by Stephen Eccher

— SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY AND BIOETHICS —

- Travis E. Ables. *Incarnational Realism: Trinity and the Spirit in Augustine and Barth*. 135
T&T Clark Studies in Systematic Theology 21.
Reviewed by Ike Miller
- Paul L. Allen. *Theological Method: A Guide for the Perplexed*. 136
Reviewed by Don J. Payne
- Michael F. Bird. *Evangelical Theology: A Biblical and Systematic Introduction*. 138
Reviewed by Stephen N. Williams
- Daniel Castelo. *Theological Theodicy*. 140
Reviewed by Bruce A. Little

Book Reviews

- João B. Chaves. *Evangelicals and Liberation Revisited: An Inquiry into the Possibility of an Evangelical-Liberationist Theology.* 142
Reviewed by J. Daniel Salinas
- Kevin Chiarot. *The Unassumed Is the Unhealed: The Humanity of Christ in the Christology of T. F. Torrance.* 143
Reviewed by Albert L. Shepherd V
- Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt. *Thomas Aquinas: Faith, Reason, and Following Christ.* 145
Christian Theology in Context.
Reviewed by Tyler R. Wittman
- Steven B. Cowan and Terry L. Wilder, eds. *In Defense of the Bible: A Comprehensive Apologetic for the Authority of Scripture.* 147
Reviewed by Johnathon Bowers
- Nathan Crawford. *Theology as Improvisation: A Study in the Musical Nature of Theological Thinking.* 148
Reviewed by William Edgar
- John M. Frame. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief.* 150
Reviewed by Paul Wells
- David Gibson and Jonathan Gibson, eds. *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her: Definite Atonement in Historical, Biblical, Theological, and Pastoral Perspective.* 155
Reviewed by David Schrock
- Myk Habets. *Theology in Transposition: A Constructive Appraisal of T. F. Torrance.* 157
Reviewed by Joseph H. Sherrard
- William Hasker. *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God.* Oxford Studies in Analytic Theology. 159
Reviewed by Alexander H. Pierce
- Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells, eds. *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics.* 2d ed. 161
Reviewed by Kyle Strobel
- Piotr J. Małysz. *Trinity, Freedom, and Love: An Engagement with the Theology of Eberhard Jüngel.* 163
Reviewed by Rob Price
- Michael McClenahan. *Jonathan Edwards and Justification by Faith.* 164
Reviewed by Rhys S. Bezzant
- Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson, eds. *Fallen: A Theology of Sin.* 166
Theology in Community.
Reviewed by James M. Arcadi
- Paul K. Moser and Michael T. McFall, eds. *The Wisdom of the Christian Faith.* 168
Reviewed by J. Thomas Chopp
- Richard J. Mouw and Douglas A. Sweeney. *The Suffering and Victorious Christ: Towards a More Compassionate Christology.* 170
Reviewed by Paul R. Hinlicky

Oliver O'Donovan. <i>Self, World, and Time: Ethics as Theology; Volume 1: An Induction.</i> Reviewed by J. David Moser	172
Martyn Percy. <i>Anglicanism: Confidence, Commitment, and Communion.</i> Ashgate Contemporary Ecclesiology. Reviewed by Jonathan Huggins	174
Dustin Resch. <i>Barth's Interpretation of the Virgin Birth: A Sign of Mystery.</i> Barth Studies Series. Reviewed by Kevin Chiarot	176
Andrew J. Schmutzer, ed. <i>The Long Journey Home: Understanding and Ministering to the Sexually Abused.</i> Reviewed by Paul C. Maxwell	178
Tim Stafford. <i>The Adam Quest: Eleven Scientists Who Held on to a Strong Faith While Wrestling with the Mystery of Human Origins.</i> Reviewed by Todd Charles Wood	181
William B. Whitney. <i>Problem and Promise in Colin E. Gunton's Doctrine of Creation.</i> Studies in Reformed Theology 26. Reviewed by Naomi N. Reese	183
— ETHICS AND PASTORALIA —	
Thabiti Anyabwile. <i>The Life of God in the Soul of the Church: The Root and Fruit of Spiritual Fellowship.</i> Reviewed by Stephen Witmer	185
Iain D. Campbell and William M. Schweitzer, eds. <i>Engaging with Keller: Thinking Through the Theology of an Influential Evangelical.</i> Reviewed by R. Andrew Compton	186
Iain D. Campbell and William M. Schweitzer, eds. <i>Engaging with Keller: Thinking Through the Theology of an Influential Evangelical.</i> Reviewed by Gavin Ortlund	188
Eddie Gibbs. <i>The Rebirth of the Church: Applying Paul's Vision for Ministry in Our Post-Christian World.</i> Reviewed by Benjamin D. Espinoza	191
Scott M. Gibson. <i>Preaching with a Plan: Sermon Strategies for Growing Mature Believers.</i> Reviewed by Eric C. Redmond	193
Jason Helopoulos. <i>A Neglected Grace: Family Worship in the Christian Home.</i> Reviewed by Brian C. Dennert	194
Willis Jenkins. <i>The Future of Ethics: Sustainability, Social Justice, and Religious Creativity.</i> Reviewed by Andrew J. Spencer	196
J. I. Packer. <i>Weakness Is the Way: Life with Christ Our Strength.</i> Reviewed by Sam Storms	198

Book Reviews

Paul Tautges. *Brass Heavens: Reasons for Unanswered Prayer*. 199
Reviewed by Paul Miller

Ben Witherington III. *The Rest of Life: Rest, Play, Eating, Studying, Sex from a Kingdom Perspective*. 201
Reviewed by Daniel Doriani

— MISSION AND CULTURE —

James V. Brownson. *Bible, Gender, Sexuality: Reframing the Church's Debate on Same-Sex Relationships*. 202
Reviewed by Matthew Lee Anderson

Jackson Wu. *Saving God's Face: A Chinese Contextualization of Salvation through Honor and Shame*. Evangelical Missiological Society Dissertation Series. 204
Reviewed by Richard Cook

Mark T. B. Laing and Paul Weston, eds. *Theology in Missionary Perspective: Lesslie Newbigin's Legacy*. 206
Reviewed by Krish Kandiah

Clive Marsh and Vaughan S. Roberts. *Personal Jesus: How Popular Music Shapes Our Souls*. 207
Reviewed by Andrew Lisi

David Nixon. *Stories from the Street: A Theology of Homelessness*. 209
Reviewed by Bill Such

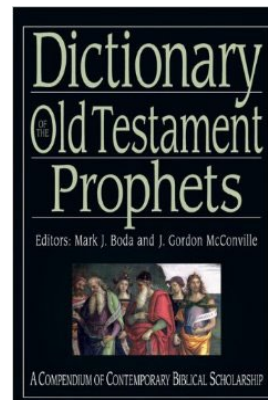
Samuel Rodriguez. *The Lamb's Agenda: Why Jesus is Calling You to a Life of Righteousness and Justice*. 211
Reviewed by Adam Warner Day

K. Scott Oliphint. *Covenantal Apologetics: Principles and Practice in Defense of Our Faith*. 213
Reviewed by David W. Hegg

— OLD TESTAMENT —

Mark J. Boda and J. Gordon McConville, eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2012. xxvi + 966 pp. \$60.00.

The publication of this volume completes IVP's collection of eight "Black Dictionaries" on the Old and New Testaments (though the *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, the first in the set from 1992, has just been reissued in a second edition). In keeping with its predecessors on the Pentateuch (2002), Historical Books (2005), and Wisdom, Poetry and Writings (2008), the *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets* aims to bring the most recent developments in OT scholarship to a broader audience. The editors, Mark Boda and Gordon McConville, have assembled a team of international contributors to provide articles on every aspect of Prophets scholarship. In addition to entries on each of the individual books in the OT prophetic corpus (including Lamentations and Daniel, two books grouped by the Jewish canon among the Writings), the *Dictionary* contains articles on important theological themes (e.g., "Angels"), history of interpretation for longer prophetic books (e.g., "Jeremiah: History of Interpretation"), exegesis and hermeneutics (e.g., "Canonical Criticism"), biblical theology (e.g., "Prophets in the New Testament"), and interdisciplinary methods (e.g., "Feminist Interpretation"). Since it is impossible to do justice to the diversity and comprehensiveness of the *Dictionary* (113 articles by 94 authors) in a brief review, I will highlight two articles that are representative of the character of the work. As a whole, the *Dictionary* displays an uneven engagement with historical-critical views on the OT Prophets that will require discernment on the part of evangelical readers.



On the one hand, Iain Duguid's article on "Ezekiel: History of Interpretation" recognizes the importance of reception history for interpreters of Ezekiel. Following an overview of Ezekiel's influence on the rest of the OT itself, Duguid overviews rabbinic and early Christian interpretation, medieval and Reformation interpretation, and modern interpretation. Most notable among the modern interpretations that Duguid surveys is the application of the oracles concerning Gog and Magog (i.e., chs. 38–39) to contemporary events. From the experienced hand of a scholar who has published a full-length commentary in an evangelical series (NIV Application Commentary; Zondervan, 1999), Duguid's article exemplifies the best of evangelical OT scholarship in paying close attention to the biblical text while showing admirable balance in its engagement with alternative views. Duguid sifts through a large amount of reception history and critical scholarship to show what is useful for illuminating our understanding of Ezekiel.

On the other hand, the article on "Isaiah: Book of" by H. G. M. Williamson offers the latest scholarship on Isaiah from someone who identifies himself as evangelical, but whose publications have embraced the critical consensus that the book of Isaiah was composed and edited over the course of several centuries. Without so much as naming the conservative scholars with whom he disagrees, Williamson summarily dismisses their objections to his view on the composition of Isaiah: "I do not find the idea of unity of authorship to be either plausible or necessary. Despite frequent claims to the contrary by conservative scholars, this conclusion has nothing to do with belief or not in the power of predictive prophecy; after all, there is still predictive prophecy included in all parts of the book even on

the most radical of critical positions” (p. 370). By excluding conservative views on composition from the scholarly discussion (e.g., John Oswalt’s magisterial 2-volume commentary in the New International Commentary on the OT series), Williamson’s article undercuts the claim of the *Dictionary* to provide “A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship” (the subtitle of the *Dictionary* on the front cover). In Williamson’s article at least, the caricature of conservative approaches as being uninformed means that the *Dictionary* represents only one side of the scholarly conversation. This observation is not meant to imply that the *Dictionary* opposes conservative scholarship in a thoroughgoing way (by contrast, for example, see Douglas Stuart’s well-reasoned defense of the historicity of Jonah on pp. 460–61), only to highlight the degree to which the *Dictionary* is inconsistent in its approach to critical scholarship and must therefore be used with discretion.

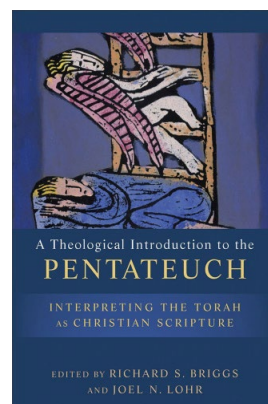
In summary, the publication of the *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets* is a major publishing event that deserves a wide reception for its breadth and depth of coverage. For those who have already wrestled through the relevant historical-critical issues, the *Dictionary* will continually prove its usefulness as the first work off the shelf for scholarly work, especially in providing comprehensive bibliographies for further research. But because of the occasional tendency of the *Dictionary* to present critical scholarship to the exclusion of conservative views, non-specialists will also need to consult evangelical introductions to the OT Prophets (e.g., C. Hassell Bullock, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophetic Books* [new ed.; Moody, 2007]; Willem VanGemeren, *Interpreting the Prophetic Word: An Introduction to the Prophetic Literature of the Old Testament* [Zondervan, 1996]) to obtain a more balanced picture of OT scholarship.

Jerry Hwang
Singapore Bible College
Republic of Singapore

Richard S. Briggs and Joel N. Lohr, eds. *A Theological Introduction to the Pentateuch: Interpreting the Torah as Christian Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012. xiv + 224 pp. \$22.99.

This volume, written by former students and colleagues of Walter Moberly at Durham University as a *Festschrift* for his sixtieth birthday, serves as an introduction to the Pentateuch with a focus on theological interpretation. For these authors theological interpretation involves (1) engaging the text with the reader’s theological concerns in mind and (2) paying close attention to the theological interests of the text itself (pp. 3, 15). This contrasts with readers whose primary concerns are historical (i.e., the compositional history of the text) or literary. While historical and literary readings can be helpful for theological interpretation and, in many instances, are necessary, these types of readings often fall short of serious theological engagement with the text. This volume seeks to carry out and to encourage such engagement.

The introduction to this volume details the interpretive approach taken by the authors, paying particular attention to their understanding of theological interpretation vis-à-vis other approaches to the text. While theological interpretation is by no means the only appropriate way of looking at the text, it provides an important avenue for reading the text well. The next five chapters each deal with one



book in the Pentateuch. The book concludes with a useful appendix surveying Moberly's writings on the Pentateuch with a brief summary of the main characteristics of his work.

Each chapter essentially consists of two parts. The first part deals with basic introductory issues, focusing particularly on the place of each book in the canon and the book's major theological themes. The second part of each chapter consists of one or two examples of theological interpretation from particular texts. The chapter on Genesis, written by Richard S. Briggs, focuses on the Tower of Babel incident in Gen 11:1–9. The chapter on Exodus, written by Jo Bailey Wells, deals with the covenant at Sinai in Exod 19:1–8. The chapter on Leviticus, written by Joel N. Lohr, deals with the Day of Atonement in Lev 16. The chapter on Numbers, written by Nathan MacDonald, focuses on critical and theological concerns in Num 20–21. The final chapter, written by Rob Barrett, focuses on the need to remember YHWH's provision during times of plenty in Deut 8 and the cancelling of debts in Deut 15: 1–11.

There is much to be commended in this book. First, this book provides several very useful examples of theological interpretation. The chapters by Joel N. Lohr and Rob Barrett are particularly helpful in this regard. Second, much of the introductory material in each chapter is very clear and informative and will be helpful to readers less familiar with these books. Finally, this book provides a useful introduction to Walter Moberly's understanding of theological interpretation and will, no doubt, encourage more readers to take up his writings.

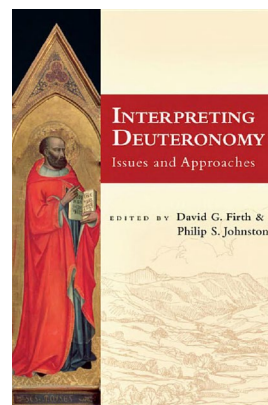
Despite these strengths, this book also has a number of drawbacks. First, readers with a more conservative understanding of the compositional history of the Pentateuch and its historical reliability will find the authors' views on critical issues somewhat problematic. While these issues are by no means front and center in each chapter of this book, the authors assume throughout the book that their readers are both familiar and comfortable with the basic conclusions of modern Pentateuchal criticism (e.g., the postexilic dating of the Priestly material). Second, given the theological focus of this book, it is surprising that the authors do not include a discussion of why they consider the Pentateuch to be theologically authoritative in light of their views on the compositional history of the Pentateuch and its historical reliability. While it is impossible to include a discussion of every significant issue related to theological interpretation in a book like this, a discussion of this issue would have been helpful for a wide variety of readers. Third, it would have been helpful if the authors provided a theological framework justifying which parts of the Pentateuch they view as being theologically normative for Christians and which parts are not. Given the fact that this book self-consciously seeks to interpret the Pentateuch as *Christian* scripture, it is surprising that, apart from a few references to how certain passages are taken up and used in the NT, very little is actually said about *how* the Pentateuch ought to function as Christian scripture. Fourth, it would also have been helpful if the authors distinguished their approach to theological interpretation from other approaches that go under the same name. The approach taken in this book is very different from the approach taken, for the most part, in the Brazos Theological Commentaries. Finally, some of the theological themes dealt with in the introductory material of each chapter seem somewhat peripheral to the books being dealt with (e.g., family values in Genesis, p. 30) while some themes are simply foreign to the text itself (e.g., ecology in the story of the plagues in Exodus, p. 59). Other more obvious themes are often overlooked (e.g., the Abrahamic covenant, God's sovereignty in the Joseph cycle, etc.).

In short, this book will prove a useful conversation partner for OT specialists interested in the theological interpretation of Scripture.

Mark Francois
Wycliffe College, University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

David G. Firth and Philip S. Johnston, eds. *Interpreting Deuteronomy: Issues and Approaches*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2012. 280 pp. \$28.00.

Firth and Johnston are to be commended, first of all, for assembling these excellent essays on Deuteronomy, a book that is so important for OT theology. Written by scholars who have already made contributions to Deuteronomy studies, including the editors themselves, the work centers on the themes of (1) approaching Deuteronomy, (2) issues in Deuteronomy, and (3) reading Deuteronomy. In part 1, James Robson and Paul A. Barker address respectively the literary composition of the book and its contemporary theological interpretation. The issues (part 2) incorporate studies of the Decalogue structure of Deuteronomy (John H. Walton), centralization of the cultus (Peter T. Vogt), civil leadership (Philip S. Johnston), passing on the faith (David G. Firth), and life and death (Heath A. Thomas). Part 3 offers varieties of ways the text can be read, including Deuteronomy's influence on the intermarriage crises in Ezra-Nehemiah (Csilla Saysell), the paratext of the book (Greg Goswell), the alien in Deuteronomy and today (Jenny Corcoran), and a Christian interpretation of genocide (Christian Hofreiter).



Restrictions of length preclude detailed assessments of the essays under review, but each must receive at least brief attention. James Robson's chapter presents his own understanding of matters such as authorship, dating, setting, and the like. He proposes that Deuteronomy, while being "Mosaic," was not in fact from Moses's pen. Its later composition, he argues, can be seen in stylistic variations, temporal perspectives, rhetorical perspectives, and literary structuring. He offers nothing new here or in his handling of Deuteronomy's place in Torah, its role in Josiah's reform, the "Deuteronomistic History," and the relation of the book's form and structure to ancient Near Eastern treaty patterns. While offering a great many helpful insights into matters of vantage-point and application, his argument that the "rhetorical situation" *in the book* is Mosaic but that *of the book* is in the context of the exile might lead some readers to conclude that Moses had little if any direct hand in its composition.

Paul Barker helpfully summarizes current views of some of the thorny theological and ethical issues embodied in Deuteronomy. These include "mission," as treated especially by Christopher Wright; the problem of divine election; the troublesome notion of warfare, particularly as it involves מִלְחָמָה; monotheism and the *Shema*; and covenant. He rightly considers Deuteronomy to be a central text in developing a holistic biblical theology.

John Walton (following his mentor Stephen Kaufman) contributes a helpful and persuasive case for the idea that the great body of mainly casuistic law (Deut 6–26) follows *seriatim* the order of the commandments of the Decalogue and elaborates and particularizes its principles. At the same time, he

recognizes the difficulty at times of finding a comfortable “fit,” a struggle all of us have faced who have wrestled with the same concept (see especially pp. 115–17).

Peter Vogt’s essay on centralization of worship is generally on target and clearly presented. He could have strengthened his case by more clearly distinguishing between the community as a whole at worship and worship in local shrines by individuals or families. The central sanctuary theme in Deuteronomy clearly relates to the festal periods when attendance at the tabernacle or temple was mandatory no matter the distance to be covered.

In the next essay, Philip Johnston’s otherwise commendable treatment of civil law is, in my opinion, marred by its insistence on a late composition of Deuteronomy even though he admits that many of its legal and judicial components reflect early settings. The extent to which Moses was the primary author of the book is left unclear.

David Firth competently outlines the role of faith (and *the* faith) in ancient Israel’s life and thought, especially the need for its proclamation and the careful bequeathal of its importance to generations to come.

Heath Thomas’s essay on life and death in Deuteronomy is almost sermonic in its presentation of the truth that life comes only through faith in the mercy and grace of God, a truth known already by Moses and his generation. His unfortunate (and unsubstantiated) distinction between Moses and the “narrator” notwithstanding, Thomas offers here a powerful demonstration and defense of an OT gospel whose foundation is anticipatory of the good news of the NT.

Csilla Saysell cites from Ezra-Nehemiah numerous examples of dependence on Deuteronomy, though, as she notes, both Nehemiah and Ezra as leaders applied methods of legal interpretation and application at variance with Torah instruction (pp. 202–7).

Greg Goswell’s discussion of “paratext” is instructive while at the same time the term is not clearly defined. His principal concern—and a most worthy one—is to determine how the canonical placement of any biblical book (Deuteronomy in this case) affects its interpretation. That is, why is the canon ordered the way it is? Indeed, why are various books ordered as they are internally? He does not always answer these questions well but the very raising of them makes its own contribution.

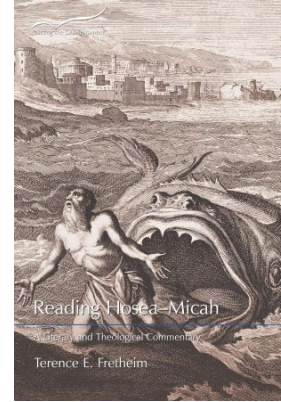
The pieces by Jenny Corcoran and Christian Hofreiter are valuable in their attempts to bridge the gap between ancient life and mores and modern times, especially within the Christian community. Corcoran addresses the plight of the stranger in OT Israel and how his situation calls to mind the issues of immigration and population absorption in the twenty-first century. More perplexing and in some respects more immediately threatening is the question of how biblical “genocide” should be understood and applied in light of contemporary terrorism justified in the name of religion. Though Hofreiter nicely frames the issue, he offers no opinion as to its resolution.

On balance, this anthology is a worthy read and is commended especially to students of arguably the most theologically important book of the OT, the last of the five books of Torah.

Eugene H. Merrill
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Louisville, Kentucky, USA

Terence E. Fretheim. *Reading Hosea–Micah: A Literary and Theological Commentary*. Reading the Old Testament. Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2013. xv + 224 pp. \$22.00.

Terence Fretheim is Elva B. Lovell Professor of Old Testament Emeritus at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. His previous publications on the so-called Minor Prophets include *The Message of Jonah: A Theological Commentary*. The *Reading the Old Testament* series is intended to present “cutting-edge research in [a form] accessible’ to a wide audience ranging from specialists in the field to educated laypeople” (p. 1). Fretheim’s commentary is thus not a technical analysis of the Hebrew text but an exposition of the “thought units” of the text’s final form.



Fretheim states in his introduction that he is aware of the ancient tradition that counts Hosea–Malachi as a single book (the Book of the Twelve). He is also aware of attempts in modern scholarship to explain the internal evidence for the composition of the Twelve. Nevertheless, Fretheim focuses on the individuality of the first six books of the Twelve. He does not give a defense of this approach, nor does he argue against (or interact with) more recent research into the making of the Book of the Twelve.

Commentary for each of the six books (Hosea–Micah) features concise introductory material designed to address special issues related to the particular book at hand. The commentary itself is not word-by-word or even verse-by-verse but section-by-section exegesis, giving attention to smaller details as needed. The author does not provide an annotated translation of the texts. In fact, it is often not clear what translation or what text (e.g., Masoretic Text, Septuagint, etc.) the author is following and why. Naturally the longer books, Hosea and Amos, receive the lion’s share of discussion.

Fretheim deals briefly in his introduction to Joel with what is one of the most prominent themes in the Book of the Twelve, namely, the Day of the LORD—which, out of the books he treats, surfaces in Joel, Amos, and Obadiah. According to Fretheim, “The phrase refers not to a single day but to several different days (past, imminent, or future) on which God is active in a decisive way for or against Israel and/or foreign nations” (p. 90). Fretheim does not entertain other views on this subject. This has the advantage of concision, but the disadvantage is the loss of a broader frame of reference for the reader.

Fretheim’s treatment of Jonah takes the standard critical approach that denies the book its historicity. He finds many details unbelievable such as the size of the city of Nineveh and the story of the fish. He does not interact with conservative explanations of these details, nor does he explore the option that the author intended the book to be read as an historical narrative whether or not the reader thinks it actually happened. Fretheim extends his view of the book’s exaggeration to include its presentation of God: “Indeed, might the book of Jonah be saying that, in and through the exaggerations, in spite of what readers may think (or hope for!), their God is *not* such a manipulative, all-controlling deity?” (p. 172). Of course, this presupposes that the reader shares Fretheim’s understanding of God as manipulative in the book.

Students and pastors (and perhaps a more general readership) will find Fretheim’s commentary to be a sure-footed, well-written, and accessible guide at many points. But the claim that this volume constitutes “cutting-edge research” for specialists is highly questionable. Much of what is of value in this book appears in other commentaries on these books. Discussion of the early versions and the history of interpretation from antiquity to the present is notably absent. Fretheim’s “Works Cited” section features

only twenty authors apart from his own name. Thus, while the commentary is generally helpful and edifying, the author apparently does not intend to make an original contribution to scholarship.

Michael B. Shepherd
Louisiana College
Pineville, Louisiana, USA

Brian N. Peterson. *Ezekiel in Context: Ezekiel's Message Understood in Its Historical Setting of Covenant Curses and Ancient Near Eastern Mythological Motifs*. Princeton Theological Monograph Series 182. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012. xviii + 416 pp. Paper. \$48.00.

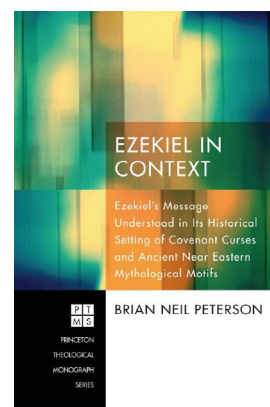
This book is a revision of Peterson's PhD thesis, completed at the University of Toronto. He takes a literary approach focussing on the final form of the text, yet without neglecting the ancient Near Eastern context of the prophet. His central thesis is that the visions and extended metaphors in the book of Ezekiel underscore its message; the "peaks" of the book are structured around covenant curse and renewal. His argument in the book begins with an introductory chapter, followed by four chapters examining the "peaks" of the book. A final chapter containing conclusions and implications is followed by an appendix, "Ezekiel and Apocalyptic," a bibliography, and a Scripture index.

The lengthy introductory chapter (93 pp.) outlines the methodology and literary technique Peterson employs. He details five methodological approaches: (1) historical; (2) cross-textual and motif analysis; (3) motif/metaphor blending; (4) rhetorical/literary; and (5) theological. Peterson sides with the "scholarly consensus" of a sixth-century Babylonian provenance for the book and its author (p. 16). It is argued that "there is a strong probability, if not certainty, that Ezekiel was reeducated in some fashion," in the Babylonian culture, or at least the language (p. 23). While some Babylonian influence is inevitable, I wonder what the extent of this influence was, given that the prophet was resettled along with the other deportees as a community in a specific location (Ezek 1:1). Peterson is on firmer ground when he argues that one of the underlying motifs in the text derives from Deut 28 and Lev 26 (p. 42). He also argues that ANE treaties were influential. One fresh idea in this book is the rhetorical structure of Ezekiel (p. 89). Peterson proposes five "peaks" in the book, corresponding to the major visions and extended metaphors:

1. vision 1 (Ezek 1–3)
2. vision 2 (chs. 8–11)
3. extended metaphors (chs. 16, 23)
4. vision 3 (37:1–14)
5. vision 4 (chs. 40–48)

The methodology in this introductory chapter is applied in the four subsequent chapters, which examine the "peaks" of the structure.

Chapter Two covers the first two "peaks." The first vision sets the tone for the rest of the book by highlighting the character of Yahweh. He will come to punish those who have broken his covenant. The second vision describes the curse of temple abandonment, "the first and perhaps greatest treaty curse" (p. 171). Chapter Three, "The Awesome Deity's Judgement," outlines the sins committed by Israel and



the punishment for spiritual adultery. This chapter adeptly reads Ezek 16 and 23 within the context of chapters 1–24, and within the context of ANE and OT law. While open to the idea, I am not yet convinced that these chapters can be considered a single “peak” since they are really “twin peaks” with chapters in between. Also, they stand out from the other “peaks” because they are not visions but metaphors (albeit a type of “word picture”). In Chapter Four, Peterson reads Ezek 37 juxtaposed with Ezek 38–39. Again, these chapters are read proficiently alongside both OT and ANE intertexts, with particular attention given to the themes of unburied dead and covenant curse reversal. Interestingly, he argues that Ezekiel’s message of hope begins with chapter 25 instead of chapter 33 (esp. pp. 253–57). Chapter Five, “The Awesome Deity Returns,” examines the return of the presence of Yahweh in Ezek 43 and 48:35. This return is understood within the context of curse reversal found in Ezek 40–48, and is also understood on the ANE background of covenant initiation, temple (re)construction, return of deities to their temples, and law giving.

A strong point of this book is its comprehensiveness. Its many links to ANE texts and images related to the book of Ezekiel make it a useful resource. A subject index would make the book even more useful. Peterson interacts well with a vast body of secondary literature. Although I’ve recorded my minor reservations, Peterson’s central thesis is cogently and convincingly argued. Any hermeneutical approach tends to “flatten” a text, and this book’s approach is no different. For instance, since Ezek 36 is not one of the “peaks” it is paid relatively little attention (mostly pp. 266–69), although it is a key passage for understanding the salvation theology of Ezekiel. Nonetheless, within Peterson’s chosen approach most of the “peaks” in his structural argument still stand.

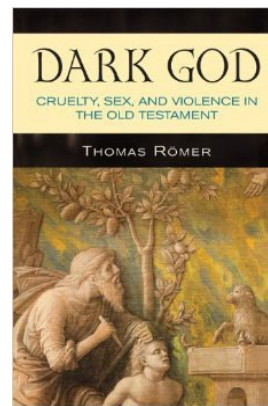
Overall, then, this book makes a valuable contribution to Ezekelian studies. Those with an interest in final form studies and the ANE background of biblical texts will find it particularly useful. Therefore it is recommended for graduate students and scholars.

Peter H. W. Lau

Sydney Missionary and Bible College
Croydon, New South Wales, Australia

Thomas Römer. *Dark God: Cruelty, Sex, and Violence in the Old Testament*. Translated by Sean O’Neill. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 2013. 160 pp. \$17.95.

Since Römer’s *Dark God* was published recently in 2013, it appears to be following a collection of similarly themed books on the subject of the supposedly bad behavior of God in the OT—see works by Eric Seibert (2009), Paul Copan (2011) and myself (2011)—but the French original (*Dieu obscur. Cruauté, sexe et violence dans l’Ancien Testament*) was actually published four years earlier (2009), and thus he was on the cutting edge of this trend. Römer clearly has a popular audience in mind and his writing (translated into English by Sean O’Neill) is clear and straightforward. Among the four discussions of disturbing divine behavior just mentioned, Römer’s is the shortest (146 pp. plus 8 pp. of notes), and he includes eight relevant black-and-white images of ancient Near Eastern inscriptions or art (pp. 32, 33, 34, 35, 105, 127, 132, 134). After his introduction, Römer’s chapter titles ask whether God is (1) male, (2) cruel, (3)



a warlike despot, (4) self-righteous, (5) violent/vengeful and (6) comprehensible. (The awkward lack of parallelism among these titles could have easily been fixed.)

While I did not always agree with Römer (more on this later), several of his extended discussions were helpful and engaging. He provides important background to his topic with an overview of interpreters who were critical or suspicious of the OT (Marcion, Schleiermacher, Harnack and Bultmann; pp. 3–6). He examines the numerous biblical descriptions of God that use feminine imagery (pp. 42–45), an aspect of Scripture often overlooked. In his discussion of divine cruelty, Römer observes interesting similarities between Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac and Jephthah’s of his daughter (pp. 48–63), as well as similarities between Jacob wrestling with God and Moses being attacked by God for not circumcising his son (pp. 63–69). Römer’s rationale for Israel’s legal system as established in the Torah is insightful (pp. 98–103), particularly his perspective on the law of retaliation, an “eye for an eye” which was intended to “avoid gratuitous and disproportionate revenge” (p. 100). In his discussion of the origins of violence based on the narrative of Cain and Abel (pp. 107–116), he makes numerous helpful observations about the ancient Near Eastern context as well as the Hebrew text (“Abel” means vapor, translated as “vanity” in Ecclesiastes). Römer’s section entitled “A God of Surprises” (pp. 139–141) is a pleasant surprise toward the end of the book, as it briefly traces unexpected ways God interacted with two of his prophets, Elijah and Jonah.

I suspect that most of *Themelios*’ audience will find in Römer’s book more weaknesses than strengths. Theologically oriented readers will find his non-supernatural interpretation of Israel’s story frustrating, or perhaps even offensive, but to his credit he is consistent in this regard. Römer will often state definitively the standard historical-critical conclusions about the OT as if they were proven facts, even ones that have been recently questioned by liberal scholars, as well as ones that were never accepted in the first place by conservative scholars. Römer argues that the significant evidence of Israelite idolatry would suggest that polytheism was Israel’s official religion (p. 10), but he unfortunately does not define “official.” Despite the practices of many of Israel’s leaders, the authors of Scripture were clearly not advocating polytheism. Römer speaks of an “anonymous prophet called Deutero-Isaiah” whose oracles are contained in Isa 40–55 (p. 17), but the issue is more complicated than he makes it seem. His argument that YHWH’s name originally meant “he who blows” (p. 23) will not likely convince many readers.

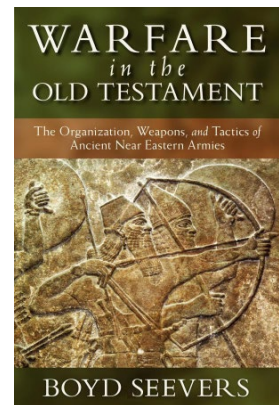
Römer takes texts with unorthodox perspectives and assumes they are clear, where other texts generally perceived to be straightforward he takes to be late editions without a historical basis. His conclusion that conquest narratives were not historical documents (pp. 76–91), which conveniently “solves” the problem of a genocide-commanding God, will not convince any in his audience who interpret the book of Joshua as a record of actual events orchestrated by God. In his discussion of Joshua, Römer attributes significant sections of the narrative to Deuteronomistic redactors, who revised Joshua in the exilic context to emphasize respect for Torah and not a value on warfare (p. 81). Elsewhere in the book Römer makes similar detailed arguments for late editing of texts; however, I would be surprised if many of his popular readers (his stated audience) were particularly interested in issues of Deuteronomistic redaction. Römer saves some of his most unorthodox interpretations for his latter chapters. He wonders if the serpent in the garden was actually obeying God’s orders (p. 95) and suggests that YHWH actually wanted the first humans to transgress by eating the forbidden fruit in order to be free (p. 97).

While most evangelicals will not be persuaded by his arguments, because of Römer's insights into the Hebrew text and into the ancient Near Eastern context, *Dark God* will enlighten many readers about the troubling texts of the OT.

David T. Lamb
Biblical Theological Seminary
Hatfield, Pennsylvania, USA

Boyd Seevers. *Warfare in the Old Testament: The Organization, Weapons, and Tactics of Ancient Near Eastern Armies*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2013. 320 pp. \$34.99.

Although this book is a popular-level revision of Seevers's dissertation (completed in 1998 at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School), do not be scared to pick it up! Seevers has done an excellent job giving the reader a guided tour of his dissertation and showing how his research can help us understand the OT. As the subtitle indicates, Seevers examines the mechanics of warfare in the OT world. Each chapter focuses on a different nation, arranged so the book moves chronologically through Israelite history (Israel, Egypt, Philistia, Assyria, Babylon, and Persia). Seevers has arranged each chapter similarly (though Israel, Egypt, and Assyria are spread over two chapters): a fictional story about a soldier from that nation, a brief history of the nation and its connection with Israel, the military organization of the country, the weapons employed by their warriors (divided into short-range, medium-range, and long-range weapons), and tactics (including motivation for warfare, strategy, battle tactics, and activities after the battle).



The audience of the book will be those who want to understand more of this aspect of life in the OT, such as pastors preaching an OT book, a layperson reading through the OT, or a theological student writing a research paper. The book will also be helpful more broadly for anyone interested in military history or the ancient Near East.

The book has several strong points. One of my favorite parts of the book was the fictional stories Seevers created, often based on real people. Seevers's story of the Egyptian Nakt-her-Peri fighting at Megiddo under Thutmose III or the Samarian Nabu-bel-ukin fighting for the Assyrian army (and all the other stories as well) were a great way to teach history as well as help the material come to life. More of this kind of imaginative reconstruction of life in ancient times is needed by those who teach the OT at any level. Beside the stories mentioned above, Seevers includes accounts of an Israelite soldier at Jericho, a Philistine soldier fighting Saul at Mount Gilboa, a Babylonian officer at Jerusalem, and a Persian cavalry officer conquering Babylon.

Another highlight of the book is the illustrations, most of which are drawn from reliefs. Instead of including pictures of reliefs themselves, which are often difficult to see clearly, Seevers enlisted his son Josh to provide over seventy line drawings of various aspects of the reliefs to make it easier for the reader to see what Seevers is trying to highlight. These line drawings are a gold mine, providing the reader not only access to the reliefs (which are sometimes hard to track down), but also clear images of important aspects of the relief. The chapters on Israel will be particularly helpful to most readers of this journal, as Seevers nicely summarizes a great amount of research to help us understand how battles

were fought in ancient Israel. Whenever a weapon, a tactic, or a military role is mentioned in Scripture, this book is a great resource to find out more about that topic.

As strong as the book is, I think that it could have been improved in a few ways. The biggest change I would have liked to have seen is more attention to the ethics and theology of warfare in the OT. I realize that this book was based on his already written dissertation, but the major questions in the minds of most readers today concerning warfare in the OT are not about the mechanics of warfare, but how we should think about it as Christians serving a God who commanded those acts of warfare. Even just an additional chapter at the end of the book would have been helpful to discuss the issue. Also, the book is missing a few recent important bibliographic entries, most notably Anthony Spalinger's *War in Ancient Egypt: The New Kingdom* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2005) and Bustenay Oded's *War, Peace, and Empire: Justifications for War in Assyrian Royal Inscriptions* (Ludwig Reichert, 1992). Very modest textual and archaeological evidence remain from Philistia and Babylon in military matters, leaving SeEVERS with little to draw on for those chapters (Aram might have been a better choice).

Having said all that, I highly recommend this book. While it may not be an essential part of a pastor's library, it is a great "luxury" book at a good price to have on one's shelf to help you understand the OT and bring it to life.

Charlie Trimm
Biola University
La Mirada, California, USA

— NEW TESTAMENT —

[Baker Academic Biblical Studies Bundle](https://www.logos.com/product/24042/). 85 vols. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013. \$2,484.60. 31,600+ pp.
<https://www.logos.com/product/24042/>

I have enthusiastically used Logos Bible Software for sixteen years, and my enthusiasm for it remains high. I currently have about 8,100 resources in my Logos library, and I'd much rather own a resource in my Logos library than in any other format because Logos resources are both searchable and versatile. Perhaps this is a generational thing, but I prefer reading on a (high resolution) screen and marking up resources electronically. And I can use Logos resources on multiple devices while Logos seamlessly syncs all of my highlighting and notes across all platforms. I regularly teach with my laptop and a projector, and as I interact with Logos resources in class, I display them on the screen for students. It works beautifully. There are so many advantages to having a large mobile library—especially if you study and teach in multiple locations. I often use Logos resources on my MacBook in my school office or home office, on my iPad while reading on a couch or in bed or on an airplane, and on my iPhone while listening to sermons in person or waiting in line.



So I was delighted when Logos announced this 85-volume bundle from Baker Academic. These resources are already in print, and many of them are invaluable additions to one's library. The bundle contains seven collections of (sometimes very broadly) evangelical resources—each also available for purchase individually. Here are some highlights:

1. Pentateuch Studies (3 vols.). Includes T. Desmond Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch* (3rd ed.; 2012), a popular evangelical textbook on the Pentateuch.

2. OT Studies (10 vols.). Includes Victor H. Matthews and James C. Moyer, *The Old Testament: Text and Context* (3rd ed.; 2012), a standard OT introduction, and David A. Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis–Malachi* (1999), probably the most chiasm-filled book in my library.

3. OT Backgrounds (16 vols.). Includes books by Edwin Yamauchi on Africa and Persia, John Currid on Egypt and archaeology, John Walton on ANE thought and the OT, and Victor Matthews on ancient Israelites and their prophets. Also David W. Baker and Bill T. Arnold, *The Face of Old Testament Studies: A Survey of Contemporary Approaches* (1999); Richard Hess, *Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey* (2007); and Kenton L. Sparks, *Ancient Texts for the Study of the Hebrew Bible: A Guide to the Background Literature* (2005). One doesn't need to agree with Sparks on inerrancy, for example, to profit from his labors.

4. NT Backgrounds (19 vols.). Includes J. Julius Scott Jr., *Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament* (2000), one of my textbooks at TEDS for a course on the context of the NT; Craig A. Evans and Emanuel Tov, eds., *Exploring the Origins of the Bible: Canon Formation in Historical, Literary, and Theological Perspective* (2008), which includes a chapter from Steve Dempster on the OT's tripartite canon; Lee Martin McDonald, *The Biblical Canon: Its Origin, Transmission, and Authority* (3rd ed.; 2007); Steve Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament* (2nd ed.; 2003), which served me well when preparing for my comprehensive exams for a NT PhD; Craig S. Keener, *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts* (2 vols.; 2011)—nearly 1,250 pages; and Craig A. Evans, *Ancient Texts for New Testament Studies: A Guide to the Background Literature* (2nd ed.; 2005), an invaluable bibliographic resource.

5. Jesus Studies (8 vols.). Includes Paul R. Eddy and Gregory A. Boyd, eds., *The Jesus Legend: A Case for the Historical Reliability of the Synoptic Jesus Tradition* (2007); and Darrell L. Bock, *Jesus according to Scripture: Restoring the Portrait from the Gospels* (2002), an excellent survey of Jesus in the Gospels.

6. Pauline Studies Collection (18 vols.). Includes two massive exegetical and theological books by Gordon D. Fee: *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (1994; 992 pp.) and *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study* (2007; 744 pp.); plus Thomas R. Schreiner, *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles* (2nd ed.; 2011). The most valuable chapter in Schreiner's book—or at least the one that most strongly influenced me—is "Tracing the Argument" (pp. 97–124). It revolutionized how I read Paul.

7. NT Studies Collection (11 vols.). Donald A. Hagner, *The New Testament: A Historical and Theological Introduction* (2012; 848 pp.), a mainstream, broadly evangelical, meat-and-potatoes textbook for NT introduction; and Udo Schnelle, *Theology of the New Testament* (2009; 912 pp.)—cf. Don Carson's review article in *JETS* 53 (2010): 133–41.

There are a lot of valuable resources in this bundle, but it is overpriced. And it would better serve users if Logos also sold the books individually. Nevertheless, the new partnership between Baker Academic and Logos Bible Software serves Bible students well.

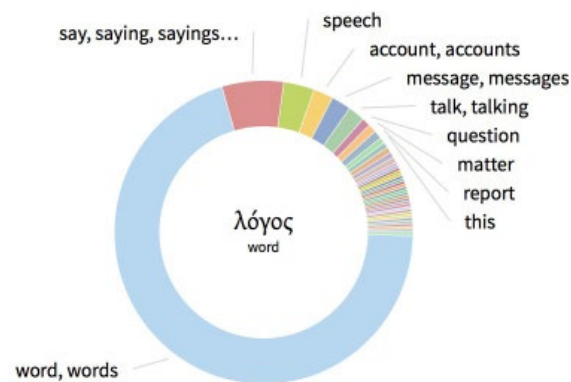
Andrew David Naselli
Bethlehem College and Seminary
Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

[Logos Bible Software 5 Platinum](https://www.logos.com/product/24546/platinum). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2013. \$2,149.95. <https://www.logos.com/product/24546/platinum>

Logos 5 offers powerful, flexible Bible software that allows users to build and utilize a substantial digital theological library for PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone, or Android. Logos 5 features various base packages for new users and current users seeking to upgrade: Starter (\$294.95), Bronze (\$629.95), Silver (\$999.95), Gold (\$1,549.95), Platinum (\$2,149.95), Diamond (\$3,449.95) and Portfolio (\$4,979.95). The Platinum package features an extensive library that would greatly benefit pastors, students, scholars, and laypeople in studying Scripture. This review highlights new features in Logos 5, then overviews the Platinum base package, and finally compares Logos 5 Platinum with other commercial Bible software and assesses its value for potential users.

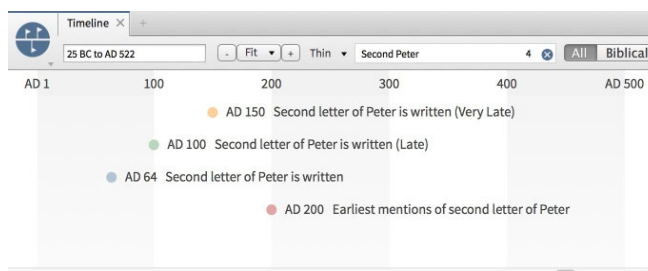


Logos 5 includes several major upgrades from Logos 4. First, version 5 offers five “guides” that allow users to quickly search relevant resources in their library. The Passage Guide presents commentaries, cross-references, parallel passages, outlines, and even relevant media on a particular biblical text. The Exegetical Guide includes apparatuses and grammars and offers definitions and resources for studying major Greek or Hebrew words in a passage. The Bible Word Study looks up a Greek or Hebrew word in available dictionaries, performs searches of all available texts, lists the word’s various “senses” or usages in Scripture, and pictures how the word is translated in one’s preferred English version (see figure, showing ESV renderings of λόγος).



Logos 5 also includes Sermon Starter and Topic Guides that may prove useful for ministers. For each of these guides, users may prioritize favorite resources, include personal notes, and save their work for future reference.

Second, the new Timeline feature (listed under Tools) includes people and events from biblical, church, and world history up to the present. For some events (for example, “Second letter of Peter is written”) multiple dates or date ranges are offered, with links to further discussions in Bible dictionaries and other resources (see figure).



A search for “exodus” yields a range of dates for the writing and finalizing of the Book of Exodus as well as two Qumran manuscripts but curiously does not include Israel’s exodus from Egypt, one of the most important events in biblical history, the dating of which is controversial.

The Logos 5 Platinum package includes 1,327 resources (print valued at \$28,700). Some headliners of this collection include major lexicons (BDAG, TDNT, Brown-Driver-Briggs) and commentary series (Preaching the Word [26 vols.], New American Commentary [40 vols.], Black’s New Testament Commentary [13 vols.], and Lenski’s Commentary on the New Testament [12 vols.]), and classic theological works by Calvin, Edwards, Baxter, Bunyan, Simeon, and Henry. The Platinum package also features many searchable, morphologically tagged ancient texts (including the BHS Hebrew text, NA²⁸ and SBL Greek texts, Rahlfs’ Septuagint, and Philo’s works), as well as 17 English Bibles (though surprisingly not the NIV or NET). *The Context of Scripture*, *Themelios* (issues 1–37), and the first three volumes of N. T. Wright’s Christian Origins series are also noteworthy inclusions.

Logos 5 is one of several superb commercial Bible software programs currently available for multiple platforms, alongside Accordance 10 (which I reviewed in *Themelios* 38:3 [2013], available at http://thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/review/accordance_10_ultimate_collection), BibleWorks 9 (see the review in *Themelios* 37:2 [2012], available at http://thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/review/bibleworks_9), and Olive Tree. Positively, Logos offers a vast library of resources available for purchase and allows users to seamlessly access their libraries across platforms and devices. The Personal Book Builder (under Tools) allows users to upload Microsoft Word documents into their Logos library, and the Bibliography feature makes it easy to cite sources, create a project bibliography, or export a collection into Zotero. Logos also offers dozens of short tutorial videos online to equip users to effectively use their software.

Conversely, Logos 5 launches and runs noticeably slower than Accordance 10 and Bible Works 9 on some computers. Further, I was somewhat disappointed in the unevenness of the Logos 5 Platinum base package. With its many strengths, the Platinum package lacks many of the important commentary series (such as Bible Speaks Today, NIGTC, Pillar, and Tyndale), standard dictionaries (HALOT, Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible, ISBE, and IVP reference volumes), translations (NIV, NET), and tagged Greek texts (OT Pseudepigrapha, Josephus, Apocryphal Gospels) included in the comparably

priced Accordance 10 Ultimate Collection. Academic users should also consider Bible Works 9, which offers a very strong, focused collection of resources for original language exegesis at only \$359.

Nevertheless, Logos 5 is a remarkable resource that will be of tremendous use for a wide range of users. For those who can afford it, the Platinum package offers an impressive digital library, though scholars and pastors will likely need to supplement it with additional reference tools. I wonder what Augustine, Calvin, or Edwards might have accomplished with such Bible software in their studies (or their pockets)!

Brian J. Tabb
Bethlehem College and Seminary
Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

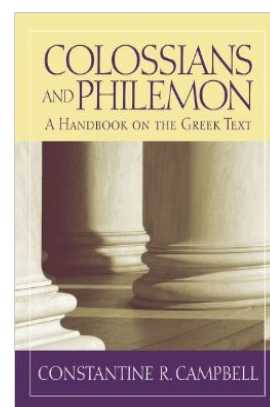
Constantine R. Campbell. *Colossians and Philemon: A Handbook on the Greek Text*. Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013. 114 pp. \$29.95.

During my research for my own commentary on Colossians (Smyth & Helwys, 2013), I counted over eighty commentaries on Colossians in existence—and that is only *English* works! Any new commentary series has to make it clear why someone who has personal or library access to dozens of commentaries on Colossians should buy or borrow yet another one. Fortunately, the new Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament series has just such a unique niche—it is a short guide through the grammar, syntax, and semantics of the original-language text. The series editor, Martin Culy, makes the claim that this would serve best as a “prequel” to the work of a regular (exegetical) commentary.

Probably any well-trained NT scholar could write such a volume, but Constantine R. Campbell proves himself to be especially qualified to comment on Colossians and Philemon because of two unique features of his work. First, Campbell has worked quite a bit in the past on Greek verbal aspect. Campbell is convinced that verbal aspect is encoded into the tense-forms, but not time. Campbell’s particular take on verbal aspect is unique (and explained at length in his book *Basics of Verbal Aspect*), but he reviews key ideas and terminology in the introduction. Obviously this perspective on verbal aspect is fully integrated in his comments on verbs throughout the book. While one may end up disagreeing with details of his verbal aspect theory, his conclusions about the understanding of individual verbs in Colossians and Philemon is nothing shocking and often reasonable and helpful.

The second unique feature of this book is Campbell’s expertise in the examination of “in Christ” language in Paul (argued and defended at length in his recent book *Union with Christ*). Rather than treating this prepositional phrase generically in a mystical or even a communal way, Campbell reads each instance contextually in a way that draws out the richness of the relationship and association with Christ as Paul intends in each instance (see p. 32 for a helpful example).

Two further beneficial features of this volume, in particular, can be mentioned. Campbell makes use of Steven Runge’s book *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, which involves a function-based approach to Greek, explaining how certain tasks are accomplished by particular discourse features.



Campbell utilizes Runge's work especially when it comes to conjunctions and point-counterpoint sets. Also, one will find very handy text-critical comments in Campbell's commentary.

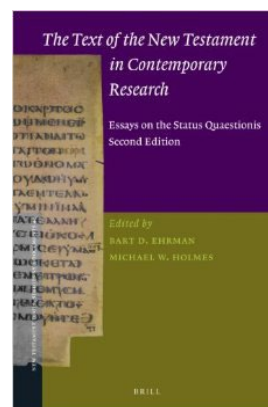
Mostly due to the brevity of this work, I found a couple of particulars of this commentary problematic (though not fatally so). First of all, while Campbell sometimes does give extended comment, overall he offers his own syntactical preference (e.g., for a genitive noun or a prepositional phrase) without comment or inclusion of options. Perhaps the idea is that the stated preference is the most obvious one, but often enough I disagreed or felt another option was equally possible. One should know, then, that this is not the place to find penetrating syntactical discussion except on selective examples (unlike, e.g., Murray Harris' EGGNT commentary on Colossians, which offers more explanation with more frequency). Second, I was surprised that Campbell did not point out when the (superfluous) appearance of a first person pronoun (with a verb) might be emphatic (see, e.g., pp. 6, 23).

For those students who have learned basic Greek grammar and syntax, it is a hugely beneficial exercise to spend time in a commentary like this (perhaps for a "reading" course in NT Greek). At the very least, patiently working through the Greek text one clause at a time forces the reader to slow down and think through everything logically and rhetorically. I warmly recommend this to anyone interested in studying Colossians and Philemon with a desire to examine the Greek text closely.

Nijay K. Gupta
Northeastern Seminary
Rochester, New York, USA

Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes, eds. *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis*. 2nd ed. New Testament Tools, Studies and Documents 42. Leiden: Brill, 2013. xii + 884 pp. £190.00/\$314.00 (hardcover); £49.00/\$76.00 (paperback).

The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research includes a collection of 28 essays on a number of subjects relating to the early text and transmission of the NT. The first edition of the volume was published in 1995 as a *Festschrift* in honor of the late American textual scholar Bruce Metzger and has proven to be a helpful resource for those interested in textual criticism of the NT. While the original edition is still less than 20 years old, there have been several notable developments in the field of NT textual criticism in recent years, impressing upon the editors of the second edition the need for an updated volume. Over the last few decades, our knowledge of ancient literary practices and the processes in which writings were produced and distributed in the ancient world has increased while a number of ancient papyri have been discovered, providing scholars with additional evidence with which to discern the state of the NT text in early Christianity. In addition, the perceived task of textual criticism has been debated, as several notable scholars have challenged the discipline's traditional objective to establish the original text of the NT. In response to these recent developments, the editors have included in the second edition several new essays. Most of these essays are related to the perceived task of textual criticism or methodological issues, though new essays have been added on some of the often overlooked witnesses to the early text of the NT. In addition to these new essays, the volume also includes a number of revised essays which



appeared in the first edition. In some cases these essays have been revised by the original authors, while in other cases new contributors provided a fresh study. The result is a valuable up-to-date and significantly expanded volume that provides a helpful assessment of the current state of NT textual criticism.

Biblical scholars as well as students with an interest in NT textual criticism will find this volume to be an excellent resource. However, those with only a limited knowledge of textual criticism may benefit from first reading an introduction to the discipline such as Paul Wegner's *A Student's Guide to Textual Criticism of the Bible* (IVP, 2006), Kurt and Barbara Aland's *The Text of the New Testament* (Eerdmans, 1995), Bruce Metzger's *The Text of the New Testament* (OUP, 2005), David Black's *New Testament Textual Criticism* (Baker, 1994), or David Parker's *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and their Texts* (CUP, 2008). The purpose of *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research* is not to provide the reader with the type of overview of the discipline one might find in an introductory work, but to address the current state of the discipline while providing readers with helpful resources for further study. While the hardback edition retails for a rather prohibitive \$314, the publisher has recently released a paperback version that retails for a more affordable \$76. The release of the paperback version will undoubtedly increase the readership and influence of the volume.

Broadly speaking, the first 18 essays are related to the extant witnesses to the early text of the NT or the process of transmission. Topics include the Greek witnesses to the NT (chs. 1–4), the early versions of the NT (chs. 5–12), the relevance of the writings of patristic authors for the task of textual criticism (chs. 13–15), Greek witnesses to the NT outside of the extant manuscripts and testimony of the Greek fathers (ch. 16), and the role of scribes in the transmission of the NT (chs. 17–18). Each essay overviews the state of research of its given topic and concludes with an up-to-date bibliography of relevant sources for further study. Those wishing to become more familiar with the wide range of witnesses to the early state of the NT will find these chapters to be especially helpful.

The remaining essays of the volume (chapters 19–28) are concerned in one way or another with methodological issues or the objectives of the discipline of NT textual criticism. These essays also include helpful bibliographies and enable the reader to become conversant with the recent trends in the discipline. Perhaps two of the more provocative essays in the volume are those of the editors Michael Holmes and Bart Ehrman, both of whom offer a significant challenge to the once widely accepted persuasion that the task of textual criticism is to reconstruct the original text of the NT writings. Holmes writes that while he once understood the purpose of textual criticism to be the reconstruction of the original text of a document, he no longer holds to this persuasion. He explains that there are at least two major reasons for this. First, “the study of the history of the transmission of the text is no longer viewed only or primarily as a means to the recovery of the original, but rather as a legitimate goal in its own right” (p. 367). Rather than treating many of the textual variants of the NT as “debris littering the path to the original text” (p. 637), Holmes suggests that scholars should recognize the value of textual variants for what they reveal about the world of the early church. The existence of textual variants, Holmes notes, provide “possible sources of insight into the history and cultural context of the individuals and communities that transmitted (and, occasionally, created) them” (p. 367–68). But why dismiss the task of reconstructing the original text? Might it be possible to work towards a reconstruction of the text of the original writings of the NT while also recognizing that textual variants may occasionally reveal further insight into the various theological controversies which took place in early Christianity?

Second, Holmes suggests that the task of reconstructing the text of the original autographs of the NT writings is fraught with difficulties. As he argues, the original autographs would have contained “not merely the text as a sequence of words, but also the precise layout, spelling, and form of the words” that “generally are not recoverable from the surviving manuscripts copies of the New Testament writings” (pp. 668–69). However, even if these relatively minor characteristics of the autographs are not the primary focus, Holmes insists that discerning an “original” text remains problematic because of the ambiguity of the term. Because the NT writings were often composed with the assistance of a secretary (see the example of Tertius in Rom 16:22), the term “original text” is often used in reference to different stages in the compositional process. For most scholars, however, the term “original text” is used to describe the text that was dispatched to a writer’s original audience. Rather than seeking to reconstruct the “original” text—in whatever form one envisions—Holmes argues that textual critics should seek to uncover, so much as the extant witnesses allow, what he has described as the initial text, that is, “the form(s) of text in which an early Christian writing first began to circulate and be copied” (p. 638). In other words, rather than seeking to reconstruct the text of the original autographs in the state in which they were originally dispatched, Holmes argues that textual critics must instead seek to establish “the textual form(s) (archetypes) from which the extant evidence derives” (p. 680).

Ehrman’s essay also discusses some of his objections to a primary focus on the reestablishment of the original text. He argues that while textual critics have “enjoyed reasonable success at establishing, to the best of their abilities, the original text of the New Testament” (p. 825), this narrow focus overlooks the significant insights that the various textual witnesses reveal about the social world in which the NT was written and transmitted. “An exclusive concentration on the autographs is myopic,” Ehrman concludes, because “it overlooks the value of variant forms of the text for historians interested in matters other than exegesis” (p. 803). Other notable textual critics have argued similarly in recent years, perhaps most notably Eldon Epp and David Parker.

Many textual critics, however, remain committed to the traditional understanding of textual criticism, namely, the reestablishment of the original text or what is sometimes referred to as the authorial text. Daniel Wallace, for example, has emphasized that the task of determining the original reading of the NT autographs is not simply a modern preoccupation, but one that has been a commitment of Christians throughout the centuries (“Challenges in New Testament Textual Criticism for the Twenty-first Century,” *JETS* 52 [2009]: 79–100). While scholars have at times failed to clarify what is meant by the term “original text,” it is for good reason that the task of reconstructing the text of the NT has remained an important objective of the church for two millennia. Because the Scriptures have long been recognized as useful for “teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness” (2 Tim 3:16 ESV), it is both natural and justifiable to recognize the work of discerning the original text of the NT as a profitable and necessary pursuit. The discovery of several biblical manuscripts and other early witnesses to the text of the NT over the last century has given scholars reason to be optimistic about our ability to reconstruct the original text. While the original reading of several passages remains uncertain, the NT is by far the best-attested writing of antiquity. Because of the impressive number of ancient witnesses to the NT that have survived, there is reason to be fairly confident in our ability to discern the most probable original text of the majority of the NT. Even when the available evidence is insufficient to determine the original reading of a particular passage, it should be recalled that no central doctrine of the Christian faith is dependent upon a single passage of Scripture in which there is dispute regarding its original reading. In other words, the merits of Christianity are not reliant upon our ability to accurately discern the original reading of the entirety of the NT.

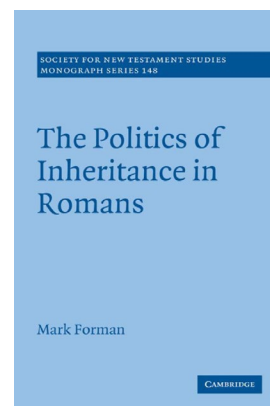
Those wishing to expand their knowledge of the various ancient witnesses to the NT or to become more conversant with recent trends and developments in textual criticism will find this volume to be a helpful resource. While many readers will undoubtedly disagree with some of the conclusions made by the various contributors, the editors are to be commended for assembling such a fine collection of essays which students and scholars alike will find to be of great value.

Benjamin Laird
University of Aberdeen
Aberdeen, Scotland, UK

Mark Forman. *The Politics of Inheritance in Romans*. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 148. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. xiv + 268 pp. \$94.00.

Most Pauline scholars spiritualize and individualize Paul's inheritance language and see little to no coherence between Paul's various expressions of inheritance. In *The Politics of Inheritance in Romans* Mark Forman attempts to correct this predominant view by arguing that Paul's language of inheritance is best understood as a material and corporate inheritance within its socio-political context. He argues that Paul is consistent with other Second Temple Jewish interpreters when he expands the OT promise of inheriting the land to include the whole world—a geographical, this-worldly inheritance (esp. *Jubilees*). Forman finds the political context suitable to Paul's eschatological framework because it is characteristic of eschatology to critique the present situation. Forman also argues that the Roman church consisted of the economically marginalized, those for whom the claims of the Imperial cult were but mere fiction. The Imperial cult's principal claim is that Caesar is appointed and blessed by the gods to bring material blessings, peace, and stability to Rome, and consequently this benefits all those under his rule. From this basis Forman wants to hear Paul's inheritance language in the same way that Paul's Roman audience would have heard it. According to Forman, the Roman church would have heard Paul's claim of her inheritance as a counter-imperial narrative. In order to demonstrate this, he does not attempt a technical-lexical approach, nor does he attempt to demonstrate the possible influences on Paul's political agenda, but rather he limits his study to a literary and thematic focus and attempts to demonstrate the conceptual likeness between Paul's narrative and the narrative of the imperial cult.

Although Paul emphasizes different aspects of inheritance to fit the context of his argument, his conception of it consists of the same content, which can be gathered by asking three central questions: What is inherited? Who will inherit? How will they inherit? According to Forman, Paul's appropriation of the Abrahamic tradition in Rom 4:13–25 answers these three questions. Romans 4:13 answers the question of what will be inherited: “you will inherit the world,” which retains the original promise of universal sovereignty embedded in it (p. 70). The world they will inherit is the eschatological, renewed world that God is restoring through the believing community. This leads to answering the second question of who will inherit the world: the descendants of Abraham (4:14–18). In Rom 4:19–21 Paul partly answers the question of how they will inherit anticipating the fuller answer in Rom 8:17–39—by God's grace through faith (Rom 4) and by suffering as Christ did, at the hands of the Romans (Rom



8). Forman perceives a connection between the this-worldly character of inheritance in Rom 4 and the promise that Abraham's descendants will exercise universal reign when Paul calls the Roman church "heirs of God" (those who inherit God's promise to Abraham) and "joint heirs with Christ" (8:17)—claims that dovetail with "glory," "creation," and "children of God" (p. 108). Paul claims that they are "more than conquerors" because they suffer in Christ, and this subverts the Empire's claim to glory that was obtained through acts of conquering. Furthermore, Forman opts for the textual variant "inheritance" in place of "people" in Rom 11:1 ("has God forsaken his inheritance?"). Forman argues that while Paul intensifies the pathos towards Israel's plight, Paul has in view the final step of restoration—the salvation of all Israel (11:28). All Israel may not mean every individual Jew, but rather "the reference is communal and far-reaching" (p. 165). Forman also argues that his interpretation of "inheritance" in Romans is reinforced by "inheritance" in Galatians (3:16, 19, 21, 26–29; 3:15–18), 1 Corinthians (6:9–10; 15:50–54), and Colossians (1:12, 3:24). Finally, Forman maintains that Rom 13:1–7 should be read on two levels—first, straightforwardly as expressing the acceptance of the Empire for the sake of survival; and second, ironically as critiquing the absurd claims of the Empire on the grounds that Caesar has only received power by God's will (p. 241).

Forman is to be commended for a well-written, well-argued thesis. He has diagnosed a problem in Pauline scholarship, found the gaps in current research, and built an intriguing argument. Although I do not want to minimize the "spiritual" blessings that many interpreters perceive as primary for Paul's inheritance language, I think it is important to realize the physical element of Paul's inheritance language. Forman helps to further our understanding of the physical side of inheritance. His argument is bolstered by a number of echoes from the Hebrew Scriptures. Particularly helpful is how Forman links Rom 4:13–18 and 4:19–21 via an echo of Isa 54:1–3.

However, Forman assumes that Paul's inheritance language is essentially material and that this has political implications for Paul's audience. Forman has constructed his argument in such a way that land is, seemingly, always assumed, and Rom 4:13 is the centerpiece. Yet, can this verse bear the weight? If the land is so significant to Paul's concept of inheritance, then wouldn't he make it more explicit in his argument? When Forman moves the focus of his argument to what can be deduced from a political context, I find Forman's argument less helpful. In particular, I do not think a two-level reading of Rom 13:1–7 is convincing.

The Politics of Inheritance in Romans is a helpful contribution to our understanding of Paul's concept of inheritance. Forman demonstrates the coherence of Paul's own understanding of inheritance and Paul's argument in Romans.

Jared R. Brown
Wheaton College
Wheaton, Illinois, USA

Sigurd Grindheim. *Introducing Biblical Theology*. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013. x + 267 pp. \$26.96.

As one who teaches biblical theology at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, I am always on the lookout for helpful textbooks to use with my students. In his recent book *Introducing Biblical Theology*, Sigurd Grindheim sets out to introduce students to the biblical storyline. The result is a helpful, well-written, and concise overview that integrates key insights from systematic theology along the way.

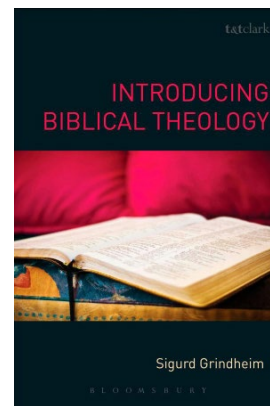
Grindheim begins by asserting that the unifying theme of the Bible is the gospel and that all sixty-six canonical books tell the story of the Triune God who has brought salvation in and through Jesus Christ. He believes that we can learn to read the Bible from the way that Jesus and the apostles do. Rather than focus on the individual contribution of each book or author, Grindheim uses them as “building blocks” to understand the overarching story of the Bible. He refers to this as a “canonical reading or interpretation of Scripture” (p. 2).

Biblical theology can be executed in several ways, and Grindheim’s approach can best be described as a hybrid between recounting the storyline and identifying key themes using systematic theology categories. While the general flow of the book roughly follows the biblical storyline, when it comes to the individual subjects Grindheim draws on material from across the canon. In the opening chapter on God the headings include a section on the name Yahweh and “God as the Triune God.” When discussing the nature of humanity (ch. 3), Grindheim organizes it under these headings: image of God; flesh; body, soul, and spirit; heart; and conscience. The chapter on human sin (ch. 4) begins with Adam and Eve in the Garden but eventually moves into insights from Paul, the Gospels, and Revelation on the nature and effects of sin.

When writing a biblical theology, one must inevitably be selective. Once he has covered the content of Gen 1–3 (chs. 1–4), Grindheim takes three more chapters to cover the remainder of the OT, focusing on covenant (ch. 5), restitution for sin (ch. 6), and the messianic hope (ch. 7). An additional eight chapters cover the NT: the incarnation (ch. 8), the work of Christ (ch. 9), salvation (ch. 10), the Holy Spirit (ch. 11), the new life of the believer (ch. 12), the church (ch. 13), new covenant rituals (ch. 14), and the last things (ch. 15). So when it comes to hitting the major movements of the biblical story, Grindheim demonstrates sound judgment.

Grindheim also shows sensitivity to both continuities and discontinuities in the biblical story. Although he does not believe humanity had a covenant relationship with God in Eden (pp. 47–48), Grindheim traces how the covenants relate to and build on each other. The new covenant is the culmination of these covenants and yet differs from it in key ways. It is internal rather than external, and God’s people will have God’s Spirit to enable them to fulfill Adam’s commission. Through the work of Christ, Gentiles have been grafted into “Israel, God’s people,” but that does not mean God is finished with ethnic Israel, since “Israel as a whole, Israel as a nation, will be saved in the end” (p. 184). The church, therefore, is “the anticipation of the eschatological people of God” (p. 193).

Biblical theologies often struggle to incorporate the wisdom literature, and this book is no exception. Other than a section on “Wisdom Christology and Preexistence,” Grindheim draws very little from



books such as Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes. One way this might have been remedied would have been to focus on the fear of Yahweh as the appropriate response to being in a covenant relationship with him.

Several features enhance the usability of this book. Each chapter concludes with a brief summary of the chapter's content, a short bibliography of recommended resources for further reading, and a few review questions. The Scripture index makes it easy to quickly find where specific texts are referred to. At several points the author even briefly introduces different critical views without bogging the reader down. Grindheim clearly has the student in mind throughout this book.

In any book covering the entire Bible, the reader will inevitably find points of disagreement, or at least areas that might have profitably received more attention. For example, Grindheim rightly emphasizes the centrality of Jesus's death. His resurrection and ascension, however, receive far too little attention. After all, Paul asserts that without the resurrection there is no Christian faith (1 Cor 15:12–19). I was especially struck that in a section on Jesus' victory over Satan there is no mention of the resurrection. Since the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ are different aspects of one complex "redemptive act" that Christ does for his people, explaining the importance of each aspect would help the reader gain a deeper understanding of the work of Christ.

A few smaller quibbles warrant brief mention as well. Grindheim claims that God's promise to David is the starting point for the messianic hope (p. 75), yet several pages later notes that Gen 3:15 points forward to Christ defeating Satan (pp. 83–84). I was not sure what the author meant when he states, "heaven is not a physical place" (p. 9). Those who are dispensational and/or credobaptist may take issue with Grindheim's disagreement with their views, though he is respectful. And given ongoing debates on the continuation or cessation of the spiritual gifts, it is a bit surprising that Grindheim does not address the issue in his section on spiritual gifts (pp. 194–95).

When it comes to using this book in the classroom, it seems best suited for undergraduate students who may have a basic familiarity with the Bible but lack a clear understanding of how the various parts fit together. The integration of insights that are more "systematic" in nature would be especially helpful for students whose curriculum does not include a distinct systematic theology course. The suggested titles for further reading are helpful for the student who wants to explore a topic further, though the books listed tend to be seminary-level reading rather than undergraduate material.

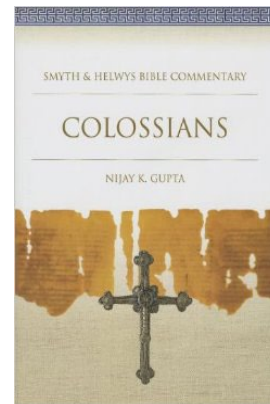
Introducing Biblical Theology enters an increasingly crowded market of introductory biblical theology texts. Those who prefer a more strictly storyline approach with less "systematic theology" mixed in may prefer Craig G. Bartholomew and Michael W. Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story* (Baker, 2004). Instructors who desire more content and additional materials for the classroom may prefer J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays, *Living God's Word: Discovering Our Place in the Great Story of Scripture* (Zondervan, 2012). Those looking for an overview of the storyline plus a defense of biblical theology will likely prefer Graeme Goldsworthy, *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible* (IVP, 2002). For a simplified version of Goldsworthy that is better suited for a church context, see Vaughan Roberts, *God's Big Picture: Tracing the Story-line of the Bible* (IVP, 2003). Also more suited for the church than the classroom, complete with an accompanying study guide, is D. A. Carson, *The God Who is There: Finding Your Place in God's Story* (Baker, 2010).

Matthew S. Harmon

Grace College and Theological Seminary
Winona Lake, Indiana, USA

Nijay Gupta. *Colossians*. Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary. Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys, 2013. ix + 227 pp. \$45.00.

This new addition to the wealth of scholarly commentaries on the Epistle to the Colossians by Nijay Gupta (Assistant Professor of Biblical Theology and Exegesis at Northeastern Seminary on the campus of Roberts Wesleyan College) is brief but powerful. It is a useful and accessible commentary, well-written, well-researched, and exhibiting a refreshing catholicity of representative viewpoints from across Christian denominational and theological perspectives. From Chrysostom to Calvin to Wesley to Bonhoeffer, Gupta interacts with ancient patristic, reformational, Wesleyan, Calvinist, Roman Catholic, Neo-orthodox, and evangelical scholars, providing illuminating exegetical details in conversation with the Church through the ages and inspiring stories which illustrate particular points that he draws out of the text of Colossians. The result is a stimulating read and a scholarly, yet practically-applicable and approachable work which stands on its own in the current world of Colossians commentaries. I speak here as one who has read just about all of them during my time studying Colossians as the focus of my doctoral research at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland.



My initial expectation because of the marketing and structure of the commentary, which comes with a searchable CD-ROM and which is laid out in a textbook-esque manner, was that perhaps this commentary would be geared toward sermon preparation, and would thus be only mildly academic in nature. This is not the case at all. Gupta is both a gifted exegete and teacher. His presentation is instantly easy to follow and infectiously written. Thus, it is perfectly suited for readers of every level, and it is ideal for the discerning pastor and Bible student. Furthermore, Gupta's own original exegesis, and his interaction with the exegesis of the other Colossian scholars is admirable and substantive in its own right, making a real contribution to the field and worthy of serious consideration and interaction both in the pulpit and in the guild. Of course, as with any work, there are strengths and weaknesses. Let us examine them both, beginning with a selection of a few strengths from the project.

First, Gupta opts for Pauline authorship for Colossians, on the basis that he considers the evidence against Pauline authorship to be insufficient to conclude that the epistle was written by someone else (cf. Col 1:1; 4:18). He is in good company here including: Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Calvin, O'Brien, Moule, Wright, Percy, Kümmel, Guthrie, Aletti, Bruce, Barth/Blanke, and Moo, just to name a few. As the Knight of the Holy Grail in Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade would say: "You have chosen wisely." But wise choices aside, Gupta's entire section on authorship is helpful, representative, and balanced.

Second, his teaching expertise makes its way into the commentary through a number of helpful explanations. For example, his labeling of the Colossian problem as the "Transcendent Ascetic Philosophy" (p. 19) is an effective literary teaching tool which assists the reader in keeping the nature of the problem (according to Gupta, and I agree) in view. It is repeated throughout the commentary in the manner of a Big Idea, and is, in my view, accurate and beneficial. Likewise, when he refers to the central theme of Col 3:10 as the process of being "reset by the pattern of the new Adam" (p. 25), I find this to be both clever and ready to preach. It strikes me as a fresh and original contribution to the unpacking

of the text in ways that translate immediately into application for one's own life and walk, and in one's teaching and preaching.

In manifold examples too numerous to list here, but woven throughout the commentary, Gupta frequently picks up on typically ignored elements of the text, shedding new light on important themes like "thankfulness" in Col 3:15. Within the theological weightiness and wonder of Colossians 3, "thankfulness" often gets glossed over (with the exception of O'Brien and Pao), while the focus is placed on other profound elements in the surrounding verses. Yet, Gupta's (in my view) prophetic and exegetically-sensitive hermeneutical eye brings out something truly profound from the idea, namely, that to be thankful "is an act of faith" which "dares to establish a counter-reality over and against the bleak and dark world" (p. 27). I find this to be profoundly human and inspiring. This type of pastoral exegesis ministers to the reader while also engaging the reader in robust theological inquiries.

Lastly, in regard to the strengths, the emphasis on the church, rather than simply individual salvation is exemplary and a much needed corrective in commentaries on all of Paul's epistles, and in Colossians in particular. It is often argued that Ephesians is the ecclesiological epistle, while Colossians is focused on Christology. However, Gupta shatters this myth by frequently reminding the reader that salvation and "spirituality" are "not about the individual in isolation but about the community and its proper health and vitality" (p. 25). Gupta picks up on and brings out the ecclesologically-rich and central element of the Church in Colossians. While there are dozens of other exemplary points which could be noted it is, perhaps, necessary to move on to a few minor critiques before wrapping up this review.

The first and most extensive critique I have of the commentary is Gupta's view that in Col 1:15–20 the thrones, powers, dominions, and authorities refer to specifically "heavenly" powers. This claim is made on the basis of the fact that the word "invisible" stands just before the list which suggests to Gupta that the authorities are likely referring to spiritual powers in particular. He notes, furthermore, that the στοιχεῖα "probably" refer to "elemental spirits" (p. 56). I have two issues with this. First, many rightly view the rulers and authorities of 1:16 as including far more than simply "heavenly" powers. They should include also earthly outward manifestations of the inward or heavenly powers. Second, the idea that the placement of the word "invisible" just before the list somehow renders the following words as "heavenly" is an exegetically questionable move to me. The grammar does not require or even suggest what Gupta is claiming here. When we consider that the text which immediately precedes the talk of the thrones and powers specifically indicates that a broader scope of phenomena are in view, that is to say, things on heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, Gupta's position becomes even less likely. In addition, while I agree that there is a component of metaphysical anxiety which the Colossian philosophy is attempting to ease, Gupta insufficiently deals with other scholarly perspectives on this matter such as the view championed by James Dunn that the στοιχεῖα refer, not to demonic forces, but to the basic principles, the basic building blocks, and the particularly former religious elements of the world. Gupta's general acceptance of the "cosmic forces" line of thinking with regard to the στοιχεῖα is also strikingly non-committal, and thus not sufficiently convincing. He notes that "it is possible that the Colossians were fearful of demonic and cosmic powers" (p. 16), that this "might" be the case (p. 16) and that "perhaps" (p. 63) the Colossians feared evil spirits. More convincing would be a sustained argument for this hypothesis and a more determinative choice of language to display his own confidence in this interpretation against other exegetical options. Lastly on this point, the lack of interaction with the work of Walter Wink on the powers is a noticeable 'history of research' lacunae in Gupta's treatment of these verses.

A second point of critique would be concerning Gupta's statement that the "forgiveness of sins" in Col 1:12–14 is not forensic but rather focused on the "power and hegemony of sin." He doesn't sufficiently prove that sin as a power, rather than sin as guilt or that which renders one subject to punishment is in view here by Paul, or that this distinction ought even to be made. His emphasis on the 'power' of sin makes sense, given his emphasis on the στοιχεῖα as cosmic forces. However, a better reading of 1:12–14 would center on the idea of transfer from a sphere with a corresponding 'power' or 'way of life,' rather than on power itself. Paul talks about a transfer (μεθίστημι) from "the dominion (ἐξουσία) of darkness" to another sphere, namely, the kingdom (βασιλεία) of the son which is characterized by his love. Indeed, each realm, so to speak, has its corresponding "power," and ἐξουσία can of course be translated 'power' or 'authority,' but the focus in this set of verses is on the sphere, not the metaphysics of the power associated with the sphere.

Lastly, in his exegesis of the household code (Col 3:18–4:1), Gupta argues that middle voice of the verb ὑποτάσσω indicates that the "action is carried out by the person on himself or herself." Thus, he is arguing for a direct or reflexive middle (See Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 416). This is indeed possible, but in my view, not probable in this instance. As grammarian Daniel Wallace notes, the reflexive usage of the middle is, in fact, quite rare in the Koine period. Therefore, while Gupta's main point that women initiate this submissiveness on their own is certainly not harmed and, in fact true, the grammar itself (apart from the fact that the wife is the subject of the verb and hence the one doing the action) doesn't add anything to his exegetical point. What the middle more likely would add or indicate, however, is that the submission of the wife to the husband would have some benefit or positive effect on the wife achieved through the act itself. In this "indirect" or "benefactive" middle (Wallace, 419) the object of the verb receives the action of the verb, yet the subject, the one doing the action, also receives some benefit or effect from the performance of the action. The sense would be the following: "Wives be submissive to your husbands such that the act of submitting has some (presumably positive) effect on you as well." Furthermore, it is possible that if this is the sense of the middle in the verse, then the universality and timelessness of the verse may take on a new, abiding ethical significance and prescriptive force.

These small exegetical issues aside, Gupta's commentary is really top notch. It should most definitely be on the shelf of any scholar, pastor-scholar, or bible student interested in receiving a very fair, extremely representative, and exegetically-sensitive, sharp and fresh reading of the epistle. In fact, this commentary would be one of my top-five Colossian commentaries alongside those of Douglas Moo, N. T. Wright, Marcus Barth/Helmut Blanke, and Peter O'Brien. It is a work of exemplary scholarship, practical significance, pastoral sensitivity and imagination, and theological breadth.

John Frederick
University of St. Andrews
St. Andrews, Scotland, UK

Douglas S. Huffman. *The Handy Guide to New Testament Greek: Grammar, Syntax, and Diagramming*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2012. 112 pp. \$16.99.

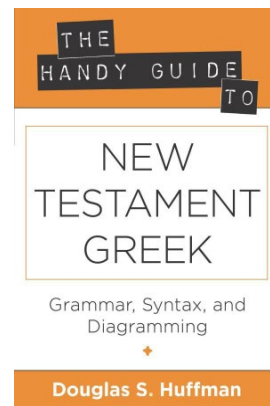
Professor Douglas Huffman of Biola University has written a compact, useful reference book intended to serve students and pastors in their ongoing study of the Greek New Testament. *The Handy Guide* includes many charts and summaries of basic and intermediate Greek morphology, grammar, and syntax, as well as a clear and practical introduction to “phrase diagramming” and a select bibliography for further study.

In Part 1, Huffman concisely reviews key material typically covered in first-year biblical Greek courses, including the alphabet; breathing marks and accents; basic usage and morphology for nouns, adjectives, and pronouns; and prepositions (pp. 7–23). He then summarizes basic features of Greek verbs and offers select conjugation paradigms and principle parts (pp. 23–52).

Part 2 overviews important points of Greek syntax covered in standard intermediate grammars, including Greek cases, the article, verbs, and conditional sentences. Huffman writes as a seasoned teacher, offering lucid and often memorable summaries throughout. For example, he calls the genitive “the most flexible ‘of’ case,” which “typically *generates* some description of the preceding (or head) noun” (p. 54). He then surveys twenty ways NT authors employ the genitive, with a clear definition and specific example of each (except for the genitive of direct object). Huffman explains that Greek verb tenses do not have a time-based orientation but indicate an author’s portrayal of an action (aspect) and spatial vantage point (proximity or remoteness). The present and imperfect tenses encode *progressive aspect* (imperfective), the future and aorist *summary aspect* (perfective), and the perfect and pluperfect *stative aspect* (pp. 61–62). Huffman notes that scholars debate the aspect of the perfect and future tense-forms (without engaging in the specifics of the discussion), and he follows Stanley Porter’s view of aspect and adapts Con Campbell’s treatment of spatial vantage point. Huffman’s own positions are set forth in more detail in his forthcoming monograph, *Verbal Aspect Theory and the Prohibitions in the Greek New Testament* (Peter Lang).

Part 3 introduces readers to phrase diagramming, a method for picturing the flow of thought in a biblical text, elsewhere called “phrasing” (Mounce, *Greek for the Rest of Us*) or “grammatical diagramming” (Guthrie and Duvall, *Biblical Greek Exegesis*). Huffman notes three other approaches (technical diagramming, semantic diagramming, and arcing) but prefers phrase diagramming as a time-efficient way to “produce an outline by which to preach/teach a particular passage of Scripture” (p. 85). Phrase diagramming includes eight steps, which Huffman illustrates on 1 Peter 1:3–9: (1) establish the limits of the paragraph; (2) divide the sentences into their natural phrases; (3) identify the main clauses of the paragraph; (4) indent the subordinate phrases and clauses; (5) draw arrows from each subordinate phrase; (6) add semantic labels; (7) mimic the Greek diagram with the English text; (8) craft a sermon/lesson outline from the diagram (pp. 87–97).

In preparation for this review, I assigned *The Handy Guide* as a supplemental textbook for a college-level intermediate Greek course I recently taught, with somewhat mixed results. Positively, Huffman’s introduction to “phrase diagramming” was very helpful—Part 3 alone is worth the price of the book, and it proved a steady guide for my students as they learned this useful method. Part 1 includes some useful charts and overviews of beginning Greek material, such as rules for accents and contraction



(pp. 8, 13). Part 2 helpfully summarized much of the material covered at greater length by standard intermediate grammars such as Wallace, *Basics of New Testament Syntax*, and his succinct explanation of verbal aspect is commendable. Further, the book's compact handbook size facilitates its use as a ready reference while reading the Greek NT.

On the other hand, I found the roughly 25% of the book devoted to various verb paradigms and select principle parts somewhat difficult for students to navigate. The summary parsing chart on p. 25 is less comprehensive than Mounce's "master verb chart" (*Basics of Biblical Greek*, 340) or Porter's "verb formulas" (*Fundamentals of New Testament Greek*, 385–87). Further, the book does not include an index or list each paradigm in the table of contents, making it challenging to locate quickly the needed paradigm. Additionally, Steven Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (Hendrickson, 2010) and Frederick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (University of Chicago Press, 2009) are notable omissions from the bibliography. These minor criticisms aside, I commend Professor Huffman's book as a supplemental textbook for biblical Greek students and instructors and as a very helpful resource for seminary graduates, pastors, and others wanting help for reading and studying the Greek NT.

Brian J. Tabb

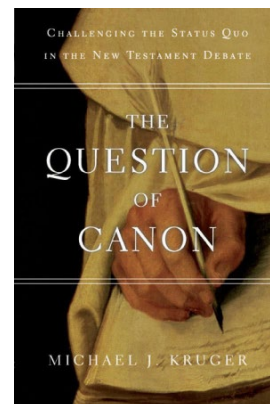
Bethlehem College and Seminary

Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

Michael J. Kruger. *The Question of Canon: Challenging the Status Quo in the New Testament Debate*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2013. 256 pp. \$24.00.

Michael Kruger has quickly become one of evangelicalism's leading voices in the areas of early Christianity and NT canon. In 2010, he co-authored *The Heresy of Orthodoxy*, which challenged the notion that Christianity began as a pluralistic set of beliefs and only later was stripped of its diversity by the group we now call the "orthodox." In *Canon Revisited* (2012), Kruger mounted a theological and historical case for Christians to justify their belief in the authority of the NT canon. Now, in *The Question of Canon*, Kruger challenges the dominant paradigm in much of modern biblical scholarship, which views the concept of canon as something altogether foreign from early Christianity and as only an ecclesiastical production of the second, third, or even fourth century. While responding to the major tenets of this view—what he labels the extrinsic model—Kruger suggests the merits of an alternative model, the intrinsic model, which is "that the idea of canon is not something imposed from the outside but develops more organically from within the early Christian religion itself" (p. 21). Kruger carefully surveys the extrinsic model by locating five of its major tenets and then revealing each tenet's major problems. After explaining his thesis and its relevancy in the introduction, each major chapter critiques the major claims of the extrinsic model and opens the door for a reconsideration of the intrinsic model.

Chapter 1 examines the claim that we must make a sharp distinction between the definitions of *Canon* and *Scripture*. Kruger suggests that the way forward in this debate over terminology is to define canon in a "multidimensional fashion." On one hand, the *exclusive* definition of canon offers a reminder



that a general consensus on the boundaries of the canon was not achieved until the fourth century. Yet, on the other hand, the *functional* definition focuses on when books began to function as an authoritative norm, which was fairly early in church history. Furthermore, the *ontological* definition, emphasizing the intrinsic character of these books themselves, is a reminder that these books did not become canonical simply because the church decided to proclaim them as such.

Chapter 2 addresses the claim that there was nothing in earliest Christianity that might have led to a canon. This chapter argues that early Christian beliefs led to a favorable environment for the growth of the NT canon. First, early Christians believed that Jesus brought the fulfillment, foretold in the OT, of a new divine message that was expected to accompany the Messiah. Second, early Christians believed Jesus inaugurated the new covenant, which carried with it an expectation of a written text. Third, since early Christians understand the apostles as Jesus's authorized agents, it would have been natural for them to conclude that their writings were authoritative.

Chapter 3 responds to the assertion that early Christians were averse to written documents. Using socio-historical studies and evidence from early Christianity, Kruger shows the fallacy of assuming that early Christians were averse to written texts just because many early believers were illiterate.

Chapter 4 counters the belief that the NT authors were unaware of their own authority. Kruger explores numerous NT examples where the authors display their awareness of their own authority. Though the authors could not foresee that their writings would be part of a completed 27 book NT canon, the evidence suggests that they believed themselves to be writing books that would guide the church.

Chapter 5 responds to the claim that the NT books were first regarded as Scripture at the end of the second century. By exploring the writings of early church fathers and the NT itself, this chapter shows that Christians began to view a number of their writings as Scripture by the turn of the first century.

In the conclusion, Kruger provides a summary of his thesis and arguments and then includes three implications from his study. First, "it serves as a simple reminder that historical investigations, like scientific ones, often operate on the basis of models, or what we might call paradigms" (p. 209). Second, "there are enough problems with the extrinsic model to raise serious questions about its viability" (p. 209). Third, "more scholarly consideration should be given to what we have called the intrinsic model" (p. 209).

Throughout this volume Kruger is charitable to those holding to the view he is opposing and also sufficiently nuances his argument to avoid the mistakes that might be made by some eager defenders of the NT canon. For example, *The Question of Canon* does not reject all the claims of the extrinsic model and begins each chapter explaining the strengths of each of its tenets. Kruger argues that his proposed intrinsic model should be emphasized *alongside, not in place of*, the extrinsic model. Kruger is careful to identify his aims and avoids getting distracted with peripheral matters along the way. Furthermore, he displays his breadth of knowledge in the primary and secondary literature; yet, his arguments are clear enough for those without special training in the field to understand.

Yet most historical-critics will probably remain unconvinced in regards to Kruger's *ontological* definition of canon, which defines canon "from a divine perspective" (p. 40). Kruger challenges—correctly in my view—the notion that the historical-critic is not also offering a theological perspective. However, some who are sympathetic to Kruger's perspective will likely suggest that in discourse with critics this kind of overtly theological argument should be sidelined since it will undoubtedly leave suspicious many of those he is trying to convince.

As a small point of clarification, Kruger's labeling the extrinsic model the "dominant" view within scholarship is true when considering the current landscape of biblical studies, but readers should not deduce from this that intrinsic model supporters are few and far between. As Kruger's references indicate and as he would likely agree, there are many scholars, and certainly the majority of Evangelical scholars, who appeal to aspects of both models and will be in agreement with Kruger's thesis.

First and most obviously, scholars should take notice of this volume as it provides a formidable challenge to the more liberal consensus concerning the canon. However, Christian leaders in a variety of contexts could be greatly helped by this volume as well. In a day when the Bible seems to be attacked from all angles and skeptics are writing *New York Times* best sellers about the Bible's "problems," Christian ministers can no longer afford to sit on the sidelines and think these issues will be safely quarantined to halls of the academy. *The Question of Canon* can help pastors and ministry leaders better understand the issues and respond in ways that help engender confidence in the NT canon.

Josh Chatraw
First Baptist Church
Dublin, Georgia, USA

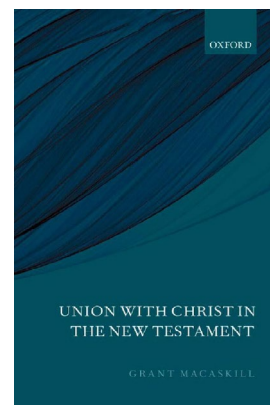
Grant Macaskill. *Union with Christ in the New Testament*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. 368 pp. £75.00/\$150.00.

How many works of NT scholarship combine discussions of contemporary Eastern Orthodox theology, church fathers such as Irenaeus and Origen, and competing interpretations of Luther and Calvin with perceptive exegesis ranging over most of the NT? Too few, though some are sprouting up as the divide between biblical studies and theology slowly thaws.

Grant Macaskill's *Union with Christ in the New Testament* ranges over all this historical, theological, and exegetical territory, and it does so capably and convincingly. Macaskill, Senior Lecturer in New Testament Studies at the University of St. Andrews, argues that the NT offers "a remarkably cohesive portrayal of the union between human beings and God" that Christ effects (p. 1). In a concise summary that the entire volume unpacks, Macaskill argues that this union is covenantal, is realized by the indwelling Spirit, maintains "an essential distinction between God and his people," is formed with a specific people who are characterized by faith and divinely revealed knowledge, is manifest in the new covenant community's love for one another, and is formally ratified by the sacraments (pp. 1–2).

Those familiar with current NT scholarship will sense controversies clustering behind each of these statements. Macaskill is responding, though not exhaustively, to Douglas Campbell's "apocalyptic" account of union with Christ in Paul and Michael Gorman's description of the same in terms of "theosis."

In the introduction, Macaskill highlights the "unavoidably theological nature of the object of study" and raises penetrating questions about how various theological accounts have been brought to bear on the relevant NT material (pp. 4–5). Accordingly, after a survey of NT scholarship on participation and union with Christ (ch. 1), Macaskill devotes a chapter to participation and union with Christ in the Patristic tradition and modern Orthodox theology (ch. 2), and then participation in Lutheran



and Reformed theology (ch. 3). In the latter, Macaskill briefly critiques the Finnish School's account of participation in Luther, surveys key aspects of Calvin's theology, critiques accounts of Reformed theology which posit a sharp divide between Calvin and later Calvinism, and examines participatory aspects of Barth's theology.

In chapter four, Macaskill explores several backgrounds to union with Christ: corporate personality and identity formation in the OT, the OT covenants, OT and early Jewish mystical and apocalyptic traditions, the participatory implications of messianism, and the Isaianic Servant's messianic matrix. Chapter five examines the "Adamic backgrounds" of union with Christ, critiquing the notion that traditions of an original "Adamic glory" were widespread in early Judaism.

In the introduction Macaskill quips, "There is a vast amount of literature that reads Paul in the light of Qumran; there is rather less that reads Paul in the light of Peter" (p. 2). In response, the second half of this volume pursues a wide-ranging synthesis of the NT's teaching on union with Christ. Chapter six examines the image of the church as the temple and the body of the Messiah, beginning with Ephesians and tracing these themes "back" through 1 and 2 Corinthians, 1 Peter, and the Synoptic Gospels and Acts. Macaskill argues that Ps 118:22, which frequently appears in the NT, provides a key to the NT's conception of union with Christ: the church is a temple in which the Messiah himself is the cornerstone (p. 169). It is not so different, then, for Paul to say that the church is the body of which Christ is the head; nor is it strange for him to slip seamlessly between these two conceptions, as he does in Eph 2:20–22.

Chapter seven explores other images of the temple in the NT, surveying John, Hebrews, and Revelation. Chapter eight discusses the sacraments and union with Christ, highlighting their covenantal character, specifically "the ways in which covenant conceptuality allows participants to identify themselves with one another and with a representative, whose story becomes theirs" (p. 192). Chapter nine explores other participatory elements in Paul, focusing on, among other things, the relationship between being "in Christ" and being indwelt by the Spirit.

Chapter ten returns to the Johannine literature, focusing in part on the programmatic predicated "I am" sayings. Chapter eleven explores grammars and narratives of participation in the rest of the NT, including the key text of 2 Pet 1:4. Chapter twelve closes the book with conclusions on a range of topics, among which are covenant, solidarity and exchange, sacrament and presence, the NT's incipient Christology and Trinitarianism, and the use of "theosis" to describe NT teaching.

On that last point, Macaskill concludes that "theosis" is not a "valid and helpful term to employ in scholarship on participation in the New Testament" because it is a complex synthesis of various strands of soteriology and philosophy, and can be deployed along radically divergent theological trajectories (p. 306). Another of this work's important conclusions is that the NT's "covenantal framework must serve as the starting point for reflection on participation or union with Christ." This has important implications for soteriology: "For all the contemporary unease about legal concepts of 'righteousness' and particularly that of the imputation of righteousness, the fact is that the concept is linked to covenant fidelity," and hence is woven into the fabric of the NT (p. 298).

My critiques are few and minor. First, the total absence of the Pastoral Epistles is disappointing. If James's sole reference to the new birth is enough to merit attention (p. 284), then 2 Timothy's repeated participatory depictions of suffering should too (2 Tim 1:8; 2:3, 11ff.), popular qualms about authorship notwithstanding. Also, minor errors occasionally scuff the otherwise gleaming quality of the work; for instance, verse reference (Heb 9:21 instead of 9:23; p. 182), parsing (labeling an aorist participle a perfect; p. 185), and a missing "of" (p. 191). Finally, the lack of engagement with Ben Blackwell's 2011 WUNT

monograph *Christosis: Pauline Soteriology in Light of Deification in Irenaeus and Cyril of Alexandria* was surprising given its thematic affinity.

These slight flaws hardly detract from the book's value. The volume's ambitious scope is more than matched by its capable exegetical and theological analysis. Macaskill ranges broadly without losing sight of his main argument. He compresses complex debates into concise summaries without falling into caricature. And, most important, he paints a portrait of the NT's teaching on union with Christ that is both cogent and compelling.

Some readers may wonder how Macaskill's volume compares to Constantine Campbell's recent work *Paul and Union with Christ*, with which Macaskill interacts occasionally and favorably. (Editor's note: See Mark A. Seifrid's review of Campbell's book in *Themelios* 38:2 [2013], available at http://thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/review/paul_and_union_with_christ_an_exegetical_and_theological_study). The narrower scope of Campbell's volume accommodates detailed analysis of the relevant prepositional phrases in Paul, whereas the broader scope of Macaskill's gives rise to sustained efforts at synthesis. Campbell mines lexical depths; Macaskill maps the theological whole. Their conclusions are generally complementary, though Macaskill stresses the "covenantal shape of Paul's account of participation" (p. 220) more than Campbell, who discusses covenant only in connection with justification. I would also suggest that Macaskill's rich definition and discussion of union with Christ evidence somewhat greater theological insight than the results of Campbell's more strictly inductive approach.

I hope Macaskill's conclusions persuade many. Yet Macaskill reaches the conclusions he does, in part, because he is not afraid to treat the NT as a theological document, and consequently to attend to its theological heirs, from Cyril to Calvin. So to say that I recommend the book is to put it too weakly. Instead, I recommend that students and scholars of the NT not only read it, but also take its methods to heart, and go and do likewise.

Bobby Jamieson
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Louisville, Kentucky, USA

Daniel Marguerat. *Paul in Acts and Paul in His Letters*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2.310. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013. 295 pp. £119.00.

Daniel Marguerat's work has long served as a model of historically informed, literarily sensitive, theologically attuned exegesis. This new book brings together English translations of many of Marguerat's more recent essays, along with a couple of new pieces, into a single collection broadly unified by the overarching theme suggested by the title, *Paul in Acts and Paul in His Letters*. As a collection of thirteen essays, the book does not advance one continuous argument but rather offers a variety of proposals about a diverse range of issues related to Paul and the book of Acts. Given the breadth of Marguerat's interests and the limited space available for the present review, I think it best for me to offer a selective

DANIEL MARGUERAT
Paul in Acts and
Paul in His Letters

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament
310
Mohr Siebeck

engagement with what seem to me to be the most significant claims found within the work, along with a couple more general comments regarding the book's contents.

The first essay, "Paul after Paul: A (Hi)story of Reception," is among the most ambitious. Here Marguerat proposes a new framework for approaching the reception of Paul within early Christianity. In particular, Marguerat is concerned to correct what he perceives to be an unwarranted prejudice for Paul the letter-writer over against the heritage of Paul that is preserved outside of Paul's own letters. Alongside the collection of Paul's letters, the early church preserved a biographical memory of Paul's ministry and a doctrinal memory of Paul's teaching. This reception of Paul was transmitted through oral tradition and preserved in Acts (biographical reception) and the Deutero-Pauline and Pastoral epistles (doctrinal reception).

Marguerat contends that the documentary reception of Paul—the collection of his letters—should not be viewed as the norm against which these other receptions of Paul are evaluated. To Marguerat, such a preference for Paul's letters reflects a post-Enlightenment pre-occupation with the written word and does not give adequate weight to the significance of oral tradition and social memory within early Christianity. In reality, the documentary, biographical, and doctrinal reception of Paul are "parallel and simultaneous" (p. 6). This is particularly important to recognize with regard to the book of Acts, which makes no reference to Paul's letter-writing and yet preserves a biographical record of his missionary activity.

Readers who affirm the Pauline authorship of Ephesians, Colossians, and the Pastoral epistles will obviously find Marguerat's distinction between a "documentary" and "doctrinal" reception of Paul to be problematic. Nonetheless, Marguerat's call to allow the book of Acts to speak on its own terms is surely warranted, as all too often scholarship has unfairly assessed the portrait of Paul in Acts against the benchmark of the Pauline corpus, creating a canon within the canon and suppressing the distinctive witness of Acts in the process.

Following the programmatic first chapter, the book contains eight chapters addressing thematic concerns in the book of Acts and four chapters related to facets of the Pauline epistles. Not every chapter on Acts is related particularly to the portrait of Paul, for the work includes essays on the Lukan conception of the Temple, the significance of meals in Acts, and two chapters on the place and significance of the resurrection within the apostolic kerygma and Lukan theology.

Among the Acts chapters, the relationship between the church and Israel emerges as a recurring theme at several points, with Marguerat recognizing aspects of both continuity and discontinuity in God's dealings with his people. A chapter entitled "Paul and the Torah in Acts" finds that for Luke the customs of Judaism retain their significance within the Jewish Christian wing of the early church, even as the Torah itself no longer functions in a soteriological manner. Likewise, in "From Temple to Home according to Luke-Acts," Marguerat suggests that the role of the Temple in Luke-Acts serves to underscore the theological continuity within salvation history, yet Marguerat also finds that for Luke the Temple has been rendered obsolete as the indispensable locus for divine blessing. Finally, in "Writing Acts: The Resurrection at Work in History," Marguerat finds that one key function of the resurrection in Lukan thought is to indicate both continuity and rupture between the church and Israel: on the one hand, the resurrection is presented as the fulfillment of the hope of Israel. On the other hand, it is the resurrection rather than the Torah that becomes the point of contention between the apostolic witnesses and their Jewish audiences. Marguerat's perspective on these issues is refreshingly balanced, skillfully capturing the nuance of Luke's posture toward the Jewish roots of the early Christian movement.

One chapter on Acts that is likely to elicit a skeptical response from certain quarters is “Paul as Socratic Figure in Acts.” In this essay, Marguerat contends that the characterization of the apostle Paul has been influenced by a Socratic model to an extent previously unrecognized in scholarship. Marguerat places quite a bit of weight on Paul’s withdrawal to the school of Tyrannus during his ministry at Ephesus (Acts 19:9), finding in this lone reference to a σχολή indications of a symbolic shift whereby Paul presents the Christian “Way” as a philosophy accessible to both Jews and Greeks. Certainly many interpreters have been willing to acknowledge a degree of parallelism between Socratic tradition and Luke’s characterization of Paul at a few points, most commonly at Paul’s discourse at Athens in Acts 17. Whether Socratic tradition was as influential as Marguerat contends, however, is likely to remain a matter of dispute among interpreters of Acts.

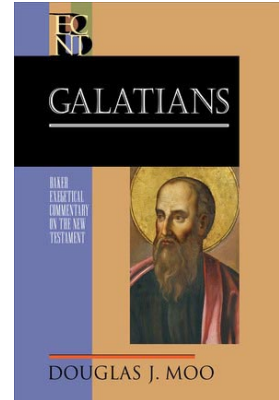
Among the four chapters on Paul’s letters, only the chapter on “Paul the Mystic” directly touches upon the comparison of Paul in Acts and Paul in his letters. The essay entitled “The Pauline Gospel of Justification by Faith” stands out as a sweeping discussion of Pauline soteriology in dialogue with the new perspective on Paul. Here, Marguerat is not confined to the Pauline concept of justification, as the chapter title might suggest, but rather the author touches upon such diverse topics as Paul’s view of the law, the final judgment, the place of the resurrection in Pauline soteriology, the significance of Paul’s Damascus road experience, and the universality of the Pauline gospel. The far-reaching scope of the chapter is impressive, yet no single topic receives the sort of sustained discussion that it deserves. By contrast, the final two chapters are much less ambitious, analyzing 1 Thess 2:11–2 and 1 Cor 11:21–6, respectively.

Readers expecting a sustained comparison of the two NT portraits of Paul are likely to be disappointed by this volume, since the majority of the chapters are not actually addressed to the kind of comparative analysis implied by the volume’s title. Moreover, many of the chapters overlap in content to a frustrating degree when the volume is read from cover-to-cover—a reflection of the fact that the chapters were originally published separately elsewhere. Most unfortunately, readers will recognize typographical errors, misspellings, and distracting grammatical mistakes on nearly every page, to the point where one might be tempted to question whether the work was proofread by a native English speaker. Nevertheless, those who are unable to read Marguerat’s work in French will surely appreciate this compendium of English translations of his articles, many of which were previously unavailable in English. Hence, the volume serves a useful purpose, making more of this distinguished scholar’s work accessible to an English-speaking audience.

Benjamin Wilson
Moody Bible Institute
Chicago, Illinois, USA

Douglas J. Moo. *Galatians*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013. xx + 469 pp. £27.17/\$44.99.

This new commentary on Galatians provides exactly what the church and the academy has come to expect from Doug Moo, an exegetically sensitive attention to the text under discussion and a vindication of a robustly Protestant and evangelical perspective. On most issues, when various opinions are surveyed, Moo judiciously organizes the material in a helpful manner that is easy to read and clear. Readers can be assured that they will not be bogged down by extraneous debates but can find compelling arguments without getting lost in the secondary literature. This will be a great commentary to have in your own personal library alongside Tom Schreiner's contribution to the ZECNT series since their perspectives and exegetical decisions complement each other in many ways. I would also recommend that interested readers have a good working knowledge of biblical Greek before trying to utilize this commentary, as the grammatical discussions might be too technical for most beginners.



Of course, there is always a list of hot topics that readers may want to know about a given commentary's conclusions. At the risk of being reductionistic—though one should never simply read a review without going to the source for themselves—I'll briefly make note of a few of these. Moo argues for a traditional reading of justification/righteousness language and the *pistis Christou* debate (no surprise to anyone I'm sure). Moo does emphasize though, rightly in my opinion, that the real concern for Paul is not *present* justification (i.e., initial acceptance only) as much as *ultimate* justification (pp. 61–62). This ultimate legal standing before God, is “fully secured by faith in Christ” (p. 162). Additionally, Moo affirms that Paul's critique of the law is both *salvation-historical* (the era of the law has passed) and *anthropological* (it is impossible to keep the law without error).

With these major conclusions I am more or less quite content. I did, however, find myself in consistent protest in relation to one minor issue and two more substantial issues. The less significant of these relates to a matter of emphasis. Moo makes a few comments about the relative importance of justification in Galatians to other issues, such as the sufficiency of the Spirit, which I find incongruous with the evidence. Though I would shy away from language about “the center” of Galatians, let alone Paul's thought as a whole, surely the Spirit is not “an ancillary” issue to justification (see p. 57) nor would it be an “exaggeration” to speak of the Spirit as “central” in Galatians (see p. 34). If either justification or the Spirit is to be given more rhetorical weight in the letter it is surely the reception of the Spirit (though this dichotomy is unrepresentative of Paul's thought in Galatians; even Moo briefly notes this by referring to them as “overlapping concepts” on p. 174). However, the “one thing” that Paul wants to learn from the Galatians is whether they received the Spirit by hearing with faith or by works of the law (Gal. 3:2).

A more substantial issue is Moo's treatment of “the works of the law” throughout the commentary. While Moo certainly acknowledges the particular sort of contextualized argument that Paul is making in regards to “the works of the law” in Galatians, he reminds the reader again and again that “works” and “doing” in general are included in Paul's critique by implication (cf. pp. 27, 30–31, 159, 176, 193, 203, 209–210, 244, 324–325). Yet just as it would be imprecise to reduce “the works of the law” to three or four “identity badges” (e.g., circumcision, Sabbath, dietary laws)—though these surely stand

out in Gentile contexts—it is likewise incongruous to expand “the works of the law” beyond all that the law requires to any “work” of any kind. The former is truncated, the latter inflated. Paul is simply not concerned to de-emphasize human activity in Galatians, as Moo is well aware, because otherwise the latter half of the letter would be gutted of its significance (cf. esp. Gal. 5:6, 22–23; 6:4–5, 8–10).

The final critique that I have relates to an issue that colors most of the interpretation offered in the commentary—the occasion for which the letter was written. Moo connects the agitators’ motivation—the fear of persecution (cf. Gal. 6:12)—with the anachronistic thesis of Robert Jewett that Zealots were the root cause (pp. 20, 393; cf. 148). Whether or not the “Zealot” movement existed at the time Galatians was written (between the late 40s to mid-50s)—which is not the perspective of most scholars, though surely similar groups did exist—this thesis is based on the assumption that the agitators were from Jerusalem, which is not entirely clear. It is surprising as well that Moo never offers an alternative to this reconstruction, such as that offered by Justin Hardin, Bruce Winter, and others, regarding the influence of Roman imperial pressure. What makes this alternative even more intriguing is the fact that Pisidian Antioch—which was one of the main destinations of the letter according to the “South Galatia” theory for which Moo (rightly) argues (see pp. 8–18)—was a major Roman colony in Asia Minor with a massive temple dedicated to Caesar Augustus.

Despite my quibbles mentioned above, preachers, teachers, researchers, and seminarians will find Moo’s commentary on Galatians to be a reliable guide on the grammatical nuances of the Greek text as well as the broader theological concerns of the church. I highly commend it.

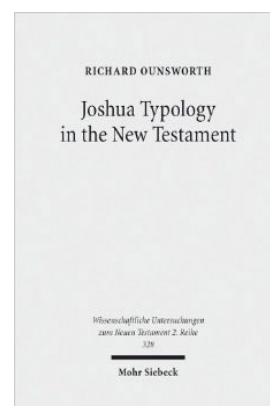
John Anthony Dunne
St Mary’s College, University of St Andrews
St Andrews, Scotland, UK

Richard Ounsworth. *Joshua Typology in the New Testament*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2.328. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012. 214 pp. £54.00/\$82.80.

The use of the OT in the NT has been the subject of much discussion over the last twenty years. While serious studies have been undertaken during that time there is still a lack of consensus concerning how the authors of the NT use the OT. An example of this can be seen in Richard Ounsworth’s recent work *Joshua Typology in the New Testament*. This monograph demonstrates that there is still room for further reflection and analysis of the topic. In particular, the author brings to the fore the often neglected, and regularly misunderstood, practice of typology.

Ounsworth’s central thesis can be seen in the opening sentence of the book where he states, “The suggestion I wish to offer is that a greater sense of the unity of the Letter to the Hebrews can be achieved by inferring from the letter a typological relationship between Joshua the son of Nun and Jesus” (p. 1). To defend this idea the author develops the relationship between Joshua and Jesus through an investigation of both the background of the Letter to the Hebrews as well as select passages within the book itself.

At the heart of Ounsworth’s reading of Hebrews are two main tenets. First, the authorial intent of the book is not as significant as “the plausibility of inferences that might have been made by the historical



audience of Hebrews” (p. 19). Second, the historical audience “familiar with the scriptures of Israel in their broad thrust, if not necessarily in their verbal detail, will have been ready to infer a particular kind of typological relationship between Jesus and Joshua” (p. 19). It is upon these two presuppositions that Ounsworth’s work rests.

To argue that the historical audience would have detected the ontological typology inferred from a Jesus/Joshua comparison, Ounsworth seeks to validate his approach by surveying the background to NT typology. Following the lead of H.D. Hummel and Michael Fishbane, Ounsworth spends considerable time wrestling with identifying what is genuine typology and what is not. What is distinctive in Ounsworth’s approach is that he presents typology not in terms of the verbal correspondence of the biblical author as much as the inferred understanding people would have deduced based on their understanding of the unfolding of *Heilsgeschichte*.

In chapter three of the book Ounsworth presents an engaging evaluation of Heb 3:7–4:11. In this section he correctly observes the historical connections of the author to Ps 95 and Num 14 and carefully reflects on this correspondence through a detailed analysis of the passage. He concludes that there is both similarity and difference between the first Joshua and the second Joshua (Jesus). While there is nothing overly controversial with his reflections, it is his next step of moving beyond the explicit reference to Joshua in Heb 3–4 to what he interprets as theological inferences throughout the rest of the book that will prove troublesome for most readers. For Ounsworth, the Joshua/Jesus connection permeates not just the chapters verbally connecting the two, but the theme continues to unfold in other areas such as the High Priest, the veil, and the Holy of Holies (p. 176).

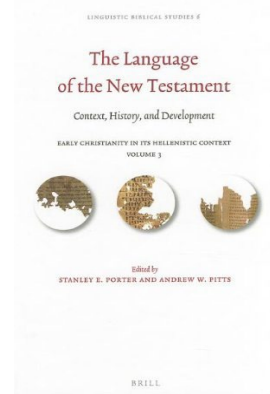
While the book title indicates that the focus is on *Typology in the New Testament*, the book itself spends very little time outside of the letter to the Hebrews, with only a fleeting discussion of Jude. In spite of this, the value of Ounsworth’s work lies in his serious reflection on the role of typology in the understanding of the historical audience of Hebrews. His assessment is put forward with a great deal of care and humility. His work, while technical, is written with clarity and his arguments straightforward. In spite of this, however, his attempt at validating his ‘ontological inference’ approach to the original audience seems virtually impossible to quantify. Throughout the book the repetition of terms like ‘might,’ ‘may,’ ‘perhaps’ and ‘possible’ indicate that even Ounsworth himself is speculative about the historical audience’s understanding of the book. While this does not rule out his approach based on ‘inference’ it does seem to minimize the likelihood of his view. While many will not find Ounsworth’s assertions convincing *Joshua Typology in the New Testament* provides fresh food for thought to those who think the subject of the use of the OT in the NT is passé.

Malcolm Gill
Sydney Missionary and Bible College
Croydon, NSW, Australia

Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts, eds. *The Language of the New Testament: Context, History, and Development*. Early Christianity in its Hellenistic Context 3. Linguistic Biblical Studies 6. Leiden: Brill, 2013. 525 pp. \$189.00.

The seventeen essays of this volume, edited by S. E. Porter and A. W. Pitts, both from McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario, treat matters pertaining to the Greek language, and to linguistics more generally. The first seven essays are grouped under the heading “Context.” Jonathan M. Watt explores implications of bilingualism for NT exegesis, explaining, for example, the use of the foreign word *raka* in Matt 5:22. Stanley E. Porter discusses a mosaic found at Antioch-on-the-Orontes that personifies four temporal conceptions, concluding that at least some Greeks thought of time as past, present, future, and enduring, indicated by a variety of forms. Rodney J. Decker investigates the Markan idiolect, emphasizing the need for caution “not to over-draw conclusions based on ostensible idiosyncrasies of Mark’s Greek” (p. 61), the need for “grammars” of each of the NT authors, the relevance of idiolect to textual criticism, the relevance of Mark’s idiolect for discussions of the Synoptic problem, and the nature of Mark’s Greek as non-literary. Frederick W. Danker investigates the alleged Pauline and Lukan christological disparity and concludes the two authors “share common ground in celebrating God as the Supreme Benefactor and Jesus Christ as the Great Benefactor, with Paul as envoy in the service of both with a message of salvation” (p. 90). Sean A. Adams critiques Albert Wifstrand’s application of Atticism to first century texts, suggesting that influences on first century authors should be treated as “classicism”; he builds on the work of Loveday Alexander in developing the concept of register, including the concept of genre as influencing the choice of register which in turn “dictates the selection of dialect within a piece of writing” (p. 111). Fredrick J. Long investigates the reality of Roman imperial rule under the authority of Jupiter/Jesus in an attempt to understand Eph 2:2, concluding that readers would “naturally equate” the phrases “the age of this world” and “the ruler of the authority of the air” to the emperor and Jupiter/Jesus (p. 153). In the longest essay of the volume (67 pp.), Jan Henrik Nylund describes “The Prague School of Linguistics and Its Influence on New Testament Language Studies” (pp. 155–221), which was established in the 1920s by Vilém Mathesius, and exemplified by the work of J. Zubatý, R. Jakobson, N. Trubetzkoy, B. Trnka, S. Kercevsikij, and others (more recently J. R. Firth of the London School and M. Halliday). Its main achievements are the vindication of the synthetic approach, the emphasis on the prevailingly systemic character of language, and the emphasis on the function performed by language (as summarized by J. Vachek in 1972; p. 185); the influence of the Prague School is identified in the linguistic work of E. Nida, D. Hill, G. Mussies, D. Hellholm, J. P. Louw, especially S. E. Porter, and others (pp. 208–20), especially regarding the concepts of structural/functional perspectives, focus on actual language use, differentiation of tense and aspect, markedness/prominence, foregrounding, and discourse analysis.

Four essays explore the history of the Greek language. Jonathan M. Watt provides “A Brief History of Ancient Greek with a View to the New Testament,” discussing the classical dialects, the triumph of fourth century Attic, the Koine of the Hellenistic period, the multilingual realities in Jewish Palestine and Egypt (the work of M. Hengel is curiously absent from Watt’s bibliography), and the choice of Greek by the NT authors. Christopher Land’s essay “Varieties of Greek Language” covers ground familiar from other essays. Andrew W. Pitts investigates the Greek case in the Hellenistic and Byzantine grammarians



(the Stoics, Dionysius Trax, Apollonius Dyscolus, Georgius Choeroboscus, Maximus Planudes). John A. L. Lee describes the Atticist grammarians, in particular Phrynichus, Moeris, and other sources; he argues that the phenomenon of Atticism was well under way in the first century, with Atticistic features appearing in the NT, notably in Luke.

Six essays discuss various aspects of “Development” (presumably the development of concepts of Greek linguistics in terms of their relevance for the NT). Andrew W. Pitts compares Greek word order and clause structure in the NT, concluding that “there seem to be several standard patterns, but they vary in levels of codification according discourse type, register and authorship variation” (p. 341), with implications for markedness determinations (p. 346). Rodney J. Decker investigates the function of the imperfect tense in Mark, concluding that the functions of the tense-forms should carry greater weight. Paul Danove compares the usages of δίδωμι and διδωμι compounds in the Septuagint and NT, describing eight distinctive usages: transference to a goal, transference terminating in a locative, delegation to a goal, delegation terminating in a locative (LXX only), benefaction, transformation, disposition, and initial motion from a source for a benefactive. Francis Gignac describes grammatical developments of Greek in Roman Egypt, as represented in the papyri, which are significant for the NT in the areas of phonology, morphology, and syntax. Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts discuss the development, form, function, and syntax of the disclosure formula (expression of the author’s desire that the audience know something) in the epistolary papyri, concluding that the implications for understanding the formula “are significant, especially with respect to emphasis, structure, and prepositional modification” (p. 438), which are, however, not spelled out. Finally, Beth M. Stovell writes about “Seeing the Kingdom of God, Seeing Eternal Life: Comparing Cohesion and Prominence in John 3 and the Apocryphal Gospels in Terms of Metaphor Use,” describing similarities and differences as regards cohesion and prominence in metaphor.

The volume informs competently about a host of linguistic theories and facts that pertain to the Greek language. The volume reads like a topic *Festschrift* (which it is not)—the various essays are loosely connected, with some essays being more pertinent and more technical than others (e.g., the essays of Danker and Long certainly contribute to a better understanding of NT texts and concepts, but are less relevant for understanding the Greek language of the NT). Some essays would have to be taken into consideration by an author writing a new grammar of NT Greek, others not so much. Reading this book does not improve one’s Greek language skills, but it will certainly, and helpfully, call into question any facile reference to “rules” that govern the Greek of the NT.

Eckhard J. Schnabel
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
South Hamilton, Massachusetts, USA

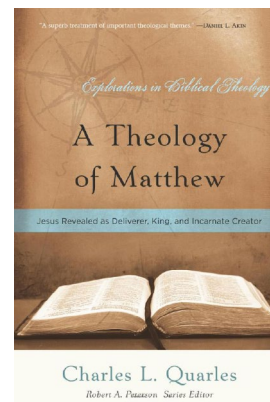
Charles L. Quarles. *A Theology of Matthew: Jesus Revealed as Deliverer, King, and Incarnate Creator*. Explorations in Biblical Theology. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2013. xvii + 220 pp. \$17.99.

Charles Quarles has written an informed and accessible introduction to the theology of Matthew's gospel that he hopes will help cure the doctrinal anemia he finds rampant today. One of the statistics he lists in the introduction is that 32% of incoming freshmen he surveyed at an evangelical college—90% of whom claim to be Christians—do not know that Christianity teaches the deity of Jesus. Quarles thus hopes to help the current generation rediscover the teaching of Christianity by explaining anew the identity and claims of Jesus Christ. In this light it makes sense that one of the main Matthean themes Quarles highlights is the divinity of Jesus.

The first two chapters set the foundation. The apostle Matthew is understood to be the author, the original audience largely comprised Jewish Christians, and Quarles leaves open the possibility that the gospel was originally written in Hebrew. The date of writing is pre-A.D. 70, and Quarles takes to task those that *a priori* posit a late date for the gospel due to their view that Jesus could not have predicted the destruction of Jerusalem. I agree that a pre-70 date for Matthew is the most probable option, though not all the reasons he provides are equally persuasive. For example, the quotations of Matthew in the Apostolic Fathers and the reference to swearing by the gold of the Temple (Matt 23:16–22) do not necessarily require an early date. On a related note, the author's comment that Vaticanus and Sinaiticus are the earliest manuscripts available of Matthew could be nuanced in light of the papyri that most likely predate these codices (e.g., \mathfrak{P}^1 , \mathfrak{P}^{45} , \mathfrak{P}^{64} , \mathfrak{P}^{104} , et al.). If his point is these codices are the earliest attributions of Matthean authorship, one might particularly note a possible fragment of \mathfrak{P}^4 for earlier attestation. Several options for the provenance of Matthew are given, with Palestine being slightly preferred. Given the intended audience of this volume, it would help to include more explicit reasons why this information is relevant since Quarles acknowledges it plays little role in interpretation. The second chapter includes some helpful reflections on how to read the gospels, including identifying Matthew's theme verse (Matt 1:21) and the differences between vertical and horizontal readings of the Gospels.

The discussion in the next four sections (nine chapters in total) is organized around Jesus as the New Moses, New David, New Abraham, and New Creator. After highlighting the parallels between Jesus and Moses in chapter 3, chapter 4 highlights the implications of this theme by focusing on Jesus as the leader of a New Exodus, the one who establishes a new covenant, and the Servant of Yahweh. Chapter 5 considers the emphasis on David in Matthew's gospel, and chapter 6 explores the implications of Jesus as the one who fulfills the Davidic covenant, the ruler over the Kingdom of Heaven, and the royal Son of Man.

Chapters 7–8 focus on the Abrahamic themes in Matthew. Here Quarles devotes quite a bit of space to Jesus as the leader of the church as New Israel (comprising Jews and Gentiles) that replaces old covenant Israel. He distances his interpretation from dispensationalism, stating that God has removed his favor from Israel because of their sin, especially their rejection of the Messiah. Quarles argues that the gracious election of New Israel is personal and eternal, and the New Israel will fulfill its mission to the nations. He addresses the presence of the four women in the genealogy of Jesus, rejecting the view



that all four are highlighted because of sexual scandal, and instead opting for the view that they are all Gentiles who were part of God's redemptive plan.

Part 5 (chapters 9–11) addresses Jesus as the New Creator and is among the most distinctive aspects of this volume. Here Quarles highlights the nature and implications of Jesus's divinity in Matthew. Chapter 9 focuses on Jesus as divine Son of Man, Wisdom, Lord, Son of God, and Immanuel. Quarles maintains that when Jesus is addressed as "Lord" in Matthew, it is an indication of Jesus's deity. It would help Quarles's argument here to provide more of his hermeneutical rationale for interpreting the vocative "Lord" as a divine title when the characters in the narrative may not be aware of the full implications of their statements.

This volume fits well with the aims of the Explorations in Biblical Theology series. Though Quarles does interact with a variety of ancient literature, those who are not familiar with, for example, the Dead Sea scrolls, Targums, the Septuagint, and biblical languages, should not have a difficult time reading this book. Quarles's contribution will also prove useful as an unintimidating introduction to Matthean scholarship for pastors and teachers. One of the recurring themes of this volume is that Jesus is Yahweh and is therefore divine. This is a welcome emphasis, though more clarity could be given to how Jesus does not merely replace Yahweh, but is distinctly filial as Son of God. Additionally, though it may be intentional, at least a couple of passages seem to repeat points (and sometimes entire sentences) stated previously (e.g., the discussions of Immanuel on pp. 152–53, 160–61).

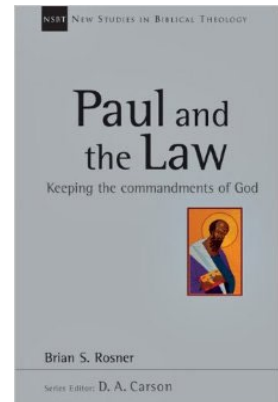
All told, Quarles does an admirable job laying out some of the key aspects of Matthew's theology, and he does so in an original way that does not neglect the practical implications of the gospel. Indeed, the book concludes with a clarion call to worship Jesus. I join with Quarles in hoping this volume will make an impact where it may be needed to counteract the doctrinal (and christological) anemia that is all too common today.

Brandon D. Crowe
Westminster Theological Seminary
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Brian S. Rosner. *Paul and the Law: Keeping the Commandments of God*. New Studies in Biblical Theology 31. Downers Grove: IVP, 2013. 249 pp. £14.99/\$24.00.

Few issues in NT study are as significant—or as hotly contested—as Paul's view of the OT law. Brian Rosner's ambitious goal in *Paul and the Law* is to provide a comprehensive framework which accounts for the apostle's disparate and seemingly contradictory statements about the law, integrating the valid insights of divergent interpretative positions (Lutheran, Reformed, New Perspective). Although some questions remain about the details of his framework, Rosner's overall approach—"a hermeneutical solution to the puzzle of Paul and the law" (p. 30, emphasis original)—is compelling, and constitutes an important contribution on this key issue.

Rosner outlines his "hermeneutical solution" in the book's opening and closing chapters (chs. 1 and 7). The "law," he argues, is primarily a *text*: the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses, not just the sum of commandments (p. 27). The variety of and



apparent contradiction between Paul's statements concerning the law arise from the fact that he is "reading" or "using" this text in different ways, for different purposes, at different times. Paul reads the law *as* commandments, *as* prophecy, *as* wisdom, etc. Hence Paul's varied and strong statements about the law may stand in tact without the need to balance them or to water them down in the interests of harmonization. In particular, "Paul does three things with the law and each one must be fully heard without prejudicing the others: (1) polemical repudiation; (2) radical replacement; and (3) wholehearted reappropriation" as both prophecy and wisdom (p. 39).

In chapters 2–3, Rosner explores Paul's "repudiation" of the law as law-covenant. He first examines Paul's *explicit* repudiation (ch. 2), focussing on the phrase "under the law" which appears in Galatians, Romans and 1 Corinthians. Rosner also discusses Lev 18:5 (which Paul cites in Gal 3:12 and Rom 10:5) and concludes, against New Perspective interpreters, that Paul's Jewish contemporaries understood this verse not simply to be defining the present religious life of Israelites, but to be offering *eternal* life on the basis of "doing" the law. Paul regards this soteriological posture as the antithesis of the gospel, which offers life on the basis of "faith" in Christ (pp. 60–73). Rosner clarifies and confirms his conclusions by referring to Eph 2:15 and 1 Tim 1:8–10. He then moves on to discuss Paul's "implicit" repudiation of the law as law-covenant (ch. 3), highlighting the many places in which Paul might have been expected to make positive statements about the law, yet fails to do so. For example, Paul says many things about Jews in Rom 2:17–29—they rely on the law, know God's will through the law, are educated in the law, have light, knowledge and truth through the law, "do", "observe", "keep" and "transgress" the law, and have the law as a written code—yet tellingly, Paul never says these things of Christians (pp. 88–100).

In ch. 4, Rosner explores Paul's "replacement" of the law, focusing on the "motif of substitution" (p. 111). When it comes to living and keeping God's commandments, Paul puts alternative things in the place which otherwise would have been occupied by the law. Replacements for the law include Christ's indwelling (Gal 2:19–20), the "law of Christ", the "law of faith" and the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Gal 6:2; 1 Cor 9:21; Rom 3:27, 8:1). Paul also speaks about "fulfilling the law" through incorporation into Christ and through love (Rom 8:3–4; 13:8–9; Gal 5:13–14). The Law of Moses is replaced by obedience to apostolic instruction (1 Cor 7:19), love produced by faith in Christ (Gal 5:6), the new creation (Gal 6:15), and righteousness, peace and joy in the Spirit (Rom 14:17).

Paul does not stop with repudiation and replacement, however; he also *reappropriates* the text of the law for believers by reading it in other ways. Firstly, Paul reappropriates the law as "prophecy" (ch. 5): that is, the law functions as a "witness" to the gospel of Christ. Rosner here admits that the subject is far too large for a comprehensive treatment in a single chapter (pp. 138–39), so he chooses instead to summarise key scholars who have explored the prophetic character of the law of Moses in more depth, and to trace the way in which Paul cites the law alongside the prophets as a testimony to the gospel of Christ in Romans (1:2; 3:21, 31; 4:23–24; chs. 9–11; 15:9–12; 16:25–26; also 10:6–9).

Second, Paul reappropriates the law "as wisdom" (ch. 6). For this reviewer, chapter 6 was the most stimulating; here Rosner's own particular strengths and research interests (1 Corinthians, Paul's ethics and the Jewish background to Paul's letters, cf. p. 23) come to the fore. Rosner argues that although Paul does not treat the law as law-covenant or as command, nevertheless "[t]he law is a critical and formative source for his moral teaching on these topics. Rather than reading the law *as law*, Paul reads it *as wisdom* for living, in the sense that he has internalized the law, makes reflective and expansive applications, and takes careful notice of its basis in the order of creation and the character of God" (p. 204, emphasis original). Rosner argues that the Psalms often treat the law as wisdom in this way, that the

law itself has a “wisdom” character (e.g. Deut 4:6), and that Paul may be seen as a wisdom teacher who uses the law as *part* of his gospel-based wisdom-teaching strategy (e.g., 1 Cor 10:11; Rom 15:4; 2 Tim 3:16–17). Rosner gives specific examples of Paul using the law as a resource for Christ-centred guidance in the areas of financial giving, greed, stealing, murder and sexual ethics.

Rosner’s general hermeneutical approach to solving the puzzle of Paul and the law is fairly convincing. Nonetheless, the particular schema he adopts (repudiation, replacement, reappropriation) needs further nuance and revision, since there are certain Pauline passages which do not fit obviously into the schema. Rom 3:19–20, for example, states that the law (as law-covenant!) has a divine *purpose* (note the term ἵνα) in holding people accountable to God and bringing the knowledge of sin as preparation for God’s grace (cf. Rom 5:20–21). Since the law here plays a real (albeit negative) divine role in relation to the gospel, “repudiation” is an insufficient term to describe Paul’s use of the law at this point. Perhaps these verses might have been integrated into the chapter on the law’s “reappropriation” as prophecy / testimony to the gospel (indeed, law-court imagery is present here, see p. 152n41)—however, the “testifying” character of the law in Rosner’s schema is of a more positive nature and would not seem to admit their inclusion. Furthermore, there are other passages in which Paul seems to take a highly *negative* stance towards the idea of reading the law “as wisdom”. For example, in Rom 2:17–29, Paul describes his Jewish opponent in terms reminiscent of wisdom-teaching—he is a διδάσκαλος/παιδευτής who sees the law as an embodiment of truth (Rom 2:20, but cf. pp. 186–87). In Rom 7:21, Paul even describes a Psalmist-style internalizing of the law (“I delight in the law of God, in my inner being”, cf. pp. 165–74), but claims it has initially disastrous results because of sin (Rom 7:24–25). A discussion of these more negative passages in relation to the idea of the “law as wisdom” would have been worthwhile.

How will different perspectives and traditions receive Rosner’s thesis? Those from a Lutheran perspective, who emphasise that “[t]he primary role of the law is to lead us to despair of any hope of obedience leading to God’s acceptance and to drive us to seek God’s mercy in Christ” (p. 21) will most likely welcome Rosner’s refusal to downplay Paul’s strong statements of repudiation against the law as law-covenant, but may be dissatisfied by his lack of attention to the antithetical law-gospel dynamic, especially in his chapter on the law as prophecy. Those from a Reformed perspective, who emphasise that “once saved we are under the moral law and must obey it in order to please God” (p. 21) may welcome Rosner’s view that Paul reappropriates the law for Christian living, but may find his construal of the Law “as wisdom” insufficiently robust to replace the classic “third use of the law”. “New Perspective” interpreters will probably appreciate Rosner’s attention to the Jewish background of Paul’s letters, but may be dissatisfied with his relative lack of attention to social and ecclesiological concerns.

Questions about the details of Rosner’s schema, however, should not detract from the value of his overall hermeneutical approach and the refreshing biblical-theological insights he offers. *Paul and the Law* is a significant contribution on a key issue of significance for all Christians, and is recommended to students and pastors for careful reading and reflection.

Lionel Windsor

St Augustine’s Anglican Church, Neutral Bay
Sydney, NSW, Australia

Thomas R. Schreiner. *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013. 736 pp. \$44.99.

Few scholars have completed the remarkable feat of writing a Pauline theology, a NT theology, and a whole-Bible Biblical theology. But with the publication of *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, Tom Schreiner has done just that. Over the course of 2,216 pages in these three volumes, Schreiner has canvassed the depth of NT and biblical theology like few other scholars of this generation.

As we consider the contribution of his latest work, *The King in His Beauty*, it is important to set it in the frame of Schreiner's larger body of work. In particular, not only does Schreiner recognize that there is no single right way to approach biblical theology, he has modeled two methods himself. While in his NT theology Schreiner uses a thematic approach, in this volume he employs a canonical approach. That feat in itself adds to the impressiveness of Schreiner's accomplishment.

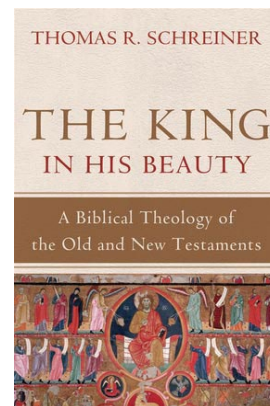
Many readers of *Themelios* are likely aware of Schreiner's work. What is more, other reviews of this particular book have appeared on *The Gospel Coalition* site. [Editor's note: See Gerald Bray, "A Systematician Reviews Tom Schreiner's *Biblical Theology*" in this issue of *Themelios*.] Because of this, I will forgo much of the typical summary that might be expected in this sort of review. It is sufficient to say that Schreiner traces the theme of God's glory—particularly his beauty and worthiness to be praised—as seen in his reign as king, overcoming his enemies and redeeming a people for himself. Moving through every book or section of both OT and NT, Schreiner convincingly demonstrates that the kingdom of God, when properly understood, is clearly unfolding through the scope of redemptive history.

So then, rather than working through the particulars of this book, I will highlight some of the key contributions and most helpful insights for pastors, with the goal of providing a springboard for its use in preaching and teaching and as a resource for further study.

At the outset, any pastor or teacher who is struggling to make connections between the details of the OT and the wider story of redemption in Christ would be well-served by observing Schreiner's method of reading the OT. Schreiner's general method is rather straightforward: he explains the OT in its context, including key principles and historical movements with a particular focus on the unfolding of the kingdom throughout the canon. He then makes NT connections where appropriate.

Even in books like Proverbs, which can be notoriously difficult to fit naturally into a redemptive-historical reading of the OT, Schreiner's observations arise naturally from the text (in both its near and wider context). Thus, when speaking of the wisdom of God in Proverbs 8, Schreiner astutely observes, "Wisdom does not represent Christ in 8:22, for it is pictured as something created. But typology always involves escalation, so that Christ fulfills and exceeds what is said about wisdom in Proverbs, since he is the wisdom of God" (p. 299). The OT section includes many similar observations that are both firmly anchored in the text of the OT while also faithfully pointing forward to the full revelation of Christ.

Another insight from Schreiner that might provide help to those tasked with preaching and teaching is his description of the kingdom of God. While it is probably best to refrain from citing specific examples, it is not uncommon for modern authors to either so narrow or broaden the definition of God's kingdom so as to make their definition almost useless. Schreiner's work helps us avoid falling



into either of these ditches. While he certainly sees multiple facets of the kingdom in the Bible, he does not broaden his definition beyond biblical boundaries. Therefore, he demonstrates throughout the book, “the kingdom of God has a threefold dimension, focusing on God as King, on human beings as the subjects of the King, and the universe as the place where his kingship is worked out” (p. xv). With this perspective in place, he helpfully walks us through the drama of the kingdom as it is “worked out in history and in a certain place” (p. xv).

Finally, it was not surprising to find that Schreiner’s summary of Pauline theology in this book is among the finest I have ever read. For the past three decades, Schreiner has been actively engaged in the study and teaching of Paul, and this chapter felt like the culmination of those years of study. For the pastor, student, or curious reader who wants to get a handle on both the current state of Pauline studies and the substance of Paul’s theology, this 35-page chapter may be the place to start.

I found very little to complain about as I read this book; however, if I have one substantial criticism of this work, it is that its treatment of some OT sections can be a bit uneven. While of course I understand that additional material would have made this already 700-page book more intimidating than it already is, I did wonder at times what criteria Schreiner used to decide what to include in the book. For example, while the chapter on the Book of the Twelve skirted over some of the details in each Prophet while only hitting the high points, the chapters on the “Major Prophets” provide much more detail.

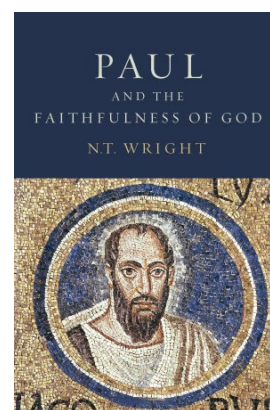
The King in His Beauty reflects years of faithful study and teaching, but it is not primarily an academic book. And for that I am profoundly thankful. Pastors, teachers, and all Christians will benefit from this book, and it is my prayer that it will be used of God to strengthen and equip his church for many years to come.

Christopher R. Bruno
Antioch School Hawai’i
Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

N. T. Wright. *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*. 2 vols. Fortress: Minneapolis, 2013. xxvii + 1,600 pp. \$89.00.

N. T. Wright’s *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* (*PFG*) is the bibliographical equivalent of a European basilica or cathedral. *PFG* is imposing, cavernous, and breathtaking in its scope and ambitions. In just over 1,500 pages of prose that is paradoxically both dense and engaging, Wright surveys a millennium of Jewish history and literature, half a millennium of Greco-Roman philosophy, first-century Hellenistic religion, the fall of the Roman Republic and rise of the Roman Empire, and dozens upon dozens of Pauline texts. And he does so all the while engaging the relevant secondary literature.

This survey is a capstone to thirty-five years of Wright’s published research in the theology of the apostle Paul. Not only does *PFG* present Wright’s understanding of Paul’s teaching, but *PFG* stands as the fourth installment in his broader *Origins and the Questions of God* project, now in its third decade of life. Wright liberally cites not only the first three volumes of this series, but also his many previous publications on Paul. Readers looking for major retractions in *PFG* will be disappointed. On a few occasions, Wright concedes that



he has changed his mind on a question of exegesis, but rarely with consequence for his project at large (cf. pp. 511–12). The impression left upon the reader is that *PFG* synthesizes a life's work in NT history and theology and that, so far as Wright is concerned, this synthesis has emerged unscathed from the fires of criticism.

While *PFG* is lengthy and given to repetition, it is not disorganized. In Part I (“Paul and His World”), Wright attempts to set Paul in the context of the first century. He first relates Saul the Pharisee to the Second Temple Jewish worldview in which he was said to have been nurtured and that provided the raw materials from which he constructed his Christian worldview and theology. Turning to Paul as Apostle to the Gentiles, Wright then explores Paul's Gentile world in three lights: philosophy, religion, and empire.

In Part II (“The Mindset of the Apostle”), Wright addresses the architecture of what he calls Paul's worldview (pp. 24–36, 351–54). Worldviews, Wright argues, contain four components—symbols, praxis, a story, and questions. Worldview, Wright maintains, is something that is “presuppose[d]” and consists of “prior commitments” that subsequently come to be formally articulated (p. 28). It therefore undergirds Paul's theology. There is, however, a reciprocal relationship, Wright contends, between worldview and theology (p. 609). Paul's theology depends upon his worldview, but his theology also sustains this worldview in Paul's churches.

It is in Part III (“Paul's Theology”) that Wright devotes the bulk of *PFG* to summarizing what is said to be Paul's theology. For Wright, Paul has reworked the Jewish worldview bequeathed to him by Second Temple Judaism around the conviction that the crucified and risen Jesus is Israel's Messiah. The resultant Pauline theology in *PFG* is a coherent, integrated whole, and may be summarized under three headings. The first is monotheism (pp. 619–773). While Paul never abandoned Jewish monotheism, he has freshly reconfigured this Jewish conviction around Jesus and the Spirit. The second is election (pp. 774–1042). Paul similarly reconfigures election around Jesus. Jesus is the faithful Israelite that the people of Israel failed to be. In Jesus, God has inaugurated the fulfillment of his purpose to restore the creation both by dealing with the problem that Torah posed for sinful Israel and by reconciling the world to himself. Since God has redefined his people around this faithful Messiah, it is their faith or faithfulness that marks them out as belonging to the faithful Messiah and as those who will receive final vindication on the day of Christ's return. The third heading is hope (pp. 1043–1265). Paul has reconfigured Israel's hope around Jesus and the Spirit. In Christ's glorious return, God's saving purposes for the whole creation will be consummated. In the meantime, Paul appeals to this redefined hope in order to shape the character of believers' lives and in order to chart the future of ethnic Israel.

In Part IV (“Paul in History”), Wright explores how “Paul's theology, his revised monotheism, election and eschatology would relate to the three worlds in which he lived, those of the Jews, the Greeks and the Romans” (p. 1269). He does this by investigating the way in which Paul brings his theology to bear on empire, religion, philosophy, and Judaism, respectively. Paul's theology was a decisive, if implicit, challenge to the imperial claims of Caesar. Paul's praxis would have been understood in terms of an alternate religion that stood opposed to the existing religions of the Roman world. Considered in terms of epistemology, ontology, or ethics, Paul's theology made claims that confronted the philosophical systems contemporary to him, even as it recognized and affirmed those truths that these systems had captured. Finally, Paul did not see himself and believers as Jews *simpliciter*. Paul's theology had, rather, taken the “consistent and . . . Jewish line of ‘fulfillment’” (p. 1413). Paul saw himself as a “Messiah man,” a conviction that entailed both continuity and discontinuity with Judaism (p. 1471).

When viewed in the context of the historical-critical tradition with which it is in dialogue and of which it is part, *PFG* has some notable strengths. First, Wright contends that Paul understands the OT to be a “single . . . coherent narrative still in search of an ending” (p. 116). This narrative begins with God creating the world and placing Adam in the Garden of Eden. It continues with the promises that God makes to Abraham, the giving of Torah at Sinai, and comes to an unresolved conclusion in the exile of Judah. It is this narrative that provides the context within which Paul speaks both of the person and work of Christ, and explains passages from the OT.

Second, Wright argues that Paul is a covenantal theologian. Covenant, for Paul, “always envisaged God’s call of Israel *for the sake of the nations*” (p. 1263, emphasis original; cf. pp. 804, 814–15). God’s covenant came to “fulfill[ment] in the death and resurrection of the Messiah, and . . . was being implemented through [Paul’s] own apostolic mission” (ibid.). Covenant is not only the framework within which Paul speaks of righteousness and justification (pp. 933, 1013), but it is also said to integrate both the forensic and participatory lines of Paul’s teaching generally (pp. 846, 875, 900).

Third, Wright argues that Paul’s theology is thoroughly eschatological. In the death and resurrection of Israel’s crucified Messiah, the age to come has dawned in history (cf. pp. 476–77, 550–55, 1068). Pauline eschatology is inaugurated but not yet consummated. That believers stand in the overlap of the ages has profound and radical implications for the way in which they live in the present (pp. 1095–1128), and perceive both the past and the future.

Fourth, within this framework, Wright advances some suggestive exegetical arguments and claims. He argues, for instance, that Paul speaks of the Spirit in terms of New Shekinah and New Exodus, thereby indicating that Paul identified the Spirit with the God of Israel (p. 727, cf. pp. 711–27). Wright also proposes a chiasmic structure not only to Rom 11:1–32 but also to Rom 9:1–11:36 that yields a coherent if not altogether satisfying reading of a portion of Romans that has long puzzled interpreters (pp. 1156–1258).

However, *PFG* also raises some troubling concerns. One relates to justification, a central component of Wright’s project of Pauline theology. Wright explicitly sets justification in the context of the inaugurated eschatology for which he argues in *PFG*. Justification, then, is both already and not yet; present and future. How, for Wright, do present and future justification relate to one another? There is a genuine “difference” between them, although the two are said to “correspond” to one another (pp. 938–39). “In the present . . . the verdict to be announced on the last day [is] anticipated” (p. 942; cf. p. 766). This latter statement helps us to see what, for Wright, justification is. Justification is fundamentally a divine verdict regarding a human being, a declarative act and not a process of transformation (cf. p. 946).

This construction naturally poses two questions. First, what does justification declare? For Wright, present justification preeminently concerns one’s membership in the people of God. “Justification by works” is “the marking out in the present, by Torah, of those who would be vindicated in the future” (p. 760). On the contrary, Wright argues, justification for Paul “*is all about being declared to be a member of God’s people*; and this people is defined in relation to Messiah himself” (p. 856, emphasis original). The covenant member is, therefore, declared “in the right” (pp. 948–49). Future justification will take place on the day of judgment, and “will consist, in concrete terms, of the resurrection of all the Messiah’s people, and hence the divine ‘declaration’ about them” (p. 939).

Second, what is the ground or basis of the verdict? With respect to present justification, Wright argues that the Reformational doctrine of imputed righteousness is not true to Paul (p. 951; cf. pp. 841,

881). The phrase “the righteousness of God” denotes rather God’s own covenant faithfulness. For Wright, the Messiah is the faithful one (Wright repeatedly argues that the Greek phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ should be translated “the faithfulness of Christ,” cf. pp. 836–51). Those who have been “incorporated” into the faithful Messiah have pronounced over them the “declaration ‘in the right,’” a declaration that is “rooted in the Messiah’s death” and resurrection (pp. 950–51; 948). The “badge” of that belongingness to the Messiah and of their sharing in his own justifying verdict is “faith” (p. 952). The “basis” of their present justification is therefore “faith” (pp. 832, 847). But while Wright can speak of faith in this connection as receptive of Christ and his work (cf. p. 952), it is not altogether clear that faith in this connection is exclusively receptive. Wright stresses that Messiah’s “faith” is his faithfulness or his covenant obedience, and proceeds to set believers’ justifying faith in the closest proximity to Messiah’s faithfulness (cf. p. 847). One may therefore be forgiven for understanding a person’s justifying faith as inclusive of his faithfulness and obedience (cf. 951), even as Wright commendably stresses that this initial verdict “is not dependent upon . . . work . . . subsequent [to faith]” (p. 955).

With respect to future justification, Wright speaks of one’s final vindication as both “according to” one’s works (pp. 938, 1031) and on the “basis of works” (pp. 940, 1028). He obliquely acknowledges criticisms that the latter form of expression (final justification on the basis of works) is counter to Paul’s teaching that justification is through faith alone (p. 949). But he dismisses the concern that the terms “ground” or “basis” are problematic in this connection (p. 949). In doing so, he regrettably sidesteps the opportunity to bring clarity to one of the most contested facets of his previously published statements on justification.

Wright’s statements on justification in *PFG*, then, synthesize but do not modify what he has argued in earlier works. *PFG* provides a full and exegetically-argued statement of justification. It does not, however, bring clarity or modification to dimensions of Wright’s understanding of justification that have come under sustained scrutiny.

A second troubling dimension of *PFG* is the way in which it depicts the saving purposes and work of God in Christ. Wright frequently stresses that God’s saving purposes are for the world. God’s intent is not simply to rescue a people, nor even to rescue that people from the world. His purpose rather is to rescue a people, and through that people, to rescue the world (cf. pp. 525, 734–35). The narrative of Adam-Abraham-Israel-(Torah)-Jesus represents the unfolding of that one purpose in history. These main lines of Wright’s proposal are salutary. It is the details and mechanics of Wright’s construct that raise certain questions. Wright, for instance, properly depicts the world’s “plight” in both Second Temple Judaism and Paul in terms of sin (p. 747), and properly understands Paul’s pre-Christian conception of that plight to have intensified in light of the cross (p. 750). But Wright overwhelmingly depicts Paul’s conception of sin in terms of the power, pollution, and bondage of sin without laying corresponding emphasis upon the guilt of sin (see especially pp. 752–72). In like fashion, Wright’s keenest interest in Paul’s exposition of Christ’s death is as that death liberates its beneficiaries from the power and captivity of sin (pp. 1068–70). There is in *PFG*, furthermore, no discussion of Paul’s teaching on hell, much less hell as a place of the eternal punishment of the wicked (cf. 2 Thess 1:8–9).

The emphasis in *PFG*’s discussion of sin and salvation, therefore, is upon the way in which sin and salvation play out within human experience and the creation. These points of themselves are, of course, true to Paul. The problem comes in what is attenuated or even omitted. Personal sin as subjecting the individual sinner to the eternal wrath of God, and salvation as delivering the sinner from that wrath and restoring him to a right relationship with God—these grand Pauline themes either do not register

at all in *PFG* or register only as faint echoes. Wright's interests in Paul lie elsewhere as evidenced by his characterization of the proposition that "God acts to restore humans to a 'right relationship' with himself" as a "drastic truncation of Paul's narrative world" (p. 490); his animadversions against "soul-saving and soul-making" (p. 1485); and his chiding of Western Christianity for its alleged preoccupation with heaven (p. 1485). The absence of hell and the eternal punishment of the wicked in *PFG* raises, in turn, serious and unanswered questions about its understanding of the character of God, the work of Christ, and the fate of human beings—three of the most fundamental concerns of *PFG*.

In conclusion, *PFG* is at once fascinating and frustrating. In highlighting Paul as a covenantal, narrational, eschatological, and coherent thinker, the core of whose theology is Christ, crucified and raised from the dead, Wright has captured the outlines of the apostle Paul's teaching. In its formulations on justification, and in the way in which it speaks of sin and salvation, *PFG* raises serious, material concerns that it does not satisfactorily resolve. Taken as a whole, *PFG* is less like Paris's Notre-Dame than Barcelona's unfinished Sagrada Familia—imposing, singular, and ingenious. And, like Sagrada Familia, *PFG* will probably be around for quite a while, exciting puzzlement, admiration, and consternation—all at the same time.

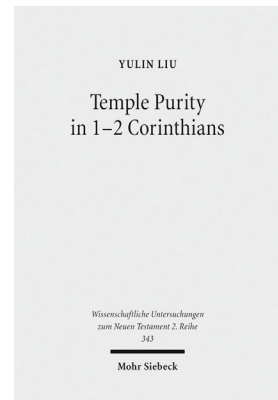
Guy Prentiss Waters
Reformed Theological Seminary
Jackson, Mississippi, USA

Yulin Liu. *Temple Purity in 1–2 Corinthians*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2.343. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013. xv + 281 pp. £69.00/\$112.00.

The temple metaphor is a frequent and significant one in the Corinthian correspondence. Within *Temple Purity in 1–2 Corinthians*, Liu examines how a Jewish and a Greek reader living within first-century Corinth would have considered this concept. He does so by considering archaeological, literary, and historical data.

Liu establishes from the opening pages the need for such a study. Temple ideas are found in passages like 1 Cor 3:16–17 when Paul writes, "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple" (ESV). The metaphor continues within 1 Cor 5 when Paul uses temple language and speaks of excommunication. In 1 Cor 6:19 he writes, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?" Then in 2 Cor 6:16 he writes, "What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, 'I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.'"

Liu is not the first person to write about the temple theme within the Corinthian letters. Other studies, however, have mainly focused upon temple language or the application of Jewish temple language. Occasionally, there have been some who have given a Greco-Roman perspective. Liu's book, however, is the first full-length monograph that has treated the connection between temple and purity from a Jewish and Greco-Roman perspective within 1–2 Corinthians. This makes Liu's study distinct.



Liu begins his study by distinguishing between the Jewish and Greco-Roman perspective. In his second chapter, he surveys the significance and character of the Jerusalem Temple, its history and significance. His chapter considers Palestinian Jewish texts (i.e., Tobit, Judith, 1 Enoch, Jubilees, 1–2 Maccabees, the Testaments of Levi and Benjamin, Prayer of Azariah, Sirach, 1 and 4 Ezra, Psalms of Solomon, and the Testament of Moses). It also considers Diaspora texts (Letter of Aristeas, Wisdom of Solomon, Sibylline Oracles 3–6, 3–4 Maccabees, and 2 Baruch). He provides other full-length sections that consider the writings of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Philo, and Josephus. It is an impressive survey of texts that cover the range of Jewish understanding.

Significantly, he points out that the Jewish sense of the temple and purity is more ontological, “a state of being compatible with the divine” (p. 12). Purity is a condition for contact with God. He finds the Jewish perspective on purity connected with priests, sacrifices, circumcision, vessels, the blood of animals, water, and morality. Ritual purity can be achieved by purification offerings, but moral purity emerges from a correct relationship with God. Sexual immorality, in particular, is defiling. When one becomes unclean, ceremonial purification is rather complex from the Jewish perspective. Purity is absolutely essential for national identity, embodies faithful worship, and witnesses of Yahweh’s holiness and glory to the nations.

In his third chapter, Liu demonstrates that Greco-Roman temples were also concerned with purity. Greco-Roman writers such as Porphyry of Tyre, Epictetus, and Plutarch point out purity requirements for worship within Greco-Roman temples. As the temple was residence for a deity, it was important to approach the god with purity. Liu notes several differences, however, in purity from the Greco-Roman perspective. While purity within Greco-Roman society concerns removal of sins and temple cleansing, the Greco-Roman sense of the word is more relational than ontological. Rather than using the blood of animals for purification, Greco-Roman deities used water. Piety, a pious mind, and a good moral life also produced purity.

Liu’s discussion of temple purity in the Greco-Roman world is detailed. He discusses temples in the Greco-Roman world, considering sources that span from 300 B.C. to A. D. 100. Rather than being a tangential point of Greco-Roman society, the temple exerted great influence on communal and individual life. In his survey, he notes that the Greco-Roman temple was a symbol for cohesion, commonwealth, and religious value of the nation. He also specifically considers the Temple of Apollo, the Temple of Isis, and the Temple of Asklepios with regards to their purity, all of which have counterparts in Corinth. Like his study on Judaism, this survey is also impressive, although it would improve with the examination of some other temples that are represented within Corinth.

While different in some ways, Liu highlights right from the beginning that the Jewish as well as the Greco-Roman perspective carried with it a sense of holiness. Both contain purity with God’s holiness and presence. Both contain purification rites. While different things lead to contamination, both worldviews contain the sense of mortal and immortal, earthly and heavenly. Temple dwelling is connected to divine dwelling, fellowship with the divine, and the people’s unity (p. 28).

Liu then takes the results of his survey of Jewish and Greco-Roman backgrounds and applies these to sections where the temple is explicitly discussed in 1 Cor 3:16–17; chs. 5–7; and 2 Cor 6:14–7:1. Liu states that these are not exegetical analyses, but there is certainly a great amount of detail in the examination of each passage in question.

Following the examination of each temple text in Corinthians, Liu then outlines his conclusions. According to Liu, Paul used the temple as a metaphoric device to address purity issues in the community.

This redefined the boundary and vocation of the Corinthian temple-community. Paul urges the Corinthians through the temple metaphor not to be divided or be immoral as that affects the entire community. Instead, the Corinthian Christians should live based on the ethical requirements of the temple. Since the temple community is not yet fulfilled, Christians ought to also separate from profane groups and pursue sanctification (p. 238).

Liu provides a thorough and thought provoking study on perceptions of the temple in 1–2 Corinthians. It would improve if he could state more clearly his viewpoint on Paul’s use of the Jewish and Greco-Roman perspective of the temple metaphor. Throughout much of the study, Liu raises the importance of the Greco-Roman background and seems to place it on an equal standing with the Jewish background. While he has done well to raise the importance of the Greco-Roman background, there are several places that favor a more decided Jewish background. Furthermore, Liu’s conclusions could be stated more clearly at times.

This can be seen in the 1 Cor 3:16–17 passage. While holiness can be understood somewhat from the Greco-Roman perspective, Paul’s declaration that the Corinthians are the temple favors a Jewish ontological perspective that seems to surpass the Greco-Roman background. Liu spends much of his discussion of 1 Cor 3 making the Jewish and Greco-Roman backgrounds seem equal. Then, at the end, he appeals to a weak echo of Num 16 to make the most sense of the passage.

In the book’s conclusion, he states this better, emphasizing the Jewish slightly over the Greco-Roman. He does rightfully state, “Given the ideas of temple purity in the pagan world, the Corinthians at least should not have felt confused when hearing about Paul’s temple metaphor, being well-equipped with pre-knowledge to understand what Paul was trying to convey” (p. 236). Then, however, he indicates that Paul is appealing to his own Christian teaching that appears to be neither fully Greco-Roman nor Jewish. This is a bit surprising as Paul’s expression in 1 Cor 3:16–17 seems to favor Jewish thought more than Greco-Roman. Liu could thus be a bit clearer.

A second matter that would help Liu’s discussion is more interaction with OT texts that Paul cites with regard to the temple metaphor. In the 1 Cor 5 discussion, Liu does not refer at any great length to the citation from Deut 17:7 in 1 Cor 5:13. While he takes time to speak about exclusion from Greco-Roman temples and also from the Jerusalem temple and the Qumran temple community, he bypasses the most explicit reference and gives other ideas. In the discussion on immorality in 1 Cor 6, Liu spends some time with the Gen 2:24 reference, but there could be more attention paid as that reference extends its influence into other places. By citing Gen 2:24 in 1 Cor 6:16, Paul particularly highlights the Jewish ideas of unity found in the surrounding context of 1 Cor 6:15–17.

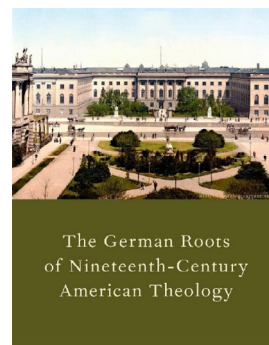
Liu has provided a thought provoking study. It is very detailed with much attention to contemporary Greco-Roman literature. Most pages throughout this book contain approximately six footnotes. Those who are interested in Corinthians studies and Paul will want access to this important study. Those who are interested in the interaction between Jewish and Greco-Roman backgrounds in Paul’s writing will also want to read Liu’s book.

H. H. Drake Williams III
Tyndale Theological Seminary
Badhoevedorp, the Netherlands

— HISTORY AND HISTORICAL THEOLOGY —

Annette G. Aubert. *The German Roots of Nineteenth-Century American Theology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. xiv + 402 pp. \$66.60.

Annette Aubert advances the intriguing thesis that “in order to comprehend certain strands of nineteenth-century American Reformed theology” (p. 220), it is necessary to understand “how the theological ideas of nineteenth-century Germany affected the Reformed theological landscape in the United States” (pp. 2–3). The changes that took place in American Reformed theology throughout the nineteenth-century will be better understood, she contends, when those changes are examined against the backdrop of what she calls “a broader intellectual context” (p. 3), one that acknowledges that American Reformed theologians were in “transatlantic dialogue” (p. 8) with German thinkers who were also responding to theological challenges “prompted by modern science and Enlightenment thinking” (p. 1). Aubert’s groundbreaking analysis traces “specific theological methods and atonement themes” throughout the works of Emanuel Vogel Gerhart and Charles Hodge in order to illustrate how Reformed theologians at Mercersburg and Old Princeton “integrated German theology into their thinking” (p. 10) as they sought to respond faithfully to the “progressive *Zeitgeist*” that was emerging “on both sides of the Atlantic” (p. 17). Her work is meticulously researched, carefully written, tightly reasoned, and remarkably compelling, and it successfully demonstrates that neither Gerhart nor Hodge should be written off as narrow-minded, provincial, or reactionary thinkers. Rather, they should be regarded as informed theologians who read widely and developed their theological methods and distinct doctrines through ongoing dialogue with a broad range of more or less orthodox sources, including “leading nineteenth-century German scholars” (p. 220).



ANNETTE G. AUBERT

Following a brief introduction in which she states her thesis and summarizes the broad outline of an argument that proves at times to be more than just a little demanding, Aubert begins to explore how Gerhart and Hodge “defined the atonement in light of their own theological methods and engagement with German theology” (p. 2). In the three chapters that comprise Part One, she discusses the formative impact various influences had on the European and American intellectual contexts of the nineteenth century. Among the influences she examines are the Scottish Common Sense Realism of philosophers like Thomas Reid, the inductive scientific method of modern thinkers like Francis Bacon and Alexander von Humboldt, the absolute idealism of German philosophers like Georg Hegel, the self-consciously subjective and progressive theology of liberal theologians like Friedrich Schleiermacher, and the various formulations of *Vermittlungstheologie* (“mediating theology”) offered by German scholars like Carl Ullmann, Friedrich Tholuck, Karl Hagenbach, and Isaak Dorner.

In Part Two, Aubert then considers the role these influences played in the development of the theological methods that were advanced by the scholars at Mercersburg and Old Princeton, and she explores the impact these methods had on their distinct doctrines of the atonement. In Chapters Four and Five she demonstrates that Gerhart “moved away” (p. 127) from the prevailing American views of the atonement because his indebtedness to Schleiermacher, idealist philosophy, and German mediating theology (p. 23) led him to abandon the traditional *locus* approach (p. 99) to the study of theology. In

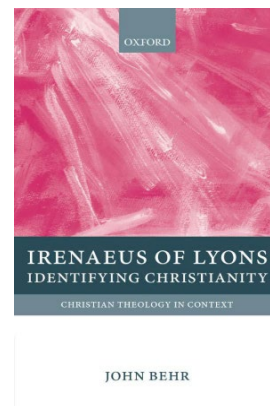
Chapters Six and Seven she then explains why Hodge retained the classically Reformed emphasis upon “vicarious satisfaction” (p. 209) despite his extensive interaction with German scholarship. According to Aubert, Hodge was persuaded that the concept of satisfaction must stand at “the core” (p. 209) of any orthodox understanding of the atonement in part because his contact with more “orthodox and confessional” (p. 160) scholars like Ernst Hengstenberg made him reluctant to adopt “a theological method based on a central dogma” (p. 63). Indeed, he refused to replace Scripture with Christology as the “*principium cognoscendi* of theology” (p. 63; cf. 93) in part because German biblical theologians encouraged him to reject the “confessional criticism, subjective theology, and progressive doctrine” (p. 72) of “Schleiermacher and the mediating theologians” (p. 194), and they did so by reinforcing his foundational commitment to the thoroughly orthodox notion that Scripture alone “provides the source for all aspects of theology” (p. 103). Finally, in her conclusion Aubert capably summarizes the broad outline of her argument and restates—in an admirably modest fashion—the central contention of her groundbreaking research: “Acknowledging the influences of Schleiermacher, the mediating theologians, and Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg allows for a more complete understanding of the Reformed American thinkers discussed in this book” (p. 220).

In my estimation, *The German Roots of Nineteenth-Century American Theology* should be required reading for those with an advanced interest in American church history for at least two important reasons. In the first place, it sheds much-needed light on important debates that had a formative impact upon the Reformed theological landscape of nineteenth-century America, including the ongoing and often contentious debates between the Reformed theologians at Mercersburg and Old Princeton Seminaries. It should be thoughtfully considered in the second place because it forthrightly and persuasively challenges a number of the sacred cows that are all too common in the historiography of North American evangelicalism, particularly those that are associated with Hodge and his colleagues at Old Princeton. In this regard, Aubert’s concluding assessment of Hodge—which is grounded in painstaking research throughout her volume—is as striking as it is refreshing. “If Hodge’s theological method is analyzed (as this book has done) in terms of his views on the noetic effects of sin and regenerated use of reason (*theologia regenitorum*),” she confidently and correctly concludes, “it cannot be argued that Hodge based his theology primarily on Scottish philosophy or rationalism. His theology did not embrace the Pelagian and rationalistic anthropological views of Thomas Reid. Instead, his theological views on anthropology (inspired by Hengstenberg and Turretin) are in agreement with Calvinism and Reformed orthodoxy” (pp. 224–25). While it goes without saying that given the depth of this volume even admiring readers will likely quibble with one aspect of Aubert’s analysis or another—for example, I would suggest that there is an unresolved tension in her discussion of Hodge’s understanding of science that leaves the mistaken impression that he really was a “naïve realist” with respect to his approach to the “book of nature” (cf. pp. 176–79)—nevertheless her revisionist scholarship deserves not just to be read widely but also celebrated, especially by those who have long suspected that there is something fishy about the standard interpretation of the Princeton Theology.

Paul Kjoss Helseth
University of Northwestern, St. Paul
St. Paul, Minnesota, USA

John Behr. *Irenaeus of Lyons: Identifying Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. 320 pp. \$110.00.

John Behr, perhaps best known for his works *The Way to Nicaea* (2001) and *The Nicene Faith* (2004), offers a splendid, short new work titled *Irenaeus of Lyons: Identifying Christianity*. Behr sees a need for this new volume on this well-studied figure since Irenaeus's opponents, namely, Valentinian and Marcion, have recently been the subjects of numerous studies. As a result of the works of Bart Ehrman, Karen King, and David Brakke on this category of "Gnosticism," there has been an increasing acceptance among scholars of the early church that there is no single early Christianity, but that there exist many "lost Christianities." As the opponents of Irenaeus have undergone more sympathetic reevaluation, Behr sees a need to reevaluate Irenaeus with these more recent studies and assessments in mind.



Although occasioned by the scholarship on "lost Christianities," Behr does not directly engage in a refutation of any particular work. He focuses his attention on enlightening his reader about Irenaeus. The volume is divided into three parts. Part one examines the situation in Rome at the time of Irenaeus's writings. Here Behr notes the prevailing order of the day in Rome was diversity among a number of Christian communities. No single Christian community could claim to be the leader of the rest, nor could any particular one claim to be the true or orthodox church. Instead, there was a mutual acceptance of a variety of doctrines. However, there were some communities such as those led by Marcion and Valentinian who intentionally distanced themselves from the rest of the Roman Church. This is perhaps the most valuable contribution of part one in that Behr establishes the surprisingly wide net of acceptable doctrines among the Roman churches and that what are today now known as heretical movements were not forced out of the Church, but that they voluntarily distanced themselves from the wider Christianity community because they believed that they championed a better understanding of the revelation of God through Christ. Hence, Behr insightfully argues that in the history of Christianity, neither orthodoxy nor heresy came first; rather, both developed together in concert (p. 47).

In part two Behr overviews Irenaeus's major work, *Against Heresies* (*AH*). Behr notes the overall complexity of the work and that those unfamiliar with Irenaeus's exegetical methods may find *AH* "tedious" and Irenaeus's efforts "inept" (p. 73). Hence, Behr clearly and concisely summarizes each of the five books of *AH*, which makes Irenaeus much more accessible to students who are just beginning to delve into the study of Irenaeus and the early church. Moreover, Behr's summaries provide a window into Irenaeus's overall theological agenda. Except for book 1 of *AH*, which focuses on summarizing his opponents' arguments, all of the books of *AH* have the same threefold structure: a discussion of the one God, a discussion of the one Christ, and finally a discussion of the human being (p. 103). Beyond this, in summarizing *AH*, Behr subtly humanizes Irenaeus, painting him neither as an unerring saint, nor as a partisan churchman unthinkingly parroting the teachings of Polycarp. Instead, Behr portrays Irenaeus as a theologian of his times, employing contemporary rhetorical techniques including the use of humor (p. 104) to establish Scripture as the standard of truth to which doctrine should be compared.

Part three constitutes the bulk of Behr's work and is an in-depth analysis of books 3–5 of *AH*. Behr emphasizes that Irenaeus's theology is wholly christocentric to the extent that Irenaeus interprets both Genesis and Revelation (and all the books in between) through the lens of Christ. For Irenaeus, the OT

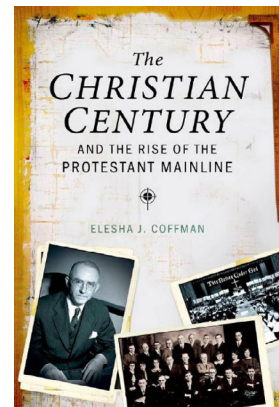
and NT do not represent two different phases of history. Instead, both testify to the work of God in Christ. Thus, Irenaeus can argue against Marcion that there is nothing new in the gospel that has not already been preached in the OT (p. 139). Behr further reveals the christocentric nature of Irenaeus's theology when he discusses the plan of salvation. Christ does not function as a "plan B" for God. Instead, Christ and not Adam is the true beginning of humanity, even though Jesus does not appear until the end of the story. Therefore, Adam is to be understood as necessary, not because of any deficiency in God, but because he is a forerunner of Christ, who is the beginning of all theology (pp. 146–47).

Irenaeus of Lyons: Identifying Christianity is a valuable contribution to the study of the early church in a number of ways. First, it serves as an important counterpoint to the many studies of "lost Christianities" showing that Irenaeus and by extension other proto-orthodox figures were not necessarily nefariously seeking to stamp out heresy but that often "heretics" willfully chose to distance and separate themselves from the proto-orthodox community. Second, Behr provides an effective, although not exhaustive, introduction to the theology of Irenaeus that will be invaluable to introductory students of the early church as well as systematic theologians seeking to better understand how Irenaeus made sense of the entire biblical narrative. Lastly, scholars will find it necessary to engage Behr's careful attention to Irenaeus's christocentric theology as they endeavor to further understand this foundational figure in Christian history.

Eric Wickman
St. Louis University
St. Louis, Missouri, USA

Elesha J. Coffman. *The Christian Century and the Rise of the Protestant Mainline*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. 271 pp. \$27.95.

It is almost impossible to speak of Elesha Coffman's monograph, *The Christian Century and the Rise of the Protestant Mainline* (TCC hereafter), without addressing the upsurge of recent scholarship on liberal Christianity in the United States. Recent books include David Hollinger's *After Cloven Tongues*, Matthew Hedstrom's *The Rise of Liberal Religion*, David Swartz's *Moral Minority: The Evangelical Left in an Age of Conservatism*, and Andrew Preston's *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy*. The increase in literature has been so astounding that *The New York Times* even dedicated space to all of the new activity. (See Jennifer Schuessler, "A Religious Legacy, with Its Leftward Tilt, Is Reconsidered," *The New York Times*, July 23, 2013, available at http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/24/books/a-religious-legacy-with-its-leftward-tilt-is-reconsidered.html?_r=1&.)



This apparent resurgence may come as a surprise to readers of *Themelios* because American evangelicals have become accustomed to being both the brunt and willing subjects of scholarly investigation. Various evangelical epochs from the Jesus Movement (Gary Dorrien), Francis Schaeffer (Barry Hankins), and Bible-thumping religious migrants (Darren Dochuck) have been appraised by academic historians. It seems possible that given the nearly constant stream of scholarship concerning evangelicalism, that the bulk of research represented a *de facto* kind of victory for conservative Christians.

It is precisely the largesse of literature concerning conservative evangelicals that makes Coffman's *TCC* stand out. *TCC* is one of those books that can be described and studied from a multitude of angles, although Coffman calls it a "cultural history" (p. 7). *TCC* could also be classified as an intellectual history of the Protestant mainline through one of its primary scholarly outlets. In eight chapters and an introduction, Coffman explains how the Protestant mainline came to the status of a religious establishment through the early history of its popular magazine, *The Christian Century*. Coffman's most intriguing claim is that the Protestant mainline was never primarily built on numbers but cultural capital. By cultural capital Coffman means that the mainline was led primarily by Caucasian men who studied at elite higher education institutions, and acquired a host of academic skills to boost their influence (pp. 13–14). In short, they were WASPs (White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestants).

In the first chapter, Coffman addresses how *The Christian Century*, once called the *Christian Oracle*, earned cultural capital. The story begins with editor, Charles Clayton Morrison, who took *The Christian Century* from a nominal source to a magazine of great importance. Coffman is quick to explain that *The Christian Century's* power was not merely ideational, but was also product of "cultural entrepreneurs," and socially progressive Protestants who took steps to make *The Christian Century* an important intellectual circle (p. 31).

The Century's readership did not just expand because of its progressive-mindedness either. In the third chapter, Coffman reveals that the magazine grew as Morrison spurred readers to share *The Century* with like-minded people, even using prizes such as cars and vacations to Europe to encourage spreading the word (p. 9). The fourth chapter continues to explore the way in which commonality defined the readership of *The Christian Century*. "This attraction to sophisticated and intellectually rigorous Christianity, far more than mere membership in the seven mostly Northern denominations later grouped together under the label 'mainline,' gave this small, elite group a distinctive identity," Coffman wrote (p. 109).

The remainder of *TCC* is mostly concerned with, not so much how the mainline lost its cultural capital, but how the mainline has adapted to various challenges including consumerism and the mass appeal of evangelicalism embodied in the likes of Billy Graham. According to Coffman, the intelligentsia of the mainline did not understand the attraction of Graham and *Christianity Today* because "they constructed their authority on the basis of popular support and actual capital rather than cultural capital." (p. 184)

In the seventh chapter, "The Contested Center," Coffman offers one of her most important insights, which is that liberal Protestants "viewed unchecked consumerism with the same horror as their more conservative contemporaries viewed godless communism" (p. 194). The result of these beliefs, the author states, is that it cost mainliners greatly because they underestimated both the force of mass communication and the resilience of fundamentalism. In other words, mainline intellectuals believed that populism was dead following the progressive era.

Despite these somewhat costly errors, Coffman reveals that since the 1990s *The Christian Century* is once again growing and even publishing some of the same authors who also publish in *Christianity Today*. This adaption came after *The Christian Century's* various editors realized that the tension between "elitism and broad appeal" was an impossibility that could not be reconciled (p. 216). Coffman concludes the final comprehensive chapter in 1960 as the general cultural shift moved away from traditional and orthodox Christianity towards what some claim was cultural drift. It may also be worth noting that there is now a renewed recognition of orthodoxy and liturgy among younger generations

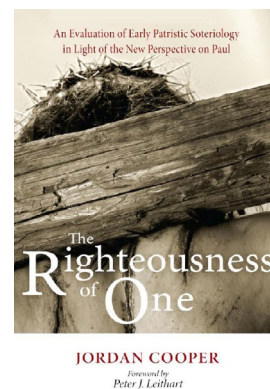
of would-be evangelicals, too. (See Gracy Olmstead, “Why Millennials Long for Liturgy,” *The American Conservative*, January 14, 2014.) In this regard, religious practice may be swinging back towards the mainline again.

Coffman’s work is most valuable, as alluded to earlier, through the prism of cultural and intellectual history. Religious historians will especially find this book appealing as many of the millennials are now exploring High Church Protestantism for the first time. Historians who are researching American conservatism will also find this book worthwhile because Coffman explores the complex tropes of tradition and consensus of America in the middle of the twentieth century. In fact, *TCC* would be most useful in a comparative analysis between competing types of traditions on the Left and Right following the Second World War.

Seth Bartee
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, Virginia, USA

Jordan Cooper. *The Righteousness of One: An Evaluation of Early Patristic Soteriology in Light of the New Perspective on Paul*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013. 147 pp. \$18.00.

The New Perspective on Paul (NPP) has taken center stage in Pauline studies for the past four decades or so. The primary actors in the drama, Krister Stendahl, E. P. Sanders, James D. G. Dunn, and N. T. Wright, have cast serious doubt on the Lutheran understanding of justification, even though each of these men represent their own nuanced view. If nothing else, the advent of the NPP has sent scholars *ad fontes*, reexamining Paul and Second Temple literature to discover new evidence that might shed light on this reinterpretation of Paul. The surprising oversight in the search for Pauline justification has been the disregard of the Fathers. How did the doctrine of justification fare with those who were left to continue the church after the apostles were martyred? Since the Fathers were the first interpreters of Paul, it only makes sense to examine their thoughts on this important Pauline doctrine. Jordan Cooper has entered the fray from this neglected vantage point. Cooper is a Pastor in the American Association of Lutheran Churches (AALC) and has written a smattering of other articles.



Cooper’s thesis is that Luther did not invent a view of justification that would have been foreign to Paul, as the NPP has so frequently claimed; rather, the same understanding of justification that Luther held was first believed long before him in the second century. That is, “Within one hundred years of the writing of Romans and Galatians, the themes that informed Luther’s thought were accepted by many in the church” (p. 97). Cooper states,

for the criticisms of Stendahl, Wright, and Dunn to have validity, two historical truths must be established that are often presupposed rather than defended: first, that the introspective, individualistic Luther, who regards justification as a purely legal transfer term, being critiqued is an accurate picture of the reformer; second, that the Augustinian reading of Paul is the beginning of an understanding of Paulinism concerned with individual salvation. (pp. 13–14)

Cooper refutes them on both counts. His aim is both to exonerate Luther from the caricatures that have marred his image and to provide evidence from the second century that shows continuity with Luther's thought.

Chapter 1 rehearses the oft-tread history of the NPP, briefly examining the contributions of Krister Stendahl, E. P. Sanders, James D. G. Dunn, and N. T. Wright. Chapter 2 contains an overview of Cooper's methodology, which includes laying the important foundation of his presuppositions as they relate to Paul, Luther, and the Patristic sources. Cooper wisely acknowledges that everyone is prone to his or her reading of texts that is, for better or worse, tainted by the glasses of one's own tradition. As a Lutheran, Cooper is certainly open to the charge of reading Luther favorably, though he handles the sources fairly throughout. Chapter 3 traces the major studies conducted on justification in the early church, for instance, those of George Stanley Faber (*The Primitive Doctrine of Justification*), Thomas F. Torrance (*The Doctrine of Grace in the Apostolic Fathers*), and Alister McGrath (*Iustitia Dei*), to name a few.

Chapter 4 is where Cooper begins to build his case. Here he puts forth his understanding of Luther, which is much more complex than many scholars have assumed. Cooper disallows a flat, monolithic approach to Luther that centers on law-court imagery. Luther himself was not immune to fine-tuning, or in some cases, altering his views over the course of his life. For Cooper, the indwelling of Christ is crucial to Luther's theology of justification. On this point he relies heavily on the work of Tuomo Mannermaa (*Christ Present in Faith*), even though he does offer several critiques of Mannermaa's work (pp. 61–63). Cooper concludes, "For Luther, justification is based on a prior union between the believer and Christ" (p. 67). Chapter 5 is a treatment of three Apostolic Fathers—*1 Clement*, Ignatius, and the *Epistle to Diognetus*. Focusing on *1 Clement* 32, much of the Ignatius corpus, but especially *Phld.* 8.2, and *Diognetus* 9, Cooper argues that each writer has a conception of justification that would align with Luther's own view. Chapter 6 is devoted to Justin Martyr. Cooper is right that any discussion about justification in the early church must move beyond the Apostolic Fathers (p. 98; an error that Torrance made). In Justin, Cooper sees individualistic salvation, imputation, and *theosis*. However, he also believes Justin rejects *sola fide* because of his emphasis on personal righteousness (p. 126). Nevertheless, Luther would look fondly on Justin's high view of union with Christ.

The overall achievement of this book is laudable. Cooper exposes a major oversight of how Paul's doctrine was appropriated in the century following his death (interested readers should also consult the fabulous work by Michael Bird and Joseph Dodson, eds., *Paul and the Second Century*). The NPP has never taken seriously how justification was taken up by Paul's successors, assuming, as many have before, that the Fathers immediately turned away from one of Paul's most cherished doctrines. From this point forward, proponents of the NPP will have to explain why those in the second century had a view of justification that looks suspiciously close to the view of justification that Luther held to. Could it be that Luther read Paul rightly all along? It will be interesting to see how a study such as this impacts further discussions.

While this study does not claim to ring the death knell of the NPP, nor does it claim to be a major work of scholarship (interaction with secondary literature is substantially lacking), there are a few problem areas. To begin with, the study flies over the surface of too many issues that demand deeper reflection, which means that he assumes too much at times. For instance, many debate the influence that Paul even had in the second century, but Cooper takes this for granted. Justin Martyr, for example, does not even mention Paul or clearly cite the Apostle. Along these lines, I thought it a bit strange to argue primarily that the second-century writers agree with Luther, rather than that the second-century

writers agree with Paul. Again, I think he assumes this, but his purpose seems to be to show that the second-century writers are Lutheran, rather than Pauline.

Second, the author overemphasizes *theosis* in the second century. The basis of this problem stems from his blurring of union and *theosis*. These are not the same and I do not think he makes this clear. At one point he takes Thomas Oden to task for not seeing *theosis* in the doctrine of justification in the second century (p. 35), though I remain more convinced by Oden than Cooper. His view of *theosis* is too developed for the second century. Unfortunately, much of his argument hinges on seeing *theosis* in the Apostolic Fathers and Justin. Had he backed down from this and simply argued that there is a current of justification by faith that runs from Paul to those in the second century, which finally flows through Luther to our day, his argument would have been stronger.

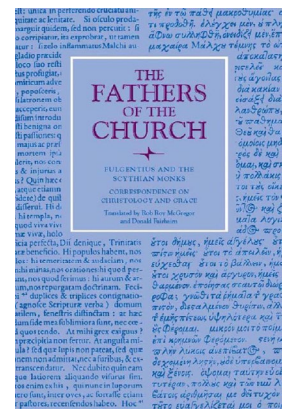
In this lucid and well-written book, Cooper asks an important question of the Fathers, one that has surprisingly not been asked: “Do the earliest Christians adopt a view of Paul akin to that of the NPP, or of Luther?” Cooper rightly answers with Luther. The Fathers are the blind spot of the NPP and Cooper’s work should force scholars to look over their shoulders’ and address this issue. Hopefully, if nothing else, this work will beckon more research on this topic. As Peter Leithart said, who wrote the book’s foreword, “Cooper does not claim to pass final judgment on the New Perspective. What he offers is the opportunity to renew the debate in a more historically informed fashion” (p. x).

Brian J. Arnold
Smithland First Baptist Church
Smithland, Kentucky, USA

Fulgentius. *Correspondence on Christology and Grace*. The Fathers of the Church. Translated by Rob Roy McGregor and Donald Fairbairn. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2013. xv + 251 pp. \$39.95.

The Catholic University of America Press continues their line, “The Fathers of the Church,” with a second volume dealing with St. Fulgentius of Ruspe. Fulgentius was a bishop in North Africa in the era after Augustine’s death. The selection of writings here regards the correspondence of Christology and grace in this crucial period of the Church’s history. Between the years AD 519 and 523, Fulgentius received and responded to letters from a group of monks from Scythia. Both sides of the correspondence, the monks’ inquiry and the bishop’s response, provide a robust glimpse at how the Church understood orthodoxy in this age. The bulk of the writings in this volume have been translated for the first time, allowing a broader audience to glean insights from this helpful dialogue.

What becomes clear in this volume is that grace and Christology were recognized as “two-sides of the same coin” and not independent theological issues. As the translators point out, both Christology and grace are concerned to properly relate the divine and human. Fulgentius, in his response to the monks and his treatise *The Truth about Predestination and Grace* (also included in this volume), explicitly links his understanding of grace and Christology, such that one cannot be understood without the other. This is particularly important for the translators, particularly Donald Fairbairn, whose earlier work, *Grace and Christology in the Early Church* (OUP, 2003), argues for an



explicit connection between these two doctrines (focusing on how Cyril responds to heretical notions of Christology, and then tracing that trajectory to Cassian). For Fairbairn, rightly I believe, to understand the ancient debates on Christology necessitates a proper grasp of their doctrine of grace. Furthermore, equally imperative, is not simply to think about these debates as interesting history, but to allow their insights to help form our own conceptions of these crucial doctrines.

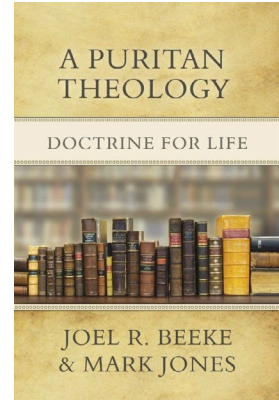
Included in this volume are translations of the “Letter from the Scythian Monks to the Bishops” (*Ep.* 16), “Fulgentius’s First Letter to the Scythian Monks” (*Ep.* 17), “Fulgentius’s Second Letter to the Scythian Monks” (*Ep.* 15), and “Fulgentius’s *The Truth About Predestination and Grace*. Included as appendices are, *The Chapters of John Maxentius Compiled Against the Nestorians and the Pelagians for the Satisfaction of the Brothers*, and *A Very Brief Confession of the Catholic Faith by the Same Author* (John Maxentius). John Maxentius was one of the Scythian monks, and his *Twelve Chapters* was the document that raised questions concerning the monks’ orthodoxy. Specifically, Maxentius claimed, “one of the Trinity was crucified in the flesh” (p. 17). As the translators point out in the introduction, the issues were probably more political than theological, and was unnecessarily confused because “in the flesh” was dropped from Maxentius’s claim when this dispute was reported to the Pope, making it look like the monks failed to distinguish between the Son’s suffering in his human nature compared to his divine nature (p. 17). Because of various attacks against the monks’ orthodoxy (and motivation), they wrote to Fulgentius to hear a response to their theology from the exiled bishops. Fulgentius affirms the monks’ belief in Christology and grace. While the monks did not convince the prevailing leadership that their view was *the* orthodox view, they won the day nonetheless at the Fifth Ecumenical Council (Constantinople II, 553).

The works themselves are very well translated and readable. The letters are not lengthy, but are tightly-packed doctrinal treatises nonetheless. In Maxentius’s two works at the end of the volume, and the monks’ original letter, the reader is given a glimpse of a tightly ordered affirmation of the faith. At times, as odd as it may sound, I had to remind myself I wasn’t reading Calvin! The introduction provides a helpful overview of the relevant theological disputes, as well as the actual texts translated, placing the works in a broad movement of political and theological issues. Overall, this is obviously an important work for patristic scholars to engage, but I think it would prove fruitful for seminary classes as well in historical and systematic theology. The readability of the texts, and their length, would allow for accessible historical material to supplement classes that primarily utilize secondary texts. Furthermore, the connection between Christology and grace, so central to the early Church’s theology, would prove fruitful in the training of pastors and future theologians.

Kyle Strobel
Grand Canyon University
Phoenix, Arizona, USA

Joel R. Beeke and Mark Jones. *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life*. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2012. xv + 1,060 pp. \$60.00.

Over the past couple of decades, Joel Beeke, president of Puritan Reformed Seminary, pastor of a Reformed congregation in Grand Rapids, and editorial director of Reformation Heritage Books, has published a prodigious amount of both scholarly and popular material related to the Puritans. In the past five or six years Mark Jones, a Presbyterian pastor in Vancouver and research associate at the University of the Free State in South Africa, has proven himself an able scholar of the Puritan and Reformed traditions. These two pastor-scholars, along with some of their colleagues and students duly recognized in the acknowledgements, have collaborated in writing the warmly received *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for the Christian Life*. The book provides a synthesis of the sort of Puritan theology that has influenced evangelicalism ever since the mid-twentieth century. It is a signal achievement and an invaluable resource for those interested in Puritan thought.



Beeke and Jones begin with a short introduction that defines the sort of Puritanism their book treats—what I call the “Banner of Truth Puritans.” These were the types of pastor-theologians whose works are widely reprinted by publishers such as Banner of Truth, Soli Deo Gloria, Solid Ground Christian Books and Reformation Heritage Books. Most of them were consistently Calvinists, though Richard Baxter is a notable exception. The Reformed Orthodoxy movement on continental Europe deeply influenced them, inspiring them to attempt to reform the Church of England in similar ways. The movement lasted from roughly 1560 to 1689, reaching the height of its influence in the 1640s and 1650s. These Puritans influenced later Calvinistic movements from Edwardseanism in the mid-1700s to the “New Calvinists” of today. By focusing on this strand of Puritans, while also conceding the movement could be defined more broadly, the authors readily confess they are writing primarily for pastors and students.

The chapters are divided into sixty chapters and structured roughly along the lines of a systematic theology textbook in the Reformed tradition. Many of the chapters deal with classical theological loci such as the Trinity, providence, Christology, church government, etc. Other chapters zero in on particular thinkers: John Owen, Thomas Goodwin, and John Bunyan loom especially large, followed close behind by William Perkins, Richard Sibbes, Thomas Manton, and Stephen Charnock. Still other chapters deal with uniquely Reformed topics, especially the six chapters on covenant theology and the chapters touching upon the Sabbath, the regulative principle of worship, and Reformed pedobaptism. Many of the chapters address topics related to pastoral theology (three different chapters on preaching) or spiritual theology (prayer, meditation); these are some of the richest sections of the book.

For those who make a regular habit of reading Puritan reprints, there will be few theological surprises. For the most part, these Puritans were “five-point” Calvinists who held to covenant theology, baptized infants, affirmed the third use of the law and debated the relative merits of congregationalism vs. Presbyterian polity. However, the authors point out Puritans who do not reflect the dominant paradigm, including hypothetical universalists such as Baxter and Baptists such as Bunyan and Benjamin Keach. Some readers will perhaps be frustrated that some individuals are not included, notably Edwards (though he is mentioned off and on throughout the book), while others, especially Baptists, might push back at

the author's clear preference for covenantal pedobaptism. Some will chafe at the implication—never explicitly stated—that the Puritans were cessationists; this remains very much a matter of scholarly debate. However, readers should keep in mind that the authors spelled out the types of Puritans they would focus upon: “Banner of Truth Puritans,” most of whom were in fact five-point Calvinists who baptized infants and did not believe the gift of prophecy continued beyond the apostolic era.

While Beeke and Jones have obviously written a book about Puritan theology, as noted in the title, *A Puritan Theology* is also a book about Puritan spirituality. Some chapters explicitly address matters of Puritan piety, as mentioned above, but Puritan spirituality pervades nearly every chapter. What Beeke and Jones understand, and what social historians often miss, is that Puritanism was, by and large, a movement committed to a particular sort of Reformed piety. As with nearly all pre-modern theologians, the Puritans believed that doctrine mattered for the Christian life—a point highlighted in the book's subtitle. Beeke and Jones do a fine job of expounding Puritan thought, but they also constantly make application to contemporary Christian spirituality, a move that would no doubt be applauded by the Puritans themselves. Like a good Puritan sermon, *A Puritan Theology* always moves from the *doctrine* to the various *uses*. For this reason the book is as valuable for being a window into Puritan piety as it is Puritan theology.

A Puritan Theology is an important book that is long overdue, as evidenced by its impressive sales figures in the earliest weeks after its publication. As a synthesis of the doctrinal and spiritual priorities of “Banner of Truth Puritans,” it should find a wide readership for many years to come. Beeke and Jones are correct that pastors and students will find a wealth of informative and edifying material related to Puritan thought. The structure of the book ensures that pastors will find the material they need to buttress their sermons, while students will have no trouble finding Puritan examples to highlight in their term papers. As a historical theologian, I have no doubt that *A Puritan Theology* will also be warmly received by all historians who believe intellectual history is crucial for understanding Christian history. Whether pastors, students, or scholars, I am confident that anyone who reads *A Puritan Theology* will learn much about Puritan thought, drink deeply of Puritan spirituality and, hopefully, be encouraged to read the writings of the Puritans for themselves.

Nathan A. Finn
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary
Wake Forest, North Carolina, USA

Paul Hartog, ed. *Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians and the Martyrdom of Polycarp: Introduction, Text, and Commentary*. Oxford Apostolic Fathers. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. xii + 402 pages £140.00/\$275.00.

While many Evangelicals have paid a great amount of attention to NT texts, few have considered the value of a set of writings known as the Apostolic Fathers. The designation “Apostolic Fathers” refers to a circle of authors who are known, or are considered to have had personal relations with some of the apostles, but were not apostles themselves. These writers have been so influenced by the apostles that their writings are considered echoes of genuine apostolic teaching. They are the earliest Christian witnesses beyond the documents of the NT and are critical for our understanding of early Christianity. The earliest were written late in the first century. The latest can be dated at the end of the second century.

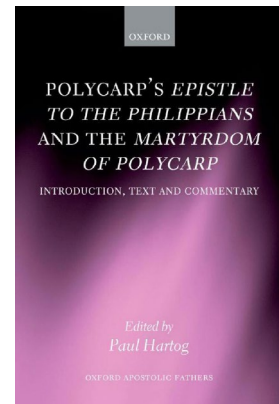
The writings of the Apostolic Fathers are diverse, being composed of different literary styles. There are letters such as *First Clement* and the *Epistle of Barnabas*. There is an early Christian homily called *Second Clement*. There are a series of letters from Ignatius of Antioch written before his martyrdom. A text that comprises a variety of traditions called the *Didache* is also a part of this group of writings. The Apostolic Fathers also have a visionary experience of Hermas of Rome which is recorded in the *Shepherd of Hermas*. Within this group of writings are two fragmentary works—the *Fragments of Papias* and the *Fragment of Quadratus*. An apologetic document called the *Epistle of Diognetus* and the pseudepigraphic letter *Epistle of Barnabas* are also contained in the Apostolic Fathers.

There are two documents that concern Polycarp. The first, *Epistle to the Philippians*, is a letter from Polycarp written to the Philippians. This letter is the only surviving document that we have written from Polycarp. This letter was written in response to a letter from the Philippian church. It addresses a leader who was greedy, a bishop named Valens. It also contains an explanation of true righteousness as being an outflow of true belief. Bad behavior was evidence that those outside of the Christian faith had infiltrated the ranks of the Christian community. As other documents within the Apostolic Fathers, *Polycarp's Letter to the Philippians* warns Christians against heresy.

The second document within the Apostolic Fathers that pertains to Polycarp is the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*. This narrative is the oldest preserved martyrdom account in Christendom outside of the NT. It displays Polycarp's martyrdom which reveals his faithfulness to Christ. The document is “a martyrdom in accordance with the gospel” (*Mart. Pol.* 1.1). It encourages the readers to imitate his faithfulness, praises other martyrs, and warns others not to fall away from the faith during persecution. It is specifically written in the form of a letter from the church at Smyrna to the church at Philomelium, but generally written to all Christian churches. Evarastus is stated as the author of the text (*Mart. Pol.* 20), but it is likely that others from the church in Smyrna helped.

This volume from Paul Hartog, Associate Professor at Faith Baptist Seminary in Ankeny, Iowa, provides a significant contribution to our understanding of these two documents and also to our comprehension of Polycarp. It is part of an English language commentary series from Oxford Apostolic Fathers that provides significant explanation on these writings.

Hartog's work provides a helpful biography about Polycarp. In his overview section, he discusses the place of Polycarp in Early Christian writers, the life of Polycarp, fragmentary evidence concerning



Polycarp, the understanding of Polycarp as bishop, Polycarp's relation to other apostles especially John, and then so-called other Polycarpian writings such as the *Pastoral Epistles* and the *Epistle of Dionysius*. Hartog also compares Polycarp's influence that may make him the anonymous presbyter in Irenaeus' writings. Hartog's treatments of these issues are thorough. Many times students of the Apostolic Fathers must go to other sources to get this information, but Hartog has helpfully placed these all together at the front of his volume.

This volume also provides an extensive introduction to both letters. These include comments on the historical setting, text and manuscript tradition, authenticity, integrity, date of writing and martyrdom, genre, occasion, purpose, themes, intertextuality, relationship with Paul, Polycarp's theology, his opponents, discussion on greed, influence of the letters, view of martyrdom, discussion of tension between Jews and Christians, anti-Montanism, legal issues, and prayer. While there are other introductions for these documents in the Loeb classical library edited by Ehrman or in translations by Holmes, Hartog's volume contains a 57-page introduction about the *Letter to the Philippians* and a 75-page introduction to the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*. It is the most comprehensive and up to date introduction to these letters, distinguishing it from other volumes on Polycarp.

Equally extensive is the bibliography that comprises 31 pages. Hartog refers to sources that date from the nineteenth through the twenty-first century. The bibliography contains French, German, and Italian scholarship.

This volume also provides a fresh English translation of these two documents. The Greek and Latin text is placed on the left page with the English translation on the right facing page. As a result, it makes translation comparison easy. Each verse within the *Letter to the Philippians* and the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* has a comment. Several of these comments are lengthy, filling several full pages. There are also lengthy discussions of critical issues and key interpretive questions.

An example of the depth and type of his investigation can be seen from his comment on *Letter to the Philippians* 9.1, which concerns an exhortation to obey the word of righteousness. This was seen in the lives of Ignatius, Zosimus, Rufus, and Paul. When Hartog comments on the context of the exhortation, he notes that the instructions on righteousness in this epistle reach a climax within the dialogue regarding endurance and martyrdom. He then refers to righteousness from earlier in the *Letter* in chapter 3. He comments specifically on the grammar of the section citing the Greek word for obedience (πειθαρχεῖν) and blessedness (μακάριος). He also notes the intensive use of the word αὐτῷ which is used to emphasize Paul himself, who stands at the end of the passage as a true hero.

His remarks also contain historical considerations of the martyrs Ignatius, Zosimus, and Rufus. He notes that there is no place in the Ignatian correspondence that we have regarding Zosimus or Rufus. The characteristics of these men can only be gained from Polycarp's description that they endured, were blessed, were seen by the Philippians, grouped with Ignatius, and were not from the Philippian church. Their honor due from the Lord, their suffering, and their denial of this world from *Letter to the Philippians* 9.2 can be added to our understanding of these men. With this knowledge, he cites the comments from Zahn who suggested that Zosimus and Rufus were Bithynian Christian prisoners sent by Pliny to Rome. But he does not find any evidence of this and agrees with Camelot that nothing else can be known about these companions of Ignatius. It is a thorough explanation of this important passage in the *Letter to the Philippians* and is exemplary of the way that Hartog handles matters in other sections of the *Letter* and the *Martyrdom*.

Students and scholars of the early church and patristic theology will be highly interested in this book. Those who are interested in the influence of the NT in the followers of the apostles will be interested as well. It is sure to be a major reference point for further studies on Polycarp.

H. H. Drake Williams III
Tyndale Theological Seminary
Badhoevedorp, The Netherlands

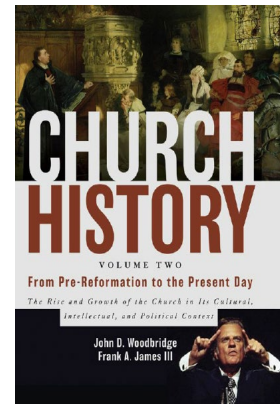
John D. Woodbridge and Frank A. James III. *Church History, Volume 2: From Pre-Reformation to the Present Day; The Rise and Growth of the Church in Its Cultural, Intellectual, and Political Context*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013. 862 pp.

John Woodbridge and Frank James's *Church History: From Pre-Reformation to the Present Day* brings to an end the nearly decade long wait for Zondervan's companion edition to Everett Ferguson's earlier volume from 2005 (now offered in a 2013 second edition). Woodbridge and James's newest offering outlines the past five hundred plus years of the history of the Christian church, with objectivity as their stated, overarching goal. Like Ferguson's preceding work, this volume represents history as a narrative in which "God works through sinners to accomplish his good purposes" (p. 29). Thus, the work intends to offer a truthful, unfettered account of the history of Christianity, warts and all.

Woodbridge and James's work spans twenty-two chapters in total, beginning with the early fourteenth century and the precipice of reformation and culminating with the twenty-first century. Here, *Church History: From Pre-Reformation to the Present Day* follows the traditional outline of most church history survey texts, but offers two noteworthy contributions. First, unlike many of its predecessors, this text attempts to take a much less Western/Euro-centric route by engaging the history of Christianity in places like Africa, China, India, and Latin America. Second, the book's ambitious reach into the twenty-first century distinguishes it from many other parallel attempts that avoid such efforts for fear of losing some historical distance and perspective.

Each of Woodbridge and James's twenty-two chapters is engaging, covering not only those major people, events, and controversies one might assume to see in a survey church history text, but also lesser-known contributions to the church's story. This balanced approach helps to paint a clearer and more authentic picture of the church since the early modern period. Here, drawing on the most recent historiography, the authors avoid romanticizing the people and/or actions of the Christian church. For instance, the presentation of Martin Luther in chapter three does not eschew the reformer's harsh dealings with the German peasants, the consequences of his ideas untethered from ecclesiastical order, or his anti-Semitic rants later in life (pp. 130–35, 144–45). These events are placed alongside Luther's better-known contributions to Protestantism in a holistic presentation of a very complex figure from the church's history.

The shared authorship of this work helps clarify difficult or seemingly obscure topics by providing the perspectives of two world-class scholars with different strengths. Woodbridge and James remain confined more closely with their own personal fields of expertise. This approach permits both authors to draw from the wealth of their academic experience when handling the detailed philosophical and



theological concepts requisite for any responsible portrayal of the Christian church's history. Here, Woodbridge and James treat their subjects with lucidity and nuance, rendering the text accessible to people on a variety of academic and intellectual levels. The "for further study" sections at the close of each chapter helpfully point the reader toward more specialized, thematic, and biographical studies.

Some of the very strengths of *Church History: From Pre-Reformation to the Present Day*, however, also may serve as some of its most glaring weaknesses as well. The voluminous eight hundred sixty-two pages, while providing the authors ample room to navigate the period in question, are problematic on two fronts. First and oddly enough, this leaves the book strikingly disjointed with its earlier companion volume; Ferguson's earlier volume covers twice as much time in almost half the length. Reading both volumes in tandem highlights this stark dissonance. It may also present logistical challenges for those wishing to implement this two volume series in a classroom setting. This contrast may even unintentionally suggest to some that the events of the church's past five hundred years are worthy of more consideration than the earlier fifteen hundred. Second, although written in a clear style and prose that makes this book accessible to most Christians, theologically trained or not, the sheer volume of the text may present this work a daunting read to some, inevitably making it less approachable.

Similarly, Woodbridge and James's reach into the twenty-first century provides some very insightful and helpful discussions on such relevant contemporary issues as the relationship between Christianity and Islam, minority and female participation in the modern church, and the Christian faith's engagement with culture and politics. Yet, at times the promise of objectivity for the book, which was purported as a pillar of the methodology for this historical endeavor in the preface, can be lost on issues still presently being debated in the church. For instance, one can perceive some level of authorial judgment on discussions regarding the highly controversial egalitarian-complementarian debate outlined in chapter twenty-one (pp. 818–19). Moreover, while the portrayal of the Christian faith in places outside of the more traditional Western/Euro-centric model are applauded, these studies are largely confined to the modern era. This lack of expansion, beyond the scope of the Western church during the presentation of all eight centuries covered in this volume, may leave the reader wondering what global Christianity looked like prior to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Ultimately, Woodbridge and James's *Church History: From Pre-Reformation to the Present Day* stands as a useful survey book on the history of Christianity. It is pitched at a level most conducive to the college or graduate level, but does not stand so intellectually elevated as to be inaccessible to laypersons interested in knowing the narrative of the Christian faith. Minor weaknesses notwithstanding, this is a useful history book. There have only been a handful of church history survey texts written by evangelicals the past decade and Woodbridge and James's work rivals any of these as far as content, readability, and faithfulness to the historic documents.

Stephen Eccher
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary
Wake Forest, North Carolina, USA

— SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY AND BIOETHICS —

Travis E. Ables. *Incarnational Realism: Trinity and the Spirit in Augustine and Barth*. T&T Clark Studies in Systematic Theology 21. London: Bloomsbury, 2013. xii + 273 pp. £70.00/\$130.00.

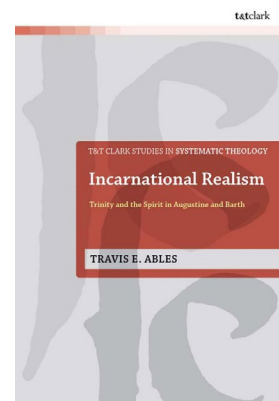
Travis E. Ables's *Incarnational Realism* is the published edition of his 2010 dissertation at Vanderbilt University: "A Pneumatology of Christian Knowledge: The Holy Spirit and the Performance of the Mystery of God in Augustine and Barth." As his published subtitle suggests, the text is a sustained reflection upon Augustine's and Barth's doctrines of the Trinity and their enduring influence on contemporary Trinitarian theology. The project, however, is not simply historical. Ables's discussion culminates in a robust development of the Spirit's activity in Christians attaining knowledge of God.

Ables's dense discussion begins with a brief consideration of the revival of Trinitarianism in the twentieth century, a revival complicated by its perceived neglect of the Holy Spirit. His discussion features a correction to the common misconception that Augustine's psychological analogy for the trinity is the primary offender of pneumatological negligence. Thus, Ables spends two chapters offering a re-reading of Augustine's psychological analogy in *De Trinitate*. His reading suggests that the psychological analogy is not really an analogy at all. Memory, knowledge and will are not analogous to the persons of the Trinity in themselves. Rather, the correspondence of the mind's memory, understanding and willing (or loving) to the movements of the persons of the Trinity is really about how the Father, Son and Holy Spirit involve humanity in God's knowledge of himself (p. 39). For example, in willing, knowledge becomes action. When such action—willing or loving—is oriented toward God, it is the action of the Spirit working in us.

In turning to Barth's Trinitarian theology in the *Church Dogmatics*, Ables is again particularly concerned with articulating Barth's pneumatology. The concern with Barth is that he does not grant the Spirit the same "density of personhood" as the Father and the Son. The reduction of the Spirit to the Augustinian "bond of love" between the Father and Son amounts to "an erasure of the Spirit as a subject of divine action" (p. 105). In refutation of this criticism, Ables argues that in actuality the work of the Spirit is the crux of Barth's dialectic of revelation.

Barth develops his doctrine of the Trinity in *CD I/1* as the guarantee of revelation. As the Father gives the Son in objective revelation in the history of the man Jesus Christ, the Spirit is the possibility and reality of subjective revelation. That is, the Spirit enables successful communication of revelation to the individual. Ultimately, Ables wants to say that though knowledge of God is something always beyond our capacity as human beings, nevertheless, we are able to attain knowledge of God by participating in the Spirit's knowledge of the Father and the Son. In this way, the Spirit is the real possibility of revelation for humanity and thus essential both to Barth's Trinitarian theology and to his doctrine of revelation.

Ables's final chapter draws the project to a close by zeroing in on the Spirit's contribution to human participation in Christ. This construction of a pneumatology that is at the same time robustly christological is the greatest contribution of his text. This is accomplished by his title phrase, incarnational realism. If human knowledge of God is made objectively possible by the incarnation, its successful communication is accomplished—realized—by the Spirit's performance of conforming our lives, and not simply our



minds, to that knowledge. In this sense, knowledge of God, like pneumatology, is not a body of ideas and information—i.e., a doctrine—it is action.

As noted, the strengths of Ables’s text are his mastery of the Augustinian and Barthian sources relevant to his task. He penetrates the accepted scholarly consensus both on Augustine and Barth in ways only possible to those who truly understand the fabric of their thought. He demonstrates this in the corrective he offers to reading Augustine’s psychological analogy and in articulating the complexities of Barth’s theological ontology.

Though the argument for re-reading the psychological analogy is compelling, I did not find his dismissal of the “bond of love” pneumatology in Augustine as convincing. He concedes Augustine’s use of the language but argues that Augustine’s doctrine of simplicity precludes the understanding it has maintained in traditional readings of Augustine. Some may wonder whether Ables’s coordination of Augustine’s “bond of love” pneumatology and divine simplicity is the only possible reading (pp. 94–101).

Ables might also have strengthened his argument by elaborating further on his fusion of deification and participation. By limiting it to humans being conformed to the image of God in knowledge and action, it seems to divest deification of its ontological bearings, which make it so profound a concept (p. 187). The intermingling of divine and human agencies does not move beyond participation in a way that the transformation of theosis or deification might actually demand (Adam Neder has offered a similar and helpful discussion of Barth and deification in the conclusion to *Participation in Christ*). For this reason, I fear his fusion of participation and deification may not garner broad support.

In any case, such concerns do not deter me from enthusiastically recommending this book to those interested in Trinitarian theology and the Spirit, especially those interested in Augustine and Barth. Indeed, it will be a significant book for future conversations on these topics.

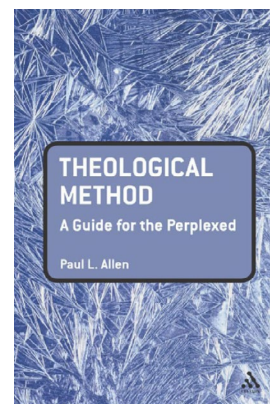
Ike Miller

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Deerfield, Illinois, USA

Paul L. Allen. *Theological Method: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London: T&T Clark, 2012. ix + 262 pp. £14.99/\$24.95.

Paul Allen, Associate Professor in the Department of Theological Studies at Concordia University, Montreal, proposes to address two key needs of students who study theological method: a clear picture of the history of methodological developments in theology and an explanation of the *prolegomena* involved in these developments. These goals serve a third purpose of helping students make sense of a monumental work such as Bernard Lonergan’s *Method in Theology*, which appears as a periodic point of reference in Allen’s overview.

The survey begins with the Apostle Paul, whose theological method was “hermeneutical with regards to Israel’s scriptures and to Christ, while it is apostolic . . . with regards to the church” (p. 24), with Paul’s conversion experience constituting his methodological pivot. Allen demonstrates that a hermeneutical circle was operating within Scripture itself, though with Paul at least, this process was tacit and selectively based on Paul’s experience.



From the patristic era onward, Allen selects figures who embody salient features of theological method in each era. Irenaeus, Origen, and Athanasius illustrate the importance of *lex orandi lex credendi* (law of praying, law of believing) in the earliest centuries. Allen provides historical and philosophical background to familiar methodological moves such as Irenaeus's "Rule of Faith," Origen's allegorical approach, and Athanasius's emphasis on "communication of idioms." This clarifies the soteriological significance of each approach, regardless of weaknesses or extremes that were involved.

Allen notes Augustine's claim that "Christian doctrine has to do with two things: things and signs" (p. 74). Furthermore, he contends, "Augustine's most important legacy is to establish the hermeneutic of love, made genuine through acts of goodness" (p. 79). Allen points out Augustine's contention that faithful reading of Scripture depends on moral conversion, further illustrating the role of personal experience in early theological method.

From the medieval period Allen highlights Pseudo-Dionysius, Anselm, and Aquinas. Dionysian apophaticism is presented as a recognition of the limitations of human language to mediate knowledge of God, not as a wholesale denial of the possibility of such knowledge. Anselm represents "a much more confident understanding of the role of language in theological affirmations" (p. 96), with dialectic playing a central role in his principle of "faith seeking understanding." Aquinas sees an even more direct correlation between revelation and reason. In contrast to other theologians considered, Aquinas posits a direct attachment of theological reflection to doctrine.

Under the heading "The Meaning of *Sola Scriptura*," Allen considers Luther, Melancthon, and Calvin. Luther opposed the division of theory and practice in theology, taking aim at "the abstract speculations of scholastic theology" (p. 120) and shifting the focus of theology from a "metaphysical ontology of God's being . . . to a foundational ontology of relationality" (p. 123). Melancthon attempted to bring a clear, systematic character to the rather unsystematic efforts of theologians like Luther. Among Calvin's methodological hallmarks was an intentional rearrangement of doctrinal loci around soteriological concerns rather than nature as the organizing principle.

In "early modern theology" Allen focuses on Schleiermacher, Newman, Ritschl, and von Harnack. Each represents a distinct and often divergent approach to how history, tradition, epistemology, and human experience relate to the nature and task of theology. Allen quickly admits the limitations and risks of each approach, yet places them within the context of orthodox theological values, even if the overall thrust and consequence of their thought veered in other directions.

For the modern period Allen considers Bultmann, Barth, Tillich, von Balthasar, Rahner, and Schillebeeckx. Key issues marking this period were the relationship of faith and history (Bultmann), the identity of theology's subject and object (Barth), the capacity of philosophical vocabulary for theological matters (Tillich), the role of creation and aesthetics in theology (von Balthasar), the significance of human questions as the starting point for theology (Rahner), and the place of understanding the gospel's historical context in contemporary Christian engagement with culture (Schillebeeckx).

Allen's final survey reviews methodological features of Radical Orthodoxy, Post-liberalism, Liberation theology, and Joseph Ratzinger. In these contemporary theological movements and their key figures he sees theology as seeking practical wisdom. "Such wisdom," he states, "seeks to overcome earlier naïve correlationism and naïve traditionalism" (p. 208).

In addition to offering insightful material on the historical and theological context of each representative, Allen highlights methodological features that often go unnoticed. This allows for a fresh,

if qualified, appreciation of those with whom there may be fierce disagreement. He shows how theology in every period responded to pressing concerns in an attempt to faithfully express the Christian faith.

Some evangelical readers will be disappointed that, though Allen does treat Scripture as authoritative, he does not understand the text (e.g., epistolary literature) to offer straightforward doctrinal content, at least not in any precise manner. Through multiple examples he argues that Paul was reflecting a particular developmental state in interpreting his own experience and not attempting to directly communicate doctrinal content.

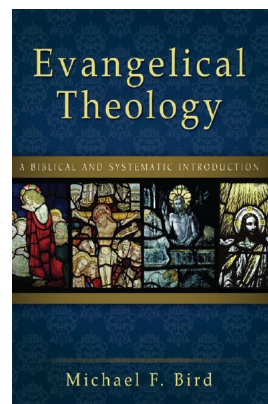
Allen's selection of representative theological figures does not include any after Calvin from the multifaceted world of "evangelical" theology. While it may have been his purpose to cover theologians whose method has wielded more ecumenical influence, the methodological influence of evangelical theologians from Carl Henry to Stanley Grenz has not been insignificant.

Overall, Paul Allen's discussion of theological method admirably accomplishes his stated purposes. Depending on how familiar a reader already is with the subject it may or may not be experienced as "a guide for the perplexed," but nonetheless it constitutes a valuable contribution to the growing literature on theological method.

Don J. Payne
Denver Seminary
Littleton, Colorado, USA

Michael F. Bird. *Evangelical Theology: A Biblical and Systematic Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013. 912 pp. £28.99/\$49.99.

'This book was written for one reason. . . . I do not believe that there is yet a genuinely evangelical theology textbook . . . that has its content, structure, and substance singularly determined by the evangel' (p. 11). Here we have one, attractively produced and inexpensively priced, in eight parts and with over eight hundred pages of main text. Following 'Prolegomena' (the first part), Michael Bird's *Evangelical Theology* describes the 'God of the Gospel: the Triune God in Being and Action'. The three subsequent parts take as their subjects the gospel of the kingdom, the Son, and salvation. Then the Holy Spirit is treated, who is 'the promise and power of the Gospel' before a penultimate part on 'The Gospel and Humanity' precedes the climactic section on ecclesiology, bearing the name of 'The Community of the Gospelized'. An 'Epilogue' describes 'Urgent Tasks for Evangelical Theology in the 21st Century'.



If there was ever a brief and bland description of a book which, in its brevity and blandness, contrasted with the book described, you have just read it. What is different about the *content* of this book? Probably and presumably the persistent concern with the life of the church actually expressed, not just stated as a matter of principle, throughout the volume, a volume which keeps in mind the aspiration that 'a theology textbook should be more like a manual for warfare [than 'an exercise in intellectual curiosity'], guiding the soldiers of Christ in how to take every thought captive to Christ' (p. 809). It is thus fitting that it should close passionately with ecclesiology, and that raises the question, "What is different about its *structure*?" The order of *loci* treated is determined by the gospel itself: hence, e.g., eschatology and

millennium have been discussed before the church, because the gospel would have us think kingdom before we think church. Finally, what is different about its *substance*? It would be worrying if we could find much that was different, since the author aspires to describe the principal tenets of evangelical theology and foster evangelical unity as far as possible. So it is no criticism—it is a commendation—to say that the substance is largely familiar, although Michael Bird consistently offers fresh opinion on or fresh formulation of this or that doctrinal point. He makes clear early that he identifies himself with the Reformed tradition and ‘thereby gravitate[s] toward the Calvinistic scheme of theology’ (p. 23).

Much in this volume is well and truly said; the style is lively and not laboured, accommodated to its readership, which is meant to include laypersons. (Summaries of what has been said and questions for study indicate that particular concern.) We should welcome both the author’s gospel-centred thinking and, as an implication of this, the concern for gospel-centred life and evangelical unity, fittingly expressed in the discussions of baptism and the Eucharist which fittingly conclude the bulk of the volume. Where biblical material is faithfully presented and biblically based thought faithfully followed, we must be grateful. Yet there are significant drawbacks.

First, the structure is puzzling. Its principle is not stated clearly, since Bird first says that ‘all Christian theology, all God-talk, and everything we infer of things divine, is really an attempt to work backward from the revealing and redeeming action of God as declared in the gospel’ but then likens the gospel to an act within a play which ‘presupposes previous divine acts’ (pp. 89–90). These statements may seem to require only modest reformulation to make them transparently consistent (they are not contradictory), but the fact that humanity and the human plight are not discussed until late in the volume and long after we have learned of atonement and salvation makes us wonder if we have quite got their measure. The huge topics of creation and fall are discussed on pages 497–500, but we read on at least another 150 pages before discussion of a literal Adam and the image of God. Further—although this shades into the question of balance as well as of structure—one wonders why the resurrection of Jesus gets so comparatively little space right in the centre of a book geared to the gospel.

Second, there are a great number of inaccuracies. A form of foundationalism is confused with (loosely) critical realism (p. 40); the Barth-Brunner disagreement is completely misrepresented (p. 71); it is wrongly stated that divine timelessness ‘means that he [God] knows neither past nor future’ (p. 128); the orthodox word used for the nature of Christ was φύσις, not οὐσία (p. 484); Barth is quoted as a supersessionist who said that ‘the Church is the historical successor to Israel’ (p. 720; words wrongly cited as coming from *Church Dogmatics* II/3), whereas Barth was here describing the position which he was strongly opposing. These are just some examples. Discussing divine impassibility, Bird avers that this does not mean that God does not suffer, but that he does not suffer under external duress: he chooses to suffer. He is favourable to Mark Baddeley’s argument ‘that impassibility is what makes the gospel good news’ (p. 131). However, among those who are cited as denying impassibility are not only Moltmann, Barth, and Bonhoeffer, but also Don Carson and John Stott. From this, the reader ought logically to conclude that all five effectively deny the gospel. Michael Bird does not believe that, but let the reader follow his statements (pp. 130–31).

Third, we should not expect a textbook to be comprehensive, but I am bound to say that it is all too often superficial. We may question the federal scheme in theology and imputed righteousness (Bird gets the Latin wrong on p. 222), but we should not do so in terms of Jesus becoming ‘our vicarious Pelagian, who keeps the law for us and imputes his obedience to us’ (p. 224), ‘the exemplary Pelagian’ providing ‘righteousness molecules floating through the air to us’ (p. 563). We may reject kenotic Christology,

but we should not think that this can be done in one sentence (p. 467). We may be impressed by Alvin Plantinga, but we should not confidently conclude that he solved the logical problem of evil between thirty and forty years ago (p. 689). We may deny transubstantiation, but we should not formulate our denial in the language of transubstantiation sounding ‘weird’ (Bird’s inverted commas), spurning the invocation of Aristotle ‘and some kookie distinction between substance and accidents’ (p. 787).

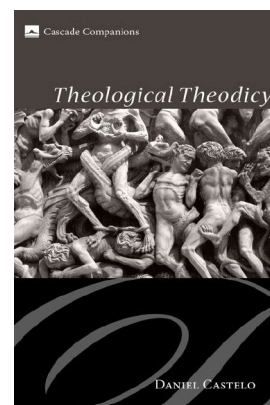
Michael Bird rightly urges systematic theologians to be familiar with biblical studies. Perhaps there is no law that biblical scholars should be familiar with systematic theology. However, if they consciously undertake ‘a biblical and systematic introduction’ to evangelical theology (and that is a most welcome undertaking), they must give themselves time to familiarize themselves with the latter discipline. There is much good material in this volume which will benefit the church. My rather cheeky but entirely serious conclusion is that a revised edition some way down the road would be most welcome and most profitable.

Stephen N. Williams
Union Theological College
Belfast, Northern Ireland

Daniel Castelo. *Theological Theodicy*. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2012. viii + 105 pp. £13.00/\$13.00.

Daniel Castelo, associate professor of theology at Seattle Pacific Seminary, argues that theodicy as a philosophical enterprise is bankrupt and of no help to the church. Rather, he thinks that the problem of evil is a moral issue, making it primarily theological in nature, which disallows the *why* question generally associated with theodicy. In chapter one Castelo presents a somewhat broad-brush (and at points unconvincing) review of the theodical landscape, complaining that the modern theodicist has wandered off the theological path of the medieval theodicists into the dangerous muddle of philosophical reasoning, leaving the church with ineffective and possibly atheological theodicies (pp. 18–19). To save the theodical day he suggests “a revamped *theological* theodicy would begin with an affirmation of the triune God as self-revealed mystery, one who is apprehended with the modality of worship” (pp. 20–21). Interestingly, he advances the idea that it is not at all clear what is meant by God is good or omnipotent (pp. 16–17). In fact, he thinks that omnipotence is “deeply problematic, especially if it is hailed as a nonnegotiable requirement for theodical reflection” (p. 17). His idea of “self-revealed mystery” is that the divine attributes of omnipotence and goodness are “always revisable and negotiable since any rendering of what they may mean are provisional at best” (p. 22). Those with an affinity for the epistemological stability of theological affirmations grounded in propositional revelation, however, may be somewhat disappointed by this view.

Chapter two continues the critique of “modern theodicies,” concluding that “the god of modern theodicy is not the God of Christian confession” (p. 32), a claim not all that compelling in light of theodical literature. In fact, he argues they are rather theodicies of the god of deism or dualism (pp. 33–39). The argument (if it is an argument), however, seems a little thin, looking more like a hasty generalization at best and philosophical naiveté at worst. Nonetheless, his suggestion that pastoral



answers in light of these theodicies often “have been problematic at best and violent at worst” (p. 88) is a point not contested here. What is not clear, however, is that modern theodicies bear the guilt for this. That aside, one will find much theodical profit tucked into this chapter even for those who have a more charitable view of “modern theodicies.” For example, the point that creation is good essentially because it comes from a good God has important implications for any theodicy, theological or otherwise.

Chapter three argues against dualism, deism, and determinism as proper explanations for why so many bad things happen in this world. His alternative explanation rests on the fact that “the triune God created the cosmos in freedom and out of love,” and if so, “then one could plausibly move to apply this logic to that which is non-God: creation is to relate to God and itself in freedom and out of love” (p. 60). Consequently, “humanity is given potential and possibility alongside limits. In this sense, agency and self-determination are at play, and if they are, then alternative—and even contradictory—possibilities present themselves” (p. 60). Hence, evil is the result of man in his alienated state making choices that are anti-God, interestingly a conclusion found in some modern theodicies. Nevertheless, Castelo’s treatment of sin, the devil and natural evils are extremely helpful for any interested in doing serious work in theodicy.

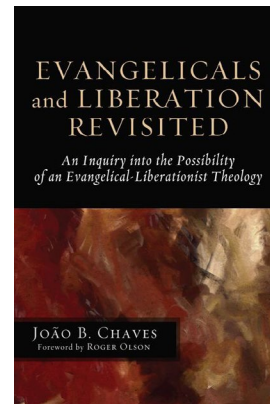
Chapter four titled “God’s Healing Response” contains helpful insights on speaking pastorally to those caught in the midst of brokenness and suffering by emphasizing what God has done through Christ and is doing through the spirit-led church ministering healing to those hurting. What it does not answer is the question of why if God is neither a deistic god nor merely an equal force with evil (dualism) is his goodness not more evident by intervening in horrific evils. To this, Castelo simply retorts that it is “a running question that has to be kept open for God, and God alone, to answer.” He claims that Scripture “does not give the church an answer to this question” (p. 88). However, most who serve the church either pastorally or apologetically realize that the “why” question cannot be ignored that easily as it is the intuitive cry of the human heart. In the end, the reader will wonder if what Castelo offers is, in substance, a theodicy at all. In fact, he claims that he offers “another stage in the conversation” (p. 20n32), but it appears more of an attempt to redefine the work of theodicy.

In spite of the concerns registered above, the book has merit for those interested in thinking about theodicies. This is so, even though historically the pressing theodical question of on what grounds God is morally justified in allowing so much evil in this world is rendered by Castelo as theologically illegitimate. Still, for those desiring to do the work of theodicy, Castelo raises some important theological (and dare I say philosophical) issues worthy of consideration.

Bruce A. Little
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary
Wake Forest, North Carolina, USA

João B. Chaves. *Evangelicals and Liberation Revisited: An Inquiry into the Possibility of an Evangelical-Liberationist Theology*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013. xvi + 137 pp. £15.00/\$18.00.

Chaves, the Brazilian professor at the Baptist University of the Americas, argues that later developments in both North American evangelicalism (NAE) and Latin American Liberation Theologies (LALT) have drawn them theologically closer than ever before. His thesis might be hard to swallow, but Chaves delivers well-researched, painstaking and compelling argumentation to convince any skeptics. Starting with outlining LALT and NAE's histories of reaction and renewal Chaves demonstrates that both of these movements have been morphing and adapting to accommodate new insights and to include criticisms. In this process they have moved in a way that it is possible today to speak of an Evangelical-Liberationist theology, something considered an oxymoron not long ago. "An evident resemblance between the two movements is that both have roots in reactions to a perceived exaggerated focus on orthodoxy that arguably paralyzed other significant aspects of authentic Christian experience" (p. 34).



On hermeneutics, for instance, an issue that initially brought upon LALT strong rejection from NAE, Chaves points to a "pervasive interpretative pluralism" among NAE to prove that external factors "such as context or personal experience have a bigger role in the hermeneutical process than conservative evangelicals are willing to acknowledge" (p. 48). Therefore NAE had no business criticizing LALT for developing a contextual interpretation of the Bible. Because "objective hermeneutic is impossible," like it or not, NAE's hermeneutics was also contextual.

Other hot topics for NAE regarding LALT were the use of Marxist categories, endorsement of violence, and push for socialism. Initial responses killed any possibility of dialogue. NAE representatives did not spare any words to criticize LALT on what they saw as a capitulation to social sciences. Chaves explains that in these three topics LALT has shifted significantly from its early version due to changing conditions in the region. Even though Marxism continues as an analytical tool, its use lately is more nuanced and limited. The same could be said about endorsing socialism. LALT has recently recognized that a market driven economy might be a better solution and has adopted a more democratic socialist position bringing it closer to NAE. NAE's criticisms of LALT's endorsement of violence have been inconsistent with NAE's support of military endeavors of the USA. "It is not difficult to see this inconsistency in evangelicals who condemn any revolutionary discourse as heretical but celebrate vigorously the American Revolution—especially in the traditionally nationalistic worship service of the Fourth of July" (p. 66). Chaves argues that "Evangelicalism and LALT have not only grown closer together in their socio-political commitments, but also they no longer need be perceived as contradictory when it comes to these issues" (p. 69).

Not all subjects that both camps deal with can be easily reconciled though. Chaves compares James McClendon Jr. and Gustavo Gutierrez on the relationship between church and the world and on soteriology. Each man has a different tradition and ends up on the opposite side of the other. But even this should not keep them from mutual dialogue. Chaves's description of Leonardo Boff's Christology is another example of how two different views on this particular doctrine need to learn from each other. By dismissing it as reductionistic and incomplete NAE is missing important correctives to its theology.

Developments in Post-Conservative Evangelical Theology (PCET) have helped build bridges between evangelicals and LALT. Chaves presents several features of PCET and argues that these manifest a change that brings awareness of traditional conservative evangelical theological shortcomings. Interaction with LALT by Latin American evangelicals has also been ambiguous but more positive in general: “Latin American evangelical theologians use a variety of liberationist theological contributions in the construction of their own theologies” (p. 117).

Chaves leaves the reader with a hunger for more. His argumentation reaches the goal of presenting the possibility of an evangelical-liberationist theology. His call to mutual respect and dialogue is commendable: “I am confident that LALT and Evangelicalism are not necessarily contradictory movements, and characterizing them as contradictory is not appropriate if their respective diversity and dynamism is taken into consideration. In a world where structural injustice and impiety run wild, a theological approach that combines the strengths of both Evangelicalism and LALT is more needed than ever” (p. 130). Amen! This book definitely charts an agenda for Christians who want to grow in their faith and commitment, especially evangelical theologians.

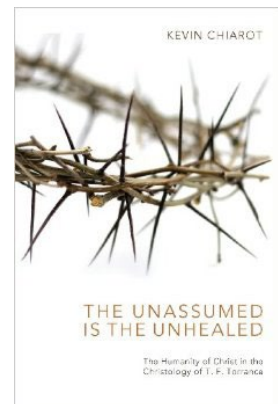
J. Daniel Salinas
United World Mission
Pasadena, California, USA

Kevin Chiarot. *The Unassumed Is the Unhealed: The Humanity of Christ in the Christology of T. F. Torrance*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013. viii + 236 pp. \$27.00.

Did the Son of God assume *fallen* humanity in the incarnation? The Scottish theologian T. F. Torrance (1913–2007) answers *yes* and argues that this assumption was necessary for the salvation of the world, following Gregory Nazianzen’s dictum: “the unassumed is the unhealed.” The incarnation occupies a central and gravitational place in Torrance’s theology, thus the assumption of fallen humanity is not a Christological footnote but a crucially important aspect of his thought. In this volume, Kevin Chiarot traces the significance of this “non-assumptus” principle for Torrance’s theological vision, and offers some insightful challenges to Torrance’s Christology along the way.

Torrance is quite possibly the most remarkable English-speaking theologian of the past century, and it is unsurprising that the corpus of secondary literature devoted to his thought seems to be expanding at an increasing rate. Among these works are quite a few studies of his Christology, but as Chiarot observes in his initial literary survey (pp. 1–22), none of these give substantial attention to or critical interaction with Torrance’s “non-assumptus” principle. This oversight is unfortunate, and Chiarot sets out to correct it. This work, Chiarot’s 2012 doctoral dissertation at the Highland Theological College, strikes a refreshing balance of charity, appreciation, and critical reflection.

As Chiarot explains, Torrance does not argue that Christ *sinned* in his incarnate life. Rather, the Son assumed our *fallen, sinful* human nature and in so doing sanctified it from the inside out (p. 91). This is necessary because for Torrance, “human nature has dynamic, temporal, cultural-relational, and



linguistic dimensions. It cannot abstract itself from the fallen sarkic order” (p. 83). To vicariously and redemptively take our place, Christ had to truly *take our place* in our fallen state of being.

This movement of the Word of God into the fallen existence of mankind is seen in the history of Israel, which Torrance calls “the womb of the incarnation.” Chiarot devotes a lengthy chapter to this history (pp. 23–86). God’s reconciling Word penetrates and pervades the fallen structures of Israel’s existence, dynamically clashing with and intensifying Israel’s rebellion against God. This situation builds through the birth-pangs of Israel’s history until the birth of Christ, the New Israel, who in the incarnation enters into Israel’s fallen context and takes the judgment of Israel upon himself, accomplishing salvation for God’s people and fulfilling their destiny of bringing that salvation to the entire world. This chapter is one of the highlights of the book, in itself standing as a worthwhile contribution to Torrance scholarship in its detailed treatment of the relation between Israel and Christ.

At the incarnation, however, the exact manner in which Christ assumes and sanctifies fallen humanity is left somewhat conceptually foggy by Torrance. Chiarot asks “in what sense does the virgin birth sanctify the humanity Christ assumed?” (p. 100) The difficulty here is that Torrance sees both Christ’s act of assumption at his birth as regenerating our humanity *and* his entire human life as progressively healing our humanity. The result is that his humanity is in unclear *continuity* and *discontinuity* with our own. Is it like Adam’s pre-Fall humanity? Or is it like the fallen humanity of the lost? Or is it the sort of post-redemption, pre-resurrection humanity that the church experiences? It seems an analogy could be drawn here between this tension and that of the Christian life, i.e., casting off the old man and putting on the new, but as Chiarot notes, this is not the sort of humanity Torrance has in view (p. 101).

This difficulty becomes even more overt in Torrance’s view of what happens to Christ’s sinful human nature on the cross. Christ’s human nature and will (and thus ours) are condemned on the cross, yet Christ’s human nature and will are also holy in his submission to the Father, for he willingly gives himself over to this judgment. As Chiarot summarizes: “the *same will* is exposed and unmasked in all its wickedness, *and* perfectly obedient and submissive” (p. 220, emphasis in original). While Chiarot does not press this critique so hard as to charge Torrance with trithelism (i.e., Jesus had three wills), he nonetheless notes that this tension “begs for clarification” (p. 220).

Much of the rest of Chiarot’s critical commentary arises in response to Torrance’s programmatic rejection of Westminster Reformed theology (which Torrance terms “federal theology”). Chiarot is an ordained pastor in the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), and subscribes to the Westminster Standards. Here he suggests that Torrance has at points misread or misjudged Westminster theology.

For example, Torrance suggests that the assumption of a “neutral” human nature would be “merely instrumental” in the incarnation, and criticizes Westminster for falling into this trap. Yet, as Chiarot observes, Torrance’s adamancy that Christ remains *sinless* due to his divine nature even while incarnate in *sinful* human nature threatens to cause his own view to stumble into the pit of instrumentalism. Chiarot rejects the charge that Christ’s humanity is “merely instrumental” in Westminster theology, and counters: “one could argue that a human nature that is corrupt and depraved would be even *more* instrumental in the hands of God, since the only nature (or will) which can act freely to save it would be divine” (p. 157). Other topics briefly treated in relation to the “non-assumptus” principle include Torrance’s aversion to forensic soteriological categories (p. 160) and his rejection of “limited atonement” (pp. 221–22).

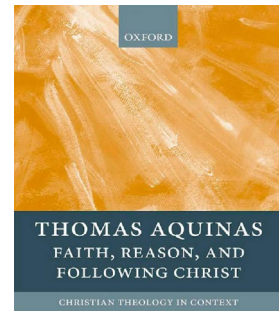
These questions and criticisms are only a few among several raised by Chiarot in the book, though they are also, in my estimation, the most central and unique. My summary above might give the

impression that Chiarot is breathlessly at odds with Torrance in this volume, but on the contrary his work is quite sympathetic and convivial. The questions addressed to Torrance's thought are incisive but also respectful. In short, this volume presents a significant study of Torrance's thought as well as some exemplar reflection on the subject of the incarnation. It will be of interest to scholars of both subjects.

Albert L. Shepherd V
King's College, University of Aberdeen
Aberdeen, Scotland, UK

Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt. *Thomas Aquinas: Faith, Reason, and Following Christ*. Christian Theology in Context. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. xii + 342 pp. £60.00/\$110.00.

Not everyone would associate Thomas Aquinas and thirteenth-century Europe with Flannery O'Connor and the American South. Fritz Bauerschmidt, currently Professor of Theology at Loyola University in Maryland and self-professed 'Hillbilly Thomist,' would have you look closer: 'friar Thomas has more in common than is usually thought with the Christ-haunted, apocalyptic, backwoods preachers that populate O'Connor's fiction . . . her stories of restless hearts and disruptive grace are not incompatible with Thomas's view that grace perfects and does not destroy nature' (p. xi). While the full gist of this statement requires one to read the book, it is motivated in part by Bauerschmidt's contextualization of Thomas as a Dominican friar.



FREDERICK CHRISTIAN BAUERSCHMIDT

The whole book is structured around Bauerschmidt's conviction that Thomas's thought ultimately revolves around two central concerns, corresponding to the two main parts of the book, namely, the relation between faith and reason and the Christian life that is following Christ. In turn, these concerns are strongly contextualized within the Dominican quest for the apostolic life: 'In all of Thomas's intellectual activities, his single goal was at all times the Dominican task of preaching Jesus Christ and caring for souls so that human beings might attain beatitude' (p. 37).

Bauerschmidt's analysis often proceeds by carefully walking the reader through texts, keeping us attuned to what Thomas is saying at every point. The expositions of the material—whether it concerns arguments for God's existence, Thomas's account of virtue or the sacraments, or his Christology—are incredibly lucid and clear, making often difficult and complex subjects immediately accessible to any reader. For the sake of economy, I restrict myself to the overarching focus on contextualizing Thomas's thought on faith, reason, and following Christ.

In Thomas's inaugural sermon, *Rigans montes*, he describes how God's own knowledge is made known to us in Scripture and while God is the ultimate teacher, he teaches us through secondary causes, namely, human teachers (pp. 46–51). This offers us an insight into how Thomas understood himself. Holy teaching is a 'way of life' for Thomas, a way that contextualizes the theologian's philosophizing within a set of commitments, beliefs, and practices that indelibly 'marks' that philosophizing—keeping philosophy subordinate to theology. Bauerschmidt concludes, 'Perhaps one ought not to say that Thomas has an intellectual project, which for all the grandeur of Thomas's thought is still perhaps too grand. It might be truer to Thomas to say that he had an intellectual ministry, the ministerial role of the

teacher of divine wisdom' (p. 81). This insight bears upon both the relation between faith and reason and the way in which God's people are conformed to Christ.

Consider the section on faith and reason, which in its reflections on the notion of theology as a 'science' demonstrates the virtues of contextualizing Thomas as a Dominican preacher. Bauerschmidt insightfully addresses how Thomas's concept of 'fittingness' (*convenientia*) is at the very foundation of theological science, even though it is not addressed in the first question of the *Summa Theologiae*—rather showing up in the third part (pp. 160–75). Arguments from 'fittingness' are employed by Thomas to demonstrate the 'aesthetic' appropriateness in God's ordering the events of salvation history in just the way God has ordered those events. It is in this way that Thomas will argue against the strict necessity of Christ's incarnation and opt instead for arguing its fittingness, that is, the way it discloses God's wisdom. Demonstrating that fittingness is at the heart of Thomas's use of reason is important: 'Arguments from fittingness might be thought of as displaying the orderliness of the economy of salvation in such a way as to move the will to praise God's goodness by the sheer attractive power of the Word made flesh in Christ, with whom Thomas associates beauty in particular' (p. 167).

The second part of this book is devoted to the theme of 'Following Christ', where Bauerschmidt's chief aim is to demonstrate the ministerial function of the second and third parts of the *Summa Theologiae*. He concludes with a compelling case that Thomas' *Summa Theologiae*, when situated with the concrete patterns of daily life and discipline of the Dominican convent, 'begins to look less like a speculative treatment of various doctrines and philosophical and theological questions—a detached philosophical or theological discourse—and begins to show itself as one instrument among many by which [the Dominicans] . . . formed people for the tasks of the order in service to the Church' (pp. 261–62). Holy teaching is therefore a speculative science for the sake of ordering human actions with theological truth, which is one reason among many that the massive *Secunda pars* cannot be abstracted from the doctrines of God and creation in the *Prima pars* and the Christology and sacramentology of the *Tertia pars*. Far from being some detachable philosophical ethics, Thomas' teaching on virtue and conformity to Christ is summed up in the cross. Nothing could separate him from Aristotle further than this, for Thomas finds in Christ the truth that the 'act of self-abandonment out of love is both the supreme example and the true path of human happiness' (p. 263).

To riff on a phrase, 'a good introduction is hard to find', but Bauerschmidt has given us one. He presents us with a refreshing portrait of Thomas who employs his considerable intellectual resources to further the cause of the gospel by displaying the beauty of God's wisdom in Christ crucified. If that is what 'Hillbilly Thomism' is all about, may its tribe increase.

Tyler R. Wittman
University of St. Andrews
St Andrews, Scotland, UK

Steven B. Cowan and Terry L. Wilder, eds. *In Defense of the Bible: A Comprehensive Apologetic for the Authority of Scripture*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2013. xvi + 490 pp. £23.49/\$34.99.

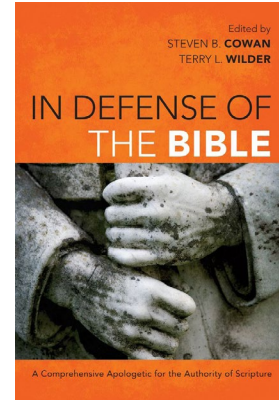
In the midst of an increasingly secular society, Cowan and Wilder have felt the need to give a fresh response to the Bible's detractors. To do this, they group common objections under three headings that divide the book into its parts: (1) philosophical and methodological challenges; (2) textual and historical challenges; and (3) ethical, scientific, and theological challenges. The goal of the volume, according to the editors, is to "meet the Bible's critics head-on and to respond to all of the major challenges to the inspiration and authority of Scripture" (p. 7).

Part 1 begins with Douglas Geivett defending the philosophical viability of divine communication (ch. 1). He argues that not only *can* God speak to human beings; he *wants* to do this. In chapter 2, Douglas Blount describes the inerrancy of Scripture in terms of supreme trustworthiness. Charles Quarles, in chapter 3, pries apart biblical higher criticism from its anti-supernatural associations and encourages Christians to wisely apply its methods to the study of Scripture. Richard Melick rounds out the presentation in Part 1 by arguing that the Bible contains a "self-correcting mechanism" (p. 90) that guides the interpreter into a proper understanding of its message (ch. 4).

Paul Wegner and Daniel Wallace take up, in Part 2, the reliability of the OT and NT texts, respectively, demonstrating how the methods of textual criticism have helped us establish the original wording of Scripture with great accuracy (chs. 5–6). In chapter 7, Terry Wilder contends that ancient readers were not credulous and would have been able to detect forged documents posing as Scripture. Mary Jo Sharp, in chapter 8, compares the biblical account to ancient pagan myths and shows how figures such as Osiris, Mithras, or Horus bear little resemblance to our risen Savior. The historicity of the OT and NT receives notice in chs. 9–10 as Walter Kaiser and Paul Barnett, respectively, survey archaeological and historiographical evidence corroborating the Bible's claims. Finally, Douglas Huffman takes up the issue of Scripture's internal historical consistency and identifies a number of mistaken assumptions that lie behind charges of contradiction (ch. 11).

In Part 3, Matthew Flannagan and Paul Copan interact carefully with the conquest narratives in Joshua and conclude that God did not order genocide then nor does he condone it today. However, God is free to make exceptions to moral requirements (such as not killing the innocent, broadly considered) should he deem it necessary for some greater purpose (ch. 12). Chapter 13 addresses the issues of slavery and sexism as James Hamilton, applying a biblical-theological framework, contends that Scripture supports neither practice. Regarding the relationship between the Bible and science, William Dembski proposes that the two do not necessarily conflict (ch. 14). In chapter 15, Craig Blaising maintains, against the confusion of over two centuries of historical-critical approaches to Scripture, that the Bible is in fact a coherent literary unit with a consistent message. Following this, Paul Wegner, Terry Wilder, and Darrell Bock affirm in chapter 16 that the books of the Protestant canon are the only documents that can rightly claim to be the word of God. Lastly, Steven Cowan wraps up the volume in chapter 17 by demonstrating the inspiration of Scripture on the basis of Jesus's testimony.

In Defense of the Bible boasts a number of strengths. First, the breadth of topics covered supports the book's claim to be a "comprehensive apologetic." The reader will find that the salient objections to



Scripture's authority are treated, and treated well, for the most part, in this volume. Second, the variety of authors defending the reliability of the Bible adds its own apologetic weight to the subject. Each voice is unique, and some voices differ at points, but the cumulative effect is very edifying. Finally, the book is accessible to a wide audience. The chapters vary in terms of sophistication, but educated laypeople, seminary students, and scholars alike will benefit from the material.

In closing, I'll mention two weaknesses of the book. First, James Hamilton's tone in his chapter on slavery and sexism is at times unhelpfully abrasive and dismissive of opposing views. He opens with this statement: "Does the Bible condone slavery and sexism? Of course not! The suggestion is ridiculous, but we live in a world where absurd conclusions seem as rational as the truth is preposterous" (p. 335). True as his observation may be, leading off with this kind of language, especially in a work on apologetics, does little to win a hearing.

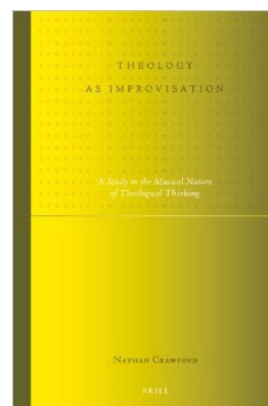
Second, William Dembski curiously suggests that we should prioritize the biblical text over authorial intent when we interpret Scripture (pp. 366–70). His point is that, when it comes to reconciling the Bible with science, we should not read into Scripture our own ideas about the human author's potentially faulty cosmology. Rather, we should focus our efforts on the text God inspired him to write. While I grant the substance of Dembski's concern, it is nonetheless problematic to drive a wedge between text and authorial intent, even when we are dealing with a dually authored book such as the Bible. Instead, we should pursue human authorial intent *through the biblical text*, recognizing that this intent is at the same time God's intent, though the latter may at times extend beyond (but not contradict) the former.

Johnathon Bowers
Bethlehem College and Seminary
Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

Nathan Crawford. *Theology as Improvisation: A Study in the Musical Nature of Theological Thinking*. Leiden: Brill, 2013. ix + 235 pp. £90.00/\$149.00.

I was fully expecting to enjoy this book. I am a jazz musician, and have spent a good deal of time thinking about the relation of music in general, and improvisation in particular, to the nature and task of theology. And there is much in this volume to commend it. The author's basic argument is that because of the great distance between God and mankind, rather than what he considers to be the totalizing or hegemonic tendency of traditional theology, *attunement* between the divine and the Christian is the best way to relate them. Along the way Nathan Crawford draws on many sources to build his case. He brings into the purview Martin Heidegger, particularly his articulation of the poetic, pre-Socratic, path to Being. He cites Derrida, claiming that his deconstruction project is something like attunement. My favorite chapter, the centerpiece, is his unpacking of improvisation itself, relying a good deal on Harvard musicologist Ingrid Monson, who has written extensively on jazz and other forms of improvised music. He then adds two chapters, one on David Tracy and the other on Augustine.

Crawford navigates through some turbulent waters. At the very end he helps the reader by summarizing his project with six themes which can be found throughout but which also need to be



developed in the future. They are: (1) Attunement as a way of thinking theologically. Attunement is both active and passive, relating to God both by listening to Scripture and by recognizing the context we are in. (2) Theology is dynamic. The reason is that God is dynamic and beyond comprehension, so that not formulations but conversations are the best way to pursue “thinking God.” (3) Doing theology begins with a disposition. The best disposition is “openness” to others, being ready to change and doing justice to others. (4) Thinking God through evocation. The dynamic force for evocation is the love of God, which awakens us to reality. (5) Theology embraces formlessness. Crawford explains that the two central doctrines of creation and incarnation tell us of God’s desire to “open discourse to the reality of the infinite and incomprehensible.” (6) Finally, theology is enacted in an ethics of resistance. To what? To “totalizing forms of discourse,” which only lead to oppression, marginalization, and disenfranchisement of people groups.

If all this sounds rather vague, I believe it is because the way Crawford sets up the problem, and then the solution through improvisation, is (intentionally?) incapable of concrete application. At the heart of the problem is his inability to be sure of anything relating to God. He says it this way: “I do this [try to be thorough about God] while arguing that even the idea of the idea of God is problematic. . . . I feel the need to say something about God while, at the same time, arguing that we cannot say anything about God” (p. 4). Traditional theology has accomplished certain good things, but it is at best incomplete, and at worst (once again) *totalizing*. Crawford seems unaware that there is a third way between totalizing and being so open that we cannot know much of anything for sure. The consensus view, particularly in Protestant theology, has been that God has revealed himself to us in deeds, in theophanies, and, especially, in Holy Scripture. The result for us is that we can know him and the world *truly* though not *exhaustively*. The dreaded totalizing is answered, not by a postmodern meandering, almost gagging anything sounding like doctrine or ethical norms, but by a covenantal relationship with God, one which disallows the false humility of saying we cannot know anything for sure, but also the pretention of exhaustiveness.

I don’t want to take any cheap shots here. But there are occasional sentences that defy interpretation. “Now I act because I must act and when I act I do so in accordance with the other, having faith that the action opens the space for the other to be other” (p. 83). Either the sentence is simply sophism, or it so lacks in concrete application that we must guess what is going on. On the other end, we find a good many truisms spread about. “In order for the listener to be part of the performance, she must be tuned in to the performance and the music being performed” (p. 112). And then we find statements that border on the heretical: “The elusive nature of God is the fact that God is noncoercive and loving, not forcing God upon People” (pp. 31–32). Really? Is God elusive in his love? How does this square with Paul’s statement that God who did not spare his own Son will also graciously give us all things (Rom 8:32)? God is so vague in Crawford’s theology he goes to remarkable lengths not to allow anything specific to characterize the divine attributes. The annoying tendency to speak of “Godself” rather than using the masculine pronoun testifies to a typical tendency in neo-liberal theology to misunderstand why God is revealed with the masculine pronoun, not as an empty being. Of course, there is no gender in God. All revelation accommodates to some degree. But no doubt the masculine pronoun refers to God’s fatherly ability to engender a Son, not to some sort of masculinity, and certainly not to oppressive patriarchy.

What is really too bad is that the notion of improvisation can indeed be a helpful way to think of doing theology. Geerhardus Vos tells us that we are in the same historical instance as the apostles and the NT. Having been given the fullness of revelation in Jesus Christ, and with the authoritative

interpretation of the revelatory material from the “fullness of time” by the NT writers, we as “end-time” believers (1 Cor 10:11) must use the same revelatory data as did those writers, albeit not infallibly. Even Kevin Vanhoozer’s theory of “theodrama” is too weak for Crawford, because there is too much emphasis on Scripture, an emphasis that “limits the forms available for thinking God” (p. 23). Curiously, Crawford does not interact with N. T. Wright, who, like Vanhoozer, suggests an ethic based on Act 5 in a great redemptive drama. Nor does he seem to know about Jeremy Begbie, who has spent much of his life articulating the analogy between doing theology and music-making.

So despite some valuable insights into the nature of doing theology, the book really does not achieve its promise. Besides the great theological difficulty of having a God who is so distant we can only try to get “in the groove,” rather than knowing what to believe, there is here also a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of improvisation. The heart of improvisation is not “attunement,” but narrative. In jazz, we have a book, the song and its chords (“changes” as we call them). With firm obedience to a song’s fundamentals: melody, harmony, style, mood, etc., the musicians are then free to tell the story by developing the melody, by interacting with other musicians in accepted conventions (call-and-response, solos, “trading fours,” building to a climax, etc.). Improvisation is thus not doing what you feel like, or vaguely being attuned to the original. Rather, it is to continue to tell the story the original song proclaims. Similarly, doing theology is not trying to feel for God, but living-out the once-for-all revelation he has given us, following his directives and his parameters.

Theology as Improvisation is as good as neo-liberal Protestantism gets. Which, regrettably, is not very satisfying. And it is certainly not worth the prohibitive price of the book. Time to change keys!

William Edgar

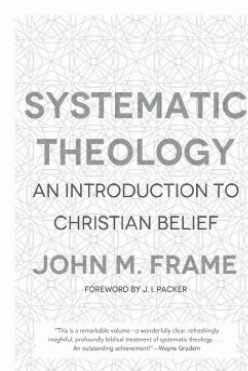
Westminster Theological Seminary

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

John M. Frame. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2013. xxxiii + 1,220 pp. £30.86/\$49.99.

John Frame holds the J. D. Trimble Chair of Systematic Theology and Philosophy at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, Florida and needs no introduction in the arena of evangelical theology. His voluminous contributions to present include a four-volume Theology of Lordship and an introduction to systematic theology entitled *Salvation Belongs to the Lord* as well as a variety of monographs. The present weighty tome bears the modest subtitle “An Introduction to Christian Belief”, a pointer to evaluating it, as apparently Frame is not writing for academia but for the edification of a broader informed public.

Whether one likes Frame’s way of doing theology or not, this is a magnificent achievement that caps an outstanding career. Frame is biblical in content, clear in expression, accessible to those outside the huddle of theological literati and above all, because theology is all about application, practical in the service of the church. Nor is Frame one to hide his light under a bushel. Even if polite restraint is everywhere formally observed, the reader is left in no doubt as to what the writer does not like about the current scene, whether it be open theism, libertarianism, gender equality, panentheism, Arminianism or just plain old academic compromise for



reasons of respectability, as well as a few in-house Reformed problems that are treated more briefly, such as two-kingdom theology.

In so far as method is concerned, as in Frame's other writings two features have prominence, namely, the status of biblical revelation and the triadic approach to theological questions, which is more than just a simple heuristic device. First and foremost, Scripture is determinative for Frame. For this reason he is not particularly interested in discussing the contribution of extra-biblical considerations to theological method either in a broad sense or with regard to particular issues. The kind of questions generated by Vanhoozer's "first theology" methodology are bypassed, which does not mean that Frame does not use his well-honed linguistic analytical skills when he needs to get out of a corner.

So much is clear from the outset: "The Bible is the most important thing. Only the Bible is the written Word of God made available to us. It must have the final word in all historical and contemporary controversies. So the most important aspect of theological work is to present to readers what the Bible says. And if some choice is to be made (as it must) of what to include and exclude, that choice must be on the basis of what is best suited to express the Bible's teaching to contemporary readers" (p. xxxi). Frame aims, self-consciously and explicitly and perhaps more than many of his predecessors or contemporaries, at writing a theology that corresponds to *sola Scriptura*, taking it as the exclusive principle and letting Scripture speak. If words are the theologian's tools, then words warranted by Scripture itself are best. Definitions too are necessary, but biblical definitions are the best. Scripture is our authority because it is God's word, not because of its content.

In evaluating the validity of the tradition, Frame often brushes aside some received idea for biblical reasons, as he does quite typically when considering the Augustinian idea of privation: "I know no biblical reason to assert that created things by nature tend to slip into nonbeing, to lose their being, or to become corrupt. Scripture says nothing of the kind, and in the absence of scriptural warrant I know of no other reason to say such a thing" (p. 288). Even Van Til's generally appreciated distinction about paradoxes and real and apparent contradictions which are ultimately reconciled in the divine mind is criticised: "I see no scriptural basis for such a claim. I don't think Scripture tells us what apparent contradictions are reconcilable by creatures and which are not" (p. 332).

Of course Frame is going to be accused of biblicism, which does not particularly embarrass him as is shown by his riposte "In Defense of Something Close to Biblicism," published in his previous book *The Doctrine of the Word of God*. Frame's concern is not only to write a distinctively Christian systematic theology, a book that could not "have been written by a Jew, Muslim, or secularist" (p. 914) but above all to write a biblical one. This will strike some as being an excessive and even a fundamentalistic variant of foundationalism. Frame denies that his position can be equated with the foundationalism he criticises (pp. 724–27). No self-evident foundations are necessary in the theological quest because if one is confident that all Scripture is God's truth, one can start anywhere: "*When we have a settled view that Scripture teaches p, then we must believe p, over against any claim that p is false.*" Applying this maxim throughout our quest for knowledge gives us a firm basis for finding truth, firm enough to describe it as a 'foundation' of knowledge. But this is not the kind of foundationalism so regularly discussed and dismissed today" (p. 727, italics Frame's). Such a frank position will doubtless irritate modernists and postmodernists alike, but this is hardly something to bother Frame as it is a hallmark of his theology and constitutes its originality. "Biblical" is always the operative and final word even if, in Frame's understanding, this does not eliminate "good and necessary consequences" which are applications of Scripture (p. 355).

Correlated with the biblical approach is an epistemology which, in some way, corresponds to the unique character of Scripture and provides a key for unlocking its inbuilt meaning: “a triperspectival biblical epistemology,” says Frame, “enables us to form a basically coherent understanding of the world by our own minds under God’s revelation” (p. 726). The triadic method permeates the whole of this work (as appendix A shows) and in his foreword J. I. Packer reckons to have counted a grand total of 110 “cogent triadic analyses,” an estimate that seems modest to me (p. xxix). Frame’s theology has been called “multiperspectivalism” (a word that strangely crops up only on p. 1112), but he does not explain the omnipresent triadic method, which is surprising in the light of the fact that critics, such as Meredith Kline, have questioned whether it is an acceptable way of doing theology. A brief presentation of the triadic approach would have been useful in the introduction, particularly for readers new to Frame, as I hope many will be.

As it is, triads crop up all over the place. We are told tongue-in-cheek that the proper method in theology is of course to divide everything in threes not twos as Ramus did (p. 258n2) and that there is “something mysteriously captivating” about the number three (p. 436) even though a direct Trinitarian rapport cannot be theoretically established (p. 507). It is not until page 1103 that we read in a footnote that Frame is indebted to Cornelius Van Til, whose ethical triad of standard, goal, and motive was the seed of thought behind all his triads.

Triadic thought (also called perspectivalism and triperspectivalism) arises out of the transcendence and immanence of God expressed in the Creator-creature distinction, in divine revelation and in the covenant context in which the divine Lordship attributes (control, authority and presence) are recognisably present. When man encounters God there are necessarily three perspectives involved in this meeting: the normative or the standard, as God is everywhere Lord; the locus in which the nature of God’s authority is made known, or the situational perspective; and the subjectivity of man as the creaturely receptor, or the existential motivational-subjective perspective. Frame insists that these perspectives are three aspects of one reality: “The key point is that in dealing with these triangles, it is important to note what the whole triangle represents. In the triad normative, situational, existential, the whole triangle represents all of reality. So each corner of it also deals with all of reality, and each is ultimately identical with the others.” (p. 971) Thus Frame insists that all knowledge is in some respect covenantal and dependent on the Word of God and that there is no secular “neutral” knowledge, not even arising from common grace in the profane sphere inhabited by the “good pagan.” True, all human knowledge is obviously not derived from Scripture, but it must all be reconciled with Scripture.

Given that triadic theology presents three perspectives on a given reality, it may be asked, and it has been, whether the relation between the perspectives is correlated and complementary, or whether there is any order of importance and subordination of one to the other. But such discussion lies beyond the scope of this review. Readers can refer to Frame’s *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (part III) for an in depth discussion of perspectivalism. One disadvantage of the triadic method that might be experienced, particularly when it is applied *in extenso*, as in this book, is that of a certain triadic overkill or repetitiveness, in which the element of surprise that characterises intriguing books (even in systematic theology!) is lost. However it cannot be denied that Frame’s many triangles have not only evident theological warrant but also excellent pedagogical value.

As to the content of this book, Frame follows the traditional pattern of systematic *loci* expected in a work of this nature, adding chapters on the Christian life and ethics. However, this is primarily a book for first-time “Framers” and I’ll explain why. If you already have read Frame’s four volumes on Lordship

and his introduction to systematics a good many of the things found here are already published in them. So part III of this book is a rewritten and abridged version of *The Doctrine of God*, part IV of the *Doctrine of the Word of God* and part V is based on the *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (1987). There are of course many tweaks, but basically the ground covered is the same. As far as parts VIII and following of this book are concerned, these are a reprise of *Salvation Belongs to the Lord* (2006), often verbatim, with some additions. Adepts of source and redaction criticism can do the rest; I make these comments not to detract from the excellence of the contents of the work before us, but those who are closer to their bucks than their books will be interested to know what's in this package.

Frame himself preempts some expected criticism about the “lopsided structure of this book” with something of a *mea culpa*: “Some of my correspondents have noticed that the chapters on Christology are rather short compared to other systematic theologies. One would think that a truly Christian and Christ-centered theology would be more voluminous in the sections dealing most explicitly with the Lord of our salvation. But as I have indicated above, I have tried to show how every topic of this book centers on Christ” (p. 880n11). One fully appreciates the fact, and as it stands this book is wholly centred on the work of the Mediator of the covenant from creation and before to final redemption. However, in the light of the complexity and richness of present Christological debate, it is something of a disappointment to find that here the person and work of Christ only occupies 44 pages of the whole. Perhaps we can still hope for a final volume of the Lordship series on the subject?

Another feature of the book, which is justified in the light of its aim and target audience, is the quantity of quotations from Scripture, which occupies considerable page space. For some it will appear excessive, and one does wonder whether more economy in quotation might have been justifiable. For instance almost the whole of page 979 is a quotation from Rom 8 and pages 910–11 quote pp. 46–50 of the *Westminster Larger Catechism* in full.

These details apart, Frame lives up to his mission of writing a biblical systematics, one which will stand alongside the classics of the past and the Grudem and Ericksons of the present. If his primary aim is to do justice to Scripture, he can hardly be accused that this is a pretext for the neglect of present concerns and interpretations. Not only does he expound Scripture throughout, but he gives fair and adequate treatment to current debate on relevant related issues when the need arises. For example, his discussion as to whether God has “feelings” and of Moltmann’s “suffering God” on pages 412–19 is both to the point and convincing. Here is Frame in full flight:

Moltmann is right to find divine suffering in the cross in the senses mentioned above. But he is wrong, I think, to conclude that the doctrine of God’s impassibility is merely a remnant of Greek philosophy. As we have seen, the doctrine of impassibility should not be used to deny that God has emotions, or to deny that God the Son suffers real injury and death on the cross. But God in his transcendent nature cannot be harmed in any way, nor can he suffer loss. In his eternal existence, “suffering loss” could only mean losing some attribute, being defeated in his war with Satan, or otherwise failing to accomplish his eternal plan. Scripture assures us that none of these things will happen—so they cannot happen. In this sense, God is impassible” (p. 417).

That said, Frame basically regrets Moltmann’s unbiblical speculations, the fact that concerning suffering in God or of God we are largely ignorant and should admit it (p. 416). Quite so, there is something almost insufferable about Moltmann’s dogmatism, even if it is often thought to be “creative.”

In a similar vein, Frame is at his best when aided and abetted by his skill in linguistic analysis; he tackles the big issues such as the problem of evil, divine sovereignty and human responsibility, and the nature of human freedom. He confronts head-on the “new perspective on Paul” (pp. 972–74), the currently fashionable middle knowledge (pp. 835–36) and libertarianism. His critique of the latter in 15 points (!) (pp. 825–30)—showing that “we must abandon either libertarianism or *sola Scriptura*”—will undoubtedly be highly unpopular in some circles, but Frame gives anyone who thinks the contrary a good deal to mull over. Likewise, regarding God’s knowledge of the future and the claims of open theism Frame states bluntly: “one of the ‘selling points’ is that it is a new position. But in fact it is an old heresy, rejected by the church four hundred years ago” (p. 310n20). He argues cogently that “God’s knowledge, even conditional knowledge, of a human free act does not cohere with the system of open theism” (p. 315), but his main reasons for rejecting it are biblical ones, either by historical example or in statements such as found in Ps 139:4, that God knows our words “altogether” before they are on our tongues, which is better than any reasoning (p. 316).

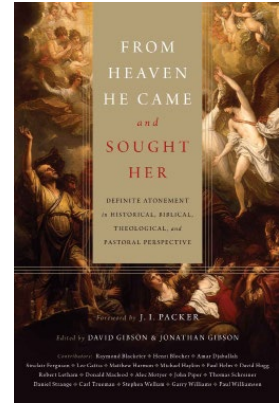
On some points the reader might think that Frame has undersold us and wish he had gone another mile. For example we are told more than once (p. 784, 792, 794) that he does not agree with Barth’s sexualising of the image of God, but he neither describes Barth’s position nor states his disagreement more fully. There is no discussion of the whys and wherefores of cessationism as such (but *cf.* p. 132 on miracles), although we are told why he does not find Grudem’s ideas on prophecy convincing (p. 929ff.). Some may well wish, in the light of current debate on the subject, that Frame had gone deeper into questions such as that of the imputation of Christ’s active obedience (pp. 902, 968), or that of whether none at all will be saved apart from a verbal confession of Christ (pp. 957–58). Another tantalising issue that is not fully developed in terms of its consequences concerns Frame’s “holistic” view of body and soul, which gets him over the related problems of dichotomy and trichotomy, creationism and traducianism, and the immortality of the soul without a hitch. However, if the terms spirit, soul, and body are not taken to designate metaphysical components of the human person, as Frame asserts, fascinating questions are raised both in the realm of Christology and as to where we go after death. The numerous questions raised certainly call for some development.

Much more could be said about the qualities of Frame’s thorough and impassioned defence of biblical truth and his willingness to swim against the tide when it is going out, but enough! On every page the reader will find reasons for praise and thankfulness, for reflexion, for agreement (or disagreement!) because Frame speaks to us in such a way that he never leaves us indifferent. His systematics is and will remain one of the major contributions to orthodox Reformed theology since Bavinck.

Paul Wells
Faculté Jean Calvin
Aix-en-Provence, France

David Gibson and Jonathan Gibson, eds. *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her: Definite Atonement in Historical, Biblical, Theological, and Pastoral Perspective*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2013. 703 pp. £30.20/\$50.00.

In 2006, A. T. B. McGowan observed that “many pamphlets have been written” on the extent of the atonement, “but few full-scale studies have been undertaken” (“The Atonement as Penal Substitution,” in *Always Reforming: Explorations in Systematic Theology* [ed. A. T. B. McGowan; IVP Academic, 2006], 209.) Eight years later, McGowan’s point can no longer be maintained. With the publication of *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her*, David and Jonathan Gibson have given the church a definitive argument for definite atonement.



While interaction with each section, let alone every chapter, is beyond the scope of this review, I will outline the contents of the book, keying on its breadth of scholarship and its method of argumentation. At the end, I will consider the potential effect this volume might have.

From the four-fold subtitle, it is apparent that *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her* aims to be comprehensive. And from my reading, I believe they have hit their mark. While not the multivolume work they had originally planned (p. 19), this book is remarkably thorough in its treatment of definite atonement.

After an introductory essay (ch. 1), the editors have compiled historical studies on subjects ranging from the ancient church to John Owen (chs. 2–8). A cadre of leading biblical scholars has queried the OT and NT to discern how Scripture speaks of the particular and universal features of the atonement (chs. 9–14). In the theological section, questions concerning the divine decree, the Trinity, and the relationship of penal substitution to definite atonement are thoroughly addressed (chs. 15–20). Finally, in the last section pastoral concerns regarding missions, assurance, and preaching are explained to show how practical definite atonement is (chs. 21–23).

All in all, there is little that is not covered, and for that reason, it is appropriate to describe the book as “encyclopedic.” Until the publication of this book, bibliographic information was disparate and introductions to all the names and controversies were incomplete. As I wrote my dissertation on the matter, I continued to find old works from different countries, written in different eras that had defended or rejected the doctrine.

With this book, however, researchers—for and against definite atonement—are furnished with an encyclopedic reference to the most important names and debates in church history. This is clearly the case in the historical section, but it continues in the exegetical and theological sections as well. For instance, Donald Macleod addresses Barth’s supralapsarianism, as well as explaining the various forms of hypothetical universalism held by Edward Polhill, Richard Baxter, John Davenant, and Moises Amyraut. Likewise, Garry Williams takes on John Davenant’s argument concerning “bare sufficiency,” along with D. Broughton Knox’s concern about a *bona fide* offer of the gospel. In short, *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her* functions as the most thorough work on the debate—from either side.

That said, the book is not exhaustive. There are other strong defenders of definite atonement only mentioned in passing (e.g., Hugh Martin, George Smeaton, T. J. Crawford) and still others who are not included at all (e.g., Robert Smith Candlish, James Haldane, Howard Malcolm, William Symington). On the other side, there are theologians who reject definite atonement that are left out of this book

(e.g., James Fraser, Thomas W. Jenkin, Ralph Wardlaw). Honestly, this is not a major fault. It simply recognizes the vastness of this literature, and it reiterates the value of this volume to supply the reader with the best place to begin research.

Still, the book is not a reference work. From start to finish the book is making the case that “the death of Christ was intended to win the salvation of God’s people alone” (p. 33). Each chapter adds to the argument, with varying degrees of passion and persuasion.

In contrast to Owen’s polemical *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*, the presentation here is more measured. For instance, in Michael Haykin’s chapter on the ancient church, he concludes by saying, “some of the key arguments used by late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Reformers in defense of definite atonement are clearly present in seed form in the ancient church” (p. 74). However, he restrains himself from saying too much in his chapter. His chapter, like some of the others (for instance, Paul Helm’s on John Calvin or Lee Gatiss’s on the Synod of Dort), does not say more than what evidence can support. This approach gives credence to the book, and secures its academic contribution. The authors are not simply trying to win a debate; they are furthering our understanding of church history.

Of all the outstanding features of the book, its rigorous consideration of the biblical text is the greatest. While the doctrine of definite atonement has been termed “a textless doctrine,” and one that Christians would never come to from reading the Bible (p. 35), *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her* is one long extended exegetical study. In the historical section, the contributors wrestle with the history of interpretation on key texts like 1 John 2:2; in the biblical section, the authors make arguments from a thick reading of Scripture; and in the theological and pastoral sections, the theology espoused is replete with Scripture.

While some opponents will remain unconvinced because they cannot find a verse that says Christ died for the elect only, it is impossible to claim definite atonement is a doctrine created by logic and not Scripture argumentation. For instance, as Garry Williams explains the idea of “double payment,” he first develops the doctrine from a close reading of Leviticus, before turning to the way metaphors work in the Bible. In the end, he defends the double payment argument by quoting John Owen himself, who cautioned against the wrongful use of the commercial metaphor (pp. 510–12). Likewise, Jonathan Gibson spends nearly one hundred pages grappling with Paul’s particularity and universalism and the Trinitarian nature of his soteriology, and Tom Schreiner addresses the knotty theological implications of the “problematic texts” in the Pastoral and General Epistles. Such patient exegesis raises the bar for theological discussion. After this work, it should be agreed that lists of proof texts are insufficient for proving or rejecting the doctrine.

In the end, what shall we say about this new work of scholarship? Michael Horton has said that it is “the most impressive defense of definite atonement in over a century.” Based on the contributors and the content of *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her* this seems like a fair appraisal, but it is worth asking a further question: Is it the best articulation of definite atonement ever? To date, that mantle has been reserved for John Owen’s *The Death of Death*. Of which, J. I. Packer once said, “It is safe to say that no comparable exposition of the work of redemption as planned and executed by the Triune Jehovah has ever been done since Owen published his. None has been needed” (“Introductory Essay,” in *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ* [Banner of Truth, 1959], 12–13).

While that sentiment may persist among some (others no doubt have dismissed Owen for a number of reasons), there is the possibility that this new volume may in time eclipse that of Owen. For one reason, its format and writing style is much easier to read. For another, it improves upon the work of

Owen. Moreover, the multiple chapters from a wide selection of biblical scholars, theologians, and pastors provide the strength of twenty-three witnesses, not just one. More academically, this volume has the advantage of being up-to-date on its sources, interpretations, and theological questions. A lot has happened since the seventeenth century, and *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her* ably handles nearly all the major controversies. Last, the weight of the argument stands on seven-hundred pages of biblical exposition and biblical theology. For all those reasons, the volume compiled and edited by the brothers Gibson is a great gift to the church, especially to those who delight in the doctrine of definite atonement.

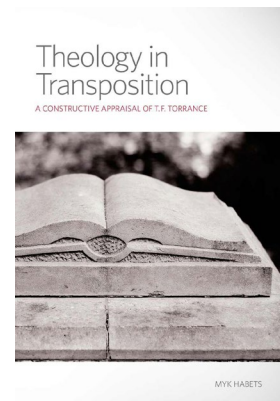
Of course, it is still too early to tell what the impact of this work will have, but for now we can say that *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her* masterfully filled the lacuna observed by A. T. B. McGowan. In this century it will be the book that all others must consult as they consider the doctrine of definite atonement.

David Schrock
Calvary Baptist Church
Seymour, Indiana, USA

Myk Habets. *Theology in Transposition: A Constructive Appraisal of T. F. Torrance*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013. xiv + 227 pp. £25.99/\$39.00.

In the years since his death in 2007, there has been growing interest in and secondary literature surrounding the Reformed theologian Thomas Forsyth Torrance. Already recognized as a significant figure within Scotland—Donald MacLeod has called him “among the immortals of Scottish theology” (p. 8)—his theological legacy has been appraised with increasing esteem. The praise that has been heaped upon Torrance by Alister McGrath, Elmer Colyer, and Paul Molnar in their recent publications on Torrance is perhaps summed up best in Bruce McCormack’s judgment that Torrance is “the most significant theologian of the late-twentieth century.” However, having recognized Torrance’s contribution, there is a need to engage both critically and constructively with his dogmatic work, lest the conversation about him stagnate in hagiography. This need has been met by Myk Habets in *Theology in Transposition: A Constructive Appraisal of T. F. Torrance*, who moves the conversation forward in his sensitive, contextual handling of Torrance.

Habets divides his analysis of Torrance into two parts. The first four chapters provide “a critical and concise overview of Torrance’s method and scope—his architectonic scientific Christian dogmatics” (p. 1). Habets first provides a biographical sketch of Torrance; his formative experiences as a child to missionary parents in China, his education in Scotland and in Basel under Karl Barth, and his work in Scotland as a Church of Scotland pastor and as a professor at New College in Edinburgh. Making use of Torrance’s unpublished writings which are currently held in Princeton Theological Seminary’s special collections, the chapter is not only an excellent introduction to Torrance but adds texture to the other biographical accounts that have been published. In chapters two through four, Habets examines in turn three major aspects of Torrance’s thought: the “scientific” structure of his Christian dogmatics,



his original position on natural theology which is staked out between Calvin and Barth, and finally his commitment to a realist epistemology and how it informed his theology.

The chapter on Torrance's epistemology is one of the highlights of the book, for in it Habets places Torrance's work within the context of Carl Henry's criticism of Torrance. In *God, Revelation, and Authority*, Henry devotes an entire chapter to critiquing Torrance's epistemological commitments, and Habets captures for the first time in print the nature of their conflict and the difference in their two positions. What results is an excellent depiction of the debate between those who work from foundationalist/nominalist positions and those who hold to forms of realism, a depiction that can lead to greater clarity and mutual understanding of the nature of the disagreement. Torrance's reply to Henry, captured in an audio recording of Torrance's lectures at Fuller, is trenchant: "So I said to him, Carl Henry, do you believe in partial substitution, and therefore there is something in your reason, Carl Henry, that hasn't really come under the judgment of the cross of Christ?" (p. 106). But Habets's reading of Henry is charitable, demonstrating what Torrance might have learned from Henry's doctrine of Scripture.

In the second part of the book, Habets brings Torrance into constructive conversation with other theologians in the Great Tradition. Chapter five examines Torrance's "mystical theology" (a term Habets concedes that Torrance would have himself avoided) as well as examining what more Torrance could have learned about "Christian experience" from his favorite theologian, Athanasius, as well as from Gregory of Nyssa. In chapter six, Habets discusses the resources within Torrance's Trinitarian theology for a robust doctrine of creation and compares this favorably with the contributions of Wolfhart Pannenberg. And in chapter seven, Habets examines Torrance's Christology and his claim that it was necessary for Jesus to assume sinful flesh in order to redeem humanity. Over the course of this final chapter, Torrance is helpfully brought into dialogue with fellow Reformed figures John Owen, Edward Irving, and Jonathan Edwards before Habets comes to the conclusion that his Christology could be strengthened with more emphasis upon the Holy Spirit's role in the atoning life of the Incarnate Son.

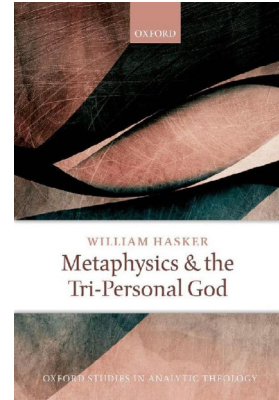
If there is a weakness in the volume, it is the sixth chapter on Torrance's doctrine of creation. The chapter, which is the shortest of the seven, is tantalizingly brief and leaves the reader wanting more. This reader in particular was hoping for hints of what kind of constructive project could be built upon Torrance's Trinitarian understanding of creation, as well as how Torrance's understanding that "creation is proleptically conditioned by redemption" (p. 146) informs his eschatology.

The book's strengths more than make up for this minor disappointment, though. Habets' conceptual grasp of Torrance's theology and the helpful ways he contextualizes Torrance within the tradition of the Church—both Reformed and beyond—make this volume an excellent introduction to Torrance and to contemporary conversations around his work. The graduate student, the pastor looking for an introduction to Torrance, and the academic would all benefit from Habets's constructive appraisal of Torrance.

Joseph H. Sherrard
University of St Andrews
St Andrews, Scotland, UK

William Hasker. *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God*. Oxford Studies in Analytic Theology. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. vii + 272 pp. £65.00/\$99.00.

William Hasker's latest monograph, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God*, marks the first installment of the new Oxford Studies in Analytic Theology series edited by Michael C. Rea and Oliver D. Crisp. This new series arises out of the burgeoning analytic theology movement comprising philosophers and theologians interested in utilizing the various "tools and methods of contemporary analytic philosophy for the purposes of constructive Christian theology" (p. ii). Hasker is not only a leading participant within analytic theology, but also a proponent of "Social trinitarianism" (henceforth, ST), or what some have called the "new orthodoxy" in Trinitarian theology.



Hasker contends that his contribution to the contemporary Trinitarian discussion will provide "an enriched theological synthesis" of the three major developments within trinitarian thought since the mid-twentieth century: (1) the recent shift in scholarly reception of fourth-century Trinitarian formulation; (2) the revival of interest in Trinitarian speculation instigated by Karl Barth; and (3) the new surge of interest in the Trinity apparent among analytic philosophers of religion (p. 1). This aim is accomplished in three parts. The first part is an attempt to demonstrate the essential continuity between fourth-century Trinitarianism and Hasker's minimal ST. The second comprises a sprawling review of the twentieth-century literature on the Trinity, culminating in a series of issues that together establish the state of the question. Hasker finally develops his own constructive proposal by further refining the various components in parts I and II.

In "Part I: Trinitarian Foundations," Hasker lays out a detailed account of ST based on a definition of the persons of the Godhead being "distinct centers of consciousness" (p. 22). His objective in this part is twofold: first, to show that his minimalist definition of ST is in accord with the *pro-Social* character of more recent renderings of pro-Nicene Trinitarianism (e.g., Lewis Ayres, Khaled Anatolios), and second, to demonstrate that this is an appropriate reading of the Fathers themselves (especially Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine). Positively speaking, Hasker's minimalist definition by itself seems to avoid the most common pitfall of ST, namely, that it often contains too inflated a concept of perichoresis. Moreover, it is an immense task to show conclusively that early Trinitarian contemplation stands in alignment with ST. Although his claims here are debatable (among patristic historians), Hasker is to be commended for engaging the question. While Hasker's new base definition of ST is intriguing, its success will depend on the cogency and synthetic coherence of his constructive proposal (considered below).

In "Part II: Trinitarian Options," Hasker canvases the theological possibilities provided by four theologians and six contemporary philosophers. He first reviews and assesses the most definitive twentieth-century theologians on the Trinity: Karl Barth, Karl Rahner, Jürgen Moltmann, and John Zizioulas (pp. 85–108). Then, he provides similar accounts of Brian Leftow (pp. 109–118), Peter Van Inwagen (pp. 119–128), Jeffrey Brower and Michael Rea (pp. 129–138), William Lane Craig (pp. 139–146), Richard Swinburne (pp. 147–154), and Keith Yandell (pp. 155–161), who together comprise a majority of the analytic philosophers who have written on the Trinity. Hasker situates these various authors on a continuum that spreads from anti- to pro-ST, summarizing and responding to them each succinctly. The discussion is masterful in both scope and detail and, by itself, worth the price of the book for anyone trying to navigate the landscape of contemporary philosophical reflection on the Trinity.

“Part III: Trinitarian Construction” contains a step-by-step formation of Hasker’s own constructive proposal for the doctrine of the Trinity. The argument in its most basic form includes 8 steps, which are worth putting in summary form here:

1. “Christological Monotheism” develops among the early Christian monotheists such that Jesus is included in the divine identity.
2. Each of the Trinitarian Persons “is God,” which is best understood as attributing to each of the Persons the *attribute* of deity (see “trope” below).
3. The central proposition of ST is that each of the Persons is a “distinct center of knowledge, will, love, and action.”
4. There is “perichoretic unity” among the three divine Persons.
5. The biblically mandated eternal processions of the Godhead, the generation of the Son and the procession of the Holy Spirit must be maintained.
6. The Persons share a single concrete divine nature, a single trope (or instance of the property) of deity.
7. The metaphysical notion of constitution explains the relation between the three persons and the one divine essence, such that the persons are not identical with, but are rather constituted by the divine nature (e.g., Michael Rea: consider a pillar that is also a statue; both are made up of the same marble, yet remain clearly distinct, pp. 53–54).
8. Grammatical guidelines explicate the normativity of the Athanasian Creed and govern the various ways we speak of “God.”

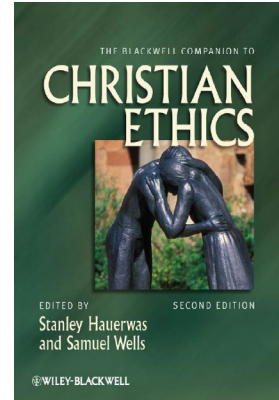
The heart of Hasker’s approach is an analogical use of the metaphysical constitution theory that allows the persons together to obtain in one trope of deity, a single concrete nature. This stems from steps six and seven, but together, these eight steps in Hasker’s argument constitute a metaphysical answer to the Trinitarian question. That is, by the collocation of these eight interdependent arguments Hasker believes that he has provided an intelligible way of understanding the triune God of Christianity.

In his account, Hasker makes skillful use of various analytic concepts, but what remains unclear is the extent to which they (a) *really* do match up with fourth-century Trinitarian development, (b) cohere with biblical concepts, such as the divine processions, and (c) fit together to form a synthetically coherent Trinitarian Godhead. Altogether, however, Hasker’s proposal merits a meaningful response from theologians and philosophers of various philosophical persuasions. This book will serve as mandatory reading for anyone hoping to stay up to date on discussions of the Trinity within the discipline of philosophical theology, especially those doing analytic theology. It must be said that for pastors and students not accustomed to this approach, however, Hasker’s compendium of Trinitarian synthesis will most certainly prove to be a challenge.

Alexander H. Pierce
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Deerfield, Illinois, USA

Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells, eds. *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*. 2d ed. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. xv + 569 pp. £125.00/\$194.95.

Hauerwas and Wells, as one might expect, have created a somewhat unusual companion to Christian ethics. My use of the term unusual should not come to denote obscure or unhelpful, but quite the opposite. Hauerwas and Wells are able to achieve what few companion volumes actually do—provide a coherent and provocative argument that is buttressed by the dozens of essays that follow their introduction. By doing so, they have done a great service to academics and pastors alike. To academics, because they remind the academy that Christian thought is always ethical thought, the proclamation of the church always has ethical imperatives. In other words, theology and ethics are two interwoven realities. Furthermore, for the pastor, because theology and ethics are ultimately tasks of the church, and the worship of the church serves as the seedbed for ethical discourse.



To begin, Hauerwas and Wells cast a vision for their endeavor: “The aim of this volume is to stretch, inspire, and develop the reader’s conception of Christian worship in order to challenge, enrich, and transform the reader’s notions of the form and content of Christian ethics” (p. 3). Notice the priority. The form and content of Christian ethics are transformed in the context of Christian worship. Christian ethical discourse is done within the lived reality of the worshipping community. This is not simply a comment about the *place* of this discussion, but focuses specifically on the development of a distinctively Christian ethical impulse. The Christian liturgy is formative for Christian ethics. Through a series of “ordered practices” that help “shape the character and assumptions of Christians.” Think about the practices of a worshipping community, from the novelty of introducing yourself to a stranger to confessing sin, celebrating, naming truth and anticipating the heavenly banquet by partaking of the Lord’s Supper (the term “eucharist” is saved for the broad movement from greeting to dismissal and not the Lord’s Supper more narrowly). The rule of life that the church embodies signals a deep conviction about the ways of the world. By partaking in this way of life, the church naturally establishes a forum for ethical discourse and pedagogy.

To allow the liturgy to form the volume the contents are broken down into five main headings. The first heading, “Meeting God and One Another,” addresses issues related to gathering, greeting, praising, and reconciling. The topics are incredibly diverse, from the nature of worship to racial reconciliation to the prophetic witness of the mentally disabled. The everyday practices of the church, from greeting one another to praising her Lord, orients everything from the church to the arts to the neglected, and focuses on unity in a way often ignored. The second heading is “Re-Encountering the Story.” The focal point of this second section is on how Scripture “shapes the character of Christians and the mind of the church.” Under this section are practices like reading Scripture, listening, proclaiming, discerning, etc. The ethical issues addressed span the distance between character formation to authority, justice to politics and reasoning in light of the tradition.

The third section is entitled “Being Embodied,” and highlights the point of the service after the proclamation of the word. These focus on particular practices not always included in celebrations of Eucharist, but a part of some—baptism and marriage. As such, the focus in these chapters is on the nature of the church as one body. Here, we find chapters addressing poverty, grief, race, abortion, health care

and cloning, etc. This section provides a broad swath of ethical concerns from marriage to discipline to gender, all through the lens that the people of God are one people, united in Christ. The fourth section is the largest grouping of practices, and it is called “Re-Enacting the Story.” This section focuses on the preparation and consumption of the Eucharist meal itself. Issues such as offering, globalization and power, euthanasia, genetically modified foods, homosexuality, and time are covered under the banner of the shared body of Christ. The fifth heading concerns the ways a service are completed. It is entitled, “Being Commissioned.” The focal point of this section is on the dismissal of the people of God—the church and her vocation as she disperses back into the world. This last section is short, comprising three chapters, which focus on wealth and theft, conception and the family, and being sent as witnesses. The volume concludes with an afterword of two chapters, one on the virtue of the liturgy and an afterword by Rowan Williams.

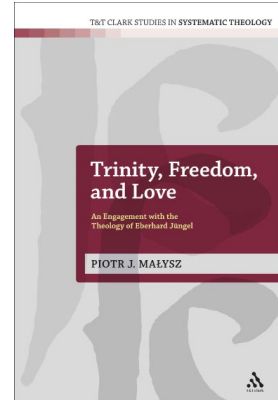
As suggested by this outline, this volume seeks to give texture to the ethical imperatives latent in Christian worship. The essays, overall, are very good, some focusing on the nature of worship and ethics in the abstract and others connecting in a deeply personal way with the authors. An example of the first is Kevin Vanhoozer’s essay “Praising in Song: Beauty and the Arts,” where he seeks to “investigate the role of beauty and aesthetics in the Christian life.” Under this goal, Vanhoozer addresses Christian ethics with “evangelical imagination”—“the ability to see what God is doing for the world in Jesus Christ.” As for the second kind of essay, Brian Brock serves as a helpful example. In his essay, “Praise: The Prophetic Public Presence of the Mentally Disabled,” Brock narrates various circumstances that his family has been confronted with regarding their son Adam and his mental disabilities. Brock raises questions concerning the apparent belief in welcoming everyone in public spaces, and offers a variety of stories that suggest the opposite. These experiences move from the public spaces of society at large to the worshipping community of the church.

This volume would be ideal for upper-divisional undergraduate and seminary/graduate level courses in Christian ethics and pastoral theology. The overall quality of the essays is extremely high and accessible. For the training of those interesting in pastoral ministry, this volume has much more to offer than most texts on Christian ethics. By grounding the key questions of ethics in the worship of the church, this text can help future pastors recognize that the acts of worship are far from innocuous moments of piety, but are, in fact, deeply prophetic political acts in the world. This volume is highly recommended. While I have purposely not focused on the decision-making of the various authors, what should stand out is the method, an issue that is unfortunately left aside in many discussions of ethics in seminaries and undergraduate courses. Let me suggest, rather, that this volume excellently raises the issues and properly locates them within the proclamation and practice of the church.

Kyle Strobel
Grand Canyon University
Phoenix, Arizona, USA

Piotr J. Małysz. *Trinity, Freedom and Love: An Engagement with the Theology of Eberhard Jüngel*. T&T Clark Studies in Systematic Theology. London: T&T Clark, 2012. x + 246 pp. £65.00/\$120.00.

A generation ago Rahner had us thinking the church had forgotten the doctrine of the Trinity. Actually, it hadn't. But we believed him. In these heady days of the "renaissance" of Trinitarian theology one might as easily believe that the church has forgotten the doctrine of the divine attributes. It hasn't. One reason it hasn't is that these two aspects of the doctrine of God—the doctrine of the Trinity and the doctrine of the divine attributes—don't come apart easily, or at least not Christianly. They are mutually intertwined. Take God's love, for example. Does the theologian treat love as part of the doctrine of the Trinity or as part of the doctrine of the divine attributes? Eberhard Jüngel's theology is testimony to this inseparability of the doctrines of the Trinity and the divine attributes, and Małysz's portrait of Jüngel's theology ably captures their interplay.



Małysz's study focuses particularly on the attribute of freedom, both divine and human. An initial chapter surveys the modern ideas of freedom that Jüngel opposes. Małysz devotes the second and third chapters, the analytic portion of the argument, to Jüngel's accounts of divine freedom and human freedom. One of Małysz's subordinate aims here is to disentangle Jüngel's doctrine of God from his influential account of Barth's and to document Jüngel's extensive debt to Luther. The fourth and final chapter, the constructive portion of the argument, draws from Jüngel's account of human freedom in order to resolve tensions in his account of divine freedom.

According to Jüngel, God, in his freedom to determine his own being, identifies himself with the man Jesus. He does so at the crucifixion, and not at the incarnation as we might expect. It is this free divine self-identification with the dead Jesus that both makes God triune and makes Jesus the Son of God. If, on Bruce McCormack's reading of Barth, God becomes triune as the result of his eternal decree of election, for Jüngel God becomes triune as the result of his temporal identification with the crucified Jesus (p. 79). God's identification with the crucified Jesus is also the primordial event of love: God surrendering himself entirely, to the point of death, to the object of his love, Jesus. For Jüngel, then, it is this exercise of the divine freedom that constitutes both God's triunity as well as the loving intersubjectivity of his being: *Trinity, Freedom and Love*.

Jüngel's account is not without its problems. To begin with, if Jesus is dead he can't reciprocate God's love, and without reciprocity God's being cannot be said to be fully relational. Further, if God's love is thus by definition unrequited, then God's love for the world would seem to be indifferent to human reciprocity. Reciprocity is, however, prevalent in Jüngel's account of human freedom. Humans are freed from self-absorption and self-tyranny when God "interrupts" their being in the event of the cross. The cross liberates humanity for love, for reciprocity, for a truly human self-determination for others and for an openness to interruption by others. Human freedom, on Jüngel's account, is thus fully relational (p. 148) and explicitly Trinitarian in structure: originating in the Father, interrupted in the Son, and freed for its goal in the Spirit.

At this point Małysz proposes to emend Jüngel's doctrine of divine freedom by aligning it more closely with his account of human freedom. If Jüngel is to speak of God as fully relational, Małysz argues that he cannot conceive of God as having merely "the form of a di-polar self-relation aimed at self-maintenance" (p. 173). Małysz proposes instead "an originary tri-polar openness . . . as the fount

of creative possibility within God's intersubjective being" (p. 207). Jüngel should have spoken of God's being, according to Małysz, as having not merely its origin in the Father and its interruption in the Son, but also its goal in the Spirit. On this account, "There is in God a capacity for love, further, for genuine creaturely interruption, because from eternity to eternity, from origin to goal, God's being [is] a triune self-transcendence" (pp. 172–73). This Trinitarian tweak to Jüngel's theology suggests that God's love of the dead Jesus, who is the interruption of the divine life, can creatively anticipate its goal in the Spirit-filled community of believers because God's love also finds its goal in the Spirit within the divine life (p. 196). Once again, Jüngel's account of human freedom suggests that there ought to have been more to his account of the divine freedom. Małysz shows us convincingly what this "more" would have to be.

Jüngel's theology would not serve well in Sunday school. His stratospheric sophistication is beyond the reach of most mortals, and the bulk of his work remains encrypted in German. Małysz has thus done us outstanding service in bringing some of the essential features of Jüngel's theology within our grasp, and in engaging Jüngel critically, charitably, and with remarkable insight. Małysz is also a fantastic writer. He translates Polish poetry in his spare time, and somehow he's made this Harvard dissertation read like a novel at points: an absorbing quest for the key to unlock Jüngel.

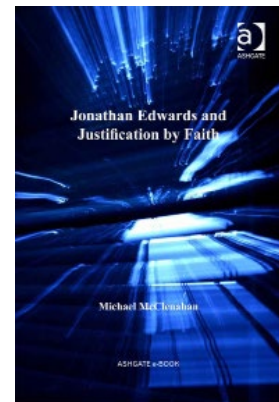
Rob Price

Talbot School of Theology

La Mirada, California, USA

Michael McClenahan. *Jonathan Edwards and Justification by Faith*. Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2012. 218 pp. £55.00/\$99.95.

Amazing as it seems, there has been much debate over the last twenty years in the field of Edwards studies concerning his doctrine of salvation, for some have seen in Edwards's teaching less the contours of Protestant orthodoxy and more a nudge towards traditional Roman Catholic soteriology. Whether such a revisionist interpretation focuses on participation in the divine, the place of works of love alongside faith in salvation, the infusion of holiness as grounds for justification, or the conditionality of the covenant, Edwards's soteriology has come under intense scrutiny. This book by Michael McClenahan, minister in the Presbyterian Church in Northern Ireland, contributes much to the contemporary debate with extraordinary theological dexterity and patient exposition of pertinent texts in their context.



The central thesis of this book is that Edwards's writings on justification have recently been misunderstood because they have been viewed by scholars through systematic rather than historical lens. McClenahan argues that Edwards's early sermons, miscellanies and first published book of sermons treating the topic of justification in the 1720s and 1730s must be understood as directly responding to positions taken in the Church of England, notably by John Tillotson, Archbishop of Canterbury (1691–1694), and not as systematic statements which aspire to completeness, nor as a generic response to deist threats generated in the American colonies and espousing mere moralism. Edwards's writing, especially his Masters defence in 1723, his sermon "Justification by Faith Alone" (1734) and the resulting book containing it entitled *Discourses of Various Important Subjects* (1738), is polemically located and

contextually contingent. The author makes clear connections, for example, between the “Apostacie” at Yale in 1722, in which the Rector, Timothy Cutler and tutors Johnson and Browne, defect to the Anglican cause and Edwards’s response to it in the Masters *Quaestio* (p. 177). Similarly, McClenahan notes how Edwards quotes from Tillotson in the published sermon, sometimes without naming him according to the custom of the day (p. 173), and builds his own case in deliberate dependence on Tillotson’s own published work. The Archbishop viewed the Reformed cause as dangerously antinomian and had worked to denounce its views on faith, works, and spiritual passivity as destructive. Edwards, while honouring some epistemological insights of the Enlightenment, nevertheless takes umbrage at the Archbishop’s method and conclusions.

At stake in these historically subtle debates is whether Edwards, by preaching and writing about justification by faith, is critiquing an *American* individualistic and *deistic* moralism, akin to salvation by works, or whether he is in fact responding to a more pernicious *Anglican* enemy who under the guise of *Christian* morality has argued for the importance of obedience and social order but has thereby undermined Protestant distinctives in the doctrine of salvation. If the former understanding of the “noise of Arminianism” is adopted, Edwards is merely arguing for a view of salvation which is about a gift from God, potentially allowing Roman Catholic categories and conceptualities which also own the nature of a divine gift. If the later understanding of Arminianism is the privileged reading, Edwards is not espousing in his works the value of being generically Christian, but is more pointedly defending Reformed scholastic insights from a particular contemporary threat. I want to commend the method and conclusions which McClenahan has reached. Edwards is engaging with a pastoral concern to defend the gratuity of grace within the forensic setting of the formal cause of justification (pp. 53, 139) rather than the framework of dispositional ontology (p. 3).

Some strengths of this book stand out. McClenahan is writing as someone both systematically sharp and historically careful. We need writers in historical theology who create a bridge with the lived reality of the faith and thereby slow down systematians. He also writes having read many of the unpublished manuscript sermons of Edwards, often unconsulted, thus giving texture and colour to his conclusions on the nature of justification in Edwards’s developing mind (see pp. 106, 117). There was more for Edwards to say after the 1730s in relation to justification, though the polemical starting points need to be honoured. In this book, dense and detailed, McClenahan gives regular summaries of the argument so far, both at the end of sections and at the end of chapters, allowing the reader to pull back from the minutiae to enjoy the view. While himself a conservative evangelical, McClenahan is able to offer critique of like-minded fellow travellers (p. 157), showing even-handedness and building trust with the readership.

On the other side of the ledger, the case studies McClenahan provides, for instance on George Bull’s *Harmonia Apostolica* or the Owen-Sherlock debate (pp. 69–76), though informative, need some further explanation of why they have been selected. While Tillotson is clearly in Edwards’s sights, and the arguments mounted respond pointedly to the Archbishop’s own books and sermons, could there have been other contemporary interlocutors as well? There are frequent typographical mistakes, not befitting a book by such an esteemed publisher: the use of apostrophe after Edwards’s name is inconsistent (pp. 92, 130), “grace” is spelled “hrace” on page 71, and denying many jokes of the last three hundred years, the great benefactor to Yale, Jeremiah Dummer, is presented as *Drummer* (p. 44)! On page 47, the name “White” without any other detail is given in footnote 112, not particularly helpful when the name White had appeared in the sentence noted anyway.

McClenahan's book, the fruit of a doctoral dissertation at Oxford, is an extraordinarily rich contribution to present debates on justification in Edwards's corpus, as well as providing careful distinctions which provides categories for evaluating other contemporary debates on soteriology. McClenahan is a sure hand, guiding us confidently and persistently through sometimes difficult historical and theological terrain. He makes clear his disagreement with authors in the field at particular junctures (for instance Miller, Morimoto, Kang, McDermott, McGrath, Pauw), chiefly by highlighting their decontextualized readings of Edwards. He makes of Edwards a man of his own Reformed scholastic times, who is also to be located in the historical moment of the vicissitudes of the revivals and their detractors.

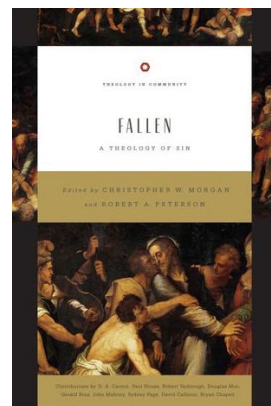
Rhys S. Bezzant
Ridley Melbourne
Parkville, Victoria, Australia

Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson, eds. *Fallen: A Theology of Sin*. Theology in Community. Wheaton: Crossway, 2013. 314 pp. £12.99/\$19.99.

"There is no subject of greater importance to Christian theology than its understanding of the concept of sin and its effects" (p. 163). So goes the bold statement that begins Gerald Bray's contribution to this volume. While the accuracy of this provocative statement can be questioned, it only takes a moment's reflection to realize that if only half as important as Bray asserts, one's ideas about sin have profound implications on one's ideas about a panoply of theological loci. For instance, one's notions about sin affect one's view of humanity in relation to God (theological anthropology). But this in turn influences our conception of our need for a savior (soteriology), how we are saved (atonement), and what kind of savior is needed to bring this about (Christology). Further, including sin as a component of our running list of things that are "not the way they are supposed to be" (to reference Cornelius Plantinga's seminal text) helps the pastor know how effectively to address a host of issues faced in pastoral contexts. Thus, it is particularly refreshing to see an attempt at an interdisciplinary approach to the treatment of this topic. Although biblical studies clearly has pride of place in the editors' and contributors' minds, perspectives from systematic, historical, and pastoral theology contribute to advancing this examination of the doctrine of sin.

In chapter 1, D.A. Carson shows his keen ability as a biblical theologian. It is slightly unfortunate, then, that he was called upon to write a chapter on sin's contemporary significance. That would be an excellent topic for a chapter to open a volume of this nature, but Carson's chapter is not that. Nevertheless, his biblical theological framing of sin as "rebellion against God's very being" (23) provides a helpful leitmotif for the rest of the text.

Paul House's twin chapters on OT conceptions of sin are some of the best material in this volume. He gives a penetrating analysis and clear presentation of the issues. Where "Sin in the Law" provides some definitional work, "Sin in the Former and Latter Prophets and the Writings" shows sin in action. These chapters bring to life House's argument that the OT presents sin as "faithless rebellion against God's



character and God's explicit word" (p. 40). (Quick sidebar: In recent years, there has been a renewal of interest in probing the intersection of philosophy and the theological disciplines [occasionally under the heading of 'analytic theology']. I found House's presentations, with its clear definitions, distinctions, and structure, to be just the kind of biblical studies that could whet the appetite of an analytic philosopher.)

The explicitly NT section of the text is offered by Robert Yarbrough and Douglas Moo. Both these scholars manifest the sort of meticulous linguistic analysis for which evangelical biblical scholars are known. Tracing such terms as sin (ἁμαρτία), trespass (παράπτωμα), desire/passion (ἐπιθυμέω), transgression (παράβασις), and unrighteousness (ἀδικία), the analytical work here will save the exegete hours of time in Bibleworks/Logos/Accordance or TDNT/NIDNTT.

Chapter 6 is an attempt by Christopher Morgan to present a biblical theology of sin. However, the thorough nature of the exegetical work in chapters 2–5 makes this chapter seem rather superfluous. If one simply reads chapters 2–5 while thinking "Creation-Fall-Redemption-Consummation," one can skip chapter 6. If you fear skipping a chapter lest you fall into committing that which the book is examining, I suggest reading this chapter first.

Gerald Bray has the monumental task of covering 2000 years of Christian theological reflection on the doctrine of sin in just 22 pages, and he even starts with 3 pages on pre-NT Jewish and Gentile notions about sin. Despite the necessary oversimplification his project entails, Bray presents a unified and lucid story about the challenges and reoccurring themes of reflections on sin. Bray's piece displays the web of implications on many areas of theology that theologians have spun, especially focusing on Augustine, late medieval Roman Catholicism, Luther, Calvin, New England Puritans, and nineteenth-century evangelicals.

John Mahony's piece, "A Theology of Sin for Today," is the most creative contribution to the volume. In this chapter, he attempts to locate the doctrine of sin on a map of other theological topics. Thus, he tries to make explicit a notion that is stated numerous times in the volume, that the doctrine of sin touches on all aspects of Christian theological reflection. Mahony, likewise, also characterizes sin as fundamentally a rebellion: "the essence of sin is simply a willful act of rebellion against God" (p. 188). The most creative move Mahony makes concerns the relationship of Christ to Adam; however, it seems that Mahony could then have developed this a bit further. He does compare Christ and Adam with respect to the temptations they faced. But perhaps this article would have worked better had it been divided into two chapters, one on "locating sin on the theological map" and a second, "a christological lens for understanding sin."

Chapter 9 is Sydney Page's Satanology, a reminder that "the Bible speaks of supernatural perpetrators of evil" (p. 219). This chapter digests much biblical material regarding Satan. If the question is, "What does the Bible say about Satan?", this chapter provides the answer. The most important thing the Bible says about Satan is that he is and will be defeated; Christ has overcome Satan, and that should be of great comfort to the person who, having studied the first part of this chapter, knows what Satan can do.

In the tenth chapter, David Calhoun connects the dots between sin and temptation. In so doing, he proffers some nice distinctions between temptation, trials, and tests. This treatment includes discussion of whether Christ could have been tempted and whether temptation might come from God. The practical upshot of the chapter is the exhortation, when faced with temptation, to trust God, obey his Word, watch and pray, flee and fight, and use your time wisely. Continuing the theme of "now what?" in the final chapter, Bryan Chapell "preaches" an encouraging sermon addressing this practical

question. What do we do after our sinful rebellion? Repent! Repent and rejoice in knowing that Christ has removed the condemning results of our rebellious hearts.

As an overview of the doctrine of sin, this book is very helpful. One great virtue this book possesses is that without exception the contributors write in an inviting, pastoral style that is largely free from technical jargon. Thus, I would recommend this book to be used, at the right church and with the right pastoral leadership, as an adult education / Sunday school text. In fact, the text is quite suited to serve as the basis for a Lenten series, with roughly two chapters being discussed each Sunday in Lent. Chapters 1 and 6 would serve as a biblical introduction in Lent 1. The second week of Lent would focus on the OT themes of chapters 2–3. Lent 3 has the NT themes of chapters 4–5. Rose Sunday has the theological refreshment of chapters 7–8, with chapters 9–10 for Lent 5 before Palm Sunday rounds out with an exhortation to repentance in chapter 11, a fitting opening to Holy Week as the church commemorates Christ’s final victory over sin.

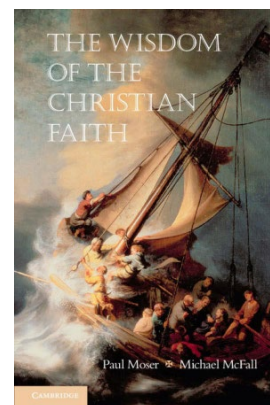
James M. Arcadi
University of Bristol
Bristol, England, UK

Paul K. Moser and Michael T. McFall, eds. *The Wisdom of the Christian Faith*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. vii + 271 pp. £17.99/\$29.99.

Though nowhere mentioned in the text, the cover of this collection of essays is an appropriate illustration of this book’s intended purpose: it is Rembrandt’s *The Storm on the Sea of Galilee*, and it depicts a gale-buffed fishing boat with nine disciples pulling sails, clinging to the mast and ropes, and turned outward in despair toward the sea. In the bottom corner of the painting we find three disciples turned to Jesus in supplication.

The Wisdom of the Christian Faith is the first book on the philosophy of religion to be written entirely by philosophers engaging themes of wisdom in the Christian tradition. In many of the essays the method used is to present leading contemporary philosophical accounts of the topic in question, and then to contrast, contradict, or refine them in the light of the Christian faith. The background assumption could be that contemporary philosophy of religion has spent too much time pulling at the sails and too little time turning toward Christ, a theme that resonates with much of Paul Moser’s recent work. As Moser claims in the introduction: “Western Philosophy has tended to occupy itself with analyzing and debating concepts and propositions. In contrast, cruciform wisdom attends to the kind of divine power exemplified in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, and then welcomes and conforms to it” (p. 8).

The collection includes essays by Paul Gooch, Merold Westphal, William Wainwright, John Hare, Andrew Pinsent, Sylvia Walsh, Gordon Graham, Robert C. Roberts, John Cottingham, Charles Taliaferro, Paul Weithman, and Jerry Walls, with an introduction by Paul Moser and Michael McFall. Space prohibits commenting on every essay, so I have chosen a few that best represent what I take to be the collection’s purpose.



John Hare's essay "Forgiveness, Justification, and Reconciliation" provides a compelling account of the nature of sacrifice that he then utilizes to examine God's forgiveness. By means of two concepts he has developed elsewhere, "the moral gap" and "the evaluative contagion," Hare seeks to make the sacrificial system—and the doctrine of atonement to which it is intrinsically linked—intelligible to modern ears. Having argued for a clarified account of sacrifice, he then applies it to the doctrines of atonement, justification, and reconciliation. In spite of the protestations regarding his own "theological naivety," Hare's essay makes deft use of theological resources, navigating between Scotus and Anselm, John Calvin and David Kelsey, Colin Gunton and N. T. Wright. Though he notes that some of his claims are controversial—as most interesting claims are—readers looking for a persuasive account of imputation and atonement that challenges modern Kantian shaped intuitions will find one here.

In "Wisdom and Evil," Andrew Pinsent explores how Solomon, unsurpassed in wisdom and achievements, could have possibly gone wrong, and how it is that one can be supremely wise and yet subject to damnation, as is the case with Aristotle's depiction in Dante's *Inferno*. Utilizing Aquinas's modification of classical virtue ethics and contemporary social cognition studies, Pinsent distinguishes between wisdom as a virtue and the gift of wisdom. Although both the virtue and gift of wisdom pertain to divine things, the mode of operation of the gift differs in that it entails an intimate union of the soul with God and a participation in God's stance toward divine things (p. 109). Thus, cases such as Solomon or Dante's Aristotle may exhibit immense amounts of the virtue of wisdom, but lacking the gift, fall into ruin.

Robert C. Roberts's contribution, "Unconditional Love and Spiritual Virtues," examines what it means to love one's enemies and how it is that Christians are to do so. He argues, *pace* Kant, that there is an affective or emotional element to love for other persons, defining love as "to cherish him or her, to see (feel) the person as valuable, as good, as excellent, in some way that nears the heart of the loved person's being," and then also to "wish him well, desire his success, well-being," and so forth (p. 159). He then makes the counterintuitive claim that "Christianity does not advocate unconditional love if that implies no conditions at all: the one loved must be good" (p. 160). However, God himself supplies this condition in the gospel. Roberts argues that in order to love our enemies we must see them in a certain light, a light supplied by Christian doctrine: "that the enemy is created in the image of God, that the enemy is one for who Christ died, that God loves his enemies, among whom we were once counted" (p. 167). Thus, Christian doctrine supplies the necessary good which makes love for enemies possible.

Turning to the work as a whole, a few criticisms are worth noting: the first is an implicit contrasting between "traditional" philosophy of religion with philosophical reflection working from explicitly Christian assumptions. Though in some chapters the relationship is framed as oppositional, it need not necessarily be so—the two activities are asking different questions and pursuing different goals, and pitting the one against the other may needlessly harm both. Secondly, the relation between some of the chapters and the theme of the book is not always clear. In Walsh's treatment of moral character, wisdom may be in the background but it is never mentioned. Similarly, Weithman's chapter mounts a strong case against "the spillover argument" against political liberalism, but no attempt is made to connect it to the theme of the book. Thirdly, the chapters inexplicably alternate between footnotes and endnotes, an oversight the publisher should have corrected.

However, the strengths far outweigh the weaknesses. First and foremost, the method of the book is to be commended: philosophical analysis is consistently used to attempt to shed light on Christian concepts, but Christian doctrine plays a normative role, often overturning our natural intuitions

regarding the theme in question. The second is the frequent emphasis on “personal knowledge,” with a number of chapters utilizing Eleonore Stump’s development of the concept in her recent work *Wandering in Darkness*. Christian theology, particularly in the evangelical tradition, has made frequent appeals to the importance of a “personal relationship” with God; these essays develop this notion with admirable clarity. Finally, in the articles that investigate the nature of wisdom there is a recurring focus on wisdom as a form of “know-how,” often related to personal acquaintance: this insight echoes the Scriptural witness—wisdom is knowing how to live well unto God.

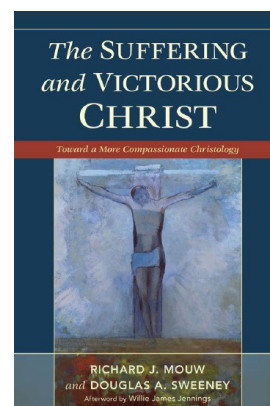
The chapters reviewed here are by no means the only useful contributions; other standouts include Wainwright’s “Obedience and Responsibility,” Cottingham’s treatment of a meaningful life, Taliaferro’s exploration of beauty and aesthetics in theology, and Wall’s inspirational final note, “The Wisdom of Hope in a Despairing World.” Though written entirely by philosophers and a serious work of Christian philosophy in its own right, I also recommend this book to pastors and seminarians. It is a fitting example of philosophy done in the service of the church, and an illustration of theological and pastoral benefits that such endeavors can produce.

J. Thomas Chopp
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Deerfield, Illinois, USA

Richard J. Mouw and Douglas A. Sweeney. *The Suffering and Victorious Christ: Towards a More Compassionate Christology*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013. x + 112 pp. £12.99/ \$19.99.

Co-authored books are experiments in collaborative theology. In this book we have a collaboration between doctrinally conservative theologians representing Reformed and Lutheran traditions on a matter that has classically divided them: Christology. What makes the collaboration possible is common concern for a Christology awake to emergent global Christianity and the literally *crying* need arising from the two-thirds world for a more compassionate Christology. *Given its limited scope*, this experiment may be judged a success; this is a judgment attested also in the valuable meditation on the post-Christendom state of theology contributed by Duke professor Willie James Jennings in the book’s afterword.

What limits the scope of the book tacitly is its location in the American context. This is a book of contemporary American and conservative-Protestant self-examination, provoked, as the authors acknowledge, by a series of probing questions posed to them by Japanese theologians at a 2010 conference in Tokyo. The book looks to a nineteenth-century Mercersburg theologian, John Nevin, and to early twentieth-century Missouri Synod dogmatician, Franz Pieper, for helpful Christological precedents in the American tradition for this announced purpose; it underscores the tensions in each of these figures with dominant forms of American Protestant triumphalism. The book portrays these theologians, each something of a misfit in his own day, as stretching classical, philosophical theism towards Trinitarian compassion—of the Trinity it can be said ontologically, *God is love*—and thus focusing the doctrine of the Incarnate Logos in His life-long solidarity of compassion with the poor.



Further witness to the North American location of the book is the interesting turn following these explorations of Nevin and Pieper in Chapter Five to the African American Christian tradition of “the slaves and their descendants” that lifts up Jesus in his divine-human solidarity with the suffering. Complicating this exploration in a helpful way, but again revealing the American scope of the book, is the final chapter on the abuse of the suffering Christ that the authors find in the post-bellum American South where he was conscripted to the lost cause of the slave-holders and their descendants.

Also limiting the scope of the book, explicitly, is a frequently reiterated commitment to maintain doctrinal orthodoxy in order to avoid the ontological kenoticism that haunts liberal or progressive Christologies of divine pathos. If the One who became poor for our sakes was not rich, and does not somehow remain rich in his freedom to love, then the *Christus dolor* (the Christ of sorrows) cannot finally be Savior—in Luther’s words, “he himself would be in need of a savior.” So in principle the book wants to qualify the *Christus victor* of the “orthodox” tradition with a new appreciation of the *Christus dolor*. What is needed is not a revisionist Christology, but a more compassionate classical Christology. Whether one should regard this a priori doctrinal commitment as a “limit” to the scope of the book, as I am suggesting, is a question about the adequacy of this little book to the enormous questions that it raises. It is best to read the book as a summons to a new and urgent task rather than as a definitive synthesis.

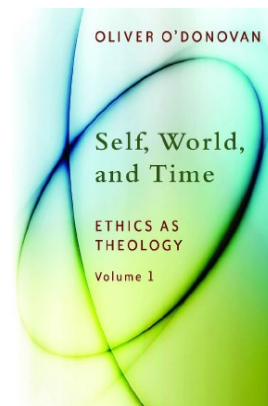
That is to say that an important series of questions are raised but go begging. First, can the divergences between Reformed and Lutheran Christologies simply be eclipsed by a common felt need for a more compassionate Christology? The principle, *finitum non capax infiniti* (the finite is not capable of the infinite) and the Johannine *kai ho logos sarx egeneto* (and the Word became flesh) are perhaps not so easily harmonized. Second, are these North American sources really adequate precedents for today’s construction of a compassionate Christology? As Michael DeJonge’s research indicates, the relation between Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Karl Barth provides a far more searching (and far less parochially American) resource for a collaborative Lutheran-Reformed search for a more compassionate Christology that is in arguable continuity with classical christological doctrine. Third, and immanent to the book itself, is the criticism made by Jennings in the afterword. He calls “unfortunate” the critical question posed by the authors *against* the post-bellum lost cause appropriation of the *Christus dolor*, “who owns the rights to the crucified Messiah?” (p. 100).

It may be granted that the formulation here is “unfortunate” for unwittingly entangling Mouw and Sweeney in a trope of liberal capitalism, as Jennings rightly complains. On the other hand, the critically dogmatic question (not the dogmatically conservative defense mechanism) intended by the authors here in pointing the problem of distinguishing the use *and abuse* of the *Christus dolor* is well taken: Which Christ (Mark 13:5)? What gospel (Gal 1:6–9; 6:15–16)? Whose Spirit (1 John 1:1–3)? The book is best read as an urgent summons to a new task of a post-Christendom critical dogmatics for the ecumenically reconciling ecclesia in mission to the nations. Recognizing this limit, the book makes a useful contribution.

Paul R. Hinlicky
Roanoke College
Salem, Virginia, USA

Oliver O'Donovan. *Self, World, and Time: Ethics as Theology; Volume 1: An Induction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013. xiii +152 pp. £16.99/\$25.00.

It has been nearly thirty years since Oliver O'Donovan, Professor of Christian Ethics and Practical Theology at the University of Edinburgh, published his seminal monograph in theological ethics: *Resurrection and Moral Order* (RMO). In RMO, O'Donovan sought to develop an account of how Jesus Christ's resurrection orders the discipline of Christian ethics. RMO focused upon the objective order of created reality and the renewal of subjective agency in light of Christ's resurrection. In O'Donovan's latest work, *Self, World, and Time: Ethics as Theology, Volume 1—An Induction*, we find some of the same key concepts, but this work takes a different direction in that O'Donovan explores what it might mean to think through the objectivism of moral order and subjective agency in relation to the Holy Spirit—something RMO did not spell out enough. It is the first of what will be a trilogy, and it is an “induction” to the following volumes, providing the conceptual tools for us to think about just *how* we are to reason morally.



The curious subtitle of the series, *Ethics as Theology*, is purposeful. O'Donovan's task in this book is to show how ethics is a discrete discipline arising from the reality of human experience, but that ethics always leads into its theological grounds without collapsing itself into theology. In chapter 1, “Moral Awareness,” O'Donovan shows how we cannot avoid moral reasoning any more than we can avoid waking up in the morning—we are always caught up in it. Morality is thus the pattern of reasoning that follows from our doings: it is *how* we think about what we do from our place in the world. O'Donovan uses the biblical metaphor of “wakefulness” as a way of describing this sort of active moral agency. The agent awakes to the *world*, that is, the objective order of creation, the *self* and its reflection on the task of agency, and *time*, the possibilities for action. Self, world, and time are the three necessary poles constitutive of moral experience.

In chapter 2, “Moral Thinking,” O'Donovan shows how moral thinking progresses from awareness. Against intuitionist or emotivist ethical theories, O'Donovan points out that morality is not self-evident. It arises from the processes of deliberation and reflection upon the world as we receive it. Therefore practical reason is discursive—“it has to negotiate a way between the two poles of description and resolution, the one determinate and the other indeterminate . . . ” (p. 29) We treat these processes with seriousness due to the sense of responsibility we obtain in engaging in practical reason. Yet the freedom correlative to responsibility we have acquired is not something that arises from the self (intuition), our individual or communal history (narrative ethics), but only from a “source behind history” (p. 37). That is, the requisite freedom for moral reasoning depends upon a source external to creation. And that source, God himself, must do a new creating within us so we can claim our freedom to act rightly.

In chapter 3, “Moral Communication,” O'Donovan says that moral thinking is only possible within human communities where moral discourse can occur. The grounds for moral thinking also are made possible by various structures of authority. Authority grants unity to moral thought, and gives it meaning. It is the “correlate of our freedom: within our social communications the moment of initiative is given to us” (p. 55). Moral thinking is possible by moral communication correlative to authority.

Chapter 4, “Moral Theory,” is where we begin to discern the meaning of the subtitle of this series: “Ethics as Theology.” The preposition “as” is purposeful, since it denies the Barthian collapse of ethics

into theology while also avoiding their isolation from one another common in modern Christian ethics. Many of the mistakes made in modern Christian ethics, O'Donovan observes, occur when the discursive character of ethics collapses into dogmatic theology or reverts to naive biblical literalism. He indicts Karl Barth's famous dictum "ethics is dogmatics, and dogmatics is ethics" for forgetting the deliberative, discursive character of ethics and "its relation to dogmatic truth" (p. 101). Similarly, those looking for an ethics that says, "The Bible says x, that settles my position on that subject," confuse close hermeneutical scrutiny of the text for true ethical deliberation and resolution *vis-à-vis* Scripture. "Moral thinking responds to the authority of Scripture with a deliberated and free action, and in no other way" (p. 79). This claim implies an Augustinian vision of freedom as creaturely love ordered towards obedience. Obedience to God through Scripture, then, "is a matter of how our own confession is to harmonize with the testimony of Scripture, and it is concerned to achieve a correspondence between the *whole train of thought* of the text from A to B and the *whole* train of our thought from X to Y" (ibid.). In other words, creaturely freedom in moral reasoning requires the formation of biblically shaped imaginations that can learn to perform the Scripture through deliberative reflection and action.

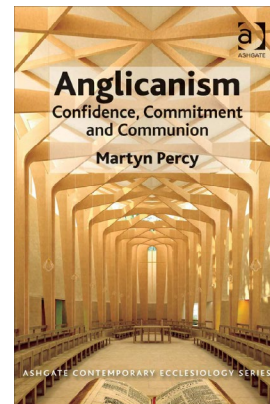
Chapters 5–6, "The Task of Moral Theology" and "The Trajectory of Faith, Love, and Hope" open the way forward for "ethics *as* theology." O'Donovan expands upon RMO by adding "a necessary complement to it, its angle of vision turned principally towards the renewal of agency and its opening to the forward calling of God" (p. 94). The key for the renewal of subjective agency in O'Donovan's account, then, is the Holy Spirit. This relation will be spelled out more clearly in the final volumes. O'Donovan finishes the book with an analysis of the three biblical-theological virtues in Christian ethical reflection, faith, hope, and love, which will shape the discussion in the final two volumes.

Self, World, and Time, Volume 1 is an achievement for many reasons. One, despite its extremely dense prose, it is remarkably clear. Two, the book's message is timely and urgent. It deserves several re-readings, not only because the book's density requires it, but because the very nature of Christian ethics, as O'Donovan would have it, requires training in discursive moral reasoning that cannot come about by the memorization of a few principles or Scripture passages. Thus the kind of induction to Christian ethics O'Donovan gives us does not generate fully competent moral persons in an overnight miracle, but requires a lifetime of biblical, Spirit-filled improvisation. This is exactly the kind of word that Christian ethics as a discipline needs, especially in the evangelical world, where it is far too easy to address the pressing ethical issues of our time with simple appeals to the Bible. These approaches too often forget the immense difficulty required to move from Scripture and prayer to knowing what we must do, where we are always acting and being acted upon by the world and other agents in the forward march of time. The endless possibilities time presents to the church requires the skill to know how to act in every age. Finally, O'Donovan is immensely learned, and the reader will benefit from his interactions with other theologians and philosophers who precede him. The only weakness I perceive in this book is that I wanted O'Donovan to say even more about the Spirit in his account of the renewal of subjective agency. But that will have to wait for the next two volumes, where I am sure we will benefit richly from the fruits of O'Donovan's lifetime of learning.

J. David Moser
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Deerfield, Illinois, USA

Martyn Percy. *Anglicanism: Confidence, Commitment, and Communion*. Ashgate Contemporary Ecclesiology. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013. x + 225 pp. £17.99/\$34.95.

This work on Anglicanism is part of the Ashgate Contemporary Ecclesiology series. The author, Martyn Percy, from Ripon College Cuddesdon in Oxford, UK, is one of the series' editors. The chapters comprising this book began as lectures or articles, most of which have been published elsewhere. They contain reflections on Anglican identity, mission, and ministry that are primarily rooted in the Church of England. As the heart of Anglicanism, happenings and writings from the Church of England will always carry a certain weight for the worldwide Anglican Communion (which is the largest Protestant fellowship in the world). However, the relevance of this book for the Anglican Church (and emerging Anglican movement) in the United States is limited by the narrow focus of the book. It is not that one cannot gain important and transferable insights. In fact, the book is full of scholarly analysis and penetrating insight. Much of it is beautifully written, and there is genuine Christian wisdom found throughout. But it does not prove as helpful to understanding Anglican mission and ministry in the US as one might hope.



Percy believes that his reflections, informed by approximately ten years of life at Cuddesdon, can “offer insight and illumination, and highlight how rich and reflexive the Anglican tradition can be in preaching and proclaiming Christ” (p. 6). This kind of example may prove necessary in light of current struggles in the Anglican Church. “Debates on sexuality and gender (women bishops), whether the church has a Covenant, or can be a Communion, how it is ultimately led, are issues that have dominated the ecclesial horizon for several decades now” (p. 6). Percy’s approach in this study is “binocular” in that he synthesizes a theological approach with a sociological/anthropological approach. This method serves the study well and brings weight to his analysis. But since most of the research is based upon figures in the UK, it is most applicable to that context. One will find similar situations in the US, but a reader will have to work out those applications on their own because they are not directly addressed in the book. Only one chapter significantly addresses the Anglican situation in America. I will address it below.

The book is organized into three main sections. Part one, “Confidence in Formation,” addresses theological training, formation for ministry, and reflections on sacred space. Part two, “Commitment and Mission,” deals with the parish model church, generational change, National Church issues, and offers a “Critique of Fresh Expressions.” Part three, “Communion and Polity,” discusses leadership in the Church, the American situation, *The Windsor Report*, and some thoughts on the future of the Church following the most recent Lambeth Conference. The book concludes with some pastoral reflections on the church’s identity and leadership, under the rubric of “blessing.”

In this short space I will comment on just two chapters that I find to be of particular interest. The first is a chapter in part two titled, “Old Tricks for New Dogs: A Critique of Fresh Expressions.” Fresh Expressions is a movement that “encourages and resources new ways of being church, working with Christians from a broad range of denominations and traditions. The movement has resulted in thousands of new congregations being formed alongside more traditional churches” (see <http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/>). These church-like gatherings aim at impacting the society by being culturally relevant. However, Percy suggests that the movement is “a form of collusion with contemporary

cultural obsession with newness, alternatives and novelty, rather than the recovery of a lost theological, missiological or ecclesiological priority” (p. 123). And again, “the Fresh Expressions movement may represent a conservative, therapeutic and individualist *retreat* from the world, whilst cloaked in a rhetoric that emphasises the very opposite of this: namely ‘cutting edge,’ ‘radical’ and so forth” (p. 127). Percy is concerned that these sorts of fellowships, disconnected from the historic Church of England (or any other historic denomination), are too connected to consumerists’ impulses. With regard to the new forms of church that are emerging he comments, “new is not necessarily better than old; fresh is not necessarily superior to established; and effervescence is not a substitute for substance . . . innovation should be judged by tradition” (p. 130). Then he adds, in a pithy line, “emerging church’ is not likely to be superior to the emerged church” (p. 130). This is a great line. This is also a great chapter worthy of our consideration. Many feel the challenge of cultural relevance. But how might the church engage society without losing the historic treasures she has to offer? Percy’s critique is timely and astute. His work proves helpful on this subject.

However, I have trouble with his chapter in Part three, titled “Context and Catholicity: An Anglican-American Dilemma?” As an Anglican priest in America, I find it rather difficult to appreciate. In it Percy aims “to suggest that some of the current crises in Anglican identity are partly rooted in some of the un-surfaced cultural and contextual assumptions that shape American life” (p. 154). This sounds a lot like saying that America is Anglicanism’s problem, and that our cultural assumptions are somehow unknown to us, though apparently clear to one across the Atlantic. Some of these cultural characteristics include “the pursuit of happiness” and “self-improvement.” Many forms of Christianity in America are what he calls “user-friendly.” I agree with this, and I think many church leaders in our country are very well aware of it. To make things worse, Percy thinks that these cultural assumptions are more at the heart of Anglican dilemmas than issues of sexuality, which he regards as secondary and symptomatic. Percy speaks favorably of Gene Robinson (the openly gay Bishop of New Hampshire). Percy doesn’t think that the actions of the American Episcopal Church (TEC) are unproblematic; he just doesn’t like the fuss resulting from it. For Percy, “Anglicanism is mostly a temperate ecclesial body” (p. 157), that “catholicity” must be preserved, and the church must “live with difference and diversity” (p. 158). In a later chapter Percy advances a related notion, “In ecclesiological terms, if you have the choice between heresy and schism, choose heresy. You can correct the former; but it will always be difficult to ever heal the latter” (p. 177). For Percy, this is a typically Anglican way of handling issues. Great patience, discussion, diversity, politeness, and wide reach should all be valued above particular stances on culturally-conditioned disputes (as he understands the sexuality debate).

Although he never mentions the emerging Anglican movements in America, such as the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), it appears that Percy would not appreciate these. Even if he has issues with the American Episcopal Church, he would not value the stance these movements have taken on important moral, cultural, and theological issues. The emerging Anglican churches might ordain women in some dioceses, but they are opposed to abortion and homosexual relationships. Groups like the ACNA see themselves as following in faithful continuity with historic Anglicanism in terms of polity, theology, and worship. However, the conversation has reached a breaking point in some parts of the Anglican Communion, such that continued shared identity is no longer possible without repentance and allegiance to scripture.

All in all, and despite the few problems I have with the work, Percy’s book deserves to be read for its mature and (in many ways) compelling insights. Readers will learn a lot and be driven to contemplation

by a generally winsome voice. The book is especially valuable to those in the Church of England who desire to better understand, and be challenged, in their own context. One might forgive the author for not fully grasping Anglican issues in the US. And even if one is inclined to take hard theological positions on current disputes, Percy's commendation of the spirit of Anglicanism as "passionate coolness" (Robert Runcie) is worthy of our consideration. No church should be quick to move to schism. But this is sometimes necessary if the very foundations of the house are beginning to crumble.

Jonathan Huggins

Stellenbosch University and Berry College

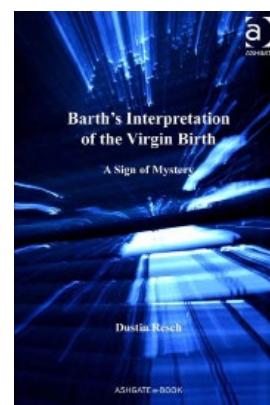
Stellenbosch, South Africa and Rome, Georgia, USA

Dustin Resch. *Barth's Interpretation of the Virgin Birth: A Sign of Mystery*. Barth Studies Series. Surrey: Ashgate, 2012. 218 pp. £50.00/\$99.95.

Dustin Resch, Assistant Professor of Theology at Briercrest College and Seminary in Caronport, Saskatchewan, has written a thorough and helpful volume on Karl Barth's interpretation of the Virgin Birth (hereafter *VB*). The book has five chapters that can be further subdivided into three topical sections relevant to the subject: historical, dogmatic, and Marian. The Marian section (chapter 5) is more of an appendix to Barth's doctrine of the VB, where Mary is seen as a prototype of the non-synergistic, yet non-deterministic, relation between divine grace and human agency. We shall focus on the first two sections.

In the first section, Resch surveys the doctrine of the VB as treated by selected figures in the Western Church (chapter 1) and Barth's own historical development on the matter (chapter 2). The patristic era is represented by Irenaeus and Augustine, the medieval period by Aquinas, the Reformation by Luther and Calvin, and the modern period by Schleiermacher, Strauss, and Brunner. The point of the survey is simply to establish certain themes that clustered around the treatment of the VB as the backdrop for Barth's reworking of the classical tradition in the face of the challenges of the modern era to the doctrine. In particular, the VB's "fittingness," or its coherence within the broader contours of Christology, is seen to have been pronounced in the classical era, though muted during the Reformation. The notion was revived in the modern era only to demonstrate the inappropriateness of the doctrine in the light of critical biblical scholarship. In addition, the question of original sin and its transmission (especially in the sexual act), and the bearing of these on the sinlessness of Jesus are seen to loom large in the tradition. Once the link between original sin and human transmission is severed in the modern era, the VB comes to be seen as having no specific theological purpose. Finally, it is shown that the classical period used the VB as a paradigm of the Spirit's work of regeneration in believers.

Barth's personal thinking on the doctrine starts with the early Göttingen and Münster lectures in dogmatics, where it is prominently located in the prolegomena. At this stage of his career, Barth views the VB as having ontological (constitutive) significance for the person of the incarnate Christ. Perceiving himself as working within the Augustinian tradition, nonetheless Barth desires to be rid of any notion of biologically inherited original sin. The removal of the male as the "actualizing," leading force of world (Adamic) history, and not as biological father *per se*, constitutes the removal of original



sin. Thus, the VB becomes an exception within the continuity of human sinfulness, establishing Christ's sinlessness and, by the removal of the male, exhibiting clearly that God alone was his Father.

By the time of *The Great Promise* (1934), where we get his only extended theological exegesis of an infancy narrative (the Lucan one), Barth begins referring to the VB as a *sign*. Here, and further in the *Credo* (1935), the VB moves from having ontic or constitutive significance to having noetic significance. That is, the VB does not accomplish the incarnation, but attests to it (p. 61). It guards the mystery of the incarnation by marking it with a miracle. Quite importantly, this enables Barth to interpret the VB without affirming any particular view of original sin and its transmission.

When we come to the *Church Dogmatics* (hereafter *CD*), again within the prolegomena now understood more robustly as a "dogmatics in brief," Barth, having considered various historical-critical objections, concludes that the VB was accepted by the church because of its "fit" with the central elements of the faith (p. 74). For Barth this means it is a sign of the *mystery* of the incarnation (and not simply the incarnation itself) that sets a limit to grasping the revelation of God in Christ by merely human means. In this role it is coupled to, and mutually interdependent with, the sign of the empty tomb, together marking off the mystery of God's revelation in its origin and goal (p. 79). Abandoning the VB as sign is, for Barth, to dissolve the mystery into a purely natural theology. That is, without the VB, the incarnation can come to seen, as in Schleiermacher, as the apex of something latent in humanity.

The second major section of the book, the dogmatic section, consists of two chapters. In chapter 3, Resch, explores the VB as the sign of God's "Yes" (grace) and "No" (judgment) to humanity. Positively, the VB attests to the genuine yet unique humanity of Jesus. It does so in a "fitting" way since it attests to the primacy of sovereign grace in the mystery of the Word's becoming flesh. Negatively, by the removal of the man, the VB indicates human inability and precludes mankind's *active contribution* to the incarnation (p. 86). In chapter 4, the spiritual conception of Jesus, grounded in the Spirit's inter-Trinitarian role as the "bond of love" between the Father and the Son, is seen as the prototypical event of the realization of God's grace (i.e., regeneration) in human beings (pp. 127–138). It demonstrates that human beings are dead in regard to their own possibility for God. Human conversion is originally and fully present in the humanity of Christ himself (pp. 151, 160). Here the conception of Jesus, his baptism, and his resurrection are linked in a theological order which, "by strict analogy" (p. 162), manifests the Spirit's subsequent work in believers as an appropriation of the very life of Christ.

A couple of issues arise with respect to the dogmatic core of the book (chapters 3 and 4). First, one would think that the removal of the man is better seen in the *conception* of Christ by the Spirit (a topic covered separately by Barth in the *CD*, and taken up by Resch in the fourth chapter) than in his VB. Thus, despite the separate chapters on the two events, a certain confusion about what exactly is in view hangs over parts of Resch's presentation. For example, in the discussion of the Lucan exegesis where Barth first interprets the VB as a sign, we are told that he does so on the basis of the parallel between the sign of Zechariah's muteness and the "sign" of the spiritual *conception* given to Mary (pp. 54–55). This lack of clarity is due, in part, to the fact that, for Barth, "the VB and the conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit are two aspects of the one sign that is Christ's miraculous human origin" (p. 83). In fact, we are later told that the VB "communicates the largely negative aspect of the sign of God's judgment on sinful human beings" (p. 126), while the "Yes" of God's grace is seen in the spiritual conception. Thus, the two-fold sign remained, for this reviewer, shrouded in some mystery!

With respect to the humanity of Christ assumed in the VB, two important issues emerge. First is Barth's well-known reworking of Chalcedonian (ontic) categories, especially the concept of "human

nature.” For Barth, human “essence” (his preferred term) is all that one is and does in one’s various acts and relations. Jesus’ “human essence” is his whole *unique* history (pp. 98–100). One wonders, then, in spite of Resch’s use of the language of assumption (e.g., p. 100), how any or all human essence(s) can be instantiated or assumed by Jesus’ unique essence.

The second issue arises from Barth’s rejection of the Augustinian notion of inherited sin, and thus the traditional role of the VB in preserving the sinlessness of Jesus. For Barth, guilt is attached “directly to the responsible acts of human beings” (p. 117). While “original sin” is universal and pervasive, it is neither imputed nor inherited. Yet neither this view of original sin nor the removal of the male from the VB prevents Christ from voluntarily assuming “sinful flesh” (pp. 118–121). Jesus comes into the same fallen sarkic order under the judgment of God in which all human beings exist. He assumes sinful flesh, yet, unlike us, he lives sinlessly in it. This assumption of fallen flesh does not, for Barth, entail any intrinsic impurity in Christ. But it is unclear why fallen flesh, under the judgment of God, should have no associated internal or psychic disorder. Resch’s presentation can leave one with the idea that liability to the judgment of God is the *only* impact sin has had on our humanity.

This leads to the general concern that the book is almost wholly uncritical exposition. It contains two and a half pages of criticism, mostly in the form of questions (good ones) at the end of the book. Overall, however, this is a minor complaint. This is a rigorous and stimulating study. It makes for excellent Christmas season reflection and, as a bonus, it is a wonderful entry into some crucial themes in Barth’s thought such as his theological method, his overall Christology, his pneumatology, and his conception of human agency.

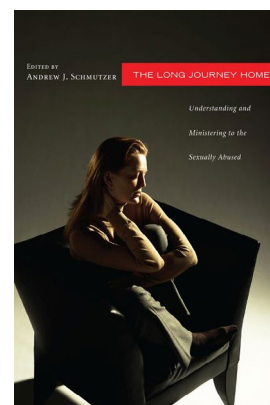
Kevin Chiarot
Westminster Presbyterian Church
Rock Tavern, New York, USA

Andrew J. Schmutzer, ed. *The Long Journey Home: Understanding and Ministering to the Sexually Abused*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011. xii + 524 pp. \$57.00.

In unprecedented fashion, Andrew Schmutzer, Old Testament scholar and theologian, accords us a collaborative, interdisciplinary work on sexual abuse (SA). He seeks to help survivors of SA understand their abuse and experience healing, as well as to give their community the appropriate tools to provide succor for the process.

SA literature too often takes on predictably unhelpful genre-forms, appearing as either that of (1) indiscernible meta-analyses of surveys and statistics in befuddling academic journals, or (2) barbed and pugnacious treatises against one institution or another. Although sophisticated and savvy, such strategies are ineffective: they rarely reach survivors of SA in a helpful way.

The audience that needs helpful literature can neither be relegated to clinical psychologists with a niche interest, nor to those who wield their platform for ranting against all forms of power. In a 2005 study, David Finkelhor, Professor of Sociology at University of New Hampshire, suggests that 30–40% of girls and 13% of boys experience sexual abuse during childhood in



America. “Unfortunately,” Schmutzer comments, “some of the best research on SA never filters down to the abused” (p. xiii). This concern sufficiently encapsulates the aim of the book.

There are three ways in which *The Long Journey Home* uniquely accomplishes the aim of reaching the abused with this helpful information. First, it represents the contributions of thirteen women and thirteen men of all dialectical “stripes” (feminist/complementarian, integrationist/biblical counseling, for starters; clans who do not play well together), each providing concise and clearly written articles on their topic of expertise. The product is a cogent, holistic program of self-understanding and growth for the survivor of SA.

The point is this: despite the historic difficulty of relating psychology and theology between competing views, there are no partisan polemics here. This unique ecumenical tone allows the book to own a constructive voice. It is informed and creative in a way that Christian SA literature has not been able to manifest due to rising temperatures betwixt competing tribes.

Second, the three disciplines that converge in this unique volume are clinical, theological, and pastoral. That convergence allows the book to overcome constant qualifications about the disciplinary limits that encumber current SA literature. Schmutzer notes that the preponderance of literature on SA before writing the book had been “social surveys, gender studies, and books by ‘group-x’ for ‘group-x’ regarding ‘group-x,’ but very little discussion on SA that intentionally valued other professions and showed it in generous dialogue” (p. xiii). *The Long Journey Home* offers this kind of open and generous exchange across fields and specializations.

Clinically, it is an instructive resource on definitions of SA, systems theory in families that accommodate SA, offender typologies, and the effects of trauma. Theologically, the compendium places SA in its biblical-theological context, interprets OT rape laws for today, and explores the issue of SA and theodicy. Pastorally, the book provides helpful directions for living with a survivor in one’s nuclear family, the role of the church in healing, and liturgical resources to aid a church in holding special services for survivors. Finally, the book concludes with stories of survivors, prayers for survivors, web-based resources for those seeking help, and a glossary of any potentially obscure terms (in the body of the text, these terms appear with a marking). Schmutzer effectively creates a new genre of SA literature—for the academic and the uneducated survivor—that has unforeseeable and untapped potential for the future of the church catholic’s collective effort to understand SA.

Third, the book’s strongest feature is that, while appropriately recognizing the dangers of power and the potential institutional manipulation from within the church, it is self-consciously a positive, Christian guide to understanding and ministering to survivors *for the church*. The cynicism and unimpressive backhandedness against the church that embarrasses much SA literature today is not present. Instead, there is a conscious interdisciplinary step forward for a broad readership: pastors, therapists, friends, and most importantly, survivors. The work strikes a sane balance between providing structural and organizational insight to the church for helping survivors of SA, as well as conceptual and spiritual guidance for the growth and healing of the individual survivor.

“The way abuse disorients the survivor’s relationship to God is devastating,” Schmutzer notes. Yet he insists, “The community of the redeemed can truly be the healing family for the sexually broken. The moral order among God’s citizens is to be a foretaste of mystery restored” (p. 133). The church is secular culture’s favorite scapegoat. One unique contribution to the dialogue, of which there are many in the book, is that *The Long Journey Home* champions a positive ecclesiology in addressing the issue of SA in which the church is the unique context for connecting the gospel to the process of healing.

Public discourse about SA has often been driven by uninformed notions of abuse and trauma, which evidences the need for this type of work. For example, Jerry Sandusky's lawyer made the defense, "The time that elapsed between the molestation and initial report is striking," later commenting that such a delay casts reasonable doubt on the credibility of such reports, as though reporting SA were the same as reporting a burglary.

This is a clear indication that Americans need education on the nature of SA and its effects. They need to understand (1) traumatic amnesia, (2) the psychological cost of childhood betrayal, (3) the developmental effects SA has on a child's social capacities, and especially (4) how all of these culminate in understanding the struggles of adult survivors of childhood SA (CSA).

One of the authors comments, "The church has a unique position in helping the victims of sexual abuse to understand their sexual identity along with their identity in Christ. Trained counselors can help survivors of sexual abuse explore the ramifications of CSA and establish their sexual identity." She adds, "Pastoral care workers can be better trained to understand the issues related to sexual abuse and create a welcoming environment in the church for victims to heal" (p. 100).

Besides Sandusky's lawyer, another example of misguided public emphasis is that Roman Catholic clergy have been stigmatically concretized in the limelight as one of the largest groups of pedophiles. Yet sociologist A. W. R. Sipe has reported that only 6% of Catholic priests have ever had a sexual experience with a minor. By comparison, in a 2010 report to Congress on child abuse, Andrea J. Sedlak reported that 37% of CSA cases are parent-child in nature, and another 23% are stepparent-child in nature, locating approximately 60% of CSA cases in the nuclear family. Coordinating this statistic with the prevalence rates of CSA noted earlier, the data indicates that roughly 25% of nuclear family-settings for children internally accommodate some form of CSA.

In light of those statistics, Schmutzer's aim to integrate the church into the process of healing for the abuser is not merely wishful thinking for the church, oft-characterized as a morally decrepit and power-hungry institution. On the contrary, it is a statistically informed, theologically motivated strategic emphasis to protect survivors from future abuse, and to bring necessary balance to multiple appropriate contexts—therapy, recovery groups, and even the church—for healing and growth. All institutionalized power is suspect, and yet a survivor in solitude will often socially, emotionally, and even physically self-destruct. *The Long Journey Home* constructively satisfies both of these concerns with balanced research and practical helps.

Due to the potential consequences for survivors of misspeaking about them or their struggle, the conversation about SA is a powder keg for political incorrectness and personal offense. Yet such explosive dangers must not blockade the church's effort to address the consequences and effects of SA. Unhindered in tone by misguided pessimism of many social activists, and unbewildered in its appropriation and application of psychological academia, Schmutzer and company have made such an effort. They have en fleshed Tolkien's adage with life-giving content, "Not all who wander are lost."

Paul C. Maxwell
Westminster Theological Seminary
Glenside, Pennsylvania, USA

Tim Stafford. *The Adam Quest: Eleven Scientists Who Held on to a Strong Faith While Wrestling with the Mystery of Human Origins*. Nashville: Nelson, 2013. 232 pp. £13.89/\$22.99.

Tim Stafford's latest book *The Adam Quest* presents brief profiles of eleven scientists who also happen to be Christians. Most of them have some public notoriety in the creation/evolution debate, and they represent different views on the subject. To be clear, I am one of the eleven scientists profiled, and I am personally acquainted with three of the others (Kurt Wise, Georgia Purdom, and Darrel Falk). Though I am not a neutral reviewer, I think my personal involvement gives me some deeper insights on the book.

As an anthology of biographies, *Adam Quest* does not lend itself to simple summary, but it does raise the typical questions that all anthologies do. Why these eleven people? Why not someone else? Why present certain details and not others? Is there a narrative or thematic thread running through the stories? Is there some message in the collection?

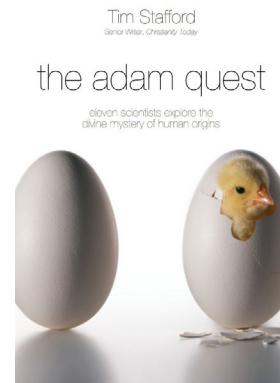
In response to the last question, Stafford opens the book with two anecdotes about Christians who have had difficult times reconciling creation and evolution, not to themselves but to their Christian friends. For Christians interested in pursuing science as a career, there is a personal price to be paid. As with any contentious subject, animosity and alienation await those who take an unpopular position. Surely this is not the way Christians ought to be? On matters essential to the faith, we can be dogmatic, but on other issues, why do we scorn those who disagree? If God's grace through Christ can cover all our sin, surely it can cover mistaken beliefs about creation?

As we already know, that's now how the creation debate has evolved. Each side has become deeply entrenched behind sometimes bitter rhetoric about the "other side." It is common for one prominent activist to accuse another of damaging the Gospel or undermining the credibility of the faith. People cannot even stand on the sidelines easily without someone demanding they declare their allegiance to the "right" side.

The message of *Adam Quest* calls us to humanize this debate. Ideas about creation and evolution are not mere abstractions. They are the thoughts and convictions of real people. More importantly, we can recognize faithful Christians on all sides of the debate, not just the side we happen to occupy. When we lose sight of the personal aspect of the debate, we run the risk of dividing the body of Christ. In short, once you get to know someone you disagree with, it becomes harder to shrug them off as a stereotype.

In this context of personalizing the debate, *Adam Quest* presents snippets of the life stories of its subjects, many of whom would strongly disagree with each other about God's mechanism of creation. The subjects of these stories are presented with little editorial commentary, which leads to some interesting contrasts. In describing Intelligent Design (ID) advocate Michael Behe, Stafford writes approvingly of his book *Edge of Evolution*, but in Darrel Falk's chapter, Behe's book is portrayed as a failure. Readers looking for clarity (is *Edge of Evolution* good or not?) should find a different book. *The Adam Quest* wants us to encounter Behe and Falk personally rather than rushing to judge their beliefs.

In the final chapter, Stafford tries to tie the disparate stories together and to emphasize again his goal of personalizing the culture war. The final chapter also exposed Stafford's own bias and ultimately undermined his message, leaving readers either delighted or disappointed, depending on whether or not they accept Stafford's personal belief in evolutionary creation.



Over the past few years, I have been privileged to get to know Darrel Falk, another of the scientists profiled in *Adam Quest*. Darrel is an ardent evolutionary creationist, and I am a fully committed young-age creationist. In our conversations, there have been tense moments, as we each confront not just a strawman argument but a fellow brother in Christ. One of the most important things I gained from our conversations is *change*. I cannot easily dismiss evangelical evolutionists any more. Even though I continue to believe that young-age creationism is true and that it is very important that Christians believe it, I now find myself struggling to articulate these beliefs in ways that are not needlessly offensive to Darrel. Such thoughts would never have occurred to me five years ago. Now, things are different. I have been *changed* by our shared relationship in Christ.

Even though Stafford advocates personalizing the debate as Darrel and I are doing, I do not sense the same sort of change in Stafford that I have experienced. Instead, Stafford judges young-age creationism with the same smug, dismissive attitude as most evolutionary creationists. Young-age creationism “presents a stark choice: you can uphold a traditional belief in the literal, historical reading of Genesis, but only at the cost of rejecting mainstream science. Yes, you can become a creation scientist, but there really isn’t much science there: no labs, no experiments. The only career in science you can aspire to is teaching about creation science” (p. 204). I find it difficult to reconcile this passage with his previous lavish praise of the subjects of his book. “How can you dismiss any of them? Are any of them not scientifically competent?” (p. 200). How could someone who rejects science be a “competent scientist?”

Looking back over the rest of the book, its true message becomes clear. The two anecdotes that open the book are not just about people who struggled with science and faith. They are about two Christians who accepted the conclusions of mainstream science and suffered the judgment of young-age creationists. What about the mockery and judgment of young-age creationists by evolutionary creationists? That was barely mentioned. The choice of biographical subjects reveals the same bias: three young-age creationists, two ID advocates, and six theistic evolutionists. Evolutionists outnumber each of the other positions two to one.

ID gets the poorest treatment of all. To describe them, Stafford uses the derogatory term “intelligent design creationists,” a phrase used by the enemies of ID to marginalize them as religious nuts. Stafford could not have chosen a more insulting label. In the ID section, he relates the stories Michael Behe and Fazale Rana. Behe certainly belongs in the world of ID, but Rana has been openly critical of ID, while still using the language of design. He’s hardly an ID advocate, not in the larger political sense of ID. In truth, Rana belongs in the world of progressive creationism, but that position, though popular, is completely ignored.

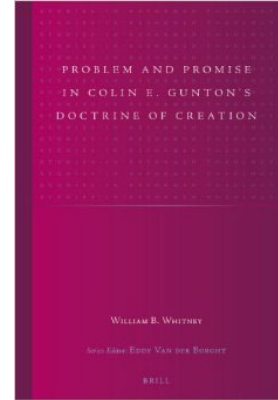
The message of *Adam Quest* is certainly one of tolerance and mutual understanding. Stafford wants creationists of all convictions to tolerate and understand Christian evolutionists. If you like that message, you will probably like *Adam Quest* and its conclusions. If like me, you think that mutual understanding ought to be *mutual*, this book will disappoint. Given his condescension, I sense that Stafford never really understood his non-evolutionist subjects at all.

I also desire a more civil and Christian debate, but *Adam Quest* is a missed opportunity to show us just what a *Christian* take on the creation/evolution debate should look like. I will continue to hope that such an example is forthcoming. Maybe it’s just around the corner.

Todd Charles Wood
Core Academy of Science
Dayton, Tennessee, USA

William B. Whitney. *Problem and Promise in Colin E. Gunton's Doctrine of Creation*. Studies in Reformed Theology 26. Leiden: Brill. 2013. viii + 213 pp. £85.00/\$128.00.

William B. Whitney, who teaches systematic theology at Fuller Theological Seminary and psychology at Azusa Pacific University, has made a significant contribution to the study of the late British theologian Colin E. Gunton's doctrine of creation. While Gunton's work on the doctrine of the Trinity has received much attention, his doctrine of creation has rarely been explored. Whitney endeavors to show that the doctrine of creation is "an integral aspect of Gunton's theology" (p. 1) since "Gunton conceives the Trinity in relation to the created order" (p. 1). In the end, Whitney not only succeeds in making this case, but also in offering cogent reasons (e.g., cultural engagement, ethical obligations) for the significance of a Christian doctrine of creation construed in a trinitarian way. This is Whitney's PhD dissertation from Fuller Theological Seminary in 2011.



In chapter 1, Whitney explores Gunton's claim that the early Christian doctrine of creation has undermined the goodness of the created world due to the influence of dualism (e.g., Platonism and Gnosticism). This resulted in distorting the concept of creation and our relation to the created world. Whitney affirms the validity of Gunton's claim and concludes, "These patterns of Greek thought are problematic for the Christian doctrine of creation and theological anthropology" (p. 40).

In chapter 2, Whitney examines Gunton's claim that modernity is another cause of the misinterpretation of the doctrine of creation and theological anthropology. While the ancients undermined the significance of the created world, modernity displaced God with individuality as the "unifying factor for all of creation" (p. 47). Accordingly, it overlooked God's interaction with the created world (e.g., the incarnation) and deism became the paradigm for perceiving the relation between the Creator and creation. Such "Modernist notions of the God-world relationship" have resulted in individualism and isolation (p. 195).

In chapter 3, Whitney presents Gunton's exposition of creation and demonstrates how his theory redirects the doctrine to the triune Creator who acts in and with the world and thus realigns our concept of God with the creation. To show the triune God's interaction with the world, Whitney explores Gunton's theory of a Trinitarian mediation, namely Christ as the mediator of creation and the Spirit as the perfecter of the creation. Further, to delineate humanity's intrinsic relation to the creation, Whitney examines the correlative nature of creation and soteriology in Gunton's theology.

In chapter 4, Gunton's theological anthropology is explored. Whitney states that in Gunton's anthropology "the Triune God [is] the basis of the true human personhood" (p. 111). Although there is a distinction between God and humanity, "human personhood . . . can be drawn from God's Triune nature," which itself consists of relationality (p. 111). Christ who is the true image of God is the exemplar of true personhood. For humanity, authentic personhood is achieved through conformity to Christ by means of the eschatological Spirit.

In chapter 5, Whitney offers a comparison of Karl Barth's and Gunton's views of culture. Whitney argues, "Gunton's view holds some similarities with Barth, but also moves beyond Barth so that through an understanding of creation, culture becomes a specific area of focus in his theology" (p. 161). Barth sees that "the world is worthy of being investigated and explored because it was made by a good Creator"

(p. 198). Yet, Gunton goes further to say that human cultural activities such as the arts and politics enable the created world to achieve its perfection as the eschatological Spirit transforms humans to become what we are intended to be. This interrelation of humanity and the created world is a significant point for Gunton's theology, which also diverges from Barth. Human cultural activity is necessary and meaningful since God calls humans to participate in perfecting the created world that is good and pleasing in God's eyes.

There are many things to commend in this book. Whitney's efforts in locating Gunton's doctrine of creation in the wider scope of his theology are praiseworthy. Moreover, his theological acumen in exegeting Gunton's often dense theology is evident. Further, the book serves as an effective overview of Gunton's theology since Whitney incorporates other significant aspects of Gunton's thought including the doctrines of the Trinity, anthropology, Christology, pneumatology, ecclesiology, and culture. This aspect distinguishes Whitney's work from a similar work by Hans Schaeffer, *Createdness and Ethics: The Doctrine of Creation and Theological Ethics in the Theology of Colin E. Gunton and Oswald Bayer*.

There are also some weaknesses worth noting. Whitney's work is based on Gunton's premise of the unity of God's act and being. While a number of important insights have arisen from this premise in Gunton's theology, it bears revisiting in relation to Gunton's doctrine of creation. Gunton argues, "who God is in his movement and relations towards the created order is who God is in his eternal being" (p. 197). If so, one might reasonably conclude that God had no choice but to create a world. Whitney's volume would have benefitted from a discussion of this apparent tension. Further, Whitney's interpretation of Gunton's view of cultural engagement seems to omit Gunton's emphasis on the role of the church. Gunton says that Israel and the church are "forms of culture instituted by God" (Colin Gunton, *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Essays Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology* [T&T Clark, 2003], 121). Since this aspect of Gunton's ecclesiology is lacking in Whitney's analysis, it seems to give the impression that cultural engagement is something that only takes place outside the church.

In summary, Whitney has made a significant contribution to the understanding of Gunton's doctrine of creation in light of his Trinitarian theology. His work will serve scholars of Gunton's work as well as those who are interested in the relationship between the Trinity and creation.

Naomi N. Reese
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Deerfield, Illinois, USA

— ETHICS AND PASTORALIA —

Thabiti Anyabwile. *The Life of God in the Soul of the Church: The Root and Fruit of Spiritual Fellowship*. Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2012. 243 pp. \$14.99.

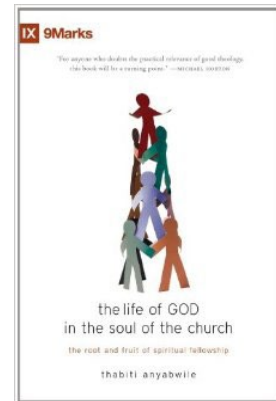
In this book, the published version of a sermon series preached in 2008, Thabiti Anyabwile formulates a biblical understanding of spiritual fellowship as “our shared life of spiritual union with Jesus the Son of God” (p. 10). While taking inspiration (as well as the title of his book) from Henry Scougal’s classic *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*, Anyabwile explores the corporate, relational dimension of union with Christ, an emphasis lacking in Scougal’s book.

The Life of God in the Soul of the Church consists of two main sections. Part 1, “Foundations,” examines 1 John 1 and 1 Cor 12 in order to offer a theological account of what spiritual fellowship is. Anyabwile contends that spiritual fellowship is “the life of God in the soul of man experienced personally by believing the truth shared relationally in the church,” which “leads to joy and holiness” (p. 17). Part 2, “Expressions” (by far the longer of the two sections) explores how spiritual fellowship actually works itself out in the context of a local church. The topics covered include loving one another, spiritual gifts, partnership in the gospel, restoration and encouragement, suffering and comfort, forgiveness, corporate singing, giving, and mutual acceptance.

Anyabwile’s book is an important one for two reasons. First, the word “fellowship” has become a vacuous one in evangelicalism. In standard evangelical language, “to fellowship” means “to chat together after church” or “to eat a meal with another Christian.” Anyabwile recovers the excitement and God-centered profundity of the term. Writing as one who is the pastor of a church with the word “Fellowship” in its name, I am grateful. A second reason for the importance of the book is our largely individualistic Christian culture. Anyabwile’s relentless focus on the corporate nature of the Christian life and his grounding of this nature in the purposes of God are much-needed correctives.

An important strength of the book is that it consists of sermons preached to Anyabwile’s own congregation. The sermons are only lightly edited and Anyabwile makes no attempt to erase the local references, often referring to specific members of First Baptist Grand Cayman and particular situations within the church. I was amused to see one reviewer fault Anyabwile for these references to his own church—presumably the reviewer would similarly fault the Apostle Paul! Far from being a drawback, these references to a specific church context offer readers the opportunity to look over the shoulder of a wise pastor as he addresses his own congregation. We see how Anyabwile addresses non-Christians (often at length) and how he keeps the gospel central in every sermon. I found especially helpful the chapter on corporate singing (which I plan to read and discuss with those who lead worship in song at my church) and the chapter on giving.

I have a few quibbles. The book is not well served by its title. If someone is not familiar with the title of Henry Scougal’s book, the allusion is lost and Anyabwile’s title is difficult to understand (it sounds strange to speak of the “soul” of a church). Most chapters are helpful because they are very practically earthed in the life of a local church. Chapter 11 (which expounds Rom 14–15) would benefit from some concrete examples of indifferent matters. For most Christians the really difficult thing in applying Rom 14–15 is the very basic step of discerning which issues are disputable and which aren’t!



Finally, in 1 Cor 12:25, Paul asserts God's desire that "the members may have the same care for one another." Anyabwile takes this to mean, "each and every member is to have fully the same concern, care and love for every other member of the body" (p. 40). He seems to believe this involves each member offering equal practical assistance and emotional support to every other member of the body (p. 42). In addition to being both emotionally and practically impossible, I think this misunderstands 1 Cor 12:25. In context, Paul's point is that no one in the church should be overlooked or ignored on the basis of spiritual gifting or economic status, not that every relationship in the church must involve equal emotional concern or practical support. Jesus himself did not live that way: he chose only twelve disciples, and within that group he had an inner circle in which he invested particular time and energy. Requiring that "each and every member is to have fully the same concern, care and love for every other member of the body" is a recipe for spiritual burnout and unnecessary guilt. Yes, we are to accept each member of the body and show them love, refusing to deny relationship to any on the basis of perceived inferior gifting or other matters. But it's okay that we are more emotionally invested in the struggles of our closest Christian friends than those of church members we barely know.

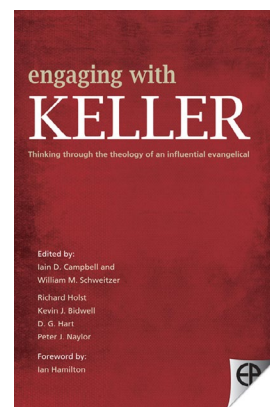
I'm thankful for *The Life of God in the Soul of the Church*. It has deepened my understanding of spiritual fellowship, and I will use it in my church to help others grow in their understanding and practice of spiritual fellowship, too.

Stephen Witmer
Pepperell Christian Fellowship
Pepperell, Massachusetts, USA

Iain D. Campbell and William M. Schweitzer, eds. *Engaging with Keller: Thinking Through the Theology of an Influential Evangelical*. Darlington: EP Books, 2013. 240 pp. £9.99/\$15.99.

In *Engaging with Keller: Thinking Through the Theology of an Influential Evangelical*, editors Iain D. Campbell and William M. Schweitzer lead a team of scholars in evaluating themes in the writings of Dr. Tim Keller, pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City. In addition to the editors, the contributors to this volume are Kevin J. Bidwell, Peter J. Naylor, C. Richard H. Holst, and D. G. Hart. Though critical, they do not hesitate to credit Keller for ways in which they have benefitted from him; from the outset they express confidence in his overall orthodoxy. Since the contributors perceive that there has been limited discussion of objections to Keller's approach, they have taken up the task of engaging themes they believe detract from what is otherwise quite admirable work. Thus a positive tone is set for what could otherwise be perceived as a collection of overly disparaging essays.

The contributors examine several topics that occur with regularity in Keller's writing and teaching: (1) doctrine of sin, (2) description of judgment and hell, (3) articulation of the Trinity, (4) vision for the institutional church's role in carrying out social justice, (5) hermeneutical method, (6) position on theistic evolution, and (7) limited emphasis on Presbyterian ecclesiology. The stated goal is to start a conversation of the merits of the way Keller conveys some specific doctrines. The editors summarize



their approach as follows: “our counsel to the church would be: imitate Keller, but not in these specific ways” (p. 23).

Several strengths commend this volume to readers of this journal. The book is by and large successful in being *appreciatively* critical. The critique had no hints of a heresy trial or smear campaign. Though there is an unevenness to the discourse with some essays being more negative in tone than others, this is clearly a book intended to plot a way forward *with* Keller, not a plea to abandon his program altogether.

Additionally, the choice of topics is appropriate. The chapters represent repeated themes in Keller’s writings, indicating that they hold an important place in his overall approach. The only exception is chapter 7 by D. G. Hart: “Looking for Communion in All the Wrong Places: Keller and the Doctrine of the Church.” Hart’s focus is on what Keller does *not* emphasize, namely, Presbyterian ecclesiology, a curious detail in light of Keller’s denominational affiliation. As a whole, the contributors carefully articulate the Reformed, confessional presentation of these topics and then compare it with Keller’s own.

Three chapters are especially noteworthy. In chapter 3—“Loosing the Dance: Is the ‘Divine Dance’ a Good Explanation of the Trinity?”—Kevin J. Bidwell examines Keller’s strong Trinitarian emphasis, drawing attention to the weakness of his employment of perichoresis. Bidwell notes six problematic implications of Keller’s presentation and reiterates the importance of God’s “oneness” and the “ontological ordering (taxis) among the Trinitarian persons” (p. 126). In chapter 5, “Timothy Keller’s Hermeneutic: An Example for the Church to Follow?”, C. Richard H. Holst considers the exegetical foundation of Keller’s work. He criticizes Keller’s overdependence on parables for doctrinal formulation, his freighting of several texts’ “secondary aspects” with more than they were designed to carry, and several interpretive *non sequiturs* (termed “logical fallacies”) in his work. In chapter 6, “‘Not Quite’ Theistic Evolution: Does Keller Bridge the Gap between Creation and Evolution?”, William M. Schweitzer critically evaluates Keller’s approach to science. He considers Keller’s specific approach to theistic evolution, but also examines broader issues in Keller’s writing related to general revelation, and examines the ambiguity in his use of the word “science” itself.

As a whole, the criticism is timely and fair. Though some might balk at a volume critiquing an admittedly orthodox evangelical, it is an important contribution nonetheless. Because Keller is a respected and influential teacher, he is often given the benefit of the doubt. This volume assists readers of Keller in differentiating between what is helpful and what is not in his overall contribution.

In spite of these strengths, a few items leave this volume open to criticism. In light of the book’s stated goal to “start a conversation” (p. 239), the contributions are far too irregular in this regard. Bidwell’s chapter on the Trinity is most successful in this endeavor. Even here, however, he would have done well to suggest concrete ways to supplement Keller’s use of “divine dance” imagery rather than focusing on the insufficiency of its current form. More effort could have been made by the contributors to chart a way forward, giving a more robust role to Keller’s intended audience and aim.

Additionally, though the introduction makes clear that this is an *appreciative* critique, this is not always evident throughout the book. At times contributors seem to “major on the minors” of Keller’s approach, treating emphases in his writing as though they are exclusions of other aspects of a given doctrinal point. Several paragraphs in the chapters on sin (ch. 2) and hell (ch. 3) sound like quibbling to this reviewer.

Finally, the methodological problem inherent in a project of this sort is not given sufficient consideration. Though the themes under consideration do resurface throughout his writings, Keller

is nevertheless an incidental writer, not a systematic one. Furthermore, as his primary setting is the church and not the academy, those used to academic writing will notice an uneven quality to the clarity and cogency of his presentation. Something analogous has been observed in John Calvin. Calvin's primary setting was also the church vis-à-vis Protestant Scholastic theologians whose primary setting was the university. Nevertheless, David Steinmetz has suggested that the *substance* of their theology was essentially the same even though the way they *conveyed* their theology was different. (See David C. Steinmetz, "The Scholastic Calvin," in *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment* [ed. Carl R. Trueman and R. S. Clark; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1999], 16–30.) This is not to suggest that *Engaging with Keller* is concerned only with *apparent* differences. That this important methodological matter was left entirely unaddressed, however, was an omission that unsettled this reviewer throughout.

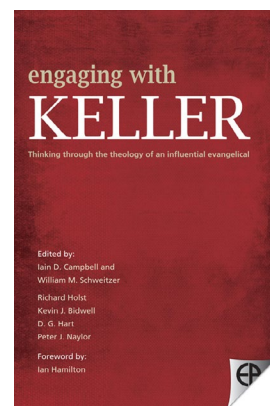
Nevertheless, in spite of these critiques, *Engaging with Keller* is an informative book. Though all who have read Keller's writings will benefit from its contribution, it will be especially useful for Reformed and Presbyterian readers. Since Keller is a minister in the Presbyterian Church of America, his denominational affiliation can tempt fellow confessional Presbyterians toward a default position of "innocence by association." Keller does appear to be taking a decidedly different tack than that usually taken by confessional Reformed and Presbyterian churches. Those in such churches wishing to emulate his approach should be circumspect about articulating these issues exclusively as Keller suggests. This book commendably helps church leaders to do just that.

R. Andrew Compton
Christ Reformed Church
Anaheim, California, USA

Iain D. Campbell and William M. Schweitzer, eds. *Engaging with Keller: Thinking Through the Theology of an Influential Evangelical*. Darlington: EP Books, 2013. 240 pp. £9.99/\$15.99.

Engaging With Keller consists of a number of essays appraising Tim Keller's views on sin, hell, the Trinity, the mission of the church, hermeneutics, creation, and ecclesiology. The authors are all from conservative Presbyterian denominations, and the majority of them are ministers in the UK. They acknowledge that Keller *intends* to teach orthodox truth, but express concern that in his desire to make Christianity relevant to a contemporary audience he has inadvertently softened some aspects of biblical teaching (pp. 17, 239).

Those who are indebted to Keller's ministry influence (such as myself) should be especially open to such criticisms. After all, no minister or ministry is perfect, and criticism can be an important means for helping us grow and see our blind spots. And even where the book might not amount to a successful criticism of Keller himself, it could still offer some helpful cautions to younger Keller enthusiasts who latch on to their teacher's ministry emphases but may or may not imitate his humility and nuance. Unfortunately, however, *Engaging with Keller* does not provide a fair and helpful criticism of Keller's thought and ministry. In the space of this review, I can focus only on a few key issues that may represent larger weaknesses in the book's approach.



First, at times the authors appear to misrepresent Keller's viewpoint. For example, in the book's opening chapter on Keller's doctrine of sin, Iain Campbell faults Keller for portraying sin as identity, idolatry, lostness, and self-centeredness, rather than disobedience. He especially objects to Keller's emphasis on the motif of idolatry, asserting that "the nature of sin is not idol-making but law-breaking" (p. 44). Campbell acknowledges that idolatry is not merely an OT problem, but claims it is the symptom of sin, not its cause. It is debatable whether our language for sin should be as exclusively legal as Campbell seems to think and whether idolatry can be reduced to a mere symptom of sin. I wonder if Campbell is forcing a false dichotomy between two equally valid and biblical images for sin. But whether this is true or not, Campbell certainly misrepresents Keller by positing a denial of sin as law-breaking in Keller's teaching. At a few points in his chapter Campbell seems to recognize that Keller never sets the relational dimension of sin over and against the legal, and at one point even quotes Keller's affirmation of sin as law-breaking (p. 60). But he then proceeds to lament that if Keller had explicated his doctrine of sin on the Bible, he "would not have been so quick to dismiss a definition of sin as a breaking of God's rules" (p. 38), and later he asserts that Keller has "dismissed defining sin as disobedience" (p. 39). It is hard not to feel a sense of unfairness here, since Keller himself affirms idolatry and disobedience as complementary, rather than competitive, aspects of a biblical doctrine of sin.

Some others chapters, while not blatantly misrepresenting Keller's teaching, may provide a measure of distortion by overlooking important nuances in his thinking or failing to consider all that he has said on a given subject. Peter Naylor, for instance, critiques Keller for advocating a dual mission in the church of gospel preaching plus doing justice. But he exhibits no awareness that Keller has actually argued against John Stott's equal emphasis on word and deed ministry, and instead posits "an asymmetrical, inseparable relationship" in which gospel proclamation has priority in the mission of the church (see Timothy Keller, "The Gospel and the Poor," *Themelios* 33:3 [2008]: 8–22, available at http://thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/article/the_gospel_and_the_poor). As a result, many of Naylor's specific criticisms seem to be targeting a simplified and slightly caricatured version of Keller's actual missiology.

Similarly, Kevin Bidwell takes issue with Keller's metaphor of a "divine dance" in his treatment of the Trinity, but he treats this metaphor as if it were a central and comprehensive representation of Keller's view on Trinitarian relations. For instance, he sets it at odds with generation and spiration (pp. 115, 118) and claims that it jeopardizes the unity of the Godhead (p. 113) and even raises the question of tritheism (p. 120). But surely there is some category confusion here: Keller does not offer the metaphor as an alternative to the divine relations espoused in, say, the Athanasian Creed. In fact, it is not at all clear that Keller places the kind of controlling emphasis on this particular metaphor that Bidwell's critique implies. It is simply one metaphor, raised here and there in Keller's many writings, intended to make a point about the *effect* of Trinitarian relations—not a final statement on the relations themselves. Bidwell faults the "divine dance" metaphor because it is not explicitly located in the Bible. But since our theological metaphors and language are often not explicitly grounded in the Bible (e.g., the very word "Trinity"), a fairer test would be to ask whether what is *pictured* in the metaphor is *consistent* with the Bible.

Bidwell would have had a firmer basis for his critique if he had consulted all of Keller's teaching on the Trinity—for instance, he might have given some attention to the statement issued from Keller and D. A. Carson regarding T. D. Jakes's Trinitarianism after his invitation to the Elephant Room (see D. A. Carson and Timothy Keller, "Carson and Keller on Jakes and the Elephant Room," *The Gospel Coalition Blog*, February 3, 2012, available at <http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/tgc/2012/02/03/carson-and->

keller-on-jakes-and-the-elephant-room/). A quick read through the first section of this statement reveals how much more Keller has to say about the Trinity than is expressed in the divine dance metaphor. Evaluating Keller's Trinitarianism exclusively through this one metaphor seems comparable to evaluating Calvin's doctrine of revelation exclusively through his metaphor of God "lisping" to us in the *Institutes* 1.13.1 to express the notion of accommodation.

Another overarching weakness of *Engaging with Keller* is that it often fails to sufficiently appreciate the concerns that undergird Keller's teaching in a particular area. For instance, in his chapter on Keller's doctrine of creation, William Schweitzer criticizes Keller for seeking to accommodate a biblical doctrine of creation with the findings of modern science. Schweitzer argues that rejection, rather than accommodation, should characterize the church's reaction to claims from the scientific community, because "the world is going to oppose God's truth" (p. 97). Of course, Keller would agree that some scientific claims should not be accommodated (hence his rejection of full-blown evolution and his affirmation of a historic Adam and Eve). Schweitzer's own position on creation issues is often left unclear (is he a young-earth or old-earth creationist?), but surely he would acknowledge that not all scientific claims should be rejected (e.g., heliocentrism). His chapter would have been more compelling if he had sought to distinguish between scientific claims that should be rejected and those that should be accommodated, on the basis of an analysis of the evidence. In this case, that might include, for instance, some discussion of homologous traits, genetic similarities, fossil distribution, etc. Instead, he seems to simply assume that all those points of data explored by Keller are among those to be rejected.

The most strident chapter in the book is Daryl Hart's concluding piece on Keller's ecclesiology. Throughout this chapter, Hart faults Keller—as well as *The Gospel Coalition* (p. 223) and the Presbyterian Church in America (p. 225)—for collaborating across denominational lines. For Hart, such collaboration represents a compromise of Presbyterianism, which requires not only "ministry under the oversight of elders in graded courts" but also "restricting ecumenical ties to communions of like faith and practice (Presbyterian and Reformed)" (pp. 211–12). Hart is certainly entitled to believe that being Presbyterian requires such denominational separatism (though I think even most Presbyterians will find such a view too restrictive). But it would have been a far more illuminating piece if he had erected an argument for why Presbyterianism forbids one from trans-denominational partnership. This view appears to be assumed throughout his chapter, rather than demonstrated, despite being the linchpin of his critique.

This makes all the more striking the severity of Hart's conclusions. According to Hart, Keller is indifferent to the doctrine of the church (p. 232), does not think church membership matters (p. 213), and exhibits a disregard for Presbyterian norms that is "well-nigh remarkable" (p. 228, cf. also p. 237). He even suggests that by seeking trans-denominational partnerships, Keller has betrayed his ordination vows in the PCA: "although Keller has subscribed the confession of faith, approved Presbyterian polity as the teaching of Scripture, and vowed to submit to his fellow officers in the PCA, his involvement with non-Presbyterians betrays his profession" (p. 235). If Hart had provided some kind of historical and/or biblical argumentation for *why* Presbyterianism forbids collaboration with non-Presbyterians, his piece would have been, if still controversial and uncompromising, at least more understandable and interesting.

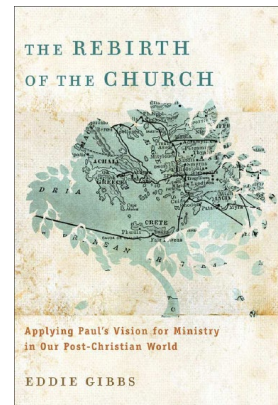
Ultimately, *Engaging with Keller* fails to produce a compelling interpretation of Keller's thought. It may benefit its readers by sparking important conversations about issues in contemporary evangelical ministry, such as the influence (to take one example) of C. S. Lewis's *The Great Divorce* on our doctrine

of hell. But its unfair representation of Keller, failure to appreciate his concerns, and tendency to assume its conclusions prohibits it from being a reliable guide through the issues it raises.

Gavin Ortlund
Sierra Madre Congregational Church
Sierra Madre, California, USA

Eddie Gibbs. *The Rebirth of the Church: Applying Paul's Vision for Ministry in Our Post-Christian World*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013. x + 262 pp. \$21.99.

The twenty-first century church exists within a postmodern, post-Christian culture that espouses relativism, embraces pluralism, and greets claims of religious experience with skepticism. While scholars continuously spill ink articulating models for mission based on sociological or cultural data, Fuller Seminary professor and church growth expert Eddie Gibbs challenges us to examine our biblical foundations for mission. In *The Rebirth of the Church*, Gibbs finds a conversation partner in the apostle Paul, whom Gibbs believes provides principles and insights into ministering within our post-Christendom culture. He puts forth a robust vision for ministry in a postmodern world that revitalizes and enables the church today to recover the practices that caused the early church to grow exponentially.



In his introduction, Gibbs is quick to note that we cannot extract the early church's ministry model verbatim and adapt it to accommodate our ministry needs today, though we will find principles that readily apply (p. 6). In the opening chapters, Gibbs substantively engages the cultural contexts of both the early church and the contemporary church. He concludes that while both contexts differ significantly in certain respects, many of the same religious and social challenges are congruent, including pluralism and a cultural rejection of Judeo-Christian morality. "Despite the two millennia that separate them, both missions continue as expressions of the ongoing mission of the ascended Christ" (p. 26). Gibbs proceeds to name the challenge that ministry practitioners have always faced: "how to translate the message of Jesus originally proclaimed in a Jewish, rural, Galilean context, into the pagan and pluralistic world of either the Roman Empire or contemporary secular society" (p. 26). With these cultural understandings in place and his goal well-articulated, Gibbs inductively explores the book of Acts and the Pauline epistles, seeking to ascertain the dominant themes and cultural issues Paul and his companions faced during their ministry endeavors.

Gibbs organizes his book categorically, zeroing in on numerous big picture concepts derived from the life and ministry of the apostle Paul. Gibbs intersperses biblical analysis with reflections on the state of ministry practices within the contemporary church. For instance, in a chapter entitled "Urban Engagement," Gibbs explores Paul's ministry in Thessalonica, a ministry season replete with social and spiritual tensions, such as the trial of Jason for (allegedly) subverting the Pax Romana through his adherence to Christianity (pp. 76–78). Gibbs comments, "some of the negative publicity experienced by churches today may be well-deserved, and for this we must admit responsibility. However, where misrepresentations arise from . . . falsehoods generated by biased opinions or vindictiveness, they need to be challenged with carefully reasoned responses" (p. 77). At the end of each chapter, Gibbs provides

an overarching conclusion to the chapter based on the principles he discusses. Careful analysis of Paul's ministry practices, including incorporating new members into the church, engaging the broader culture, and firmly adhering to the gospel, as well as the practical implications of these themes for the church today, compose the majority of this work.

This book finds its place in a rich and ever-expanding literature on the missional church, dominated by theorists such as Alan Hirsch, Alan Roxburgh, Darrell Guder, and Craig Van Gelder. The book is different theologically and culturally from the works of these theorists, and diverges significantly from Gibbs's previous works, such as *Emerging Churches*. While those books gave unbridled support to emergent church theology and practices, *The Rebirth of the Church* is more historical in nature and allows the missiological thought and practice of Paul to speak into our current context. While many a missiological text will look at contemporary realities and extract biblical principles to meet current needs, Gibbs does exactly the opposite, first exploring the biblical text *then* applying biblical principles to our current context.

Readers of a more conservative evangelical ilk will resonate with much of Gibbs's theological conclusions related to mission. For instance, speaking of atonement, Gibbs writes, "When the very idea of atonement is downplayed or rejected outright, we lose sight of a whole range of key terms that lie at the heart of the gospel, including grace, adoption, redemption, justification, and regeneration" (p. 178). Elsewhere, Gibbs expounds rich Trinitarian theology and evangelical soteriology and eschatology, concluding that in times of persecution "the church must humbly and boldly stand its ground with conviction, clarity, and credibility" (p. 199). He even chides contemporary churches for fostering biblical illiteracy, accommodating heterodox theology, and losing evangelistic fire (p. 74). Thus, while conservative evangelical readers may have concerns approaching Gibbs due to his emerging church affiliation, his exploration of the biblical text undergirded with orthodox theological conviction and missiological insight make this work a refreshing entry into literature on missional church thought and practice.

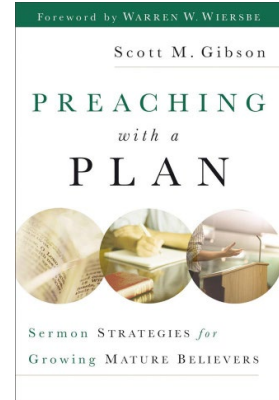
My main concern with this book is its applicability—will churches continue to build their missional approaches based on non-biblical principles, or will they turn, as Gibbs has, to the missiological practices the Bible prescribes? While the book does not give much in the way of simple, practical applications, it will be up to thoughtful practitioners to put those principles into practice in their particular ministry context.

The Rebirth of the Church is an exciting entry into the literature on the missional church, providing principles and lessons from the thought and practices of Paul and the early church for use in our contemporary context. An expert missiologist, Gibbs has a finger carefully placed on the pulse of the contemporary church, and as a result his cultural analyses are insightful and his conclusions pertinent to ministry needs today. Pastors, seminarians, missiologists, and practical theologians in various areas of ministry will greatly benefit from Gibbs's thorough biblical analysis, penetrating insight, and engaging style.

Benjamin D. Espinoza
Covenant Church
Bowling Green, Ohio, USA

Scott M. Gibson. *Preaching with a Plan: Sermon Strategies for Growing Mature Believers*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012. 149 pp. \$13.00.

Often I have remarked to my homiletics students and other young pastors that they should think of sermons as part of a curriculum. Rather than producing graduates with formal knowledge in Bible, or giving sermons with little thought to the potential of cumulative years of preaching, the pulpit curriculum would have as its goal to mature people in the whole counsel of God. The ultimate goal should be the glory of God; the penultimate goal of the instruction should be to make disciples who fulfill their role as stewards of the gospel in the church and in the world. The penultimate and ultimate goals thus guide all planning of preaching, carrying a generation of believers through the bulk of the sixty-six books that reveal the goal of the God of redemptive history. The approach should be expositional, deliberate, and practical.



I anticipated that I would find similar appeal for a program of study for pulpit ministry in Scott Gibson's *Preaching With a Plan: Sermon Strategies for Growing Mature Believers*. Gibson is the Haddon W. Robinson Professor of Preaching and Ministry and director for the Center for Preaching at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. He serves the church with many writings on preaching, providing a wealth of strategies for communicating the biblical text more effectively within contemporary culture. This work has a unique pastoral focus in comparison to his other writings, emphasizing "discipleship through our sermons" (p. 14).

In six brief chapters, Gibson shares many seasoned pastoral insights on audience analysis. Here is the primary thrust of the book: *The needs of the congregation are the driving factor in sermon planning*. Therefore, one reads of Gibson's casual encounters with church members, and of tools that will "assess the trends in the church" (p. 89). The work is as much about the task of faithful shepherding based on members' needs as it is about preaching.

The author provides many admonitions toward items that might detract from diligent, intentional sermon planning. When discussing text selections, he warns, "Too many preachers have their needs, their concerns, their pet theological positions, and their darling texts to promote or emphasize when they choose texts for preaching" (p. 28). Similarly, seeing the danger of "spiritual lethargy" for pastors, he cautions that the "white fog of boredom has the potential of sabotaging the very essence and purpose of our calling" (p. 53). The audience of such counsel seems to be those newer to the pastorate rather than veteran pastors.

Beyond the above words, my commendations for this book are few, for the book has many shortcomings. It is much more philosophical than it is concrete. Gibson writes for three chapters before he discusses "a process for intentional planning" in the fourth (p. 65). Even this chapter's process makes arbitrary categories for determining the "spiritual age" of one's congregation: infant, toddler, child, adolescent, young adult, middle age, and older adult (p. 73). These divisions are reminiscent of a soteriology that sets apart so-called carnal Christians from mature believers, and they could establish false target groups as the basis of one's preaching calendar. While he does offer some very generalized instructions toward planning preaching, they tend to be obvious: "First ask God for wisdom . . . pray about the task of discerning where your congregation is spiritually" (p. 82).

The author quotes too many authorities on preaching. The work reads like a *Who's Who* list of preachers, historical and modern, and the number of authorities quoted detracts from Gibson's ability to express a thoroughgoing perspective on any topic in the book. The intent of the writer might be to strengthen his argument by marshaling the weight of respected pastors. Occasionally, however, this results in juxtaposing differing views as equally valid options. I wished for the professor of preaching to explain more of his personal theory and practice.

The most significant weakness of Gibson's manual is that it lacks a constructive theology for preaching as discipleship. As a result, some of the writer's suggestions seem incomplete, others seem narrow, and still others seem contradictory. For example, the author notes, "a particular text may not be the most appropriate for [a] church at [a given] time" (p. 26). He does not, however, provide any wisdom for discerning when texts might be inappropriate. This same fault arises when Gibson states, "series preaching can also allow preachers to get into ruts . . . without consideration of those whom they are supposed to be discipling. It can also allow preachers to be lazy" (p. 42). How so? And what is the superior alternative, and why?

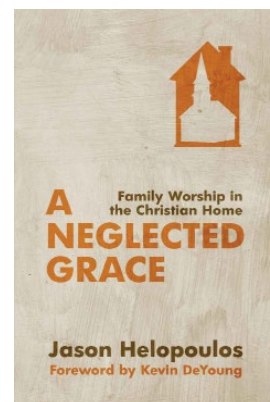
Multiple times the work encourages the use of a lectionary for developing a preaching plan. Yet one must ask the author why he recommends an instrument that will invite someone from outside of a congregation to determine that church's preaching schedule? This seems contradictory to Gibson's thesis of planning based on congregational needs. Throughout the book one fails to find any biblical or theological means of weighing perceived audience needs in one's scheduling. While the authors leaves open many plausible means of planning, he does not propose one determinant theory for using preaching to make disciples. There is a latent seeker-sensitivity notion in this work. There is no discussion about connecting a plan for preaching the whole counsel of God to growing disciples.

No one can fault Gibson for stressing discipleship in preaching. We are called to make disciples of all peoples (Matt 28:18–20; 2 Tim 2:1–2). Nonetheless, readers must look elsewhere to find a theology and method of connecting expositional preaching to a plan for deepening disciples in their faith.

Eric C. Redmond
New Canaan Baptist Church
Washington, D.C., USA

Jason Helopoulos. *A Neglected Grace: Family Worship in the Christian Home*. Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2013. 128 pp. £6.99/\$10.99.

Discussions of "family worship" often seem more like "law" than "grace," as the topic can involve prescriptions of what it should look like and lead many to despair of their failure and perceived inability to live up to the standards set forth. Jason Helopoulos, Assistant Pastor at University Reformed Church (East Lansing, Michigan), counteracts this tendency and connects family worship and grace in *A Neglected Grace: Family Worship in the Christian Home*. Helopoulos seeks to show how family worship is a grace to families, and he offers warm instruction and encouragement to families in their attempt to practice family worship.



The introduction notes the neglect of family worship, as Helopoulos compares the contemporary lack of family worship in Christian homes with the prevalence of family worship seen in places like seventeenth-century Kidderminster, England. In addition, Helopoulos lays out both his plan to focus on family worship as a grace and his position as one who is not an expert at family worship, but rather one who seeks to grow in it.

The first three chapters of the book offer the basis for family worship. The first chapter portrays family worship along with secret (individual) and corporate worship as three legs of the “stool” of the Christian life. In chapter two, Helopoulos shows that the Bible teaches family worship as a joyful responsibility for household heads. Helopoulos identifies additional benefits for families beyond the main reason for family worship (honoring God) in the third chapter.

The book takes a practical turn in chapter four. This chapter states that Scripture, prayer, and singing are the main elements of family worship and that practices such as Scripture memory, catechism, and responsive reading are additional possibilities for this time. The manner of family worship is the topic of the fifth chapter, as Helopoulos maintains that family worship should be reverent, joyful, and consistent. He then seeks to correct some possible misperceptions or misuses of family worship in chapter six. Helopoulos continues to highlight family worship as a grace and he himself speaks gracefully in this section. For example, he does not give a strict prescription on how long or how often family worship should be, recognizes that a family’s worship will not live up to the ideals he sets on every occasion, and stresses that family worship should not be a time to castigate or simply give moral training.

Helopoulos concludes the book by offering some advice and encouragement to the reader. Chapter seven gives some concrete thoughts on implementing family worship, such as selecting the same time and place and being brief (especially with young kids) and flexible. Chapter eight is a “trouble-shooting” chapter, looking at potential challenges such as an unsupportive or non-Christian spouse or children who do not sit still. The final chapter features various testimonies about family worship that offer glimpses of the joy of family worship as well as the struggles that accompany it. The book features four appendices with examples and resources to help in family worship.

Overall, Helopoulos has succeeded in his goal in showing how family worship is a grace and how to practice family worship gracefully. While a great resource, there are a number of questions and practical issues about family worship that Helopoulos raises but does not address. Some that come to mind are: How should a family approach family worship when the father is often travelling for business during the week or when the family is out of its normal surroundings (e.g., vacation)? If family worship is a grace that one needs to live the Christian life in worship (see p. 27), then is there anything equivalent for singles—should there be “roommate worship” akin to family worship? Might it be wiser to be intentional in the choice of songs sung at family worship, similar to the way that Helopoulos advocates for intentionality in the Scriptures read? Is singing *necessary* during family worship, as most do not maintain that singing is a normal or necessary part of secret (individual) worship? I raise these issues not as criticisms of Helopoulos’s project since they might be beyond the scope of his work, though they could be fodder for future revision. Moreover, I suspect that the author would welcome these sorts of questions, as they further the conversation about family worship and encourage its practice.

Helopoulos’s focus on grace will lead families to worship more faithfully and church leaders to feel more confident in discussing the topic of family worship with the members of their congregations. The

book is readable and short enough for a layperson to read in the midst of a busy life, so it would be a great resource to give to families with children as well as married or engaged couples.

Brian C. Dennert
Trinity Presbyterian Church
Hinsdale, Illinois, USA

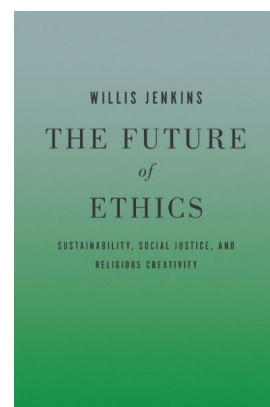
Willis Jenkins. *The Future of Ethics: Sustainability, Social Justice, and Religious Creativity*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2013. viii + 340 pp. \$34.95.

Willis Jenkins is the Margaret A. Farley Assistant Professor of Social Ethics at Yale Divinity School. His recent book, *The Future of Ethics*, follows the trajectory of his significant volume on eco-justice, *Ecologies of Grace: Environmental Ethics and Christian Theology* (Oxford University Press, 2008). The central argument of *The Future of Ethics* is that with problems of size and complexity, ethical theories must be shaped in response to necessary actions rather than shaping actions based on a foundational worldview (pp. 4–7).

The book is divided into seven chapters, along with an introduction and afterword. In the introduction, Jenkins helpfully lays out his methodology for the book. He admits that his “approach is pluralist and nonfoundationalist in that it does not suppose that the world needs to share a common faith or worldview in order to cooperate in confronting shared problems” (p. 6). More important for Jenkins is the development of “practical capacities and responsibility and cooperation” (p. 6). Jenkins declares that worldview matters only “in the ways that particular communities use them to support possibilities of response” (p. 6).

After establishing his ethical scheme and explaining the scope of the project in the introduction, chapter 1 outlines the scope of the problem of climate change, which Jenkins believes to be greater than popular awareness. Chapter 2 is an extended argument for praxis preceding worldview in an ethical system, involving a critique of contemporary and historical Christian ethicists whose emphasis is on the primacy of right theology. The third chapter consists of Jenkins’s defense of global ethics based on shared activism above theological framework. Chapter 4 offers a critique of a purely pragmatic view of environmental ethics. Jenkins’s argument for the involvement of worldview in ethics is that it can be more effectively leveraged to mobilize action.

In the final three chapters of the volume Jenkins shifts to consider three specific environmental problems. His purpose in these chapters is to demonstrate how a pragmatic, pluralistic ethic can be effective in combatting particular social ills. In the fifth chapter, Jenkins discusses the social and environmental injustices wrought by the uneven distribution of harmful chemicals, particularly with respect to chemical disposal, among different ethnicities and economic groups. The sixth chapter connects Jenkins’s concepts of social justice and pragmatic ethics to the idea of relieving economic poverty. Chapter 7 argues for a focus on justice for future generations, not just the present generation. The afterword is a brief reflection on the limits of the system and the need to rely on sustaining grace, which is a reference to his earlier, foundational book.



The Future of Ethics is an innovative approach to ethics, particularly environmental ethics, from a Christian tradition. In a refreshing shift from the typical approach to Christian environmental ethics, Jenkins does not frame his work in response to Lynn White's important but overused essay. Instead, Jenkins attempts to move the project of Christian environmental ethics beyond the consideration of the doctrine of creation, anthropology, and eschatology. This book is a call to respond by participating in meaningful activity to reduce human impact on the environment, particularly, as Jenkins understands it, to reduce the human contribution to climate change. In this way, Jenkins's book is successful in accomplishing his purpose by moving the reader to consider the empirical evidences, as presented in the book, of human impact on the environment. The reader is also brought into consideration of the appropriate response to that evidence.

Although Jenkins argues his case well and successfully moves beyond the basic theological concerns, his rejection of a uniquely Christian worldview as a foundation for environmental ethics creates methodological concerns. Jenkins's assertion that worldview is constructed based on observations of behavioral patterns needlessly detaches his ethics from a traditional, orthodox Christian foundation, which allows Jenkins to focus nearly entirely on social activism (p. 90). In truth, Jenkins's argument is generically orthodox, with connection to Christianity made by beginning each chapter with a selected biblical text and occasional references to elements of the Christian tradition in the text itself. Yet while this de-emphasis on Christian theology is essential to Jenkins's overall project, it tends to undermine his overall argument. This is because apart from Christian foundations, there is no longer an adequate basis for neighbor love, respect for God's creation, or eschatological hope. Thus *The Future of Ethics* falls prey to the drift common among nonfoundational projects, making it an interesting read but more suited to reinforcing the views of individuals already in agreement on the centrality of the ecological problem from a pragmatic approach than convincing skeptics of the value of this approach.

Still, *The Future of Ethics* is helpful in cogently demonstrating a nonfoundational, pragmatic approach to ethics based on a contemporary understanding of scientific evidence. As such, Jenkins has made a significant contribution to the ongoing conversation in Christian environmental ethics and should be commended on that basis.

Andrew J. Spencer
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary
Wake Forest, North Carolina, USA

J. I. Packer. *Weakness Is the Way: Life with Christ Our Strength*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2013. 125 pp. \$14.99.

This comparatively short book with its strange title delivers a powerful blow to the rampant triumphalism that has infected much of the Bible-believing world. Using Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians as his principal resource, J. I. Packer has once again provided us with both the theological depth and practical wisdom necessary to live in a way that pleases and honors Christ.

The reader should not draw false conclusions from the title. Whereas Packer advocates a form of "weakness" as the only way in which to live to the glory of God, he does not deny the proper place of spiritual strength. The subtitle reminds us that it is in and through our weakness that Christ's powerful presence is made known.

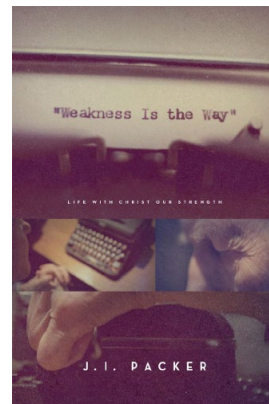
Packer's decision "to take soundings in Second Corinthians" (p. 16) is a wise and helpful one, as it is in this letter that the apostle bares his soul and honestly embraces his own weaknesses. Indeed, it is 2 Corinthians that "exhibits Paul to us at his weakest situationally—consumed with a pastor's anxiety, put under pressure, remorselessly censured, opposed outright and by some given the brush-off, and living in distress because of what he knew, feared, and imagined was being said about him by this rambunctious church at Corinth" (p. 96). Yet such weaknesses, far from a hindrance to successful ministry, are the very means by which the strength and sufficiency of Christ in the life of every believer are made known. Indeed, as Packer notes, "the way of true spiritual strength, leading to real fruitfulness in Christian life and service, is the humble, self-distrustful way of consciously recognized weakness in spiritual things" (p. 16).

But what does Packer mean by "weakness"? He defines it as "a state of inadequacy, or insufficiency, in relation to some standard or ideal to which we desire to conform" (p. 49). In the case of Paul in particular, and even of Christians in general, it means a realistic acknowledgment in facing not only our fundamental human limitations (such as those we encounter in the physical, intellectual, and relational realms of life), but more importantly our sinfulness, our transgressions, and the guilt that these entail. Paul's counsel to the Corinthians (and to us) is that the only proper response is to "look to Christ as your loving Sin-Bearer and living Lord" (p. 50). The Christian must "love Christ, in unending gratitude for his unending love to you" (p. 51) and "lean on Christ and rely on him to supply through the Holy Spirit all the strength you need for his service, no matter how weak unhappy circumstances and unfriendly people may be making you feel at present" (p. 51).

Clearly, then, Packer is no advocate of morbid defeatism in Christian living. Taking his cue from Paul's confession in chapter twelve ("when I am weak, then I am strong," v. 10), he encourages us all to lean on Christ in all things, bringing our weakness to him. Here is where true comfort and joy are found. Weakness is not a cause for self-pity but for Christ-dependence.

As Packer reads Paul, the apostle "demonstrates a sustained recognition that feeling weak in oneself is par for the course in the Christian life and therefore something one may properly boast about and be content with" (p. 53; on this see especially 2 Cor 12:7–10). It is here that we need to pay close attention to Packer's insightful conclusion:

In this, Paul models the discipleship, spiritual maturity, and growth in grace that all believers are called to pursue. When the world tells us, as it does, that everyone has a



right to a life that is easy, comfortable, and relatively pain-free, a life that enables us to discover, display, and deploy all the strengths that are latent within us, the world twists the truth right out of shape. That was not the quality of life to which Christ's call led him, nor was it Paul's calling, nor is it what we are called to in the twenty-first century. For all Christians, the likelihood is rather that as our discipleship continues, God will make us increasingly weakness-conscious and pain-aware, so that we may learn with Paul that when we are conscious of being weak, then—and only then—may we become truly strong in the Lord. And should we want it any other way? (pp. 53–54)

In the remainder of this short but superb book, Packer walks us through 2 Corinthians and demonstrates at every turn how our acknowledged weakness must become the platform for the display of Christ's supreme and all-sufficient power for living. Christ, notes Packer, "is the source of our strength in weakness and of our hope of heaven. . . . For Paul, the Lord Jesus is the controlling center of life in every respect, being both example and enabler throughout" (p. 117).

Do not look to this brief book for a detailed exposition of the whole of 2 Corinthians. Rather, read it as a pastorally-informed strategy for living in biblically-grounded, Christ-exalting confidence that our weakness, far from serving as an insurmountable obstacle to genuine Christian growth and triumph, is the very means through which our risen Lord manifests the energizing and sustaining wonder of his grace and power.

Sam Storms

Bridgeway Church

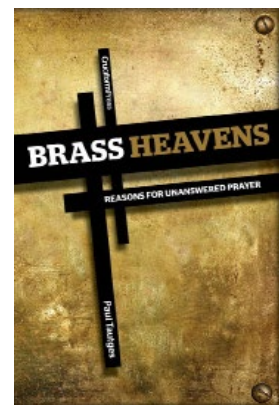
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Paul Tautges. *Brass Heavens: Reasons for Unanswered Prayer*. Adelphi, MD: Cruciform, 2013. 122 pp. \$9.99.

In this book Paul Tautges tackles the toughest aspect of Christian praying—unanswered prayer. In doing so, he doesn't flinch from the "whole counsel of God." He begins by grounding a theology of prayer in the nature of the triune God—a God whose very nature is to share generously. Tautges writes, "We cry out to God because we expect him to listen" (p. 7). It seems like an obvious point, but knowing God's generosity is inseparable from a vibrant life of prayer. As evangelicals drift into thinking of prayer almost as a mystical abstract "relationship," it is refreshing to see Tautges dwell on the DNA of prayer. We pray because God hears.

But, Tautges writes, our relationship with God is not a mushy, sterile relationship where feeling good about ourselves is the center. Because the Father has set his love on us, because our *standing* is secure, our relationship with the "Father is alive, rich, nuanced, dynamic, and personal" (p. 32). So as a loving Father, God disciplines his children—which gets us to unanswered prayer. "We need the purifying power of *unanswered* prayer" (p. 43; italics original).

The second half of the book examines six reasons for unanswered prayer. The first five (pet sins, neglected reconciliation, religious sins, inconsiderate husbands, and stubborn pride) focus on how our sin blocks the free flow of prayer to our Father. The sixth reason—testing our faith—deals with the more



Job-like angst where the blocked prayer is God maturing us. He closes this section with a stunning quote from Spurgeon encouraging persistence in prayer (pp. 113–14).

I enjoyed Tautges’s immersion in the Word and his focus on the way disobedience blocks our felt communion with God. *Brass Heavens* is solid meat and potatoes for the Christian. The book is a slow unpacking of one aspect of the fear of God: if you live a life of quiet rebellion against God, the heavens will be brass. It’s that simple.

No book on prayer can handle every aspect of prayer—the subject is so deep and rich. Nevertheless, I was hoping for more on the anguish side of prayer where, like Job, our prayers aren’t answered and we don’t know why. Tautges touches only lightly on our lost Hebrew lament tradition (“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”) in the last section of the book. Sometimes in the evangelical tradition we are better at unpacking sin than a mystery.

Another suggestion for improvement is that in the last section of the book, one wishes for a differentiation between the sins of pride and self-will. Tautges begins by describing someone who is self-willed, but then calls it pride. In the post-Augustine tradition we tend to miss self-will as a master sin. It’s an easy miss because pride, well, fills the room with its large ego. But the single overarching characteristic of Jesus’s earthly life is his submission to his Father. Identifying self-will fits well with Tautges’s first five reasons for unanswered prayer because all of them are tinged with self-will.

One final suggestion is merited, though we remember that one book can’t do everything. Tautges looks at how un-holiness blocks prayer, but he neglects the opposite biblical theme of how holiness unleashes powerful prayer. In general our evangelical tradition is better at dealing with the negative than giving a positive vision. So we have largely lost touch with James’s teaching that “the prayer of a righteous person has great power” (Jas 5:16). It is true that prayer is weakened in our lives because of sin, but we need not shy away from the opposite truth: that prayer is empowered by holiness. It is. There is a peculiar power in a holy life that has endured in suffering, through thick and thin, that has willed-to-love in such a way that self has died.

Brass Heavens is a worthwhile read. It is a useful primer, eminently practical, on how sin blocks prayer. Tautges’s richly biblical vision, if followed, will unleash new freedom and power in your prayers.

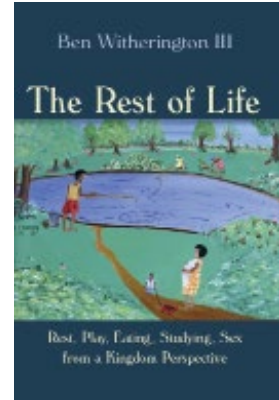
Paul Miller

seeJesus

Telford, Pennsylvania, USA

Ben Witherington III. *The Rest of Life: Rest, Play, Eating, Studying, Sex from a Kingdom Perspective*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012. x + 158 pp. \$18.00.

Ben Witherington is a gifted and prolific NT scholar who has written a number of excellent monographs that contribute much to the intellectual life of the church. This is a different sort of book, one best appreciated by fans of Witherington who want to spend time with one of our leading theologians. *The Rest of Life: Rest, Play, Eating, Studying, Sex from a Kingdom Perspective* is structured around five long chapters, which are already named in the subtitle: rest, play, food, Bible study, and sex. The final two essays (on study and sex) are the strongest, the result of extensive research and crisp writing. The chapters on play and rest are summaries of Christian wisdom. We will come to the chapter on eating later.



The introduction to the book says it is addressing “normal weekly events in the normal Christian life,” especially topics we “seldom hear anything about” (p. vii). This applies chiefly to the chapters on play and food. If one wonders how the chapters on rest/Sabbath (including worship) and Bible study match this goal, perhaps they are the sources of direction for the rest of life. Most chapters are eclectic, with academic sections featuring serious exegesis as well as casual sections that may include folksy stories and pastoral words for the reader’s heart. In a departure from typical practices, two of the five chapters feature a very long book review.

The first chapter, on rest, begins with a twenty-page review essay of Sigve Tonstad’s 2009 learned tome, *The Lost Meaning of the Sabbath Day*, and then moves to the topics of rest and worship. Chapter two, on play, builds on the insights of respected authorities on play, above all the underappreciated Robert Johnston’s outstanding monograph *The Christian at Play*. Chapter four, on the study of Scripture, is loaded with insights on the proper reading of Scripture, all graced by apt case studies and an invigorating style. The last chapter, on sex, also begins with an extended book review—in this case Rob Bell’s 2007 book *Sex God*. The review section highlights Witherington’s strengths—his mastery of biblical data and his eye for social commentary. The chapter is strongest when in exegetical mode, going where Witherington wishes, as in the exposition of the qualifications for elders and deacons (p. 141–51).

The reader will notice that I skipped chapter three on food. The style of the chapter suggests a sleepy editor. Consider the double use of the maladroit phrase “context in which” on page 67: “The social context in which the Bible was written was a context in which people ate just to stay alive.” This sentence could simply read, “In biblical times, people ate to survive.” Or, “Today, the superabundance of food tempts us to overeat. In biblical times, the problem was scarcity.” This sort of problem is common. One sentence blandly and repetitively begins, “We have talked about what the Bible says about . . .” (p. 73).

The content of the chapter is disappointing too. When Witherington repeatedly says, “I think I know the reason” (p. 65), “I imagine” (p. 66), “I suspect” (p. 66), and “A moment’s reflection will show” (p. 66; cf. p. 136), he inadvertently implies that he meditated on his topic more than he researched it. There *are* several pages of biblical data. For example, in pages 68–69, Witherington quotes ten passages that use the word “feasting” and offers helpful comments on some of them. Yet the citations are puzzling. The translations appear to be his, and his renderings commonly disagree with the major English translations. On five occasions he translates the common Greek verb ἐσθίω with “feast” rather than the normal “eat” without explaining his decision.

Witherington wisely devotes a large portion of the chapter to cultural analysis of Western problems, chiefly overeating and obesity. I laud his commitment to sane eating and exercise. Witherington begins with an account of a speech he gave at a Christian convention. He recalls his shock as he gazed at a sea of overweight pastors. Indeed, pastors should show self-discipline, but is it proper to name the denomination (not his own) and the city of the event (p. 65)? Later, he sensibly comments on food in the media. Yet the analysis focuses on two long-defunct television programs featuring popular but widely ridiculed hosts who were more entertainers than chefs. Further, the comments on these men are, at best, rambling and digressive. His cited sources are an obituary for one chef (p. 70) and a Wikipedia article, quoted at length (pp. 71–73), for the other. Witherington is a capable author, a learned man, and a winsome lecturer. But this chapter was a draft, not a completed work.

That said, the other chapters have much good content. Overall, this is a book for Witherington's many devotees. They will enjoy his unique blend of scholarship and light-hearted observations, crisply stated, on topics of abiding interest.

Daniel Doriani
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri, USA

— MISSION AND CULTURE —

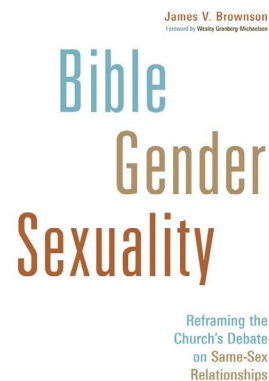
James V. Brownson. *Bible, Gender, Sexuality: Reframing the Church's Debate on Same-Sex Relationships*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013. xi + 300 pp. \$29.00.

This entry into the ever-expanding literature on the Bible's teaching on same-sex relationships is a welcome yet unsatisfying attempt to "discern the deeper and more comprehensive moral logic that undergirds the specific commands, prohibitions, and examples of the biblical text" that have to do with gender and sexuality (p. 9).

Brownson's argument is thorough and will reward both skeptics and fans alike, as he routinely digs up what for "traditionalists" in this debate have been assumptions and calls them into question. If his argument proves wrong—as I think it ultimately does—saying where and how it goes astray is more difficult than it seems on the surface, as Brownson challenges a way of reading Scripture that for traditionalists has sometimes functioned as a trump card in this debate.

Brownson (thankfully!) starts in a place other than the deeply contested prohibitions of same-sex sexual activity. His first chapter takes on what is for many theologians the central plank of the traditionalist case on same-sex relations: the "one flesh union" that Gen 2:24 speaks of. Brownson contends that it "does not refer to physical gender complementarity, but to the common bond of shared kinship" (p. 35).

After clarifying how his own canonically rooted approach sits in relationship to other attempts to find more positive theological resources for same-sex sexual relationships, Brownson then turns toward evaluating four "very broad forms of moral logic" that are "critical for understanding what the Bible has



to say about sexuality in general: patriarchy, the ‘one-flesh’ bond of marriage, procreation, and celibacy” (p. 14). Throughout these sections, Brownson offers readings of the relevant passages that are meant to problematize the traditionalist positions. On procreation, for instance, he suggests, “the witness of Scripture as a whole suggests that [procreation] cannot be a *defining*, or essential, aspect of [one-flesh] unions. What is ‘normal’ cannot simply be assumed to be ‘normative’” (p. 122). In returning to the “one-flesh unions,” Brownson sounds a similar note: “The fact that the Bible uses the language of ‘one flesh’ to refer to male-female unions *normally* does not inherently, and of itself, indicate that it views such linkages *normatively*” (p. 105).

In the final section, Brownson turns toward the boundaries of appropriate human sexuality, taking cues from Rom 1:24–27 to focus on lust, purity, honor/shame, and natural law (chs. 8–11). Here, Brownson’s method of rereading Scripture in light of what he takes to be contemporary givens about the nature of human sexuality comes to the fore. He suggests, for instance, that “the attempt by some traditionalists to bracket sexual orientation and to focus only on sexual behavior” as a way of sorting out Romans 1 is “ultimately untenable, even if it may seem necessary or benevolent from a pastoral point of view” (p. 175). And critiquing the language of “sexual orientation” isn’t an option from his standpoint, either, as the “resistance of sexual orientation to change” is an “increasingly established scientific fact” (p. 176). When Brownson turns to “nature,” he pulls a page from many traditionalist’s playbook and affirms that “redemption does not displace or escape nature; rather, it fulfills nature” (p. 250). But our understanding “of exactly how the will of God is revealed in the natural order is subject to change, deepening, and growth over time” (p. 247). Committed gay and lesbian unions can find a place in this “renewed ‘nature’” provided that nature “is not simply determined by anatomy” and because our understanding of “nature” is different enough from that of the NT that “the New Testament does not envision the kind of committed, mutual, lifelong, loving, moderated gay and lesbian unions that are emerging today” (p. 251).

In his conclusion, Brownson sums up his position and revisits the controversial prohibitions, repeating arguments about their irrelevance for today’s debates that are by now well known. But he also reminds us that “gender complementarity” is “not taught in Scripture, considered in its entirety, and has never been part of normative Christian teaching” (p. 266).

By calling into question whether the “gender complementarity” that is on the surface of the Genesis account is actually a norm that Scripture presents, Brownson indeed moves the discussion closer toward the center of the divide on this question. Yet traditionalists might simply respond that Scripture holds together what Brownson’s distinction tears asunder, namely the covenantal aspects of marriage and the anatomy in which such covenantal commitments are revealed, consummated, and made fruitful in the limited permanence of the gift of children. Brownson suggests that the focus of Genesis 2 is not on the complementarity of male and female, but on their similarity (pp. 29ff.). Fair enough. But *focusing* on such a similarity is only intelligible within a context where differences are assumed, obvious, and have no need to be argued for, else why bother mentioning the similarity at all? And while Brownson’s suggestion that Gen 2:24 is focused on “the formation of the essential and foundational building blocks of human community—the ties of kinship” (p. 34) is an evocative one, one wonders whether the *biological* ties beneath that kinship are left with any moral force at all. They did not matter much for society in Plato’s thought experiment in *The Republic*. Brownson’s emphasis on “kinship” has a similar sort of avoidance of the biological preconditions that make “mutual care” intelligible and valuable.

But these are merely initial worries, and Brownson's book merits a closer and more full treatment than I can afford here. Indeed, his approach is useful precisely for illuminating the difficulty of defending a stance that the church has nearly unambiguously treated as the presupposition for moral reflection about human sexuality, even if there have been differences over the details of that stance. For traditionalists, the debate over whether the presupposition of anatomical difference is only "normal" or also "normative" will not be settled by appeal to empirical claims about contemporary experience or science. The grammar and meaning of human sexuality is different from other investigations into the natural world, for its subject matter extends beyond that which such empirical pursuits can deliver (namely, the meaning of human sexuality and moral norms).

I suspect Brownson's book will persuade few who do not share his starting points or his means of integrating "experience" into his reading of Scripture. But for the questions it raises and for the deep challenge it presents to the traditionalist account of Scripture, it is a book worth considering carefully and closely.

Matthew Lee Anderson
University of Oxford
Oxford, England, UK

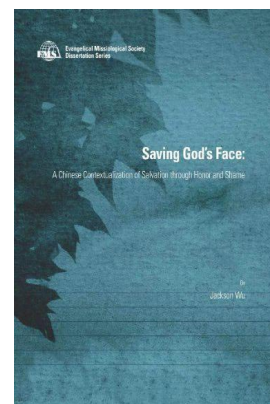
Jackson Wu. *Saving God's Face: A Chinese Contextualization of Salvation through Honor and Shame*. Evangelical Missiological Society Dissertation Series. Pasadena: William Carey International University Press, 2012. xii + 356 pp. \$25.00.

In *Saving God's Face* Jackson Wu contributes to cutting edge discussions of global theology. Building on foundational books such as Timothy Tennent's *Theology in the Context of World Christianity*, Wu discusses one specific question of Christian theology in the context of China. Wu's study intersects a number of academic fields, including theology, missiology, and Chinese studies. Theologically, Wu asks, "[W]hy have Christians favored law-language when so much of the Bible emphasizes God's glory and his people not being put to shame?" In the area of missiology, Wu asks, "[H]ow do we share the gospel in honor—shame cultures in a way that both reflects what the Bible really says and does not come across as superficial?" (p. xi).

Wu brings keen insights to this topic. He has a PhD in Applied Theology from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and has served as a church planter and now teaches theology and missiology for Chinese pastors. From this background, one of Wu's central arguments is, "Many who are more accustomed to a law-based presentation of salvation could benefit from hearing a message about the restoration of God's glory and the removal of human shame" (p. 9).

The book is divided into six chapters, including chapters on "theological contextualization," "theologizing for a Chinese culture," "honor and shame in context," and "a soteriology of honor and shame." The heart of this study is found in chapters 4 and 5 where Wu develops the idea of honor and shame in a Chinese context and then develops a soteriology of honor and shame.

In chapter 4 Wu notes, "Remarkably, there is tremendous overlap between the Bible and Chinese culture. On this common ground, one can pursue a contextualized soteriology that fits Eastern cultures



without denying the legal motif familiar to Western theology” (p. 177). He then goes through, for instance, a number of various contextualizations of honor and shame. The goal of chapter 5 is to find how Chinese culture adds to an understanding of salvation. Wu summarizes one part of his conclusion: “The interpretation suggested in this book . . . affirms that sin *is most basically a violation against God’s honor*. Averting God’s anger is not most fundamental . . . Sin also raises the need of God’s own vindication. God’s vindication involves the manifestation of his supreme worth in all the earth” (p. 207, emphasis in the original).

A central strength of the book is the plethora of sources from a wide variety of disciplines. Wu moves effortlessly from source to source, placing scholars into dialogue on numerous pertinent issues. For PhD students, the book provides a model of an effective literature review. He uses Greek and Hebrew, and he includes an extensive exegetical section on interpreting Rom 1–5 from an honor-shame perspective (pp. 250–92).

Unfortunately, Wu uses very few Chinese-language sources. He does discuss several Chinese authors whose works are available in English, but the study includes few published Chinese-language works. Thus, although a “Chinese contextualization,” the book may be aimed at a Western and English speaking audience. Additionally, while Wu wants to bring the best of Chinese and Western theology together, he may miss the significant voices of the emerging urban churches in China and the development of fluid “hybrid-identities.” (See, for instance, Ethan Christofferson, *Negotiating Identity: Exploring Tensions between Being Hakka and Being Christian in Northwestern Taiwan* [Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012]; and Jon Ro, “*Globalization’s Impact on the Urban Church in China: A Multiple Case-Study of Four Churches in a Major Urban Center*” [PhD diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2013].)

A problem that plagues numerous dissertations, such as this book that Jackson Wu’s is based on, is overstatement. Wu occasionally claims too much, optimistically asserting, for instance, that ideas from honor-shame might help reconcile the “New Perspectives on Paul” with what has been “dubbed the old Perspective” (p. 225). In another example, in chapter 3 on Chinese culture, at the end of an adequate but necessarily cursory twenty-five pages on Chinese culture, Wu adds the claim to have “outlined the major contours of Chinese culture” (p. 94).

Saving God’s Face reads like a dissertation; it is scholarly and competent, but not artistic. Less repetition, a more modest tone, and maybe more subtle arguments could help the book reach a broader audience. I hope Jackson Wu continues to publish because his ideas are significant. Two of his practical applications help demonstrate the value of the study.

First, after discussion of honor and shame in Romans, Wu writes,

Practical implications extend to every part of human society. Competitiveness and exclusion become normal means of face grabbing. In such disorder, God is disregarded and so dishonored. God alone is the measure of [honor-shame]. By dividing the world into “us” or “them” one loses perspective of the one true God. (p. 279)

Second, Wu writes of the implications of honor-shame for the Chinese churches:

First, Chinese Christians must reckon with their own sense of identity and loyalty. Doing so will require people to reject typical ways of dividing the world, whereby ethnicity, gender, and social status categorize those who are “insiders” and “outsiders.” This leads to a second implication. Paul challenges not only Jews and Greeks, but also the Chinese church as it considers its own calling to send missionaries cross-culturally

among fellow Gentiles. Third, the Bible spurs Chinese Christians to see the church as family, not laying excessive stress on bloodline. (p. 298)

Although *Saving God's Face* takes some persistence to read, the patient reader will be rewarded.

Richard Cook
Logos Evangelical Seminary
El Monte, California, USA

Mark T. B. Laing and Paul Weston, eds. *Theology in Missionary Perspective: Lesslie Newbigin's Legacy*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012. vi + 320 pp. \$37.00.

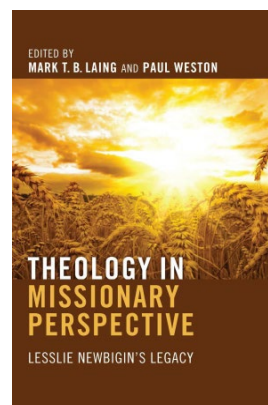
With this publication of a new collection of essays exploring the missiological implications of Lesslie Newbigin's work, there's an opportunity for a new audience of evangelicals to engage with his writing. In his recent history of the post-war globalisation of Evangelicalism, Professor Brian Stanley names Lesslie Newbigin alongside C. S. Lewis as one of two thinkers who have provided "an intellectual armoury of a very different kind from that offered by the sterling efforts of conservative theologians" (*Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism* [IVP, 2013], 149). Just as Lewis did not fit easily within evangelical circles yet has blessed many with his writings, Newbigin also offers a similar treasure trove of insights.

These essays, many of which originate from a 2009 conference that gathered to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of Newbigin's birth, are—as is usual in these kinds of collections—a mixed bag. Some of the essays are decidedly average and make one wonder why the authors didn't just direct readers to an appropriate chapter of one of Newbigin's many publications. Others are excellent: Ian Barnes's and Murray Rae's essays in particular stood out for me. Nevertheless reading this volume reminds me of the value of a dialogue with Newbigin. As an integrative rather than a systematic thinker, many of Newbigin's streams of thought flow into one another, however for me five areas stand out as beneficial conversation topic for conservative evangelicals:

First, in the area of ecclesiology Newbigin argues that the church's life as well as its speech is to be an apologetic for the gospel. See Rae's excellent essay, "The Congregation as Hermeneutic of the Gospel." Rae highlights Newbigin's challenge that apologetics cannot just be seen as an intellectual pursuit isolated from the lived reality of the church's common life.

Second, in the field of epistemology Newbigin critiques an unexamined foundationalist theory of knowledge, which is popular in many evangelical circles and lacks sufficient biblical warrant. Newbigin argues for epistemic humility. See Eleanor Jackson's essay, "'And the Truth Shall Set You Free': Lesslie Newbigin's Understanding of 'Truth' as Illustrated by His Life and Work."

Third, Newbigin critiques the empire mentality present in some forms of Christian political engagement. See especially Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen's essay, "The Church in the Post-Christian Society between Modernity and Late Modernity: Lesslie Newbigin's Post-Critical Missional Ecclesiology," which highlights the need for reexamining the assumptions in our political engagement in a multicultural context. Newbigin offers an alternative approach to navigating an approach to civic engagement in a post Christendom context.



Fourth, regarding expository ministry, Newbigin challenges some evangelical biblical ministry that sometimes isolates a text not just from its context in a given book of the Bible but from its impact on the public life of our culture. Newbigin's work challenges the church to tell the whole story of Scripture with Jesus as its centre—a public truth which is the true story of the whole world. On this point, see Jürgen Schuster's article, "The Clue to History."

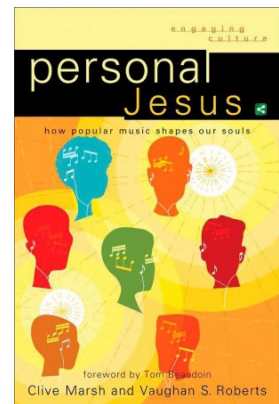
Fifth, regarding eschatology, Newbigin's thought challenges approaches to the end times which focus on millennial controversies. Newbigin links missiology with eschatology by challenging the church to enact its function as the sign, instrument, and firstfruit of the coming kingdom of God in its life and mission. For this, see Weston's essay, "Ecclesiology in Eschatological Perspective: Newbigin's Understanding of the Missionary Church."

As in all good conversation there will be much to enjoy as well disagree with as we engage with Newbigin's life and thought. This selection of essays is a good way to begin for readers not familiar with his work and will also prompt those of us who have benefitted from long-term exposure to Newbigin to appreciate new perspectives.

Krish Kandiah
The Evangelical Alliance
London, England, UK

Clive Marsh and Vaughan S. Roberts. *Personal Jesus: How Popular Music Shapes Our Souls*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012. vii + 234 pp. £14.44/\$22.99.

Clive Marsh is senior lecturer and director of learning and teaching at the Institute of Lifelong Learning, University of Leicester. Vaughan Roberts is vicar of Collegiate Church of St Mary in Warwick, England. Both self-professed "music lovers," Marsh and Roberts partnered to write *Personal Jesus: How Popular Music Shapes Our Souls*, a title only loosely connected to the subject matter. They offer their main contention in the brief introduction: "Ensuring the critical study of religion in relation to how people listen to contemporary popular music will foster appropriate understanding of the music itself. It will help us understand how religions do (and must) work in society today. More fully exploring the function of music as a form of popular culture will be good for society as a whole" (p. xv).



The book is structured in three main parts with a brief postscript at the end. Part 1 is called "Music and Religion." It seeks to place the book in its proper cultural (ch. 1) and theological contexts (ch. 3). To pave the way forward, they develop a theoretical framework called the Magisteria-Ibiza Spectrum (ch. 2) and the notion of "affective space" to which they refer frequently. They argue that it is in this space, and not "religion," where many of life's big questions and issues are explored and worked out (pp. 26–27). Additionally, Marsh and Roberts side with several other theologians who hint that Christians have moved from denouncing popular music as "sin" to seeing it, even if vaguely, as sacramental (p. 32).

In part 2, "Living by Pop Music," Marsh and Roberts strive to understand just *how* people are listening to popular music. Drawing from the work of Ian S. Markham and his "theology of engagement," this is an act of "overhearing" or "being open simply to what is there" (p. 128). Each chapter in part 2 focuses

on a different active use of popular music—capitalism (ch. 4), the body (ch. 5), transcendence or the “tingle factor” (ch. 6), ritual (ch. 7), and “personal canon” (ch. 8). While seeking to “let the music speak for itself” (p. 124), Marsh and Roberts do not intend for religion to be left behind. Rather, by taking this very approach, the authors show how closely connected popular music and religion are. The chapter on transcendence highlights this most effectively.

Part 3, “Pop Music and Theology,” makes the turn to their theological reflections and implications. Along with the “theology of engagement” mentioned above, Marsh and Roberts argue in chapter 9 that “listening to popular music can be viewed as a spiritual practice,” meaning “a practice in and through which people actively work on their development of an inner life” (p. 133). Chapter 10 attempts to pull all the work together in a systematic-theological framework, borrowing from Kelton Cobb. The result is a lucid chart (p. 159) that provides a way forward for comparing and contrasting systematic theology, their work in part 2, and Litvin’s six songs examined earlier in the book (pp. 22–25). Chapter 11 is the culmination of all of this work. The authors focus on three theological themes for further reflection and analysis: incarnation, church, and sacraments. This final major chapter reflects the fruit of the authors’ labors, drawing out excellent insights into each theme.

I would like to comment briefly on the definition of terms, particularly of “popular music.” Marsh and Roberts make no attempt early in the book to define “popular music.” The terms “popular music,” “pop music,” and the generic term “music” are used interchangeably without clarification. This confuses anyone who is familiar with the formulaic, industry-driven genre of “pop music.” Only in chapter 10 do they explicitly address a definition of “popular music,” stating, “Popular music is much more a type of music with multiple forms that people enjoy and use for a range of purposes” (p. 140). This is a surprising oversight for a text mainly aimed toward the academy. First, why wait until chapter 10 to state this explicitly? In an academic text, one would expect this in the introduction, especially as it is the primary medium examined. Second, why call it *popular* music at all if the definition is that broad and subjective? Any and all music should be included and explored if that is the case.

Nevertheless, many good aspects stand out in this book, but one above all. The method of Marsh and Roberts is the book’s greatest strength. Few theologians venture into this type of cultural engagement, especially at this level of critical analysis. They take pains to be patient with developing any significant theological conclusions, and even those are just scratching the surface. One sees this vividly regarding their brief, but perceptive, case study of Lady Gaga in the final chapter (pp. 172–73). Instead of denouncing her as “demonic,” as many in the church have done, they are able to explore her songs (e.g., “Born This Way”) and her fans (“little monsters”) in fresh ways that denote general cultural efforts (albeit, without the light of the gospel) that long for the realization of astonishingly wonderful themes of “justice-seeking” and “connectedness/church”; Marsh and Roberts provide examples for how Christians can listen to her and others on their terms. In other words, the book is an excellent lesson on not merely engaging culture, but *listening well to popular culture* before speaking. This is where the church, the Christian academy, and ordinary Christians all have much room to grow. *Personal Jesus* is a solid step in that direction, although approaches that might labor more intentionally and explicitly to show how Jesus subversively fulfills these cultural impulses and narratives would be even more welcome in addition to this book’s work.

Andrew Lisi
Mars Hill Church
Seattle, Washington, USA

David Nixon. *Stories from the Street: A Theology of Homelessness*. Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2013. 214 pp. £19.99/\$39.95.

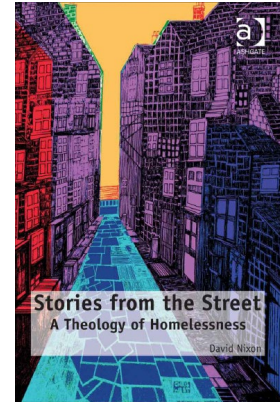
David Nixon's *Stories from the Street* is an exploration of theological endeavor between a priest (Nixon himself) and a small group of homeless people. The homeless respondents to Nixon's enquiries provide the basis of a "theology of story" which becomes a lens to personal transformation through recovering insights lost to a church that has marginalized social justice. The book is divided into three parts: exploring a theology of story, a community context for the individual stories examined, and finally an insightful theology of homelessness.

The particular stories of homeless people become a solidarity of outsiders with Jesus, himself an outsider rejected by the establishment. This puts homeless people in a special place in the tradition of liberation theologians like Gutierrez and Segundo, who understand themselves to be as story-tellers of God on a par with God's story in the Bible. These stories can provide a valuable chalice through which to taste afresh God's story. The approach is that of critical realism by which Nixon means an ability to listen, on Buber's I-Thou frame of discourse, to the nuggets of God's mystery found in the stories of homeless people. The method is a hermeneutic of "love and suspicion"—that is, a good listening ear, proclivity to withholding judgment, and an attitude of openness to a story's impact while suspicious of the translucent deceptions of personal writings.

Nixon presents insights into homelessness by analyzing the specifics of place and space by documenting his participants' response to Jesus's interaction with outsiders in the Gospels to offset the secure sociological map the wealthy traverse in post-Enlightenment capitalism. Simply put: homeless people exist in non-places (supermarkets, street corners, motorway underpasses and so forth), while middle class/elite values of "knowing one's place" in society are vouchsafed by politics and power. Brief biological vignettes follow of the participants who are asked about causes and results of crises over health and relationship issues touching on childhood, family deaths, sexuality, and crime. Suicide and substance abuse come to the fore in the interviews through the raw expression of emotion. A final section explores the participants' spiritual understanding of their situation in life. The last chapter of part two documents other homeless people's reaction to reading portions of Luke's gospel.

A significant feature of this book is found in the resources it mines for the development of a theology of homelessness through principles gleaned from interviews with homeless people. Obvious notions that come to the fore are loss, suffering, the will to survive in bad circumstances, and the sundry conditions and responses that resulted in homelessness. Key insights are how spirituality is expressed by homeless people; the absence of any understanding that the Christian story is good news; how the self-awareness of homeless people is devoid of any interest in social structures that have produced or increased homelessness; the reorientation of the "holiness" map in society and fresh perspectives, especially about Jesus, gained from listening to those "outside the camp" (Heb 13:12–13).

For Nixon the stories of homeless people can lead to insights into Jesus's stories by freeing them from their domestication in church life. Homeless people may well be ignorant of this role in actualizing God's story through their non-verbal presence and actual experiences, but those of us pastoring churches need to realize their import for producing transformation in our congregations. Without being manipulative our task is to simply connect the two to allow the seed of the gospel to grow. "Vulnerable people are



the best preachers of the gospel in their own communities” (p. 155), and I think they are also effective preachers in *our own* communities if we can cope with the rawness of their presence! Certainly, city living preserves the illusion of a secure existence by making available to us such things as employment, homes and leisure activity. Homeless people living outside the pale of social acceptability become a threat to that security because their presence reminds us of the finitude which city living seeks to mask. This may explain why many communities seek the legal removal of the homeless from city streets, as in my own community in Chico, California.

The merit of Nixon’s identification of the homeless God with the crucified God (p. 179) is a further tap into the nature of our true condition. The pinpoint where we penetrate the mystery of God and witness the groaning of Trinitarian existence on our behalf is found in its shadow form in homeless, disenfranchised outsiders of all varieties, whose experiences through history have resonated from its most concentrated form in the crucified Jesus, a person rejected by all.

This identification means that the stories of homeless people are more than vehicles through which to appropriate our calling in a fresh way. Nixon rightly asserts that the established church needs the shock therapy of this identification to regain its own condition of being a story-maker again so that its worship, evangelism, and place in community can become catalytic for meaningful social change.

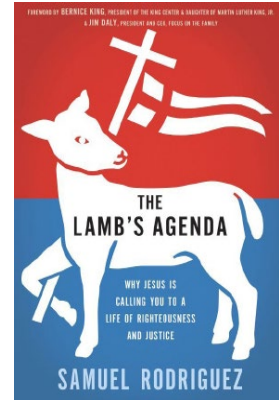
Working with the poor for a number of years caused me to ask how efficacious the death of Jesus is for those who from my middle class experience frequently take on a commitment to follow Jesus which is shot through with incessant lapses. The brokenness of drug addicts, rape victims, and serial parolees following Jesus seems at times so strong that it threatens my largely Wesleyan understanding of the nature of the Christian life. I have come to see that a man who started drinking at four years old has a genuine commitment to Jesus in spite of a recurring cycle of dissipation and that he cannot find a church to disciple him because his life is so unconventionally Christian, to say the least.

Nixon’s study is laudable in pointing the way not just to a theology of story but to understanding the brokenness of our human condition. It encouraged me to confront the accuracy of the privileged lens of accountability I impose on my homeless brothers and sisters. The study is a gateway into further future insights into how human brokenness and theological reflection can shape various aspects of healing that the gospel promises God will one day bring about.

Bill Such
Jesus Center
Chico, California, USA

Samuel Rodriguez. *The Lamb's Agenda: Why Jesus is Calling You to a Life of Righteousness and Justice*. Nashville: Nelson, 2013. xxi + 232 pp. \$15.99.

What would America look like if its churches were characterized by vibrant, diverse, worshipers? What if churches generously shared their time and treasures with others so that welfare bureaucracies were a thing of the past? What might a *Third* Great Awakening in America look like in our days? Samuel Rodriguez paints just such a picture in this book. Rodriguez is convinced that America “will be saved not via the agenda of the Donkey or that of the Elephant. Our nation’s only hope is found in the Agenda of the Lamb” (p. xxi). In *The Lamb’s Agenda*, Rodriguez challenges his readers to embrace the vision of social justice of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the evangelistic heart of Billy Graham, or—as he elsewhere states—reconcile John 3:16 with Matt 25 (p. 91).



The Lamb’s Agenda provides the vision for a future movement of Christians. Rodriguez first discusses the need for Christians to live both vertically (connected to God) and horizontally (engaged in community and society). By that, he means our focus should be to save the lost and transform our communities—address sin and confront injustice. In chapter 2 he argues that we need a prophetic movement that has socio-political impact rather than a spiritually driven political movement. He critiques current political movements like the Tea Party (which he argues ignores the vertical and distances itself from Jesus) and Occupy Wall Street (which ignores the vertical and over-emphasizes the horizontal).

Rodriguez details how the Democratic agenda is opposed to the agenda of the Lamb, specifically mentioning a few policy items including the health-care mandate and affirmation of same-sex marriage. He states that Republicans must “replace the image of an angry, white, and evangelical bloc with a multiethnic, compassionate, truth-telling community” (p. 46). He elsewhere gives examples of prominent followers of Jesus who were concerned for social justice (William Wilberforce, Bill Wilson, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Charles Colson). He contends that the quintessential civil rights issue of our era is the protection of the unborn.

This book’s primary thesis is that this new movement must reconcile the movements of Billy Graham and Martin Luther King, Jr., John 3:16 and Matt 25. In these men and biblical texts, there exists a commitment to the gospel and a social justice movement. He asserts that churches that ignore the plight of their neighbors are not living a complete gospel since the gospel must influence the horizontal sphere. Additionally, this kingdom movement must be multiethnic. The Hispanic population is largely sympathetic to Christianity, and Christians must reach out to them. Rodriguez offers practical tips for doing this and states that the church must engage with the culture and seek to connect generations rather than separate them.

Rodriguez moves the discussion to the partnership between churches and the government. He ideally sees both institutions partnering for renewing communities. Religious institutions should not look to the government for funding to accomplish the God-given mandate the church has of helping the poor. If churches accept subsidies from the government, then they are obligated to play by the government’s rules which often are opposed to the church’s rules. Rather, the state should partner with reliable and effective institutions of faith and ask no more than help from those institutions.

In the final chapters, Rodriguez argues that Christians must identify more strongly as Christians than as Democrats or Republicans. When Christians go into the voting booth, they must align their votes with God's will, and they must be wary of political strategists who seek to exploit Christianity for a vote. He concludes with a restatement of his vision—our vertical relationship has horizontal consequences, and this new movement must have Christ as its foundation. Only when following the agenda of the Lamb can Christians effect change in America.

The Lamb's Agenda has a number of strengths. Rodriguez provides a compelling vision. It would be difficult to find a Christian who would disagree with his vision of a transformation of our society with its foundation in Jesus. Moreover, he rightly sees that our vertical relationship with God must impact our horizontal relationships with our communities. Both aspects are important in living the Christian life. He also sees that the only sustainable movement is one that has its foundation in the gospel.

Second, Rodriguez insightfully points out that the Lamb's agenda should not be equated with the Republican or Democratic agenda. Anecdotal evidence surely provides support for his view that there are instances where Republican and Democratic agendas are opposed to explicit biblical teaching.

Third, he advocates a multiethnic movement. Biblical evidence abounds which shows that the church is diversely composed (e.g., Rev 5:9). Furthermore, Rodriguez notes that church leaders should seek to connect the generations rather than pandering to generational differences. It is vital that generations learn from and value one another if a revival of Christianity is to break out in America. Rodriguez aptly notes that a multiethnic and multigenerational movement in the church is vital to the social transformation of America.

Fourth, Rodriguez notes how this new church movement should be characterized. Forgiveness should be one of its cornerstones. In a time when our culture increasingly lacks a forgiving attitude, this will set apart a Christian movement. Moreover, he also asserts that Christians must fight against "rhetorical pornography." By this, he means that Christians must renounce language that is intended to inflict emotional pain. He observes that language has become more violent, more vulgar and harsher in an era of social media where people can hide behind anonymity. A Christian movement that abstains from the quick and cutting retorts that characterize our society will stand apart from other movements.

While *Lamb's Agenda* has much to commend in it, there are some deficiencies. While Rodriguez gives a few specific examples of where Democratic agenda conflicts with the Lamb's agenda, he does not show any specific places where the Republican agenda does the same. His main critique of the Republican Party is that it has an image of angry, white Evangelicals. While I do not dispute this, it would have been helpful for Rodriguez to point out areas where the Republican agenda conflicts with that of the Lamb's since the Lamb's agenda does not completely overlap with it.

Second, he mentions that the majority of Americans self-identify as Christian. Though he does not say this explicitly, it is difficult to believe that the majority of Americans actually *are* Christians. To be fair, Rodriguez is probably aware of this, and he likely cites this statistic because it shows that a large percentage of the American population would sympathize with Christian causes. However, an area that is lacking is his cure for spiritual apathy. If most Americans self-identify as Christians but are nominal believers, what will shake them from their apathy? After all, Rodriguez contends that lukewarm Christianity is the most dangerous problem in the church. How then can we remedy this problem and mobilize more to champion the cause of Christ in the horizontal sphere?

Finally, the reader is left wondering how this transformation of society will be accomplished. Rodriguez does mention some practical examples (being careful of our rhetoric, tips for engaging the

minority populations in our churches, etc.), but where does a reader start? After reading the book, I found myself in whole-hearted agreement with Rodriguez's cause, but I was left asking, what now? How do we start this movement?

The Lamb's Agenda is an excellent work that gives a compelling vision for transforming American society and living out the gospel in a vertical and horizontal way. Pastors and church leaders seeking to impact their communities would do well to read and consider the cause that Rodriguez champions. In addition, any American Christian would benefit from this work as it challenges them to live out their faith not simply in the privacy of our own homes, but in our neighborhoods, communities, and country.

Adam Warner Day
Evangelical Theological Society
Louisville, Kentucky, USA

K. Scott Oliphint. *Covenantal Apologetics: Principles and Practice in Defense of Our Faith*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2013. 288 pp. \$19.99.

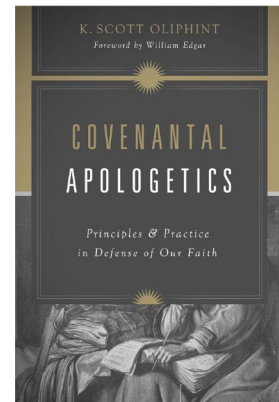
In *Covenantal Apologetics*, Scott Oliphint argues that the defense and proclamation of truth about God is best done from a covenantal perspective. God always remains God and yet relates authentically to his creation. This means everyone is in relationship with God, either in obedience or rebellion. The bottom-line truth that this covenantal relationship makes clear is that God is right, Christianity is true, and anything opposing it is false.

It is this position that Oliphint, a professor of apologetics and systematic theology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, seeks not only to explain but also to model in this book's seven chapters. He first defines and defends his principles and then uses conversational examples to demonstrate their practice. This is one of the many benefits of his thought-provoking and readable book.

The introduction provides both a roadmap for the reader and a summary of each chapter. Fundamental to understanding Oliphint is the recognition that his view of apologetics sees success as nothing less than a radical commitment to life change. Apologetics is evangelistic in every sense.

For Oliphint *covenantal apologetics* is a better way to understand the presuppositional method of Van Til that he believes is the only apologetic approach that is consistent with Reformed theology. He is not shy about his position, assuming Reformed theology to be "the best and most consistent expression of the Christian faith" (p. 30).

Chapter 1 gives a brief, but intelligent overview of the redemptive story that highlights two principle facts: God is working all things for his glory, and everyone is in relationship with God and therefore required to respond to him by recognizing that Jesus Christ is Lord. Oliphint is clear—the lordship of Christ is foundational to the defense of Christianity. For the apologist this simply means that the lordship of Christ is true for everyone, and "the verbal expression of Christ's lordship" in the Bible is "authoritative even over those who reject it" (p. 37). The chapter concludes with a clear explanation of ten tenets that form the crucial foundation for his apologetic scheme and method. I found them



very helpful and was thankful that someone thought to list them conveniently on one page for future reference.

Chapter 2 is given over to a very thorough and useful presentation of the importance of the lordship of Christ in apologetic method. Here we see the benefit of systematic theology in formulating a biblically sound defense of truth. Specifically, sections describing the way in which the Son reveals the Godhead, the nature of the Son's humiliation, and the discussion of Trinitarian issues are all engaging.

Chapter 3 turns to the subject of proof and its place in apologetic discourse. As a preacher I was delighted that Oliphint recognizes the close relationship between preaching and apologetics. The declaration and defense of the truth must also come from the pulpit since the content of apologetics and Scripture exposition substantially overlap. It is the gospel of Jesus Christ and not the mode of communication that must always take precedence.

In chapter 4 Oliphint defends his preference for persuasion over what he calls "strict, demonstrative proofs" (p. 127). As always, his reasons are deeply theological, and relate back to the tenets. While his explanations here at times take the reader down some tedious paths, they are worth walking along carefully. His consistency is impressive but can only be understood and appreciated after a rather long uphill climb.

Chapters 5–7 give the reader the opportunity to see Oliphint's tenets, and the covenantal approach in action. He takes on the "Achilles' Heel" (p. 161)—that is, the problem of evil—in chapter 5 and models his method in a fictitious conversation between an atheist objector and a covenantal apologist. Chapter 6 is quite refreshing in that it describes the benefit of a winsome manner that must adorn the gospel in every defense of Christianity. In the last chapter, Oliphint takes on the Islamic apologist in another lengthy conversation. Oliphint is to be commended for attempting to both teach and model his method although it becomes apparent in the fictitious conversations that facility as a covenantal apologist will demand intellectual and biblical preparation.

Overall, this book is very helpful in presenting a new slant on the presuppositional apologetic method. But I suspect that it will do more to encourage followers of Van Til than convince committed evidentialists to change their method.

Oliphint is right in saying that his method arises from a commitment to Reformed theology. Those who don't agree with him theologically will not be convinced. Given this, the real far reaching value of this well-written volume may be that God uses it to challenge the theological underpinnings of those committed to an apologetic method that wrongly assumes that faith can be mustered up through evidence.

Scott Oliphint's *Covenantal Apologetics* is a worthy read for at least three reasons. First, it is pastorally theological. Many parts will warm your soul. Second, it will remind you carefully that every Christ-follower is called as God's image bearer to know and defend his truth. Lastly, it will lessen the panic we all feel when facing an antagonistic objector through the reminder that Christianity is right and Scripture is authoritative, even for those who continue to suppress its truth in unrighteousness.

David W. Hegg
Grace Baptist Church
Santa Clarita, California, USA