Book Reviews

Victor KNOWLES. ***Good and Faithful Servant: The Simple, Stimulating Story of Donald G. Hunt.*** **Joplin, Missouri: Peace On Earth Ministries, 2005. 103 pp. $10.00.**

In this volume, Knowles narrates the story of his friend and mentor Donald G. Hunt. The text is not intended to be a scholarly biography but an overview of the life and work of Donald G. Hunt. Moreover, Knowles desires to see readers inspired to greater service for Christ as they read about the life, ministry, and numerous accomplishments of Hunt.

As an evangelist, educator, editor, and author, Hunt had a profound influence on the recent history of the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement. He was born in Cincinnati, Iowa, in 1922 and became a Christian at the age of fourteen. Even before he became the first male graduate of Ozark Bible College (now Ozark Christian College) in 1946 and a graduate of Cincinnati Bible Seminary in 1947, Hunt had earned a reputation as an influential evangelist. Amid his numerous travels as an evangelist (both nationally and internationally), Hunt also served as a church planter and in several located ministries.

In the mid-1940s, Hunt and two of his colleagues, Burton W. Barber and James R. McMorrow, established an eight-page weekly "gospel paper" and an institution of higher education to train young men and women for service to the church. The first issue of their paper, *The Voice of Evangelism*, was issued on February 7, 1946, and the Midwestern School of Evangelism opened its doors to students in the fall of 1947. Hunt served as both the editor of *The Voice of Evangelism* (which became a monthly magazine in 1965) and as a professor at the school for the remainder of his life. His nearly 60 years as an editor may be the longest editorial tenure in the history of the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement. Hunt also wrote 15 books, coauthored eight additional volumes, penned numerous tracts and booklets, and developed two Bible games before his death July 1, 2005.

As an academic resource, this volume has little value for scholars, researchers, or students. As an inspirational story about a significant figure in the modern Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement, however, the volume pays great dividends and is worthy of a wide reading. Because Hunt performed his service to the Lord with little expectation of honor or fanfare, his life and accomplishments are often overlooked in the larger community of Christians. He deserves a greater amount of recognition. In this slim monograph, Knowles gives him his recognition and pays a great tribute to his friend and mentor by enabling more people to learn from and be inspired by the "the simple, stimulating story" of Donald G. Hunt.

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Douglas A. WISSING. ***Pioneer in Tibet: The Life and Perils of Dr. Albert Shelton.*** **New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004. 352 pp. $29.95.**

After less than twenty years in Western China (eastern Tibet), Dr. Albert Shelton died February 17, 1922, in Batang, shot by a bandit. His passing made international news. He had been invited by the Dalai Lama to visit Lhasa, the holy city, but was never able to go. Brigands had held him captive in 1920, creating a stirring tale that was pushed by *Chicago Tribune*'s foreign news service. Upon his death all the New York papers, some Midwestern publications and even *Illustrated London News* published accounts of this Disciple missionary. The present Dalai Lama wrote a message for this volume.

Born in 1875 in the rough territory of Kansas, he learned to ride and shoot at an early age. He studied hard to become a medical doctor. He married in 1899 and had two children, both born in Batang. His wife, Flora Flavia Shelton, became a translator of Tibetan and published a series of books. The girls, Dorris and Dorothy, grew up speaking Tibetan, often dressing like Tibetan children. Shelton himself read Tibetan poorly, but he spoke the local dialect so well that he became a translator for political conferences between Chinese and Tibetan forces. The Chinese overran Kham, the easternmost province of Tibet, but Tibetan rebels continued the strife. The area was often in disarray. The Chinese thought Buddhist Lamas and monks rebels, so they destroyed many of them and their monasteries. Shelton gave medical assistance to all; on occasion he operated on wounded troops until he could no longer stand. He healed soldiers and those in the general population. Shelton also took many pictures and collected fine Tibetan art objects particularly from the ruined monasteries and upper-class homes, thus becoming an acknowledged expert. He sold his collection to the Museum in Newark, New Jersey, and wrote articles on Tibet for *National Geographic.*

The mission work in Batang struggled. Few Tibetans were ever converted and only a few Chinese. Much of this was due to the inability of Sheltons and other missionaries to identify with or belong to the Tibetan culture. They brought not only medicine and surgical instruments but also many American views and things, including a pump organ. Only near his death had the older Sheltons begun fully to admire the native people and to think like them in important ways. Penetration of the gospel into the culture would only have come in the next stages.

This excellent volume is well researched but marred by many typos. Its descriptions of life both in Kansas and in China–Tibet are superb. The latter make the present situation in Tibet much more understandable.

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Thomas A. ASKEW and Richard V. PIERARD. ***The American Church Experience: A Concise History.*** **Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004. 288 pp. $21.95.**

Historians Thomas Askew and Richard Pierard have narrated the story of

Christianity in America in order to fill an ironic gap in the religious knowledge of American Christians. Despite the prominence of religious faith in the political life and popular culture of the contemporary United States, "many in the pews have only the faintest awareness of the way Christianity, in all its expressions, has over the years shaped our national experience" (9). Askew and Pierard have responded to the need for "thoughtful reflection on American church history" (9) with a lucid, well-organized account appropriate for home or church libraries.

Following a brief introduction of European and English religious experience, the volume divides into four chronological sections: the colonial period, the early nineteenth century, the later nineteenth century, and the twentieth century. The twenty individual chapters are concise—usually about a dozen pages each—and give balanced attention to both church life and theological ideas. Black and white illustrations distributed throughout the text reinforce the narrative with images of significant events and people. The reader who wishes to pursue any given topic in depth will delight in this volume's up-to-date, 31-page bibliography.

In organizing their narrative, the authors have paid particular attention to the "evangelical tradition" of Protestant churches in America (9). This focus highlights a crucial and too frequently neglected aspect of American Christian history: the vitality of home and foreign missions. For example, Askew and Pierard provide fascinating accounts of nineteenth-century women such as the Baptists Helen Barrett Montgomery, Lucy Peabody, and Lottie Moon, who were leaders in world missions. The spotlight on evangelicals has the obvious disadvantage of failing to incorporate America's largest Christian community, Roman Catholicism. Paragraphs on Catholicism appear in several chapters, but, except in the case of Catholic missions, how these paragraphs contribute to the overall narrative structure of the volume is unclear.

Although the terms evangelical, conservative, and orthodox are defined in the preface (10), their actual usage in the text is ambiguous. For example, Askew and Pierard describe Protestant fundamentalism as a "reaffirmation of orthodox Christianity" and discuss the important role played in fundamentalism by the dispensational premillennialism of John Nelson Darby (138-139). One might well say that Darby's theology of history was a daring act of exegetical genius, but to imply that it simply "reaffirmed" the classic articulations of Christian theology seems, to this reader, a bit of a stretch.

In the same way, Askew and Pierard assert that the first principle of evangelicalism is "a stress on the Bible as *the* authority for belief and practice" (10). This principle, however, has been especially prominent among American Christians in the Reformed tradition. If it were consistently pursued in a historical definition of evangelicalism, the principle would have the curious effect of excluding John Wesley from the evangelical camp because he advocated greater attention to tradition and experience in shaping the Christian life. Fortunately, the authors do not rigorously apply the biblicist principle and, in fact, provide a very good account of the role of Methodism in American Christian history.

Readers who turn to this volume for an introduction to the history of

Christianity in America will be struck not only by the importance of evangelical Protestantism to American history as a whole but also by the amazing diversity of ideas and practices that characterize Christianity in the United States. Askew and Pierard have performed a notable service for clergy and laity by vividly retelling the story of American Christianity in its wide diversity and vigorous moral activism.

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Mark A. NOLL. *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys. A History of Evangelicalism, Vol. 1.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004. 330 pp. $23.00.

This is first volume of five volumes projected in the History of Evangelicalism series. This volume, which recounts the early history of Evangelicalism to approximately 1795, has much to recommend it. Recipient of the 2005 *Christianity Today* Book Award in history/biography, authored by a popular and highly regarded evangelical historian, and dealing with a subject of imminent interest to many, one might well approach this volume with elevated expectations.

Noll begins by explaining and redefining the term "evangelical." This is especially important in light of the rich but complicated history of the term. The evangelical history and evangelicalism with which this series will deal has connections to the Pietistic movement and began with the interconnected eighteenth-century revivals that occurred in the British Isles and colonies in the New World. Additionally, evangelicalism has always designated specific "convictions and attitudes" (19) including the following four, suggested by Bebbington in *Evangelicalism in Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (Unwin Hyman, 1989, and quoted by Noll): "the belief that lives need to be changed," "that all spiritual truth is to be found in [the Bible's] pages," that all believers must be dedicated to lives of activism particularly in the areas of evangelism and missions, and that "Christ's death was the crucial matter in providing atonement for sin" (19). This volume focuses primarily on Britain and North America and lays the foundation for understanding the spread of Evangelicalism far beyond those locations.

The chapters that follow the introduction survey the landscapes in which evangelicalism emerged and describe three antecedents of the revivals that shook the century: Calvinism and Puritanism, Continental Pietism, and the "tradition of rigorous spirituality and innovative organization" (50) associated with High Church Anglicanism. Gradually, numerous individuals "in position to make a difference" (69) were converted to a faith that wedded mind and heart and was moved to action by the love of Jesus. As such people discovered and encouraged one another, they began to permeate society in such a way that many became convicted that they needed God and did not have Him. This was the foundation of the great revivals of 1734–1738.

Noll proceeds to narrate how revival spread to and from many whose names are well known. He reviews the connections between such men as Edwards, Spangenberg, Whitefield, Colman, Guyse, Watts, Rowland, Harris, Tennant, the Wesleys, Cennick, and Böhler. In spite of the differences that arose, the movement continued, encouraged especially by the preaching of Whitefield in the American colonies, England, and Scotland and by the international dissemination of printed materials of all kinds detailing "experiential Christianity" (116).

Noll devotes an entire chapter to discuss why the revival happened at all, concluding that "there can be no single statement that 'explains' the rise of evangelicalism" (153) and that a proper explanation must be multidimensional. Theology, personal appeal, clever marketing, psychological appeal, social factors, economic issues, and many other elements played unique roles.

The chapters that follow describe the growth, change, and spread of evangelicalism to the far corners of the earth via missionary outreach. Finally, the author devotes a chapter to "true religion" (262-290) discussing such things as the differences between the sexes in regard to evangelical experience, the theological differences that arose (most notably and consistently the Calvinistic–Arminian argument), the writing and singing of hymns, and the extant personal testimonies of early evangelicals.

This is a volume sure to delight anyone interested in either history or evangelicalism. It is, frankly, a pleasure to read. For anyone wishing to know what evangelicalism encompasses, this volume, and the series to which it belongs, would be a good place to begin. Here one finds not only doctrinal definitions but also biographical illustrations and examples of the principles that define evangelicalism. In addition, the volume is sprinkled liberally with illustrations and events that could be used to preach the central theme of evangelicalism: the evangel.

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D.G. HART. *Deconstructing Evangelicalism.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004. 224 pp. $24.99.

In this distinctive story on the making of conservative Protestantism in the age of Billy Graham, D.G. Hart, historian of American Christianity, takes us to the "smoke-filled" back room of American evangelicalism. Hart does not give a full-blown narrative of evangelicalism, but delivers an account of how contemporary scholarship has constructed the reality of the "evangelical edifice." He then concludes his discussion with his observation of polity, creed, and liturgy in the fragmentation of current evangelicalism. At the heart of this book, he notes that constructed evangelicalism cannot hold its center and is heading towards "deconstructing."

Hart begins by showing how scholars have used history, sociology, and public opinion to describe the beginnings, growth, and current "adolescence" of evangel-

icalism. He discusses the major historians and their studies (Marsden, Balmer, Shelley) that attempt to place evangelicalism into a larger context that mirrors the ideas of the earlier movement. He details the major social scientists and their studies (Hunter, Smith) that confirm evangelicalism as a major field of analysis that affirms the ideas of its early founders. He finally notes the major pollsters and their polls (Gallup, Barna) that exemplify evangelicalism as a major recipient of polling questions that confirm the place of the movement in American religion.

Hart then moves from description to prescription in the second half of the book where he uses ministry, theology, and worship as illustrations of the evangelicalism's deconstruction. He discusses the leaders in ministry (Graham, Dobson, LaHaye) that show evangelicalism as an inappropriate label because it includes the parachurch as easily as the church. He details the leaders in theology (ETS, Fuller Seminary, et al.) that confirm evangelicalism as fatefully not united due to its attempt at enforcing inerrancy. He notes the leaders in worship (artists in contemporary Christian music, megachurch worship leaders, et al.) that illustrate evangelicalism as weakened in its inconsistent use of transcendent views and virtues in the clothing of novelty.

Hart comes to his conclusion by stating, "Enough Already." He dialogues with contemporary thinkers (Stackhouse, Howard, Williams) on the formula to reconstruct evangelicalism. Nevertheless, Hart sees these formulas as inadequate due to evangelicalism's love of the parachurch and pietism over the church and her ministry.

Hart's study can encourage or outrage, enlighten or bewilder students of evangelicalism. He encourages those to look beyond evangelicalism, its divorce from Fundamentalism, and its duel with mainline Protestantism towards other forms of Protestantism. He outrages those who have invested their scholarship in Evangelicalism and are trying to hold its center. He enlightens those who see evangelicalism's deficiency in the traditions of Christianity as a fatal flaw. He bewilders those who thought that Derrida was going to leap from the pages and "deconstruct" evangelicalism. Hart writes more about the disintegration or the disassembly of evangelicalism from a faulty blueprint.

Yet, Hart does a service to scholars in American Christianity. This study should make scholars consider whether their endeavors have favored a movement and its inadequate forms over the church and its tradition. Also, scholars in the Stone-Campbell tradition should take heed as more segments of the Restoration Movement accept this "low-church" Protestantism.

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Henry H. MITCHELL. *Black Church Beginnings: The Long-Hidden Realities of the First Years.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004. 197 pp. $18.00.

Many antebellum African-American spirituals continue to grace hymnals and orders of worship today, leading to the widespread assumption that slaves and freed

blacks were part of vital Christian communities prior to the Civil War. The scarcity of records and reliable sources makes it difficult to achieve a clear understanding of these nascent black churches. This volume seeks to provide concrete answers to how African-American churches began in both the North and South.

Mitchell begins by echoing an argument strongly articulated by Melvin Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (Beacon, 1958), arguing that slaves and free blacks retained numerous cultural elements from Africa. Given the author's hope to dispel the notion that Christianity is simply a white man's religion, the clear ties to Africa provide a necessary starting point for his argument. He adds that slave conversions were quite rare until the First Great Awakening, when styles of preaching and worship more closely approximated the religious practices common in many African tribes. The balance of the volume chronicles the emergence of African-American congregations, denominations, and religious institutions through the early 1900s.

Mitchell does a nice job bringing together much of the basic research on the development of the African-American Church. He briefly mentions the significant people and congregations that played significant roles in the development of African-American Christianity. He also helpfully includes the challenges and accomplishments of women preachers within the AME and AME Zion denominations. Frequently, however, the volume descends into lists, reading more like an encyclopedia than a serious monograph.

Mitchell provides no new research on the origins of the black church. He does try to use local congregational histories as his only primary sources, but he fails to offer any supporting evidence that these were written during the time period in question, leading the reader to conclude that many of these sources were compiled within the last few decades. The footnotes fail to include dates for nearly all of these congregationally constructed histories. Mitchell did not dig into individual church records, or pore through denominational archives. Aside from compiling the work of other historians who have done hard research, Mitchell's work adds very little to the field of early African-American church history.

Those interested in issues affecting the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement will be disappointed by its absence from the volume, save for a brief mention of Andrew Marshall, pastor of First African Baptist Church in Savannah. The church was excluded from the local white Baptist association in the 1830s because Marshall held to "Campbellite doctrine" and his congregation was unwilling to dismiss him for his beliefs. Some discussion of the Cane Ridge revivals would have been appropriate, given that it was a multiracial revival that became a significant vein of the early Stone-Campbell Movement.

For pastors and students who know precious little about the African-American church, Mitchell's volume has some value. He does a fine job summarizing significant information in a compact and easy to read format. However, better first volumes on the topics considered would include Albert Raboteau, *Slave Religion* (Oxford University Press, 1978) and *Canaan Land: A Religious History of African Americans* (Oxford University Press, 2001). Another excellent volume that should be considered

is C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Duke University Press, 1990). In the absence of these volumes, Mitchell's monograph serves as a suitable start for investigating the field.

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John Anthony MCGUCKIN, ed. *The Westminster Handbook to Origen.* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2004. 228 pp. $34.95.

McGuckin's edited work is a very consistent and concise tool introducing the reader to the life and thought of Origen. In fact, the depth of the information available in just over 200 pages is rather remarkable. There are two introductory chapters detailing the life of Origen and a brief survey of contemporary scholarly work on Origen. These are followed by nearly 80 separate articles arranged like encyclopedia articles on various aspects of Origen's thought, most notably on the preexistence of souls, on the recapitulation of all things and universal salvation, and on his cosmology of various degrees of fallenness of created beings (from angels to humans to Satan), as well as his identification with the practice of allegorical interpretive practice. An alphabetized list of articles follows the two introductory chapters and precedes the articles themselves.

The strengths of this work are evident from the preceding paragraph. If one has very little knowledge of Origen, this work will give one a breadth of awareness of Origen's life and thought, and issues related to them, as well as some depth in particular aspects of Origen's thought (such as the ones noted above). More importantly, this work will serve to correct certain misunderstandings (or caricatures) of Origen and his thought. For example, it appears that Origen did not castrate himself as legend seems to indicate. I recall former instructors referring to Origen as "the origin of all heresies": an obvious hyperbole based on posthumous anathemas against doctrines derived from his thought or from implications of his arguments. While Origen's thought does contain extremely problematic tenets (such as the preexistence of souls), McGuckin and the other authors do a fine job of demonstrating his fidelity to the apostolic faith.

If there are any weaknesses in the text, they are minor. One could have wished for more discussion of the later conciliar anathematizations of doctrines arising from Origen's thought and to what degree Origen's thought fell under such condemnations. One would have liked a greater description of Origen's influence on later thinkers such as Gregory of Nyssa and Maximos the Confessor (though these influences are briefly noted). But this would have lengthened the volume and may well have compromised its conciseness. Further, these are admittedly concerns that do not address the primary interest of this volume.

Since McGuckin and the other authors do such a fine job of situating Origen in his historical and doctrinal context, readers will find much to satisfy their interest concerning early Christianity, particularly as Origen's uniqueness provides

counterpoints to the developing clarification of apostolic, or NT, Christian thought. Of special interest may well be the articles dealing with Origen's use of allegorical interpretive practice (among his other interpretive practices), and how such allegorical interpretation did not result in bizarre flights of fancy but actually helped Origen remain faithful to authorial intent and biblical coherence.

Given the above, this handbook is eminently suited to educated readers who have an interest in the thought of early Christianity, or in Origen in particular, especially as such figures as Origen played fundamental roles in the clarification of the apostolic deposit of faith. It could be quite useful in an introductory theology class, or, suitably facilitated, could provide helpful education in a selective adult Sunday School class.

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Bart D. EHRMAN and Andrew S. JACOBS. *Christianity in Late Antiquity: 300–450 C.E. A Reader.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. 502 pp. $39.95.

Ehrman and Jacobs commence their history with the Great Persecution promoted by Diocletian at the end of the second century and end with the Council of Chalcedon in the late fifth century. This work strives to introduce its readers to the social, political, and religious revolution that took place within the empire and the church within this relatively brief period of time. The persecution of marginalized Christians at the beginning of this period is juxtaposed with the bitter theological and political feuding between Christians in later years; such a contrast makes this revolutionary picture of the culture fairly clear to portray. However, the editors are careful not to simply include Greek and Latin writings from the empire itself, but also to include contributions from individuals outside the empire written in a variety of languages (e.g., Syriac). By using such diverse sources, the editors attempt to include a wide variety of Christian perspectives at the time, not showing favoritism toward orthodoxy and the perspectives with which it was most concerned. In other words, the editors' primary concern is not only to depict the development of the orthodox church but also to introduce students of the early church to the diversity in Christian doctrine at this early period, as well as to the dramatic social and political changes the church experienced. Regardless, the bulk of the literature included does deal directly with the orthodox church of the Roman empire and those issues most significant to it; this is simply a reflection of the relative paucity of sources available outside of the orthodox church.

The work itself is well organized and covers a wide spectrum of political, theological, and practical issues. The works are all translated into near-modern English, which is a luxury not always granted English readers of ancient texts. Each grouping of texts as well as each text itself is given an introduction that provides a basic background for the beginner in this field. Such breadth and accessibility are the greatest attributes of the work. Because the editors openly admit that this antholo-

gy is simply an introduction to the larger world of issues in the church of late antiquity, those seeking more detailed treatment of specific issues can find no fault with its content or format. Readers must recognize that this volume is designed as an introduction for a college- or graduate-level course, or possibly for the interested lifetime learner wanting to gain an acquaintance with the subject. The volume does not contain definitive treatments on issues specific to the early church and would not be significantly helpful to a scholar who specializes in this period.

As a collection of source documents it is a helpful resource, and especially so since it covers such a broad spectrum of people, locations, and themes, and does so in a fashion that is easily accessible to an English reader with no previous training in this period. Ehrman and Jacobs have created a work that is certainly a valuable introduction or supplement to the study of the church in the centuries directly after the conversion of Constantine. Given the political, social, and religious importance of this period, the persons involved in it (e.g., Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, and Eusebius), and the defining events of those years (e.g., the roots of monasticism and the constant concerns regarding heresy), this work is a welcome addition to the study of the late antiquity church due to its unique breadth and to the quality exhibited in both the translations and discussions.

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Lawrence S. CUNNINGHAM. *Francis of Assisi: Performing the Gospel Life.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004. 160 pp. $14.00.

Francis of Assisi and his deliberately chosen life of poverty stand as an indictment of the consumerism that has engulfed Western society, including those who are in the church. Perhaps that is one of the reasons his biography is such a fascinating read. One of the ironies of considering Francis's life in this context (writing this review just before Thanksgiving when the bombshell of Christmas consumerism is about to explode) is that, as Cunningham points out in the volume, Francis had a special love for Christmas. The now common practice of erecting Christmas crib scenes seems to have been inspired by him. He was fascinated by the Johannine statement, "The Word became flesh" (John 1:14). It impressed him with the deep humility of the Son of God becoming human, a humility that Francis wanted to imitate in his own life. The birth of Christ in a manger in Bethlehem reminded Francis that Christ was born in a situation in which he and his parents were "in effect, homeless" (74). Impressed by this, in 1223 Francis celebrated Christmas mass in a stable "with a manger and the traditional presence of the ox and the ass" (74). Such a unique celebration deeply impressed those who heard of it. This was "the beginning," Cunningham writes, "of a highly complex Christmas custom whose final end is the beautiful custom of the Christmas creche" (75).

Cunningham has written a balanced, critical, and meditative biography of Francis. The comprehensive work approaches his life chronologically. All commonly known facts of Francis's life are narrated, such as his conversion and choice

of poverty, his ministry to lepers, his love of creation and especially of animals, and the stigmata. Everything is taken seriously and discussed critically. But there is much more to the volume. Cunningham also discusses the beginnings of the Franciscans, the writing of the Rule and its approval by the Church, Francis's relationship to the Catholic hierarchy, and his relationship with Clare, all matters important to understanding who Francis was.

Cunningham is especially successful setting Francis in his context. Francis is an indictment of contemporary Western culture and church, true, but his way of life was also an indictment of much of the medieval church. Cunningham emphasizes that, considering the contradictions between the life of Francis and the medieval church in general, he was always a faithful and loyal Catholic.

The subtitle of this volume, *Performing the Gospel Life*, describes the overarching motif structuring Cunningham's approach. He argues that Francis must be seen in the context of the "reforming impulses of medieval Europe which sought to articulate the ideal gospel life" (viii). What sets Francis apart in this general context is his extraordinary success in "performing," that is, living out, the gospel life. The gospel, for Francis, was not only to be read and interpreted. It was to be lived. When preparing some of his brothers for a mission he said to them, "Preach and, if necessary, use words" (135). In conclusion, the author notes some misunderstandings and misappropriations of the life of Francis of Assisi that have removed him from his context. According to Cunningham, Francis "was simply a little Umbrian touched by the mysterious power of grace who had a revolutionary idea: to live the life of the Christ of the gospels as closely and as literally as he could" (138-139).

I highly recommend this volume to anyone who wants to learn more of Francis of Assisi, as well as to anyone who wants to seriously reflect on what living "the gospel life" might mean today.

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Charles W. COLSON and Nigel M. de S. CAMERON, eds. *Human Dignity in the Biotech Century: A Christian Vision for Public Policy.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004. 252 pp. $16.00.

Colson and Cameron have brought together an impressive array of experts in this important text in the field of bioethics. Bioethicists, physicians, medical researchers, legal experts, and public policy advocates write from their own fields of expertise, usually with a balanced combination of expertise and passion. Christians and non-Christians interested in the topics, and particularly college professors and college students, would benefit greatly from reading this volume.

Though topics like abortion and human cloning have been debated for some time in the West, the essays addressing these topics still bring freshness to the discussion. In a highly readable essay, Paige Comstock Cunningham urges readers to learn from mistakes in the history of the abortion public policy debate. She shows

how recent pro-life advertising and policy initiatives have increased an emphasis on the movement's concern for women, with measurable positive results. She also lays out the (somewhat controversial) suggestion of cooperating with some pro-choice activists who (perhaps surprisingly) oppose human cloning. Other authors in the collection also try to construct pathways of communication with those who do not share a Judeo-Christian worldview, for example, by using natural rights language and argumentation (Adams, Smith).

Several of the essays (Prentice, Mitchell, Stevens, Jochemsen) highlight the promise as well as the ethical problems associated with genetic research. C. Christopher Hook explores the somewhat bewildering new world of interfacing technology and human biology, surveying ethical pitfalls of nanotechnology, cybernetics, and the emerging philosophy of Transhumanism. Many point out the moral problems of human cloning, and show that the oft-touted distinction between reproductive and therapeutic cloning is grounded in politics and economics rather than in sound scientific or ethical principles.

Henk Jochemsen aptly surveys the debate over biotechnology and public policy in the European context. European policies on biotechnology are in general more restrictive than in the United States, especially on issues such as human cloning, embryonic stem cell research, human biomedical research protocols, and genetic engineering. This reflects a greater awareness of the negative impact of eugenic practices in Europe's own history, whereas Americans are still largely ignorant of their own eugenics excesses. Several authors (Cameron, Mitchell, Saunders, Adams, and Smith) refer to medical ideologies leading up to the Holocaust, and see a foreboding parallel in the shift to strong utilitarianism in contemporary American bioethics. True to the volume's subtitle, a succinct statement of public policy goals occurs in the Appendix, which rounds out the text with "A Manifesto on Biotechnology and Human Dignity" (240-244).

The volume suffers from repetitiveness. The reader is treated to several authors' explanations of human genetics, explanations of DNA, and descriptions of the process of somatic cell nuclear transfer (cloning). The volume could be shortened by a stronger editorial hand, and a glossary of frequently-used technical terms could render several chapters more succinct and reduce redundancy.

All in all, however, Colson and Cameron's efforts are to be applauded, for the interdisciplinary nature of the work is its key strength. Not all authors evinced the same level of confidence or optimism that public policy or legal initiatives will effectuate those social changes they hope for. But the volume's impact lies in creating awareness that the educational task for the church in the area of bioethics is vital, and that there are positive steps pro-life advocates in various disciplines can and should undertake. Experts who share a passion for the Christ and for human dignity need to continue such collaborations.

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Herman BAVINCK. *Reformed Dogmatics.* Vol. 2: *God and Creation.* John Bolt, ed. John Vriend, trans. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004. 697 pp. $49.99.

This volume is a translation of the second volume of the third Dutch edition of Bavinck's *Gereformeerde dogmatiek,* 1918. Herman Bavinck ((1854–1921) and his older contemporary Abraham Kuyper (1837–1920) were the chief architects of Dutch neo-Calvinism, which must be distinguished from the so-called "Princeton Theology" of Benjamin Warfield (1851). Whereas the "Princeton Theology" developed an apologetic approach to the modernity, arguing from a rational foundation supposedly common to believers and unbelievers, neo-Calvinism rejected the apologetic approach and attempted to build a comprehensive Christian worldview based on uniquely Christian presuppositions. Readers of *SCJ* may be more familiar with the American "Princeton" apologetic theology than with its Dutch neo-Calvinist cousin. The publication of this volume provides an occasion for Stone-Campbell readers to become familiar with what is arguably the more vital of the two traditions and certainly the more relevant to a post-modern culture.

This volume covers the traditional topics of the doctrine of God and creation: Part I—the knowledge of God; Part II—the divine nature and attributes and the Holy Trinity; Part III—election and predestination and the nature of creation; Part IV—the nature of spiritual and the material worlds; Part V—the creation of humans and human nature and destiny; and Part VI—providence. Bavinck defends the orthodox and catholic faith in its distinctive Calvinist form. He does not merely catalogue the traditional Calvinist positions, however. Bavinck enters deeply into dialogue and debate with enlightenment philosophers such as Kant and Hegel and such modernist theologians as Schleiermacher and Ritschl. He draws on the church fathers and medieval theologians as well as the Post-Reformation Reformed theologians.

In one sense Bavinck's work is dated. He addresses a late nineteenth and early twentieth-century situation. On the other hand, Bavinck deals with matters that are still relevant today. The issues raised by philosophies and theologies of the nineteenth century are still with us. This volume is still worth reading for its intelligent presentation of orthodoxy. This volume will be of use to anyone seriously interested in doctrinal theology, for constructive as well as historical purposes. Christian colleges should add this volume to their collections.

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Barry L. CALLEN. *Discerning the Divine: God in Christian Theology.* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2004. 238 pp. $19.95.

This book has the feel of being nurtured in the classroom. Undoubtedly it will find use as a textbook in an advanced college or seminary course in the area of Systematic Theology. This is the appropriate context for assessment of the book.

In the preface, Callen promises that many theological voices will speak in the

pages of the book. This promise is fulfilled. Impressive is Callen's wide acquaintance with recent secondary literature in America on the doctrine of God. When interchange spans the spectrum from Norman Geisler to John Cobb, one realizes Callen has read representatively. Nevertheless, the author does tend to work broadly within the evangelical spectrum. He seems more comfortable there. This probably accounts for the notable absence of dialogue with some "heavyweights" in the area such as Colin Gunton and Miroslav Volf.

The opening chapter sounds like the first lecture of a class, and I began to think this may be a long read. But as I began to move into the book, I was pleasantly surprised with both the high quality of writing and the concise way the author dealt with complicated material. The book is not dull and should be well received by students. Quite early in the book, Callen raises the question of open theism. Here his sympathies clearly fall on the side of Clark Pinnock who serves as a major discussion partner, not only on this issue, but also throughout the book. This may also explain the fascination for a modest version of Process Theology that emerges from time to time. Toward the end of the book, the author attempts to hold this all together with a fairly traditional Trinitarian understanding of God, which is heavy on relational concepts rather than being substantialist.

The bulk of the book is taken up with two areas. First, dialogue occurs between the biblical view of God and the Trinitarian understanding that came in the Patristic period. Second, historical survey of major movements of thought in Christian Theology occurs along with representative thinkers in the area of the doctrine of God. Little new ground is broken here, but to follow the discussion will prove a good road map for students.

If one is looking for an in-depth engagement with major theologians of our era on the Trinity, this is not your book. But, given that the question of open theism is a lively issue in contemporary conservative theological discussions, many teachers may wish to include a good segment on the doctrine of God in a course on Systematic Theology. If so, this will certainly be an excellent resource for the classroom.

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Sergius BULGAKOV. *The Comforter.* Translated by Boris Jakim. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004. 398 pp. $34.00.

Reading this volume transports one into the sometimes mysterious world of the Eastern Church. In contrast to the Lockeian simplicity of Stone-Campbell theology, Bulgakov's Russian Orthodoxy is complex and rambling. It is both speculative and richly philosophical. Bulgakov (1871–1944), a preeminent twentieth-century Russian theologian, began his career as a Marxist political economist, converted to Orthodoxy at the time of the Russian Revolution, was ordained, and fled his homeland for Paris, where he taught at the St. Sergius Theological Institute.

First published in 1936 as the second volume of his trilogy, *On Divine*

Humanity, The Comforter offers an Orthodox definition of the Holy Spirit. Bulgakov both explicates and dispenses with the *filioque* clause. For a noncreedal tradition, such as the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement, this might seem unimportant, but it is important to understand a significant impasse to East-West unity and read a possible solution to that impasse.

Following a translator's introduction and an author's preface, Bulgakov's introduction offers an extended discussion of the Patristic doctrines of the Holy Spirit, both East and West. Then, beginning with an exploration of the Spirit's place within the Trinity, he moves to the "fundamental problematic" of procession and origination. Though he insists that the doctrine of the *filioque* is fatally flawed, procession was not a patristic issue, and if the church returns to the patristic formulas there is a way around one impasse separating East and West. From here he explicates the relationship of the "Spirit of God" and the Holy Spirit, which are not necessarily synonymous terms; thus, "the Holy Spirit *actualizes* the spirituality of God, without retaining it, exhausting it, or even defining it" (153). Johannine in his theology of the Holy Spirit—witness the choice of Comforter—he suggests that Acts and the epistles do not define the Holy Spirit as the Third Hypostasis of the Trinity, but instead speak of the gifts and actions of the Spirit. Bulgakov insists that the Spirit proceeds from the Father, but he focuses on their dyadic relationship, the Divine Sophia, or the actualization of the "biunity of [two] hypostases" Word and the Spirit (126). Sophia is a central concept for Bulgakov, and with its increased usage in contemporary theology, this discussion bears reading. Sophia does not have hypostatic existence (not being part of the Godhead), but taken together the relationship of Son and Spirit can be understood as both inseparable and unconfused.

From the theoretical the text turns to the more practical, to a degree: the revelation of the Spirit of God in church and creation. Once again, Son and Holy Spirit are drawn together in their dyadic relationship, and the gifts are expressions of the Pentecost descent of the Spirit that actualize the presence of divinity in creation. It is here that the principle of Divine–humanity is revealed, for the principle of Divine–humanity is the deification of creation, the unity of divinity with creation. This is the purpose of incarnation and descent, "two aspects of one and the same act" (278). In an epilogue, Bulgakov returns to the Father, the origin of both Son and Spirit, and the Source of unity within the Trinity.

Bulgakov offers a dense and difficult volume that is not for everyone. The discerning, mature, well-read, and patient reader, however, will find valuable resources for understanding the mysteries of God's Spirit. For spiritual descendants of Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell who celebrate the simplicity of the gospel, reading Bulgakov may remind us of the sometimes complex nature of Christian doctrine.

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Kirk Bryon JONES. *The Jazz of Preaching: How to Preach with Great Freedom and Joy.* Nashville: Abingdon, 2004. 137 pp. $16.00.

The only thing that will replace preaching is better preaching. This volume provides that spark of inspiration to challenge the seasoned preacher to better preaching. The challenge, however, is a little radical. Consequently, this is not a volume for every seasoned preacher. Nevertheless, those who like to think outside the box, or who are looking for a novel approach to communicating the gospel, or those who are struggling against monotony may appreciate this volume.

Every preacher, has experienced the upside and the downside of preaching, as well as the sweet taste of victory and the agony of defeat. Even the best of preachers has had the Saturday night panic attack when Sunday morning is coming and he has nothing to say. For Jones, one of those Saturday night slumps inspired him to listen to jazz music instead of traditional "inspirational" music. According to the author, at this point the lights began to turn on. This volume is a result of that moment. Consequently, the author's thesis is that biblical preaching can be enhanced by exploring key elements of jazz and learning to apply those elements to the act of preaching. Further Jones, a professor of homiletics at Andover Newton Theological School, has developed a unique class named after this volume that explores these ideas.

The volume has a number of commendable features. I was blessed by the author's openness and transparency. While he admits that he loves to preach, he admits with equal candor that there are times when preaching is the last thing in the world he would like to do. Another added feature is the exercises at the end of each chapter. They are practical and challenge the reader to move beyond the context of this volume. From his own experience, Jones provides the reader with numerous examples, illustrations, and insights to improve one's preaching skills. The material is also well documented, and Jones lists additional resources to encourage better preaching.

I would not recommend this volume for a beginning homiletics student. The material is better suited to those who have considerable experience preaching or who are involved in more advanced stages of homiletic studies.

Finally, I would encourage those pastors who have opportunity to meet regularly with each other to read this volume together. While an individual may profit from this study, working together on the exercises and suggesting ways to improve preaching in a group setting would, in my opinion, be much more beneficial.

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Craig BLOMBERG. *Preaching The Parables.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004. 251 pp. $16.99.

It is sometimes assumed that scholars make poor preachers and preachers make

poor scholars. Blomberg counters that characterization in this volume. Any contribution from Blomberg is welcome, but this particular contribution is a marvelous example of how exegesis becomes exposition. Blomberg is a NT professor at Denver Seminary. The volume is unique in that it elucidates some of the hermeneutical principles for interpreting parables as well as providing examples of sermons on the parables. Blomberg offers 12 complete sermons and follows them with a commentary on how each sermon was constructed.

Blomberg does not explain any systematic approach to interpreting parables, but a cursory discussion appears in the introduction. He does not subscribe to the oft-accepted notion that parables have only one point. He believes these stories are more complex than that and that limiting their message to one idea is an overreaction to the allegorization of the parables. Blomberg advocates investigating characters in the stories as clues to what is being taught and that each character may teach a unique point. He maintains the parables as they have been transmitted are an authentic word from Jesus. He focuses on Lucan parables partly because they were the subject of his PhD thesis at the University of Aberdeen.

The individual messages contained in this volume possess creative variety. Some messages are very traditionally organized, others not so. The messages are densely packed with genuine scholarly and practical insights that will provoke the preacher to create his own message rather than simply plagiarize the author. Even the sermon titles testify to Blomberg's ability as a communicator. Some of his titles include: "Let's Play Wedding, Let's Play Funeral," "The Basement of the Hard Rock Café," "Can I Be Saved without Stewardship?" and "The Kingdom of Heaven: Priceless."

Blomberg's sermons, while taking the text seriously, also display an ability to exegete the audience. The sermons reflect an understanding of human nature and contemporary concerns.

Blomberg says that the best illustration of his approach is his sermon on the prodigal son. Keeping in mind Blomberg's advice concerning isolating an idea for each character, the author demonstrates that the prodigal himself teaches us "that repentance is always possible for those who want to return to God" (36). The elder brother teaches "that God's people ought not to begrudge his generosity for even the most wayward of sinners" (37). The father teaches us "that God in his lavish love forgives the sins of both sons and wants us to do likewise" (38). This three-point outline is true to the text and abundantly clear to the listener.

Another subtler example of this approach is found in the message, "Who is My Most Important Neighbor?" The author uses individuals or groups in the parable of the Good Samaritan to develop the following ideas: Believers are called to show compassion to anyone in need (58), religion often gets in the way of demonstrating God's compassion for people (61), and even my enemy is my neighbor (63).

Blomberg concludes with a brief discussion of the major recurring themes in the parables of Jesus, including money, grace, and concern for the oppressed. Do not be tempted to skip Blomberg's commentary on each sermon. They are a course on homiletics in themselves. Blomberg describes how the sermons came to be writ-

ten, why a particular structure was chosen, and provides a clear description of the road from hermeneutics to homiletics. This volume will be of great value to those preachers who wish to mine the extremely fruitful biblical genre of the parable.

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Brian C. STILLER. *Preaching Parables to Postmoderns.* Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005. 200 pp. $17.00.

Books that address modernity and postmodernity line the shelves of libraries and bookstores around the country. Books addressing how one should preach to the postmodern audience line the shelves of seminary libraries. My personal library is no different, as scattered among homiletics books are those addressing the postmodern worldview. Stiller, President of Tyndale University College and Seminary in Toronto, has added one more helpful resource for preachers.

This volume sets itself apart from other preaching resources addressing cultural issues in two ways. First, Stiller does not try to write a definitive volume on the modern–postmodern culture of today. He summarizes the mind-set and outlines some of the postmodern trademarks. Some of these descriptions include the rejection of absolute truth, the dismissal of authority, and pluralism as the equal value of all ideas. While these ideas can be found and expanded upon in other works, the summary is effective for his purpose.

Second, the author focuses his attention on preaching the parables of Jesus to an audience that is postmodern. This is the reason he can resort to a summary of the postmodern mind-set. He wants to spend the majority of the volume helping the preacher understand the parable in order to develop a message that addresses the audience living in a postmodern world.

Stiller's volume includes four chapters and a detailed bibliography. Chapters one and two provide the foundation for the third chapter. The final chapter is his application.

The first chapter lays out his understanding of the modern world. Not only are the characteristics of postmodernity discussed, but Stiller offers a simple synopsis of how the postmodern mind emerged. While recognizing that a shift has occurred, Stiller does not believe society has made a clear break from modernity (2). Instead, he describes the current modern–postmodern relationship as a flow ebbing back and forth between the two worldviews. This raises the question, "Why a book directed at postmodernism if modernity is still present?"

The second chapter discusses how the stories of Jesus can speak to the postmodern mind. As the previous chapter is a synopsis of postmodernity, chapter two is a synopsis of a study on parables. He gives a brief history describing how parables were used by Jesus and the value they hold today. His summary is helpful, and his rationale for preaching parables and their interaction with the postmodern mind is insightful.

Having laid his foundation, chapter three is the primary focus of the volume. Here Stiller discusses ten parables of Jesus. Each of the selected parables, chosen from Matthew or Luke, is a lengthy, developed narrative such as *The Good Samaritan*, *The Prodigal Son*, and *The Persistent Widow*. As each parable is discussed, Stiller lists questions to help the preacher understand the parable. Such a list is no stranger to any exegetical study, and includes key words, the position of a parable within the text, and cultural factors. Such a list can be found in greater detail elsewhere. What is beneficial in Stiller's list is how he connects the parable with the postmodern audience. He guides the reader through the maze of seeing the parable through the eyes of the postmodern mind.

The final chapter acts as the application section of the volume and includes four sermons. Each sermon is a narrative manuscript and based on the exegetical work from the previous chapter. The sermons are based on the texts of *The Unforgiving Servant*, *The Ten Talents*, *The Good Samaritan*, and *The Prodigal Son*. While the sermons are not as engaging as some by Fred Craddock, they more than adequately demonstrate how Jesus' parables can speak to the postmodern audience.

This volume will be an excellent resource to have on hand when one decides to preach on the parables of Jesus. Even if the preacher chooses a parable outside of the ones included in the volume, Stiller has provided an excellent starting point for the study.

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Edith L. BLUMHOFER. *Her Heart Can See: The Life and Hymns of Fanny J. Crosby.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005. 365 pp. $20.00.

The Eli Lily foundation funded a three-year study of the history of American Hymnody and its relationship to the larger landscape of American Christianity. This volume is the result of the study. Blumhofer writes not only a biography of Fanny J. Crosby but also exposes the culture of the American landscape and the people and events that intersected with Crosby. The volume depicts the development, expansion, and place of church music in society in the 1800s.

Instead of writing a chronological history of the life of Crosby, Blumhofer discusses unique aspects of Crosby's life in each chapter. The volume begins by portraying Fanny's family, education, and faith. Other chapters deal with people who influenced her and with whom she collaborated. The final chapters describe her hymns and the honor she received as a beloved writer and evangelical speaker.

Crosby (1820–1915) is described as a kind, sweet-spirited, diminutive woman of four feet nine inches. A mistreatment of an eye infection at two months of age caused permanent blindness. It was, however, her blindness that gave her opportunity to share her prolific gift of poetry. She recited her poetry before the most prominent political figures of her day: John Quincy Adams, James Buchanan,

Jefferson Davis, Horace Greeley, Henry Clay, Jenny Lind, and William Cullen Bryant. She was a personal friend of President Grover Cleveland.

In the Christian arena she was close friends with Dwight L. Moody, Ira and Fanny Sankey, Henry Ward Beecher, Theodore Cuyler, and a host of other well-known evangelical preachers.

She wrote lyrics for the most popular songwriters of her day, including Robert Lowry, Lowell Mason, George Root, William Bradbury, William J. Kirkpatrick, John Sweney, Philip Phillips, William Howard Doane, and Mrs. J.P. Knapp.

Fanny Crosby is credited with writing between 8,000 and 10,000 secular songs, poems, and hymns. She is best remembered for her hymns *Blessed Assurance; Rescue the Perishing; Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross; Safe in the Arms of Jesus; I am Thine, O Lord;* and *Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior.*

Blumhofer takes pains to depict the culture and people that influenced the poetry, songs, and hymns Crosby wrote. Seeking to place Crosby *in situ*, Blumhofer can be wordy and digresses from the relationship of a person or event to Fanny Crosby to a full explanation of that person or event's history. The author often seeks to convey too much information, also, which results in stilted sentences.

The volume is an extremely well-researched volume that portrays the impact of hymnology on American Christianity, most significantly, in the life and accomplishments of Fanny Crosby.

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Nicholas WOLTERSTORFF. *Educating for Shalom: Essays on Christian Higher Education.* Clarence W. Joldersma and Gloria Goris Stronks eds. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004. 310 pp. $24.00.

Very few names are more recognizable among the broader Christian academy than that of Wolterstorff. As a professor at Calvin College for many years, now serving as the Noah Porter Professor of Philosophical Theology, Yale Divinity School, he is able to study and promote Christian thought in academia as well as to engage in Christian higher education. His career has provided him with opportunity and experience to engage in the Christian professorate and academic community. While Wolterstorff typically is recognized as a Christian philosopher and most of his works reflect this commitment, he also has demonstrated an intense interest in Christianity in the higher education community, publishing numerous speeches and essays as well as one major work, *Education for Life: Reflections on Teaching and Learning* (Baker, 2002).

This volume is a reflection of his lifelong involvement in and commitment to Christian higher education. The volume itself is a collection of his writings compiled and edited by Clarence W. Joldersma and Gloria Goris Stronks. As such, this review is not simply of Wolterstorff, but also of Joldersma and Stronk as compilers

and editors. To endeavor to critique this work, one must engage in the daunting task of critiquing the life work of Wolterstorff. Rather, this review will focus on this volume specifically, offering a review of Joldersma and Stronk's work.

Joldersma and Stronk explain their motivation in compiling such a collection as seeking to increase the value of Wolterstorff's contribution to Christian higher education by highlighting the Reformed tradition's contributions to education, the development of Wolterstorff's thoughts on education, and demonstrating his interaction with "Reformed thinkers" and "traditional philosophers" (vii). To this end, selections of Wolterstorff's writings are collected in six clusters of sample writings Essays 1-3 "are an early indication of Wolterstorff's developing thought" (vii); Essays 4-6 address "the nature of Christian scholarship or learning" (viii); Essays 7-11 "form an interesting group if taken together," since they track his move away from a traditional liberal arts approach to education (viii, ix); Essays 12-14 return to "the idea of Christian scholarship, or learning" (ix); Essays 15-17 "focus more directly on Christian academics in the context of society" (ix-x); and Essays 18-19 "take us full circle, back to Wolterstorff's earliest preoccupations with Christian higher education" (x).

Joldersma and Stronks endeavor to thread these essays together using the theme of *shalom* as it appears in Wolterstorff's works. Wolterstorff does maintain that *shalom*, peace, is the agenda for the Christian higher education institution of the 21st century in light of the absence of peace both in the world and the academic community. The editors summarize his vision of *shalom* as a call and vision that should be reflected in Christian scholarship as the professed aim of Christian instruction. In short, the establishment of God's peace should be the overarching purpose of Christian higher education for the next century.

In all fairness to the editors of this work, theirs was a daunting task. As previously mentioned, few scholars have had a career and significant voice comparable to Nicholas Wolterstorff. The notion of capturing the essence of his contribution to Christian scholarship in a single volume is indeed an impressive undertaking. What is perhaps even more impressive is the fact that they accomplished it well. While such works typically leave gaps in tracking the intellectual path of a scholar, this volume minimizes the gaps in his intellectual journey and accurately reflects his convictions. Although the volume is not chronologically arranged, there is a sense of the development of Wolterstorff's educational philosophy and theory. In short, the volume is well worth the investment for anyone administering or teaching in Christian higher education, or for those who have a concern for the place of Christians in the broader academic community.

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Douglas V. HENRY and Bob R. AGEE, eds. ***Faithful Learning and the Christian Scholarly Vocation.*** **Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003. 178 pp. $18.00.**

This volume is the result of assembling a writing team comprised of nine highly recognized figures in the field of Christian education, all with impressive publication and scholarly credentials. This jointly edited work is comprised of ten chapters written by nine authors, two of which are written by Denton Lotz (Chapters 8 and 10). Each chapter concludes with reflection and discussion questions as well as a bibliography of other works written by the contributor, making it very conducive to use in classroom or faculty contexts.

The editors' self-expressed purpose for the text is simple yet profound: "exploring the relationship between Christian faith and intellectual life. It offers a theological foundation . . . and then goes on to consider some of the important intellectual challenges and opportunities faced by Christian higher education in the twenty-first century" (xi-xii). This purpose is reflected in the volume's twofold division: (1) "Theological Reflection" (chapters 1–5) and "Challenges and Opportunities" (chapters 6–10), both intended to provide the reader with a portrait of higher education with a distinctly Christian perspective.

The first chapter is authored by Richard Hughes and entitled "Christian Faith and the Life of the Mind," a familiar theme in his writings. He endeavors to balance academic respectability with "Christian underpinnings," noting the frequent conflict between the two (3). This chapter, however, is not another call for faith-learning integration or a presentation of such a paradigm, but rather explores the issue of how one's Christian convictions can foster and facilitate academic inquiry among faculty at Christian institutions of higher education (4). He responds to this issue by engaging five theological traditions (Reformed, Anabaptist/Mennonite, Catholic, Lutheran, and Baptist) and noting their peculiar contributions to the discussion.

The second chapter is entitled "The Calling of the Christian Scholar-Teacher" and is written by C. Stephen Evans. He endeavors to call faculty to not just denominational loyalty, but to "consider the role of Christian faculty in a Christian education institution" (27) as those who believe in Christ and Christian higher education. Evans poses a quandary innate to the issue at hand: can faculty perform Christian scholarship without degenerating into the relativism of postmodernism? He responds with a well-considered answer of "principled pluralism" that is worth exploring (46).

The third contribution to the text endeavors to "provide part of a framework for their [institutions of Christian higher education] common work in the years ahead" (50). Martin Marty's chapter "The Church and Christian Higher Education in the New Millennium" describes this framework in terms of Christ-centeredness (Col 1:15-20), enabling Christian educators to overcome the dichotomies of the material and spiritual, secular and religious, privileged and exposed, and *v*ocation and *V*ocation.

The chapter contributed by Joel Carpenter was as insightful as his earlier coauthored work, *Making Higher Education Christian* (with Kenneth Shipps,

Eerdmans, 1987), as regards the trajectories of our profession into the current century. He emphasizes the need to comprehend the call of Christian scholarship in the context of the Great Commission as the mission of Christian higher education. He notes encouraging trends within the higher education community indicating advancing Christian scholarship and stresses the need to continue along these lines.

Many contend that spiritual formation and academic pursuits are not complementary. However, Parker Palmer maintains that education and spirituality share a common concern for truth, which involves epistemology. Hence, Palmer presents "a Gospel epistemology" (81) as providing four avenues or ideas of Christian truth as being personal, communal, mutual and reciprocal, but ultimately transformational. He maintains that these notions are limited by objectivism, calling Christian higher education to instruction beyond the notion of objective truth.

Nathan Hatch commences Part Two by discussing the "vital role of Christian faculty" (96) in light of the present turmoil in the academic community (i.e., erosion of public trust, separation of spirituality and learning, and the loss of authoritative voice in education). After explaining the turmoil and citing several examples of it in higher education, he poses the quintessential question: "How do we recruit and cultivate the faculty whom we will expect collectively to embody the ideals of our institution?" (96). To this end he recommends four strategies: (1) leadership at department levels, (2) professional encouragement and development, (3) a responsive, and (4) flexible administration to the hiring of faculty, even beyond denominational labels.

One of the most familiar names in Christian higher education, Arthur F. Holmes, takes Alan Bloom to task in Chapter 7. After describing and analyzing Bloom's *Closing of the American Mind* (Simon & Schuster, 1988), Holmes poses the antithesis of the "Opening of the Christian Mind" (111) through three presuppositions: (1) the objectivity of values, (2) the theocentric unity of truth, and (3) the nature of persons. Holmes further uses these as a call to overcome the problem of individualism with a covenant community (113ff). While these three presuppositions seem timeless, Holmes provides a contemporary venue appropriate for use in the 21st-century higher education institution.

Lotz's first contribution to this volume addresses the need for Christian higher education to convert the culture. "Basically, America's intelligentsia have rejected the Christian faith. . . . Can Western civilization, the fruit of Christian theology and biblical faith, be brought back into the fold of the Christian tradition?" (124). Lotz calls the professorate to rise to the challenge of neo-paganism present in contemporary Western culture, particularly in regard to creation, sex, and social justice. This will require institutions of Christian higher education to convert to this task and the American church to perceive its context as a legitimate missions field.

Christian sociologist Anthony Campolo similarly calls Christian higher education to develop "radical colleges" (142) as those institutions that engage in the intentional integration of faith and learning and social engagement. In the same way as Lotz, he calls the professorate and student body to a Christian worldview and to carry this into the culture, actively engaging it on contemporary grounds of discussion.

The final chapter, once again by Lotz, engages the notion of the Christian higher education community's relationship to the culture as a "clash of civilizations" (159). Noting how the civilization conflict between the United States and the USSR in previous generations shaped education, even that in the Church, he discusses how civilization has been shaped by the development of "multipolar and multicivilizational global politics," the "decline of Western influence," "stability of civilizational identity," "likelihood of civilizational conflict," and "the chastening of Western arrogance" (161-169). Lotz turns his attention to theological contributions of living in a multicivilizational world and ultimately to the role of Christian higher education in this context. He discusses the value of studying Western civilization and church history, the legitimacy of Christian bias, the imperative to relate transculturally, the reformation of the church, and the continuing relevance of global mission (171-174).

This text could readily be used in a discussion group with faculty, administration, or professors of Christian education. As one would expect with such an impressive lineup of contributors, the volume's insights and implications for Christian higher education are readily apparent and worthy of considerable attention. As with any text that is a conglomeration of distinct authors working separately, no single line of thought is addressed uniformly throughout the entire text; however, the editors overcame this obstacle in the format and thematic structure of the text. In short, this volume is a needed text, emphasizing the integration of Christian faith and scholarship into a unified approach for ministry and service in God's Kingdom.

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Dan SCHMIDT. *Taken by Communion: How the Lord's Supper Nourishes the Soul.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003. 173 pp. $12.95.

Dan Schmidt's volume is a phrase-by-phrase exegesis of Paul's instructions concerning the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. Schmidt also adds two chapters on phrases taken from the Gospel accounts of the Lord's Supper. The author's expressed purpose is to engage in devotional exegesis, "reflecting on how communion might change people and the churches of which they are a part" (13).

The danger inherent in engaging in devotional exegesis is skipping the exegesis and moving right to the devotion. Schmidt provides evidence throughout that he has avoided this error. He demonstrates awareness of the literary context of Paul's instructions to the Corinthians. For example, he explains that communion is not a time to "dig in and pig out but . . . to be consumed" (156, see 1 Cor 11:20-22). Schmidt is also sensitive to the larger biblical context. This is apparent as he discusses the connections between the Lord's Supper and the Passover feast (35-47, 147). The author also demonstrates other exegetical techniques that are often

absent from devotional exegesis, such as word study, attention to rhetorical devices, and theological reflection.

As strong as Schmidt's exegesis is, his application is even stronger. Every chapter is laced with comments and reflections that encourage readers to pause and consider their own spiritual life. For instance, in the first chapter, Schmidt explores the phrase "the Lord Jesus." The author explains that "Lord" is more than a name; "it is a description, an invitation, a challenge, a charge, a hope" (21). He reflects that Lordship is a matter of loyalty and that to recognize Jesus as such demands obedience. Therefore, beginning in this first chapter and continuing throughout the volume, Schmidt is clearly serious about helping his readers change their behavior both as individual disciples and as church members.

Schmidt's weakest point is found in chapter 11. Here Schmidt moves from explaining the phrases found in 1 Cor 11:23-26 to the Gospel accounts and a discussion of the phrase "they sang a hymn" (Matt 26:30; Mark 14:26). Schmidt misses his own purpose here by offering thoughts on Psalms 115–118 (no doubt the Psalms that Jesus and His disciples sang that night) and on "why we sing" (149), forgoing more appropriate reflections on the Lord's Supper.

Most readers from the Stone-Campbell heritage (and most Protestants in general) will disagree with Schmidt's summary statement, "bread and wine become his flesh and blood as those who are infused by grace begin to incarnate grace" (158). Here Schmidt seems to cross into the territory of transubstantiation and sacramental theology. However, these drawbacks do not outweigh the strengths of this volume.

Schmidt's volume is helpful for those who celebrate the Lord's Supper more frequently than it is for those who do not. His encouragement for those who participate in communion often is that it is not something to be taken lightly or for granted. This volume would be useful as a personal devotional guide for believers looking to refresh their time at the Lord's Table. Schmidt's thoughts also offer prompts for those preparing communion meditations or for the preacher writing a sermon on the Lord's Supper (based on either 1 Corinthians 11 or on the Gospel accounts).

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Leonard J. VANDER ZEE. *Christ, Baptism and the Lord's Supper: Recovering the Sacraments for Evangelical Worship.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004. 252 pp. $18.00.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are key aspects of the worship that churches perform. This volume addresses the issue of how the church views these practices

In the first section, Vander Zee defines sacraments and how they work both practically and biblically. Vander Zee redefines sacraments, opposing the view that sacraments are rituals performed to impart grace to the performer. Instead, sacra-

ments are events that allow the partaker to experience the invisible through the visible. Vander Zee uses semiotics and a new sociological theory, called ritual theory, to inform this definition. The focus of this theory when applied to the sacraments is that when people are baptized or join in the Lord's Supper, they experience the things that Christ experienced (46). We experience the past in the present.

The second section looks at the sacrament of baptism. Vander Zee looks at the biblical understanding of baptism through the eyes of the OT and ritual washings. The ritual washings of the OT are carried over into the NT through the symbolism of baptism. The practical applications of the role of baptism are also discussed, along with the topic of infant baptism.

The last section discusses the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. As with baptism, the Lord's Supper should be viewed through the lens of the role of meals in the OT. Meals were a social practice, just as the Lord's Supper is a social practice, according to 1 Corinthians 11. Memory of the past and a longing for the future are part of the practice of the Lord's Supper. The events of the Last Supper are experienced as believers come to the table, and as they do this, they bear witness to Jesus until he returns. The history of the Christ event is experienced in the Lord's Supper. Vander Zee then discusses the history of interpretation of the Lord's Supper and the theology of this practice for today's church.

Vander Zee believes that in order to gain a fuller understanding of the sacraments, the church needs to step back and experience these practices through the five senses and view these things through a wider perspective. Partakers need to not just see the event but also recognize what is occurring around the event, including the people, sounds, smells, and tastes. The invisible can be experienced through these visible symbols.

Finally, Vander Zee focuses on the theme of ecumenicism in this volume. He desires to bring to the church an understanding of the sacraments that all Christians can agree upon. He supports infant baptism, however, stating that it should be practiced even though there is less evidence for it. The author also tends to set up barriers between different denominations.

This is an important volume for those who would like to understand how baptism and the Lord's Supper function in a theological and sociological perspective. Students, pastors, and theologians will rediscover the significance of baptism and the Lord's Supper through this fresh portrayal of the meaning and function of the sacraments.

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David W. GILL. *Doing Right: Practicing Ethical Principles.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004. 342 pp. $16.00.

Using a creative travel metaphor, Gill describes the Decalogue as an appropriate atlas for Christian ethics, providing ten moral itineraries for travelers on the Christian journey. Gill suggests that these itineraries guide Christians through the

ethical minefields of today. Following two introductory chapters, this volume explores the moral implications of these commandments and includes rich insights from biblical, rabbinic, and Reformed thought.

The first half of the volume sets the contours for this ethical journey. Gill differentiates between cover principles (general ethical guidelines such as the categorical imperative or the utilitarian principle) and more concrete, practical area principles, which are the itineraries that properly focus our travel along the road. Neither cover nor area principles stand alone, however. They require a compelling mission, strong personal character, a community for discernment and support, and practical application in daily life. Thus, Gill stresses, this volume is not specifically deontological but rather part of a way of becoming good, a virtue-centered notion that he addresses more fully in an earlier companion volume bearing that title (InterVarsity, 2000).

Following a brief review of key sources for Christian ethics (Jesus, Scripture, and the church), Gill introduces his four cover principles (love God, love your neighbor, act justly and righteously, and liberate and redeem) and provides a Christian context for using the Decalogue as the foundational map for ethics. The fact that the commandments are not divisible into two spheres of response is of central importance for Gill: all ten commandments are ways of relating to God, and all ten are ways of relating to humans.

The second half of the volume discusses the commandments as area principles interpreted in terms of the four cover principles. For example, the first commandment as an area principle is "never allow anyone or anything to threaten God's central place in your life" (84). When this command is obeyed, Christians realize that God created all humans in his own image, and a corollary principle emerges: "never treat any persons as though they are dispensable or without value" (94). The second commandment prohibits "any humanly made image or representation of God" (106) because idols and images contradict and violate "the grand rules of the road: love for God, love for your neighbor and justice" (105). Those who follow area principle two to honor the "freedom, vitality, and reality of the living God" will also respect the corollary principle not to view people through stereotypes or fixed images (113). Commandment three prohibits disrespectful and trivializing usage of the divine name and also implies the correlative principle not to place demeaning names on people. Similarly, commandment six not only disallows killing and violence but also requires just and righteous actions. The seventh commandment prohibiting adultery also entails loving the God who has joined together. In each chapter, then, area principles restate the commandments, and for each area principle Gill provides commentary and correlative ethical responses. The goal in each chapter is to articulate how Christians might, in the words of the volume's subtitle, "practice ethical principles." A postscript follows the last chapter, neatly summarizing the various principles and corollaries of the Decalogue.

Readers of *SCJ* will appreciate the care with which Gill treats biblical stories related to the commands, as well as post-Decalogue Jewish and Christian expansions and interpretations of the commandments. Gill excels in grounding contemporary Christian living in the beliefs and teachings of Israel and early Christianity.

For example, his exposition in chapter six on the Sabbath commandment includes an extensive treatment of good works. In chapter 10, discussion of the prohibition against theft leads to a thorough analysis of Christian stewardship.

The text is equally accessible to graduate seminarians and adult Bible class students, for undergraduate Christian ethics courses, and for seasoned ministers eager to refresh their study. Bulleted inset summaries and quotes are helpful markers throughout the volume. The travel metaphor is overworked at times, though, and occasional trivial footnotes weaken the volume's overall quality ("Oops! Even the Lone Ranger had Tonto" on p. 26). The most substantive weakness, however, is the focus on principles and commands which, despite Gill's intent, leaves readers with a heavy dose of rule-based ethics. Without the companion volume, *Becoming Good* (InterVarsity, 2000), the ethic is incomplete. Nonetheless, this volume is a welcome addition to a substantial number of recent texts interacting with the Decalogue, and a particularly strong study rooted in a profound respect for biblical theology.

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Rubel SHELLY and John O. YORK. *The Jesus Proposal: A Theological Framework for Maintaining the Unity of the Body of Christ.* Siloam Springs, AR: Leafwood, 2003. 219 pp. $13.99.

In this easy-to-read volume, Shelly and York propose that the foundation for unity in the body of Christ ought to be one's relationship with Christ. The authors contend that this new understanding of unity in the church is contrary to the modern approach. They argue that modernity's approach to unity is one of "theological agreement, ecclesiological structure, and institutional loyalty," which, according to them, is unbiblical (10). Rather than engaging in theological discussions with other Christians, the church should accept anyone who claims to have a relationship with Jesus, the only valid test of fellowship Christians.. Shelly and York believe that this proposal will appeal to the current philosophical milieu, namely, postmodernity. Postmodernity's rejection of boundaries makes it easier to tear down doctrinal walls that divide Christians. In effect, the authors attempt to formulate a concept of church unity within a postmodernity mold.

The authors' "Jesus Proposal" commences by blaming philosophical modernity for disunity in the body of Christ. According to Shelly and York, modernity's demand for "fixed, rational, and clearly marked boundaries" divided the church and brought about numerous denominations (9). The denominations adopted this modern methodology in their theology, especially during the Reformation, and began to exclude those who did not agree on specific points of doctrine. The authors also claim that this same approach was adopted by many in the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement, and hence they, too, began to view other Christian denominations as doctrinally unsound. Ultimately, say the authors, more division resulted.

The authors' suggested cure of the church-gone-modern is for it to give up "attempting to out-argue other philosophical and religious points of view" (19) and relinquish the goal of being doctrinally sound (31). In fact, Shelly and York are tired of drawing neat "doctrinal circles:" they are "far less concerned anymore to draw circles—or lines of any kind—that separate people who love, seek, and confess Jesus Christ" (54). In essence, the authors argue that it no longer matters what one believes about baptism, the Holy Spirit, the Lord's Supper, or any other biblical teaching. The only heresy that exists is to deny the humanity or deity of Jesus (153). In fideistic fashion, the authors want Christians to give up being rational about their faith. "We long to believe in the spiritual, in truth that is above reason," they say (32). According to Shelly and York, it is time to quit using proof-texts for doctrine and establishing theological propositions for unity in the church. Isolation and judgmentalism are out; inclusion and acceptance are in.

Shelly and York's assertion that modernity is to blame for the disunity of the church has some truth to it. Modernism did bring in the idea that man's reasoning is the ultimate authority, thus concluding that man can determine truth through reason alone apart from revelation. This resulted in the very destructive rugged individualism. However, claiming that the church's adoption of modernity's method of establishing boundaries led to the disunity of the church is not a cogent argument. Such an accusation entirely ignores church history. From the time of the apostles, the church has set doctrinal boundaries. One has to look only to the letters of 1 Corinthians and Galatians to find numerous examples of Paul rebuking false teachings about the Lord's Supper, baptism, and circumcision, to name a few. Early in the second century, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, and others constantly drew doctrinal circles. All these examples are at least 1,000 years before modernity came upon the philosophical scene. The idea that modernity is to blame for the church's practice of making theological boundaries is patently false.

An irony is that Shelly and York commit the self-referential incoherence fallacy inherent in postmodern thought. They contend that Christians should no longer make doctrinal circles, but they themselves make one by stating such a proposition. Their doctrinal circle is that no one should make doctrinal circles. Furthermore, the authors continually make other doctrinal circles, including that we ought not to distort the doctrine of grace (45) and that the Bible never speaks against women filling any role (leadership or otherwise) they wish to fill in the church (189). The authors continually contradict themselves because they make doctrinal circles as well as use proof-texts they claim to despise. Ultimately, the question is not whether we ought to make doctrinal circles: it is, whose doctrinal circles are we going to use? Shelly and York seem to be unaware of this.

Shelly and York's "Jesus proposal" to accept anyone who claims to have a relationship with Jesus leaves too many pressing questions unanswered. Would Shelly and York contend that the early church should have accepted Marcion, who taught that the God of the OT was different from the one of the New Testament? One would have to answer this in the positive using the "Jesus proposal." After all, Marcion himself claimed to have a relationship with Jesus. If the church were to

accept Shelly and York's "Jesus proposal" it would lead to the acceptance of heretics. In its current form, the "Jesus proposal" leads to an unbiblical practice.

Another pressing question left unanswered is, What does it mean to have a relationship with Jesus? The reader searches in vain for any definitive answer. Shelly and York never once attempt to define what it means to have a relationship with Jesus. The result is that a relationship with Jesus is nothing more than a theological abstraction. This is very dangerous. Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and many other cults claim to have a relationship with Jesus. I doubt that Shelly and York would contend that such groups ought to be considered Christian, considering they believe that the only heresy is the denial of Christ's humanity or deity. But then we are right back to letting Marcion through the church doors.

Although this volume contains some elements of truth regarding modernity's influence on the church, it goes too far. Many readers will find it difficult to believe that modernity alone is to blame for the disunity of the church. Many will probably end up asking what role sin takes in the disunity of the church. Shelly and York never mention sin, which is very odd for a volume claiming to be about theology. It seems that they are more focused on blaming theology for the problems of the church than anything else. Furthermore, many will probably question the very essence of the "Jesus proposal." Should the church really accept anyone who claims to have a relationship with Jesus? Many readers will most likely want to know what exactly it means to have a relationship with Jesus. In the final analysis, Shelly and York are proposing for the church to capitulate to a postmodern relativistic philosophy to maintain unity in the body of Christ. In light of this, it seems that this volume will simply be placed on the shelf and forgotten because it cannot be put into practice consistently, just as postmodernity is a failing philosophy because it is inherently inconsistent and incoherent.

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James, C. VANDERKAM, *From Joshua to Caiaphas: High Priests after the Exile*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004. 548 pp. $45.00.

In this huge project that began in the 1980s, James VanderKam provides an encyclopedic historical analysis of the postexilic high priests and the sources behind the telling of their lives. Arguably, he has written the first comprehensive history of all fifty-one priests, a remarkable accomplishment given the complexities and difficulties of Second Temple sources. His ability to work evenly with such a broad range of material (Hebrew Bible to Dead Sea Scrolls to Josephus to bullae and coins) in order to assess thoroughly all accessible information about each high priest, and describe high priestly duties from the Persian Period into the Herodian Age (538 BC to AD 70) is quite impressive. He does this with masterful touches and unexpected coherence given the length of this volume. After a simple two-page summary in the Preface and a brief sketch of the opening years of the postexilic

restoration, VanderKam begins a very systematic analysis of each of the fifty-one postexilic high priests. He offers a list of these high priests in chronological order with a continuous numbering sequence and subheadings by chapter (491-492). The same order and number is maintained within the core of each chapter. These two pages were well worn by the time I finished reading number 51, Phannias Son of Samuel (490).

In each of the four major historical periods (Persian, Early Hellenistic, Hasmonean, and Herodian), VanderKam follows a consistent format: introductory matters, the political situation, the respective high priests by number, an evaluation of the historical sources for each one, and sometimes a brief paragraph summarizing the sociopolitical nature of the high-priestly office within that particular period. He addresses, occasionally in-depth, several specific issues pertinent to individual priests or speculative historical reconstructions where the data is nearly nonexistent, such as Cross's "haplography induced by papponymy" solution or the seven-year *intersacerdotium* gap for Hasmonean high priests. As would be expected, VanderKam is conversant with all divergent aspects of these issues and quite complete in his discussion. For example, his coverage of the Hasmonean high priests extends over a hundred and fifty pages, engages the positions of all the major scholars regarding the mysterious identities of Qumran's Teacher of Righteousness and the Wicked Priest against the backdrop of the powerful Hasmonean family, and carefully exegetes every extant text in a fashion that makes not only the texts, but also his arguments understandable to a nonscholarly audience. Even his treatment of technical terms in Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic from a broad range of sources is not intimidating for the nonspecialist.

Obviously the strength of this volume is its pioneering effort to include everything obtainable from primary and secondary literature to create a comprehensive history of the postexilic high priests and make it inviting to a large audience. While not everyone interested in aspects of Second Temple Judaism will buy this book and read it cover to cover, most will find it indispensable for research on any of the postexilic high priests or sociopolitical structures within Yehud/Israel during this time period. Although the book is quite pleasing in its layout, with an exceptional extensive bibliography and twenty-page index to ancient sources, what it lacks is a subject index, which is simply a necessity for a book well over 500 pages.

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John Francis WILSON. *Caesarea Philippi: Banias, The Lost City of Pan*. New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004. 262 pp. $39.50.

Like Pan, John Wilson "scampers fleet of foot" through the mountains of information regarding the people and potentates whose cultures and commands shaped life at the site of Caesarea Philippi. Specialists in the periods through which he passes will likely complain that "Pan" is naked, but newcomers to Levantine history will

find "Pan" plays some interesting tunes that they will want to hear more fully. Wilson, a professor from Pepperdine University, has spent two decades excavating the site and pondering the community that lived by the cave of Pan.

Students of the NT will be attracted to the book by its title. It employs the first-century name of the city founded by the Herod Philip in honor of Augustus. These students wanting a monograph to inform sermons and papers will find little beneficial information. The discussion of Herodian rule of the site is contained within only thirty pages (9-39). The subsequent discussion of the cult of Pan with its shrine, offerings, and games (57-64) may stimulate related study of pagan religion and appreciation for the obstacles and opportunities faced by Christians. While Wilson accepts that Jesus visited the region of the city, he sees early local Jewish-Christian traditions as shaping the Gospels' production after AD 70. His view of the Scriptures will be troubling to scholars within the Stone-Cambpell Restoration Movement who hold the traditional views of Scripture within the Restoration Movement.

Wilson identifies three pericopes in his "Banias-Cycle" (79-82) as originating from the context of Caesarea Philippi. The "Admission of Jesus' Messiahship by Peter" followed by Jesus' affirmation of Peter as a "Rock" associated with victory over the "Gates of Hell" (Matt 16:18) in the setting of the exposed bedrock of the slopes of Mt. Hermon and the waters flowing from the cave of Pan is dismissed in a footnote. Wilson questions the propriety of associating with Caesarea Philippi "this Matthean extension of Mark's more primitive account…" (206, n. 61). The "Transfiguration on Mount Hermon" is connected by Wilson to earlier Jewish apocalyptic traditions thought to be retained by local Jewish-Christians that regarded the heights of Hermon as a stairway to heaven. The "Healing of the Demon-possessed Boy" after Jesus' descent is speculated to be a depiction of Jesus' superiority to Pan who had either failed to cure or inspired the boy's "panolepsy." The discussion of all three of these pericopes is not sufficiently developed.

Professional historians will find Wilson's account of Caesarea Philippi to provide local anecdotes of the ascent of Christianity, its dominance over persistent pagan resistance and eventual eclipse by Islam that they can employ in lectures. The struggle over the site in the time of the Crusades is particularly informative. Wilson's treatment of religion is nonconfessional. Orthodox and heretical sects of Christianity and Islam are discussed as equals.

Archaeologists will be surprised by Wilson's lack of discussion about the excavations. He cuts the story off before the various excavations of Caesarea Philippi he has witnessed. Wilson concludes, "Banias, after two thousand years is no more" (180), but the fact is that there will continue to be people excavating and visiting the site. An additional chapter on the history of the expeditions and the development of the archaeological park would assist students and visitors find greater significance in the architectural and artifactual remains. Perhaps student and tourist supplications will induce "Pan" to play the song of modern Banias.

Christians will not find that Wilson plays their tune but might find some chords

they can use. This book is recommended for Seminary libraries but it will be of limited value to most Bible College students and ministers.

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Dennis E. SMITH. ***From Symposium to Eucharist: The Banquet in the Early Christian World.*** **Minneapolis: Fortress 2003. 411 pp. $25.00.**

Smith's thesis is that the form of all ancient meals, including the Jewish Passover, Qumran community meals, and the Christian Lord's Supper, was influenced by the Greco-Roman banquet model. This volume is an enlargement of his Harvard dissertation and methodically examines Greco-Roman banquets (philosophical, sacrificial, and club banquets), various Jewish banquets, and Christian banquets (as portrayed in Paul's writings and in the Gospels). Smith concludes with a summarizing chapter on "The Banquet and Christian Theology."

Smith brings to light a wealth of material on ancient meals from his extensive research, much of which unfortunately is buried in endnotes that are difficult to find and consult. Footnotes would make Smith's research much more accessible.

While previous scholars have focused on the differences among various meals in the ancient world, Smith chooses instead to focus on the similarities of the meals, thus leading to his conclusion of the influence of the more ancient and culturally pervasive Greco-Roman model (2-3, 14, 50, 279). This selected focus is both a strength and weakness of the volume. It is a strength because Smith highlights the commonalities shared by the meals of disparate groups. For instance, all ancient meals were to some extent considered "sacred," all had defined rules of behavior, wrestled with the issue of social status, had two courses (a meal followed by the "symposium"—wine and conversation and possibly entertainment), and all functioned as a means to define the ethos of the community as distinctive from the rest of the world. These observations are instructive.

On the other hand, Smith tends to ignore or gloss over the dissimilarities between the meals of the various groups, a practice which undermines the credibility of his conclusions. For instance, he assumes that the third and fourth cups of the Jewish Passover meal were added at a later date because they do not comply with the two courses of a typical Greco-Roman meal (147-150). Similarly, he concludes (giving very little evidence) that the blessing of the bread and the blessing of the cup of the Lord's Supper described in 1 Cor 11:23-26 (which to Smith is a mythical account of a meal which was not a Passover meal) represent the two parts of a Greco-Roman banquet: the meal and the symposium (188, 282). He does not allow for the possibilities of other (Middle Eastern, perhaps?) cultural influences on Judeo-Christian meal practices.

One might wonder if some of the similarities among ancient banquets Smith discusses (particularly the sharing of a meal followed by drinking and conversation or entertainment) is indicative of a common Greco-Roman influence. One may

argue that such practices are typical of meals around the world, both formal and informal, ancient and modern. Whether the meal is the noon meal of a Lion's Club, a retirement dinner, a family reunion, a meal among Bedouin friends, a Passover meal, or a Christmas dinner, many groups who share a common bond dine together and then linger over the table discussing topics of mutual interest. Although each of these meals serves as a boundary marker between the diners and the rest of the world, and each is governed by a set of explicit or implicit rules, surely no one would assert that a single model has influenced them all. Yet this is analogous of what Smith attempts to do regarding ancient banquets.

Nevertheless, Smith does unearth useful material regarding, for example, the widely divergent views of ancient Jews regarding the association with Gentiles (159-166) and the similarities between Paul's admonitions for orderliness in the assemblies of the Corinthian church and the rules for proper symposium conversation (206-207).

Yet the way Smith handles his evidence should make one reticent to accept his conclusions uncritically. For instance, he sometimes gives little evidence to support his claims (80, 134), and he often draws his conclusions before presenting his evidence (145, 150). He leads the reader to believe that the Roman government banned clubs because of immorality at their banquets, when the actual reason seems to be that they caused political unrest (which had little to do with banquets) (97). He anachronistically infers that the banquet practices in eighth-century BC Israel (Amos 6:4-7) were within the sphere of Greco-Roman influence (134, 259). He presumes that the meal in Antioch described by Paul in Gal 2:11-12 must have been a ritual event (essentially, the "Lord's Supper") since Christians in Corinth worshiped at their banquets (174, 176-177).

Finally, the existence of similarities does not necessarily indicate a common influence. In the end, Smith has gathered material that indicates similarities between the banquets of the Greco-Romans and those of Judaism and Christianity, but his handling of the material and his lack of careful argument make his contention of influence unconvincing.

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Dennis PARDEE. *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit.* Writings from the Ancient World Series, No. 10. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002. 299 pp. $29.95.

Pardee has taught at the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute for many years and is one of the most erudite and productive scholars within the field of Northwest Semitic and Hebrew Bible, especially in the field of Ugaritic language and literature. The volume reviewed here is part of the Society of Biblical Literature's series entitled "Writings from the Ancient World." In essence, the purpose of this series is to provide transliterations and translations of texts from the

ancient world in general, and the biblical world in particular. Certainly this is one of the most important series published by the Society of Biblical Literature: scholars, libraries, and students will find many of the volumes in this series enormously useful. The foci of Pardee's volume are the Ugaritic ritual texts from Late Bronze Age. It is a superb contribution to the field.

Before focusing on the contents of this volume, it might be useful to summarize some of the most fundamental background data. Ugarit was an ancient Syrian city, located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. There are occupational levels at Ugarit that date to the Neolithic period. The Late Bronze Age strata (ca. 1550–1200 BC) have garnered substantial attention within the fields of Old Testament and Northwest Semitic studies, though, because hundreds of tablets in the Ugaritic language (a Northwest Semitic language) have been discovered (beginning in 1929) in the Late Bronze Age strata. Significantly, these tablets provide a window on Syro-Palestinian religion of the Late Bronze Age and contain numerous references to deities (e.g., Ba'lu [cf. biblical Hebrew Ba'al], 'Asherah, El, 'Anat, Dagon) and religious practices associated with the Canaanites in the Hebrew Bible.

Pardee begins by noting that the Ugaritic mythological narratives (Ba'lu, Aqhat, Kirta) contain some reference to ritual functions but provide just a modicum of information about daily religious practice (blood sacrifice) at Ugarit. However, the ritual texts which Pardeee translates for this volume deal predominantly with daily religious practices, especially blood sacrifice. In fact, Pardee argues that these ritual texts focus on "the practical and theoretical concerns of daily religion" (2). Blood sacrifice was a predominant component of this daily religion and the author actually argues that "bloody sacrifice, that is, the slaying of a sacrificial animal, is at the very heart of the Ugaritic cult" (3).

Some of these ritual texts are descriptions of the ritual sacrifices prescribed for a single month. For example, one text contains the following material: "on the third day of the month, a ram (is to be offered) to Ba'lu and "a ram is to be offered to Asherah." The text continues through the various days of the month. For example, it states that "on the fourteenth day, the king will wash himself clean and on the day of the full moon, two bulls are to be felled for Yarihu (the moon god of Ugarit" (28-29 passim). Some of these ritual texts describe offerings that are to be made as part of a ritual for "national unity" (77-83). There are also some descriptions of prayers that can be offered during times of national distress (and accompanied by blood sacrifice). For example, one Ugaritic text contains the following prayer: "When a strong foe attacks your gate, a warrior your walls, you shall lift your eyes to Ba'lu and say: 'O Ba'lu, if you drive the strong one from our gate, the warrior from our walls . . . we shall sanctify a full . . . we shall fulfill a vow . . . to the sanctuary we shall ascend, O Ba'lu . . . and Ba'lu will hear our prayer" (149-150).

In addition, there are some divination texts similar to those found in Mesopotamia and often calumniated in the Hebrew Bible. There are even some incantation texts, including some against snakes and scorpions and even male sexual dysfunction. There is also an Ugaritic text that refers to the Marzeah, an enigmatic socioreligious convocation of some sort (cf. Amos 6:7 and Jer 16:5 for the biblical references to a Marzeah).

This volume concludes with various indices, including one with references to the relevant texts of the Hebrew Bible, various personal names, and divine names. Ultimately, this volume provides an invaluable window on Canaanite religion and is a *sine qua non* for anyone wishing to develop a more profound understanding of the complexities of Canaanite religion—complexities that are so relevant for an informed reading of the Hebrew Bible.

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S.A. NIGOSIAN. *From Ancient Writings to Sacred Texts: The Old Testament and Apocrypha*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2004. 270 pp. $18.95.

The author, who teaches Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and Near Eastern Religions at Victoria College, University of Toronto, wrote this volume as a guide for college students majoring in disciplines other than biblical studies. As such, it makes no concessions to the theological convictions or ecclesiastical commitments of its readers. The title of the volume, therefore, is somewhat misleading. Only the first chapter actually considers the function of these writings as sacred texts, and that only by way of roughly nine pages on the development of the Jewish and Christian canons. On the whole, the reader will experience these as ancient writings but not necessarily as sacred texts.

The first chapter discusses the development of the Hebrew language, its use in most of the literature of the OT, the transmission and translations of the text, and recognition of the texts as Jewish and Christian Scripture. The next four chapters treat the writings of the OT in the sequence found in the Protestant canon, under the broad divisions Pentateuch, History, Poetry and Wisdom, and Prophets. Chapter six gives brief introductions to each of the apocryphal/deuterocanonical writings. The final chapter summarizes the current state of OT scholarship with respect to authorship, dating, and the history of Israelite-Jewish literature and its place within Ancient Near Eastern religion and literature. A very helpful glossary follows ("Acrostic" to "Ziggurat"), then a 30-page bibliography and an index.

The author's target audience is undergraduates unfamiliar with the contents, historical settings, or literary genres of the OT. He notes, for example, that Israelites are "ancestors of modern Jews" (1). For every OT book, the author includes a brief synopsis of its contents, a discussion of the literary genre(s), some attention to issues of authorship, dating, historical setting, and a discussion of the most pressing concerns in contemporary scholarship. He often includes at least one quotation from the text, most often of a passage famous either for its antiquity (the Song of Deborah in Judges 5), its familiarity (Psalm 8), or its moral or ethical power (Mic 6:6-8). The literary level and general vocabulary of this volume strike me as more demanding than other undergraduate Bible survey texts I have seen (for example, "cosmogony" and "cosmogonic" appear undefined in the text and are not included in the glossary).

The volume is commendable for its organization, breadth, and evenhandedness with regard to scholarship. The author usually summarizes the major theories about literary composition, dating, and authorship and introduces conventional terminology (JEDP, Deuteronomic history); at the same time, he acknowledges competing theories (the Scandinavian school, the *Enneateuc*). Although Nigosian seems generally comfortable with the mainstream consensus deriving from source-, form-, redaction-, tradition-, and rhetorical-criticism (the paradigms of the 19th and early-20th centuries), he is quick to acknowledge the value of newer methodologies (social-scientific, "new" literary, ritual, and feminist studies). The work is firmly grounded in comparative religious studies; there are frequent references to and quotations from parallel literature from the Ancient Near East (The Gilgamesh Epic, the Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers," The Wisdom of Amenemope, the Mari letters).

Readers of this journal who are at home with mainstream historical-critical scholarship will not be surprised by anything in this volume, although they may find much to disagree with. It is not suitable as a textbook in colleges where the Bible is valued and read as inspired Scripture, normative for the life and faith of the church. For the same reason, it has little to offer as seminary curriculum, not because seminarians ought not be exposed to critical biblical scholarship, but because Nigosian avoids the theological and pastoral concerns central to the study of the Bible in schools preparing students for ministerial leadership. At the same time, professional biblical scholars may value the volume for its splendid bibliography, if nothing else. Although running heavily to authors and presses typically identified with mainstream historical-critical scholarship, there is a fair representation of publications from Eerdmans, InterVarsity, Baker, and other publishers identified broadly with evangelical scholarship. Readers would be wise, as always, to verify every Scripture reference; there are a few errors. There are also some curious bibliographic references: J.A. Sanders is James A. most places, but listed as Jim Alvin Sanders where he is shown as editor of *The Dead Sea Psalms Scroll*, although that volume knows him only as J.A. Sanders.

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Martin KESSLER and Karel DEURLOO. ***A Commentary on Genesis: The Book of Beginnings.*** **New York: Paulist, 2004. 244 pp. $21.95.**

Kessler and Deurloo team up to present a nontraditional commentary on the book of Genesis. In the preface, they describe their volume as "a literary commentary on a book that is clearly cast in a narrative form" (ix). This sentence captures not only the methodology of the commentary but also sheds light on the content; extensive, in-depth treatment of all issues in Genesis is not the focus of this volume. Instead, a flowing presentation of key events and how these events display certain themes is more important to the authors.

Kessler and Deurloo move through the story of Genesis, only inserting comments on technical issues when necessary. Their desire is to help the reader understand the meaning of the final form of the text without becoming bogged down in minute details. Historical-critical issues are dealt with only in passing, and the text contains no footnotes or endnotes. These statements should not be interpreted as criticisms since this work is not intended to be compared to traditional commentaries.

Perhaps the greatest criticism that can be leveled against this commentary is the lack of space given to debated issues in the text. The authors provide only their conclusions without discussing divergent opinions. This should not be the final word on the commentary, however, since its weaknesses are countered by a refreshing approach to the text and an interesting focus at all times on two connected themes: the relationship between God and humans and the interrelationships among humans. This common analysis is applied in interesting places in the Genesis narrative.

Kessler and Deurloo have crafted a work that is useful to a wide range of scholastic capabilities. Because of its narrative form, this work is extremely easy to read and captivates the reader with a mix of text, simple notes on Hebrew words and culture, ancient Near Eastern similarities and theological cross-weaving. For this reason, it should appeal to non-Christian literary students as well as to an occasional minister seeking to supplement his study with a less technical but still highly theological work.

This commentary may also interest biblical scholars and professors because it presents a unique approach to the biblical text. Deurloo's work represents the theology and methodology of the "Amsterdam school." Kessler's work in translating it makes this commentary one of two volumes available in English that showcase this form of exegesis and methodology. In addition, some of the authors' perspectives on the framework and themes of Genesis, coupled with the narrative method of presentation, should serve as a refreshing look at this familiar OT.

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Jacob MILGROM. *Leviticus.* Continental Commentary. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004. 388 pp. $30.00.

Milgrom, Emeritus Professor of Hebrew Bible at the University of California, Berkeley, has spent fifty years of scholarship specializing in the ritual laws of the Pentateuch. As author of the monumental three-volume, two thousand seven hundred page Anchor Bible Commentary on Leviticus, he has arguably studied Leviticus more thoroughly than any person now alive and conceivably more than anyone ever. But his three-volume, erudite commentary is, to say the least, a bit overwhelming. In this new commentary, Milgrom has boiled down his earlier, massive tome to present a more concise summary of the fruit of his labors.

A problem for modern readers of Leviticus is the question of relevance. Milgrom recounts a story of chancellor of the theological seminary where Milgrom had received his doctorate. When Milgrom was a young scholar, he was invited to

teach a course at that institution, and was happily given opportunity to teach "Exilic Isaiah (chapters 40–66)" which was, in fact, the object of his Ph.D. dissertation. Later he was given another opportunity to teach, and having in the meantime discovered some insights into cultic law, he asked to teach Leviticus. To that request the same chancellor's face darkened and he shouted in anger "No!" It seemed to the chancellor that Leviticus was a completely useless book to seminary students who one day would be asked to prepare biblical sermons. Many Christians similarly find this book to be a meaningless jumble of rituals impossible to understand in Israel's context and completely irrelevant to us under the new covenant.

Milgrom's goal is to show that these rituals do in fact have meaning and are not without significance for today. Unlike his earlier commentary, where no stone is left unturned exegetically, this work is not very detailed and tries not to get bogged down in the particulars of each ritual. Instead his goal is to lay out the ideological significance of the rituals. To do that, he explores for each chapter of Leviticus a "selected theme" or two that seeks to bring out the significance of each section of the book, such as "contrast with pagans" and "partnership with laity" in Leviticus 1, "the poor person's sacrifice" in Leviticus 2, "the joyous offering" in Leviticus 3, "the priestly picture of Dorian Gray" in Leviticus 4, "sacrilege against sanctums" and "the priestly doctrine of repentance" in Leviticus 5, and so forth. These short essays appear to be intended to help make Leviticus preachable as well as more understandable.

Milgrom's work on cultic law has been groundbreaking and insightful. When he began his studies of cultic law, there were almost no serviceable commentaries on Leviticus, or as Milgrom puts it himself, "when I started to research Leviticus, I found myself on the ground floor." Many of the Christian ones available (Bonar or Kellogg) were excessively typological in approach and did not have great insight on the meaning of the rituals in Israel's historical context. Likewise works on animal sacrifice such as the one by J.H. Kurtz seem quaint and antiquated after Milgrom. One of Milgrom's greatest insights is an observation he first made decades ago that the Hebrew word חַטָּאת (*ḥaṭṭāʾth*) that had been rendered traditionally in translations as the "sin offering" is really better understood as a "purification offering" because it deals not only with sin but also with ceremonial uncleanness that has no necessary connection with sin—burying a relative is not sinful, but it did make one "unclean" and in need of sprinkling with water mixed with the ashes from the red heifer *khatta't*-offering. This insight by Milgrom must now be the standard starting point for all scholarly study of the OT sacrifices. Speaking personally, Milgrom's earlier writings have opened up for me the whole world of priestly theology. I am indebted to him for having made Leviticus both meaningful and (dare I say) enjoyable. This short commentary by Milgrom will no doubt open up the meaning of Leviticus for a new set of readers to whom I warmly commend it.

That is not to say I have no caveats about this book. First, Milgrom's Anchor Bible Commentary on Leviticus would better serve those who want exegetical detail and alternative points of view. There are no new bibliographic entries in this new commentary as compared with the earlier one and, so far as I can tell, there is little in

Milgrom's new commentary that is not said also—and usually in greater detail—in his Anchor Bible Commentary. It is the Anchor Bible Commentary on Leviticus that will remain the *magnum opus* of Milgrom's career. Those who already have that work might not wish to spend the extra money required for what is essentially an abridgment. On the other hand, those who cannot imagine wading through Milgrom's twenty-seven-hundred-page commentary on Leviticus might prefer the short form of his insights. And those of us who have the older work will find his selection of what he found the most important for a shorter work interesting in itself.

Second, Milgrom is a Jew, not a Christian, and so his consideration of the special significance of Leviticus for Christians, while not completely absent—see his helpful observation about the symbolic meaning of the abolition of the dietary laws for Christianity's relationship with Gentiles in Acts 10–11—is nonetheless limited. For example, there is not a single crossreference to the book of Hebrews. Those wanting to know more about the Christian significance of Leviticus would do better to consult the commentaries of Wenham and Hartley rather than the ones by Milgrom.

Third, Milgrom is liberal in his theology and source-critical stances. Whereas Milgrom seeks to find coherence in what he regards as part of the P source, namely Leviticus 1–16, he considers the rest of Leviticus to be from a different source, H. Moreover, Milgrom feels no constraint to find coherence between the P part of Leviticus and the H part, and even points out what he regards as contradictions. To Milgrom "YHWH said to Moses" in Leviticus does not mean that God spoke these things to Moses, but that these new laws are "derivable from Mosaic principles" as were the rabbinic oral laws. To many this will sound like strained sophistry.

The most blatant example of liberal theological bias is Milgrom's treatment of homosexuality in Lev 18:22 and 20:13. Milgrom, while admitting that the Bible condemns homosexual acts but wanting to justify the practice of homosexuality today, tries to limit the applicability of this command severely: only to Israel not the nations, only in the Holy Land not outside, and only to men not lesbians. He also floats the idea that it may apply exclusively to homosexual incest within the family, not to other homosexual relationships. Again, all this seems unconvincing. Does Milgrom likewise want to limit the applicability of the incest laws only to Israel in the land? If not, why make an exception with the homosexual law? The context applies the condemnation of violations of these laws to the nations, not just Israel (see Lev 18:24-25), and the proper framework for understanding this law comes from the creation order from which homosexual acts, both gay and lesbian, deviate. This law's applicability to Christians seems to be clinched by Paul's use of Leviticus's language. The LXX of Lev 20:13 states, "Whoever sleeps with a male in the manner of bedding (intercourse with) a woman, they have both committed an abomination." The second of Paul's words for homosexuals in 1 Cor 6:9, ἀρσενοκοίτης (*arsenokoitēs)* combines elements of the word "male" (ἀρσενικός, *arsenikos*) and the word "bed/intercourse" (κοῖτος, *koitos*). This compound word, not found in any extant Greek text earlier than 1 Corinthians, is probably derived directly from the LXX of Lev 20:13; thus, Paul's use of the term presupposes and reaffirms Leviticus's condemnation of homo-

sexual acts for the Christian (see Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament* [San Francisco: HarperSanFransisco, 1996] 382-383).

Despite these weaknesses, anyone seeking to understand the meaning of Leviticus will find this book quite helpful.

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D.N. PREMNATH. ***Eighth Century Prophets: A Social Analysis.*** **St Louis: Chalice, 2003. 229 pp. $29.99.**

This volume is a revision of the author's 1984 Graduate Theological Union PhD dissertation under the direction of Norman Gottwald, Marvin Cheney, and Robert Coote. The work clearly reflects the economic orientation of this school of interpretation, but makes application to the eighth-century prophets more thoroughly than has been done previously. The work offers a useful corrective to the overly spiritualized readings brought by most students to the literature.

The title of the volume, unlike its antecedent, is somewhat misleading. More than half of the volume passes (the first 98 of 188 pages) with scarcely a reference to the prophets. This is actually quite a good thing, but the volume would not be suitable as the primary textbook for a class on the eighth-century prophets.

Premnath calls his method "systemic analysis" (3), by which he means interpreting the prophetic writings in their ancient context and interpreting that ancient context in terms of the "dynamic interrelatedness of various structures and functions" (3) that comprise the society. Like many contemporary interpreters of ancient Israel, Premnath insists that this involves maintaining a dialogue between comparative social anthropology (observing how comparable social structures work in other societies) and the particularities of Israelite history. In addition to these two overt dialogue partners, a third, social critique of the contemporary world, receives scarce methodological discussion but is crucial to the significance of this volume.

The central argument, presented most forcefully in chapter 3, is that (1) the eighth century in Israel and Judah was a period of economic growth and political power, (2) both of these were increasingly concentrated in the hands of a ruling elite that lived in a few major cities (a process known as latifundialization), (3) as a result, the majority of Israelites were increasingly impoverished and politically disenfranchised, and (4) that this entire scenario constitutes the most important background for the eighth-century prophets. None of this will surprise anyone familiar with the prophets. Indeed, the same points are made more poetically in Abraham Heschel's classic, *The Prophets* (Harper, 2001). Premnath's most significant contribution is his synthesis of material culture and biblical interpretation. Three chapters plus an introduction and a conclusion investigate the phenomenon of latifundialization in a cross-cultural perspective (chapter 1), the beginnings of that process in Israel prior to the eighth century (chapter 2), and a reading of selected eighth-century prophetic texts in light of this evidence.

Premnath's discussion of the archaeological evidence is somewhat dated, as is to be expected since the primary research was conducted more than 15 years before this publication. The archaeological portrayal could be filled in on several points by looking at more materials published since 1990, but it would not be changed significantly. There is an accumulation of more evidence in favor of the thesis, rather than evidence that would subvert it.

Premnath's use of biblical texts is less critical than many interpreters would find comfortable. For example, he uses the books of Chronicles throughout the text as an historical source for the eighth century with seemingly no awareness that the legitimacy of this approach has been hotly debated for many years. In his treatment of the prophets, the author accepts reorderings of the Hebrew text based on the sense (118-119) but allows a nonsensical reading of it on the basis of the MT's authority (153). He also makes a number of questionable literary-critical judgments: Amos 2:9-12 "clearly do not belong in this context" (162). But the helpful discussions far outweigh the difficulties, as in his suggestion that the use of "sandals" in Amos 2:6 is a judicial metaphor for the officially sanctioned theft of land (163), or that the promiscuity in Hosea has more to do with "agricultural intensification" than with syncretism (135).

Stylistically, the work is engaging and lively, and this despite numerous redundancies and other irregularities, some of which are quite striking. For example, Premnath compares the relationship of the cities and the countryside to that of "a leach living off a human body by draining its blood" (89, 109)—a delicious image, to be sure, but irritating precisely because one remembers it. Or, when discussing the extensive wine industry at Gibeon, he twice reacts with puzzlement that the Bible makes no mention of it, in one paragraph and again in the following paragraph, and in nearly identical language.

This volume would be an excellent secondary textbook in a class on OT prophets at seminary level, or in a class discussing the relationship between biblical studies and archaeology. Its deficiencies are far outweighed by its valuable contribution to the historical and theological study of the prophets.

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Brevard S. CHILDS. *The Struggle to Understand Isaiah as Christian Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004. 332 pp. $35.00.

Childs is one of the foremost scholars in biblical studies over the past fifty years. He is perhaps best known for his seminal contributions in the area of "canonical criticism" (though Childs himself came to prefer the term "canonical approach"). One of the constants in Childs's writings has been his passion that the modern church treat the Bible as "sacred Scripture" as it carries out its pivotal tasks of preaching and teaching. This concern lies at the root of this present volume. His stated purpose is "to trace through the centuries the different ways in which great Christian theolo-

gians have struggled to understand the book of Isaiah as the church's sacred scripture, that is, as a vehicle for communicating the Christian gospel" (xi).

Childs begins his survey with a chapter analyzing the role of the Septuagint in the study of Isaiah and the NT's usage of Isaiah. He then proceeds to examine various noteworthy individuals in church history and each one's contribution to the study of Isaiah. The list is impressive: names from early church history, including Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Origen, and Jerome; then such "heavyweights" from the first half of the second millennium (up to the 1600s) as Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, and John Calvin. Childs then groups several individuals in a chapter devoted to "seventeenth- and eighteenth-century interpreters" (230-264) then more in another entitled, "the nineteenth and twentieth centuries" (265-290). A final study examines "postmodern interpretation" (291-298) before Childs offers his own "hermeneutical implications" (299-324).

Childs's work provides an incisive survey of the history of interpretation and of key issues that have arisen in the interpretation of Isaiah. Of special interest to note is the manner in which passages such as Isa 7:14 have been viewed over the years. In large part, however, this volume appears to reflect Childs's canonical approach, which advocates that the interpreter work within the structure the biblical text has received from those who shaped it and used it as sacred Scripture. The Scriptures should not be understood apart from the church, nor should the church be understood apart from the Scriptures. Essentially this is the methodology underlying Childs's research: by analyzing how Isaiah has been understood by the church over the past 2,000 years, the church today can gain significant insights into how the prophet should be interpreted in our time.

Such an approach, however, tends to sever the interpretation of the Bible from the author's intended meaning, which is a key tenet of evangelical hermeneutics. Those within the history of the church who have advocated seeking this meaning (such as Luther and Calvin) are viewed in Childs's study as expressing one of many approaches to Isaiah, rather than *the primary* approach evangelicals would claim must govern biblical interpretation. While Childs does discern a "family resemblance within Christian exegesis" (312) within the "struggle" to interpret Isaiah, one comes away asking if it is possible to do any more than "struggle" to understand the prophet—a dilemma (one should recall) with which Philip the evangelist was only too happy to help the Ethiopian eunuch.

Childs is to be commended for his warning about the impact of a postmodern approach to the Bible that disavows looking for any resemblance. In addition, Childs's irenic spirit in responding to those with whom he disagrees ("with much regret," 46; "with much sadness," 294) is an exemplary model to follow when in dialogue with others. Whatever "struggle" we engage in should be with issues, not people.

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M. Eugene BORING and Fred B.CRADDOCK. *The People's New Testament Commentary*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2004. 827 pp. $39.95.

For over 114 years, this publication, authored by B.W. Johnson, has provided those associated with the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement a concise and user-friendly guide to making sense of the NT. Needless to say, it also schooled generations in an understanding of the NT that embodied the central tenets of the movement. Stone-Campbell churches are now deeply indebted to Professors Boring and Craddock for producing a massive and complete overhaul of Johnson's work.

The authors of this new commentary state that the primary continuity between their work and its forerunner lies in the conviction that the NT belongs as much to the ordinary Christian as it does to ministers and biblical scholars. Thus Boring and Craddock explain that "[t]he aim of this commentary is to clarify matters of history, culture, geography, literature, and translation so the people can more readily listen to the text" (ix).

One major difference between Johnson's work and its successor is that the latter does not produce a text of the NT. While basing their commentary on the NRSV with a close eye on the evangelical NIV, the authors have only reproduced (in bold font) those biblical words or phrases which they attempt to elucidate. The result of this procedure is approximately 808 pages of commentary (in relatively small font), a massive increase over the modest annotations of Johnson. Interspersed within these pages are helpful introductions and outlines of each NT document. Within these pages one also finds 16 figures and 19 excursuses that usually address a theologically troubling issue. A five-page introduction to the NT prefaces the volume, and a three-page bibliography, guiding the reader to further readings, concludes it. Unfortunately, no maps are provided.

Johnson's work and this volume have two other notable differences.. The latter assume a Bible that, as a whole, faithfully bears witness to God's work in Christ but also contains real discrepancies in various details. Such should not be harmonized, say the authors, "but celebrated as part of the biblical witness that God has chosen to work through fallible human beings" (390). This outlook is related to another difference between Johnson and his successors: the latter worship and work in a milieu (Disciples of Christ) that has been assimilated into the scholarship of mainline Protestantism and moderate-liberal Roman Catholicism of the post-Vatican II era. The perspective of liberal Protestantism appears in the authors' brief treatment of homosexuality (472-473) and openness to Roman Catholicism, evidenced not only in the bibliography but also in their sympathetic treatment of the Pastoral Epistles (for example, "husband of one wife" in 1 Tim 3:2 is treated as an absolute prohibition of a second marriage).

Naturally, any work of this scope and daring will have shortcomings. In particular, regular appeal to "confessional" or "nonobjectifying" language in order to cope with some of the miracle traditions in the Gospels and Acts will not help the average layperson. What is the "something real" to which such language points (17), and if the stories are not literally true, how did they come to be told? Why

should talk of the resurrection of Jesus not be viewed as "nonobjectifying" (101)? Moreover, the argument that St. John the Divine had such a dialectical view of final salvation that he could affirm ultimate salvation as both limited and universal (817-819) was unpersuasive.

Nevertheless, Boring and Craddock are to be heartily congratulated for having given the church a one-volume commentary on the NT (no mean achievement!) that is based on recent biblical research, designed for the layperson in the pew, ecumenical in every direction, and that both presupposes and advocates a robust Nicene Christology with its correlative Trinitarian stance. Any school, minister, or scholar associated with the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement would neglect to purchase this important tool. It will receive significant use among members of mainline Protestant churches.

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Paul D. WEGNER. *A Student's Guide to Textual Criticism of the Bible: Its History, Methods and Results.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005. 208 pp. $18.00.

Textual criticism seems to be one of those disciplines everyone agrees is necessary but celebrates that someone else is doing. The interest among students is anything but energetic. However, the need for not just a genuine appreciation for textual critics but also for a broad understanding of the art of textual criticism is paramount. The issues facing scholars regarding the nature and aims of textual criticism require that students be adequately trained in textual criticism to be able to competently address these issues.

To that end, this volume is a welcome addition. Using language readily accessible to students, Wegner takes up the unenviable task of introducing textual criticism. The scope of his work is indeed ambitious, attempting to introduce textual criticism of both the OT and the NT. The scope of his work is perhaps the greatest strength of this introductory text. Wegner's discussion of differences between the two types of textual criticism fills a gap too often present in curriculum.

Wegner organizes his volume quite predictably, first presenting a rationale for text criticism, then a discussion of the types of errors known to have occurred in transmission. Second, he introduces textual criticism of the OT. Here he provides a good survey of the history and practice of textual criticism of the OT, along with a nice summary of relevant source materials. He follows the same format in his approach to the NT. Finally, he concludes with a helpful survey of the ancient editions often unfamiliar to beginning and even intermediate students.

Sadly lacking in Wegner's volume is sufficient discussion of textual criticism of the Septuagint or of exactly how this might influence the study of either the OT or the NT. This perhaps represents a weakness not with Wegner himself but with the

prevailing attitude toward the Septuagint in the church. As with many of the deficiencies with Wegner, his bibliography is helpful in overcoming this deficiency.

Wegner's volume suffers an unfortunate lacuna due to the accident of timing and not to any fault of Wegner himself. This volume was released just as the first fascicle of the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* was published. The author was thus incapable of including information on this edition of the Hebrew Bible. This is especially unfortunate, considering that one of the goals of the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* is to provide more text-critical data for readers. This would be a welcome inclusion in a future edition.

This volume is certainly insufficient to equip the student of biblical languages to adequately perform textual criticism. His work is often a bit more cursory than one might have hoped. This can be forgiven, though, because the volume is, after all, an introductory text, and Wegner provides extensive bibliographies within each section. He thus achieves a balance essential for introductory works that is rare. He successfully balances the detail provided in the text with suggested readings for students who wish to pursue the material more in-depth, conveniently weaving these suggestions into the text rather than providing one extensive bibliography at the end. Wegner's work is a valuable addition to the teaching tools for biblical languages and is particularly accessible to and aware of the needs of students who intend to practice ministry.

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Craig G. BARTHOLOMEW and Michael W. GOHEEN. *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004. 256 pp. $19.99.

This offering by Bartholomew and Goheen, both at Redeemer University College in Ontario, seeks to bring the beginner into the world of narrative approaches to biblical theology by providing an accessible introductory textbook.

The title of the volume reveals a number of its emphases. First, the story of God's redemption of humankind is presented as a six-act drama featuring the King and His Kingdom. Act 1 tells the story of creation, Act 2 tells of human rebellion, and the lengthy Act 3 tells of the selection of Israel and the initiation of God's redemption. An interlude tells the anticipatory story of the intertestamental period, leading into Act 4, the "Coming of the King:" the story of Jesus and the accomplishment of redemption in his death and resurrection. Act 5 speaks of the spread of the Church, and Act 6, appropriately titled "Return of the King," finishes eschatologically.

Second, as the title suggests, Bartholomew and Goheen see the act of God with humankind as a single, continual dramatic series of events, from the Garden of Eden through the people of Israel and into the Gentile world through the redemption of Jesus. To end the play at Sinai, or in the Land, or during David's reign, or in prophetic repentance—or even to read the Bible in a fragmented, disconnected way—is to interrupt the story and not see the ending.

Third, there is a two-pronged approach to the work. The work includes a biblical scholar, Bartholomew, and a missiologist, Goheen. Not only are the authors dependent upon biblical academics like David Wenham and N.T. Wright, but also upon authors like Lesslie Newbigin. The volume does not simply relate biblical material in its ancient theological setting, but also includes an interest in finding one's place in the drama, as the subtitle suggests.

The overall result is commendatory. The textbook really is accessible to first-year university students. The approach to the application of the story is refreshing and holistic, taking all of creation into view. It is an accomplished, finely written and integrated work, and supported well by various resources on the authors' website, www.biblicaltheology.ca.

The volume does have some weaknesses. Much of the telling of the story seems to be merely an abridgment of the biblical narratives. For example, they tell the story of Acts with little historical background, exploration of OT echoes in the story, comment on Luke's storytelling devices, or addition of material from traditional or other New Testament sources. Creative moments occur throughout the volume, but some of the story lacks theological integration or critical engagement, and the generally good introduction to Jesus is impoverished in Hebrew background—an odd thing, given that this is a narrative biblical theology. Furthermore, the volume is simplistic at points. The range of scholarly conversation is limited primarily to British scholars and American evangelical writers. This volume could be viewed as a translation of N.T. Wright's work for beginners, though it is adequate in that respect. An example of where simplicity causes the work to suffer is the unanswered question of what reading the full OT and NT together as a single story means for non-Christian Jewish contemporaries of Jesus and Paul. Moreover, the authors should have included some endnotes on issues that are highly debated, such as historical referentiality, authorship issues, and the current rereadings of ancient Jewish sects.

Despite some gaps, this is an excellent effort, and the reviewer would recommend it for use in Christian colleges or adult education programs within Stone-Campbell Restoration churches. The material is open enough for supplements and caveats by the teacher without doing damage to the concept. This volume is an excellent gateway into a fruitful discussion of biblical theology with a creative approach to bringing "God's Story" into one's own story.

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Russell PREGEANT. *Matthew*. St. Louis: Chalice, 2004. 201 pp. $24.99.

Pregeant more than meets the expectations set forth in the 'Series Preface:' the commentary is "designed to help pastors, seminary students, and educated laity. . ." (vii). Some background in redaction criticism and process theology is needed to comprehend the analysis given. He is also true to "laypersons and pastors I have

known . . . who dare to doubt so that faith may grow" (xi). There is plenty of doubt in this commentary. In fact, "this commentary is based in the premise that the meaning of a text is in some degree open-ended" (201). Doubt and honest questioning of the text are significant themes.

It is difficult to argue intellectually against the idea of redaction criticism. Certainly, the Gospel writers were redactors, editors. Each writer had a purpose for his audience. Each author chose material he believed pertinent to his theme. However, such a premise does not necessarily mean that the authors are not who church tradition suggests they are. At one level the author of Matthew is unknown. Pregeant, therefore, simply calls the writer "the Narrator." He does not really discuss authorship. His focus is on the text and reader response.

A conclusion of this presupposition is that the gospel of Matthew was written after the destruction of Jerusalem. Pregeant raises a number of issues that he claims would not be pertinent to a postdestruction audience, thus questioning their authenticity. He does not, however, allow the possibility of solutions if the writing were prior to AD 70.

The format is very helpful. A readable pericope is chosen, and then Pregeant forthrightly explains the text as such. Usually this is accomplished with little personal commentary. The next section is entitled "Thinking Today." At this point possible application, insights, and personal opinion are shared. These are given in a clear, thoughtful manner. Pregeant's focus is on the here and now. That approach seems appropriate in light of Jesus' words "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt 6:10). The Christian faith is not just about going to heaven. It is about bringing heaven to earth. God does not just want us in heaven, he wants heaven in us.

The focus in the volume on the text helps uncover the structure of Matthew. For instance, the point is made that the third great discourse, chapter 13, "is bracketed by two stories concerning Jesus' family . . . the effect of the bracketing is thus to allow the themes of cosmic conflict and Jesus' family/hometown to interpret one another. . . . [this] means placing the will of God above community loyalty and, indeed, even family" (103). This type of example is seen throughout the volume.

A thought-provoking but difficult point is made in reference to salvation. Pregeant suggests that a personal belief in Jesus is not the criteria of salvation. Rather, it is deeds of mercy and love. These can be done regardless of "acknowledgement of Jesus" (179).

The last section, "26:1–28:20, An Open-Ended Conclusion," is exactly that. Very little is discussed concerning the physical resurrection of Jesus. The focus in these pages is upon the various people mentioned in the narrative. Although Jesus is mentioned as one of the people, the resurrection is not a focal point of that discussion.

Pregeant's open-ended approach is definitely an expression of his strong bent toward process theology. A bibliographical list of process theology publications is given at the end of the volume. The process thought, along with the heavy use of redaction criticism, goes a few steps too far for this reviewer.

This volume is challenging, full of insights, and gives ample room for open dis-

cussion full of both agreement and disagreement. This reviewer's final word is best expressed in Pregeant's own words: "He [Jesus] will condemn the scribes and Pharisees not for faulty theology but for the content of their characters" (160). While this reviewer considers the theology expressed in this volume faulty, he wishes in no way to cast aspersion on Pregeant's very worthy character and would like to express his appreciation for the addition of this publication to the world of theology.

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Kevin W. LARSEN. ***Seeing and Understanding Jesus: A Literary and Theological Commentary on Mark 8:22–9:13.*** **Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005. 219 pp. $34.00.**

In the eighth chapter of Mark, Jesus is concerned that his disciples see but do not understand (8:17-18,21). Jesus then portrays his concern by healing a blind man in two stages (8:22-26). Larsen draws the title of this volume both from these ancient episodes and from our contemporary situation. The author defines our contemporary situation in terms of interpreters of Mark seeing but not understanding the meaning of Mark's central pericopes in chapters eight and nine. Larsen urges interpreters to look at these passages with deeper understanding, like the blind man of Bethsaida who "saw everything clearly" (8:25).

What interpreters typically see is the Markan focus on discipleship. What interpreters too often do not understand is that following (discipleship) requires a leader. In the Gospels, of course, that leader is Jesus. In this volume, Larsen combats that lack of emphasis or focus on Christology. Simply stated, Mark's primary emphasis is Christology, not discipleship. The primary reason for this mistaken focus on discipleship is the inattention paid to Jesus' transfiguration (9:2-13). When interpreters view the center of Mark as two pericopes (healing the blind man and Peter's confession with Jesus' response, both in chapter 8), they are beginning to see. When interpreters view the center of Mark as three pericopes (adding the transfiguration in chapter 9), they are ready to understand. "This is my beloved Son; hear him!" (9:7).

The volume displays thorough and exemplary exegesis. The author commences by placing the structure of the text within the broader Markan narrative. Larsen identifies 8:22-26, 8:27–9:1, and 9:2-13 as individual pericopae. These divisions are common, though not unanimous, among scholars (Larsen joins the minority only in rejecting a pericope division at 8:30, a division recognized, for example, by NRSV, NIV, UBSGNT[4], and Aland's *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum*). More important than strict dividing lines is a consideration of the relationship of each pericope to surrounding sections and to the Gospel as a whole. This is especially the case with Mark 8:22-26. Larsen identifies extensive connections between this passage and both the preceding and following material, eventually identifying these central verses as a hinge section (59). Because of the broad nature of such discus-

sions, the volume is a valuable contribution to the study of the structure of Mark as a whole. After analyzing structure, Larsen performs verse-by-verse exegesis. Professors and their students will appreciate the detail and clarity of Larsen's approach to text, grammar, and syntax. Each chapter ends with a discussion of the theological significance of the text. Those using the volume for preaching would do well to spend considerable time in these theological sections.

Features characteristic of a volume that began as a dissertation include occasional technical language [e.g., "*exordium*" (24), "hiph" (49), "first class conditional" (107), "epexegetical" (115)], extensive literature reviews, and a 22-page bibliography. These characteristics, as well as the volume's rigorous exegesis in general, suggest readership at the seminary level and above.

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Clay Alan HAM. *The Coming King and the Rejected Shepherd: Matthew's Reading of Zechariah's Messianic Hope.* Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2005. 192 pp. $95.00.

Although not a voluminous work, Ham's monograph on Matthew's use of Zechariah in his Gospel contributes substantially to the discussion. This is due to the fact that Ham undertakes an exercise which has not been done previous to his book: a full-length study on the quotations and allusions to Zechariah found in the narrative of Matthew's Gospel. He begins by interacting with the history of scholarship concerning this topic, pointing out the weaknesses of these former projects and the gaps which they have left unfilled concerning Matthew's intertextual use of Zechariah. Their primary weakness, according to Ham, is that most of these studies have focused on the Gospel's formula quotations alone. Thus, Matthew's more nuanced treatments of the OT (in the form of less explicit allusions) have received relatively little attention. Ham's work seeks to correct this oversight by examining both the explicit quotations and the implicit allusions to Zechariah in the first gospel.

The first of the three chapters in the body of his work deals with the explicit quotations of Zechariah in Matthew. The second examines the possible allusions to Zechariah in Matthew, and seeks to determine whether each is a legitimate reference to the OT book. In his third chapter, Ham argues that the theological themes derived from Zechariah of Davidic kingship and the rejection of God's appointed shepherd are combined in Matthew to portray Jesus as a messianic shepherd-king. In all examinations of these passages, Ham employs a "comparative exegetical" methodology. This methodology, as suggested by its title, compares the interpretation of a NT passage which cites or alludes to an OT text with the interpretations of that OT text found elsewhere in the body of Jewish and Christian literature that shares with the gospel a sociocultural context. Thus, each passage from Zechariah under observation is examined grammatically within its new Matthean context, discussed in light of its original OT context, and considered in light of other inter-

pretations from the Dead Sea Scrolls, OT Pseudepigrapha, rabbinic literature, the early church fathers, and other works of the NT.

An obvious strength of Ham's study is his incorporation of the implicit allusions to Zechariah in Matthew in addition to the explicit quotations. This allows the former to contribute in forming a more complete picture of the intertextual relationship between the two texts. Also to be commended is his weighing of a variety of evidence which might aid by comparison and contrast in the interpretation of each use of Zechariah in Matthew's Gospel. Concerning his treatment of the allusions to Zechariah in the second chapter of his study, one might wonder at the methodological basis for discussing separately the allusions that are positioned before Matthew's passion narrative and those that are found within it. The answer might lie simply in the order of the appearances of the allusions in the Matthean narrative, although it is strange that Ham does not likewise discuss the explicit quotations of Zechariah in the order that they appear in Matthew's narrative. Is it significant that Ham deems all of these potential allusions present before the passion narrative dubious? What does this say, if anything, about his view of the literary and theological relationship between the passion narrative and the rest of Matthew's Gospel? These are questions that are sparked by Ham's approach, but are ones which he leaves unanswered.

This study on Matthew's use of Zechariah contains a thorough and well-researched examination of the function of the OT text in the Gospel's portrayal of Jesus as the messianic shepherd-king. It is a fine example of the study of intertextuality for both the seasoned and aspiring scholar.

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Eckhard J. SCHNABEL. *Early Christian Mission: Jesus and the Twelve* (Vol. 1) and *Early Christian Mission: Paul and the Early Church* (Vol. 2). Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004. 1928 pp. $90.00.

Given the sheer size of this tome (two volumes, 1,928 pages), Schnabel should be congratulated on the translation alone of his *Early Christian Mission* from its German counterpart, *Urchristliche Mission*, regardless of its content. That being said, the content is more than commendable as well.

Schnabel traces the history of missions from Genesis to Paul. He argues that the missionary impulse is ideologically present in creation but arises more practically in the Abrahamic covenant. However, according to Schnabel, a missionary praxis itself (in terms of active attempts to convert individuals to the worship of Yahweh) is altogether absent in the OT and in intertestamental Jewish literature. No prototype exists of missionary activity that may serve as a historical precedent for the missionary activity of Jesus and his followers. The activity of the early church, Schnabel claims, is rooted in the historical ministry of Jesus and the continuation of that ministry by his early followers, including Paul after his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus.

This massive study has many strengths and a few weaknesses. Regarding

strengths, not only does Schnabel provide several comprehensive and handy outlines, as well as an entire appendix of maps and figures, but he also provides helpful distinctions in terms of the content of his study. For example, he clearly differentiates between missionary ideas and missionary praxis, claiming that the latter was first initiated by Jesus' followers following their Easter experiences of the risen Lord and of Pentecost. Along similar lines, Schnabel helpfully distinguishes between the historical origins of Christian mission (found in Jesus' life and ministry) and the effective origins of Christian mission (found in the post-Resurrection experiences of his early followers). Another strength of the study is Schnabel's insistence on analyzing the sayings of Jesus against the backdrop of their narrative context rather than following the practice of many of his German predecessors (isolating the individual saying apart from their context). Admirably, Schnabel includes a final chapter which comments on current missiological methods and church growth strategies; this chapter catapults the volume out of merely academic study and into practical issues. As a final strength, though one may critique his conclusions, Schnabel effectively demonstrates his comprehensive engagement with the many fields of biblical scholarship found in this text as he includes literary, historical, geographical, cultural, and archaeological data throughout.

Schnabel's weaknesses are few but nonetheless present. As a publication matter, this translation contains sections of smaller font that are set off from the rest of the text. Since there is no explanation for this in the front matter, one must only assume that these are sections not included in the German original, but such an assumption is simply speculation. Second, though many *SCJ* readers will appreciate, as this reader did, Schnabel's tenacious defense of the historicity of Luke–Acts, qualified in terms of Luke's intentions (912), and his stern critiques of scholars who dismiss evangelical scholarship, his combative rhetoric does at times detract from the overall purpose of his study. Nothing is inherently wrong with conservative conclusions, especially when they are argued for and documented as Schnabel has here. However, this text tends toward predictability in a way that can be unappealing to its reader.

Schnabel's work certainly deserves the attribution of "masterpiece" it garners from Craig A. Evans on the back of the dust jacket. Though it is of only limited use in the undergraduate or Sunday School classroom , graduate students and faculty of theological institutions can hardly afford to ignore it. Missionaries and missiologists who seek to base their current endeavors on the example of the early church may find it vital to their work.

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Murry J. HARRIS. *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians.* New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005. 1072 pp. $75.00

This volume represents a lifetime achievement for Harris, Professor Emeritus of New Testament Exegesis and Theology, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. This

beloved professor (now retired to his homeland, New Zealand), though renowned for his profound knowledge of Greek (e.g., his highly regarded essay on prepositions in *NIDNTT* 3:1171-1215.), has always been passionate about his work on 2 Corinthians. Two of his M.A. students, myself (*2 Corinthians*, College Press, 1999) and Linda Belleville (*2 Corinthians*, InterVarsity, 1996), caught this passion in class and also published commentaries on 2 Corinthians. While Harris did publish a well-received commentary as part of Volume 10 in the Expositor's Bible Commentary (Zondervan) in 1976, it was confined to barely over 100 pages: a straightjacket compared to the 1000 pages he fills with winsome, unfettered analysis in this current volume.

Building on the conclusions of his own mentor, F.F. Bruce, Harris follows a chronology of Paul that places Galatians and 1 and 2 Thessalonians before his writing of 1 and 2 Corinthians. He considers 2 Corinthians 2:4 to refer to a "Severe" letter so specific to the Corinthian situation that it had little value to later churches (8). Despite cases pressed by reputable scholars regarding fragments of other letters in 2 Corinthians (2:14–7:4), he concludes that 2 Corinthians is one letter. While recognizing its internal unity, he believes it far more likely for Paul himself to have "indulged in a massive digression" (13) as regards 2:17–7:4 than for a redactor to have engaged in such an effort. Regarding 6:14–7:1, Harris notes vocabulary that does not fit the letter but believes Paul originally composed it at another time for another occasion and inserted it himself (25). Regarding chapters 8 and 9, he makes the case that once it is agreed that they "belong together," their connection to chapters 1–7 is clear (29). Finally, on the matter of chapters 10–13, Harris rejects both the Hausrath proposal (chapters 10–13 preceding 1–9) and the Semler proposal (chapters 10–13 are a part of a separate letter sent subsequent to chapters 1–9), instead defending the view that Paul received bad news about the Corinthian church between the dictation of chapters 1–9 and chapters 10–13 (43). He mildly chides Otto Betz ("2 Corinthians," *Anchor Bible Dictionary,* 1:1148-1154) and Ralph Martin (*2 Corinthians*, Word, 1986) for prematurely pronouncing the disunity of 2 Corinthians as nearly unanimous among scholars and notes the resurgence of conclusions of unity for 2 Corinthians since their pronouncements (43). Despite the fact that rhetorical analyses of 2 Corinthians aid in demonstrating its unity, Harris is not convinced that Paul would have so formally organized his letters to friends (109).

Harris carefully scrutinizes Paul's language about his opposition in Corinth. First, he makes a distinction between the "false apostles" (11:22-23) and the "super-apostles" (11:15; 12:11). The false apostles Paul considers himself superior to, but to the "super-apostles" he considers himself equal (75-76). Thus, "super-apostles" references the Twelve (as used by his opponents), though some consider it a reference only to James, Peter, John. Second, Harris identifies two opposition groups toward whom Paul directs his remarks in 2 Corinthians. Based on information in both 1 and 2 Corinthians, Harris detects a "proto-Gnostic" group with tendencies toward spiritualized eschatology and libertinism (83). In 2 Corinthians he detects a group claiming to be Christians with credentials from Jerusalem but who were, in fact, Judaizers, those who lost the debate in Acts 15 (85-86).

Additional features worth noting in this commentary include a chronology of the relations of Paul, Timothy, and Titus with the Corinthian Church (101-105); a representation of rhetorical analyses of 2 Corinthians (105-108); a sample of chiastic analyses of 2 Corinthians (110-114); theological summaries of the Godhead, salvation, the gospel, the church, apostleship, Christian ministry, the Christian life, suffering, stewardship, Satan, and eschatology (114-125); a 100-page bibliography at the front; and an expanded paraphrase of 2 Corinthians at the back that lays out in unmistakable language Harris's interpretive views.

As anticipated, Harris lays out exegetically his distinctive views on bodily resurrection. Based on 2 Cor 5:1-10, Harris declares, "There is no evidence in the Pauline corpus that death removes believers from their ἐν Χριστω incorporation" (371) and "there is no reason to suppose that an interval of time separates" the believer from being away from the body and being home with the Lord (400). Given several alternatives, he argues for the future acquisition of the spiritual body as an ideal possession actualized at the parousia (375-380). Yet, his argument that this interval between a believer's death and the parousia is not a "disembodiment" but a "preservation" is not based on 2 Corinthians so much as it is on trying to find a medium between 2 Corinthians 5 and 1 Corinthians 15. His comments on 2 Corinthians itself seem to lean more toward the "future acquisition of the spiritual body at death" view.

In this commentary Harris demonstrates to the highest degree the goals of this unparalleled series: thorough exegesis, attention to Greek details when helpful, unflappable discussion of exegetical options informed by immersion into secondary literature, and careful but clearly reasoned conclusions in all matters. Reading a commentary like this requires a graduate-level education, but those who are able will be rewarded for their preparation.

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