BOOK REVIEWS / LES COMPTES RENDUS DES LIVRES

Guy Appéré, *Le Mystère de Christ.* Mulhouse : Editions Grâce et Vérité, 1980, 153 pages.

Le Mystére de Christ, un commentaire sur l'épître aux Colossiens, mérite d'être au premier plan parmi les commentaires méditatifs dans une bibliothèque française évangélique. Le développement du texte biblique est très clair, solide, orthodoxe, et se concentre sur Jésus Christ. Son style est simple, clair, pur et normatif. Il n'y a pas de spéculation, ni de guerre théologique contre des mouvements chrétiens. L'auteur explique purement et simplement le texte et les arguments de Paul dans l'épitre. Cette œuvre est très agréable à lire.

Notre livre semble être mis sur le marché pour trois types d'acheteurs : ceux qui diregent des études bibliques, les prédicateurs hélas surchargés devant chercher des commentaires pratiques pour préparer leurs messages, et ceux qui aiment les publications de piété. Cependant, il manque à ce livre trois qualités importantes nécessaires à la présentation de ce matériel en public : des illustrations, des applications à chaque point, et des questions à débattre. Ce livre, visant surtout le marché de littérature évangélique, est écrit pour le marché européen et non nord-américain. A la lumière de ces réserves, l'on peut bien profiter de ce livre.

Guy Appéré a divisé l'épître en vingt parties; chacune représente un chapitre de six ou sept pages. Dans chaque chapitre, le texte biblique est résumé brièvement, et deux ou quatre mots ou expressions clés sont identifiés, autour desquels l'auteur enveloppe ses observations méditatives.

Le texte imprimé est net, clair et assez espacé; les marges sont assez grandes pour inscrire des annotations. Le grand défaut des éditeurs (et non de l'auteur) est la qualité de la reliure : toutes les pages de mon exemplaire se sont détachées.

Ma dernière critique est influencée par le milieu dans lequel je travaille : le champ missionnaire. Je note la perspective fort occidentale de l'auteur. L'application du texte, lorsque présente, s'adresse aux églises occidentales. Par contre, la plupart des croyants évangéliques sont situés hors de cette culture, et la grande majorité de la littérature évangélique occidentale arrive éventuellement dans les bibliothèques des pays d'Outre-Mer. En faisant cela, n'implantons-nous pas, sans le vouloir, des principes et des concepts occidentaux? Que les éditeurs puissent exiger de leurs auteurs préférés qu'ils s'adressent aux lecteurs et lectrices du monde entier, et qu'ils fassent les recherches nécessaires au sujet des églises de chaque continent. Ceci dit, le travail de Guy Appéré est très valable pour nous qui cherchons des commentaires pratiques et méditatifs.

Benjamin Hegeman
L'école biblique Bariba, Bénin.

Peter Barnes, *Seeing Jesus: The Case Against Pictures of the Lord Jesus Christ*. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1990, 14 pages.

This small booklet tackles an issue rarely discussed today in Christian circles: are pictorial representations of Christ, in illustrations or on film, helpful or even legitimate? Apart from a chapter in J.I. Packer's *Knowing God*, the reviewer cannot recall seeing a current discussion of this issue. Yet, as Peter Barnes ably argues, this is an issue which the Church does need to address.

Barnes, a Presbyterian minister from New South Wales, Australia, first looks at the Scriptures, which ultimately must decide this issue. He cites the second commandment of the Decalogue [Exod 20:4-6], which prohibits any use of images or pictures in the worship of God, and then refers to a swarm of Scriptural texts which reiterate this command in one way or another: Lev 26:1; Ps 115:1-8; Is 2:8; 40:18-20; 41:21-29; 46:5-7; Hos 13:2; Amos 5:26-27; Acts 17:24-25; Rom 1:22-25; 1 John 5:21. Barnes further notes that the second commandment not only forbids the worshipping of such images, but also their construction. "This sweeping prohibition is based on the truth that *all* representations of God dishonour Him" [p.6]. Those who would argue that the incarnation obviates this commandment and now allows for pictorial representations of at least Christ are met with the telling rebuttal that such representations "cannot portray Christ in the full glory of His deity." And by being unable to portray the deity of Christ, they represent him as far less that he actually is.

Barnes rightly emphasizes that no description at all of Christ can be found in the Scriptures apart from the slenderest of hints, such as Isa 53:2. Thus, although Christ has indeed come in the flesh, we are given no real idea as to his physical appearance. Consequently, every representation of Christ is inaccurate. Moreover, pictorial representations of Christ invariably recreate him in the artist's own image and that of his culture. "Hence we find the Byzantine Christ, the Anglo-Saxon Christ, the African Christ, the hippy Christ, and so on - but none of them the authentic Christ" [p.5].

The second major area which Barnes looks at is the testimony of Church history. As he admits, this is something of a mixed bag. Prior to the toleration of the Church in the early fourth century, the widely-held belief was that pictures of Christ were not an option for believers. As the fourth century progressed, however, the Church began to take a more liberal perspective and embrace images of Christ as part of its life and worship. This new perspective, though, did not go unchallenged. Epiphanius of Salamis (*ca.*315-403), for instance, wrote a number of treatises against portrayals of Christ, and asserted in his will that "if anyone should dare, using the Incarnation as an excuse, to look at the divine image of the God Logos painted with earthly colours, let him be anathema." Such protests were generally unsuccessful. It was only with the Reformation that the widespread use of images and pictures was successfully challenged, as John Calvin (1509-1564) and his heirs totally rejected the use of pictorial representations of Christ. Barnes is quick to point out that this opposition to portrayals of Christ was not a blanket rejection of the arts. As Calvin himself declared in his *Institutes* 1.11.12: "Because sculpture and painting are gifts of God, I seek a pure and legitimate use of each."

In his conclusion, Barnes relates his discussion of pictorial representations of Christ to the Church's need for revival. Where the Church begins to use such representations, Barnes affirms, it is a sign of declension and decay. In support, he alludes to the contention of Amy Carmichael (1867-1951) that the Church has resort to pictures of Christ only when her power has gone. Yes, we must see Jesus; but it is through the

preaching of the Word and by faith. Such are "the God-ordained means of revival" [p.13]. All in all, this is a well-argued booklet that provides food for thought and comes highly recommended.

Michael A.G. Haykin,
Central Baptist Seminary, Gormley, Ontario.

Abraham Booth, *An Essay on the Kingdom of Christ.* 1788 ed.; repr. Paris, Arkansas: The Baptist Standard Bearer, 1987, 76 pages. Available from: The Baptist Standard Bearer, No.1 Iron Oaks Drive, Paris, Arkansas 72855.

In his day, Abraham Booth (1734-1806) was one of the leading pastors of the English Calvinistic Baptist denomination. Once described by Andrew Fuller as "the first counsellor of our denomination," he was always referred to by his contemporaries with deep respect. His chief claim to literary fame is probably his *The Reign of Grace* (1768). This essay, which has also been reprinted a number of times, was written some twenty years later, and is a valuable exploration of the ramifications of our Lord's confession before Pontius Pilate: "my kingdom is not of this world" [John 18:36]. Booth argues that by this statement Christ depicts himself as a spiritual monarch, ruling over the realm of the human conscience and the heart [p.6-7]. Moreover, since "the empire of Christ...extends to every creature" [p.5], his kingdom cannot be regarded as coterminous with any earthly state. Building on these assertions, Booth queries "whether any national religious establishment can be a part of his kingdom" [p.21]. Booth hastens to add that he has no doubt that many in the Church of England of his day, the "national religious establishment" in view here, were genuine members of Christ's kingdom. He is rightly calling into question, though, a marriage between Church and State, common in his day and regarded with nostalgia by some evangelicals in ours. Moreover, due to the fact that Christ's kingdom is a spiritual one, its establishment is by means consonant with its nature: "evangelical truth and spiritual gifts, laborious and ardent prayer, fortitude, patience, and a holy example" [p.29].

A highly instructive section on church architecture occurs in the last third of the essay. Arguing that "the kingdom of Christ is not like the empires of this world, in regard to external splendour" [p.45], Booth critiques the idea that one honours Christ by "erecting pompous places of worship, (*and*) by consecrating those places" [p.45]. For a place of worship, simplicity and a convenient location are all that are needed [p.46]. The erection of splendid and expensive edifices for Christian worship has, in Booth's estimation, its origin in "a perverse imitation of Pagans," and was introduced into Christian circles by Constantine [p.56-57]. Booth can thus assert that "a congregation of day-labourers with an illiterate minister in the meanest habit, convened in a barn, may be a spiritual temple, enjoy the Divine presence, and perform the christian worship in all its glory" [p.50]. This argument in favour of what is essentially a plain, functional building designed for worship that is truly corporate and for the meeting of God's people around the ministry of the Word basically went unchallenged in Baptist circles till the mid-1800s. At that time Baptist church buildings began to be consciously modelled on Anglican Gothic structures, in order to express the growing Baptist conviction that in every measure they were equal to their Anglican neighbours. A similar conviction of "having arrived" seems to grip modern Canadian evangelical Baptists; is it not reflected in some of our newest church buildings and renovated "sanctuaries"? Booth's words are thus still very timely ones and bear much pondering.

Michael A.G. Haykin,
Central Baptist Seminary, Gormley, Ontario.

David K. Clark and Norman L. Geisler, *Apologetics in the New Age: A Christian Critique of Pantheism.* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990, 254 pages.

As the title of this book indicates, it deals with a broader subject than the current New Age trend. It is in fact a full frontal assault upon pantheism in general, the only such work in print from scholarly evangelical philosophers. The authors are both qualified for the task. Clark holds a Ph.D. in philosophy of religion from Northwestern University. This is his second bout with pantheism, having already written a book dealing with Alan Watts. Geisler has his Ph.D. from Loyola University and is a well-known apologist for the Christian faith, having written a number of books dealing with major worldviews, including the New Age and Eastern thought.

They begin with a brief historical overview, detailing how Eastern thought has invaded the West and then giving their reasons for critiquing it. They see these beliefs as unbiblical, as not fitting reality, and as unable to deliver what they promise. They then launch into their first major task, a survey of pantheism's basic forms. A specific representative scholar is chosen from each of five schools. Their views are concisely and fairly presented in enough detail that the distinctives of each form are clear without being cumbersome in treatment. The famous Zen Buddhist scholar D.T. Suzuki represents the Permeational Pantheistic School. While pantheism itself is the general belief that "God is the world and the world is God," there is the necessity of examining these views individually, for it soon becomes clear that there are differing degrees as to how far this basic equation is taken. Suzuki's school, for example, seeks an experience of the unity they believe underlies, penetrates and infiltrates all reality. They seek a new perception, in which the true emptiness of all forms is realized. The mediaeval philosopher Shankara is interacted with to deal with Absolute Pantheism, the view of Classical Hinduism. In this version of pantheism only God is real and all else is of an illusory quality. It involves a quest to go beyond using rationality to make distinctions of any sort and for an experience of unity with a higher cosmic Self, which is the only real entity and upon whom everything is dependent. Sarvepali Radhakrishnan steps in for Modern Hinduism, which takes the form of a Multilevel Pantheism. Here again we find God as the only ultimate reality, but now other things exist at varying lower levels of reality. Some things are more real than others. Everyday reality is reinterpreted as revealing the Ultimate One, rather than totally denied. Next we journey to the West, where the Neo-Platonic Greek philosopher Plotinus shows us an Emanational Pantheism. Here we find that God's being overflows and grows into the world in a series of ascendable emanations. The other Western representative is Benedict de Spinoza, who holds a view in which all things are merely modifications of God's infinite being. This is a model of pantheism worked out within a rationalist framework.

The critique in the second section is undoubtedly what will attract most Christians to this work. The four-pronged attack on New Age thinking, on worldview in general, knowledge of consciousness, religious mysticism, and the problem of evil, really boils down to one issue, epistemology: how do we know what we know? Alongside this question the authors are also concerned with the issue of reliable authority: who do you trust for truth in this system? These two issues run through all four fronts of this assault on pantheism. Before launching into their critique they first give a brief overview of New Age beliefs. They divide the survey into four topics, with each consecutively matching the prongs of the later attack: worldview, epistemology, religion, and pain.

In a wise move, Clark and Geisler immediately dig under the issue of interpretive difference between worldviews, thus warding off the "well-that's-just-the-way-you-see-it"

charge often raised when dealing with pantheists. They clearly show that while facts are arranged and interpreted by worldview, there are some things which stand independent and can thus judge worldviews. These include logical norms, rationality, consistency, coherence, comprehensiveness of explanatory power, congruity with a wide web of facts, and the fact that the use of unaffirmable statements is self-defeating. This last point is obviously a bugbear of the authors, for they take glee in repeatedly showing how pantheists use words to say words mean nothing, use intellect to deny intellect, logically denounce logic, and use the senses to deny the senses. Such moves are rightly shown to be self-defeating non-sense. In fact, the first prong of the attack, that on worldview, is basically a catalogue of such unaffirmables in pantheism's views of God, the nature of Being, the relationship of the Ultimate and personality, and the world. Pantheism is continually caught in dilemmas: a viewpoint supposedly beyond viewpoints, a totally-other God caught in distinctions, a personal impersonal absolute, and the monumental problem that our entire sensory experience, except under altered states, simply does not lead to a natural affirmation of the illusoriness of reality.

Proceeding to knowledge of consciousness, the authors show pantheists to be mired in either circular reasoning or arbitrary choice by holding a system positing two separate realities, one of which cannot be argued for, because it is supposedly beyond both logic and language. They are shown to be caught in question-begging over the issue of religious experience and failure to distinguish such experiences from their interpretation of them. The section on religious mysticism is really a disection of pluralism. Again the critique focuses on the system's self-contradictions. The fact of religious plurality in no way necessitates the religious position of pluralism. Pluralists are shown to claim exclusively that pluralism is true and just as exclusively that exclusivism is not true. Their tolerance is shown to not only have limits, but to be intolerance in the way they arrogantly cut out the core issues of each religion to make them fit the pluralist view.

The final attack is on pantheism's treatment of the problem of pain. By making evil a part of God it destroys the unity and perfection of the Absolute. Making it illusory goes against all evidence and has no reasonable warrant. These responses engender indifference to suffering and breed a relativism which undercuts ethical behavior. The book concludes with a discussion about why pantheism appeals to our culture of self-centeredness, a very helpful summary of apologetic arguments against pantheism, and a glossary of important words and concepts. The critical point which Clark and Geisler bring out is that pantheism has an aversion to rationality, through which it creates voids in thought in which anything can be posited. Since it does not fit normal reality, this is about the only intellectual move it can make; though to be fully consistent it should just be silent. Pantheism does everything it can to avoid self-consistency, coherence of its parts, use of proper evidence, and clarity of meaning, for the simple reason that when such extra-worldview measuring sticks are used, pantheism falls apart.

Having spent many years personally studying Eastern religion and interacting with Buddhists in particular, I must say that Clark and Geisler have done a fine job. I've had opportunity to use the type of argumentation they advance and can testify to its effectiveness. They were very smart to make epistemology the lynchpin of their critique, as it is the soft underbelly of Pantheism. I well remember a friend of mine confronting one of the top Western Tibetan Buddhists with this: if the senses are unrealiable, then our reasoning is unrealiable, and thus how do you know your beliefs are not just part of the delusion as well? The Buddhist answered by an appeal to ascended masters. But if the system in question is a possible delusion, are not the masters possibly the most deluded? There is just no way to surely know in pantheistic systems other than the bald assertion of sheer subjective experience. Of course, I had given this argument to my friend, and I have in my possession printed admission from two top Buddhist priests that the problem cannot

be answered within the Buddhist worldview other than by a leap of faith in experience; yet faith is something supposedly unnecessary in Buddhism's deductive explanation of the world! We thus end right where Clark and Geisler put the emphasis of their work: pantheism's failed epistemology leads to contradiction and unaffirmability.

James S. Taylor,
Toronto, Ontario.

Kelly James Clark, *Return to Reason*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1990, 158 pages.

This book is a successful attempt to make accessible to the non-specialist some important new developments in the philosophy of religion. Drawing on the work of Alvin Plantinga, Nicholas Wolterstorff, William Alston, George Mavrodes and others, Clark organizes his introduction to Reformed epistemology around its already familiar thesis. The Christian is, according to these authors, not epistemically obligated to meet the evidentialist demand that he or she reason *to* belief in God from propositions which are self-evident (i.e. recognized to be true upon understanding them), evident to the senses (i.e. reports of immediate sense experience), or incorrigible (i.e. propositions about which one could not be wrong) since this demand: (1) is itself not self-evident nor evident to the senses nor incorrigible nor inferable from propositions which are; (2) excludes cases of obviously true beliefs (e.g. that there is an external world, that one's wife is a person); and (3) is too austere to yield a sufficient number of non-trivial candidates from which to reason. Moreover, they argue that the Christian is within his or her epistemic rights to reason *from* belief in God (i.e. to include belief in God in the foundations of his or her "noetic structure") since, like beliefs which are self-evident, evident to the senses or incorrigible, belief in God is properly basic.

Clark organizes his discussion of Reformed epistemology in two parts. The first deals with the role of evidence relative to belief in God. Clark examines two classical proofs for the existence of God, the cosmological and the argument from design, the more recent probabilistic argument of Richard Swinburne, and finally the "uncritical" evidentialism of evangelical apologetics. In each case Clark maintains that the "power" of the argument in question is "a function of what one already believes" [p.40]. "Rationality" should, according to Clark, be thus "construed in a way more amenable to the types of arguments that are available to finite human believers" [p.54].

Evidence may also be mounted against belief in God. For this reason Clark considers the atheological argument from the existence of evil. The force of this argument derives from the Christian believer's affirmation of a good and omnipotent God and the presence of evil in the world. If evil exists, on this account, then a good and omnipotent God does not. Clark maintains with Plantinga [see *God, Freedom and Evil* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974)] that while the reason(s) for which God permits evil is not revealed to Christians, it is nevertheless possible to address the evidentialist objection by demonstrating the logical compatibility of the co-existence of moral and natural evil with a good and omnipotent God on the grounds of human freedom and the presence of free non-human persons in the world.

The second section of the book examines in detail the noetic structure (i.e. the system of one's beliefs with their relations to one another) underlying the evidentialist conception of rationality and proposes an alternative conception of rationality in keeping with the Reformed tradition. According to W.K. Clifford, evidentialist *extraordinaire*, everyone has an ethical obligation not only in their actions but also in their believings. Thus, according to Clifford, it is wrong always, everywhere, and for anyone, to believe

anything on insufficient evidence [p.102]. Belief in God therefore rests on its evidential support as does belief in a scientific hypothesis. A central problem with this conception of rationality, according to Clark, is that it construes belief in God on analogy with belief in a scientific hypothesis. It is more appropriate, according to Clark, to conceive of belief in God on analogy with belief in other minds or persons since, like our belief in other persons, belief in God is accepted *immediately* (i.e. without propositional evidence).

While Clark shares the "foundationalist" noetic structure with the evidentialist, he takes issue with the rigorous criteria by which a proposition may properly acquire its place on the ground floor level. Instead of arbitrarily asserting that one may only admit those beliefs into a noetic structure which satisfy the classical foundationalist's criteria of what is basic (i.e. self-evidence, evidence to the senses and incorrigibility), Reformed epistemology insists that such criteria be expanded to include others arrived at inductively, i.e. arrived at by assembling obviously basic beliefs and the conditions under which they exist. In this way that which is basic can be framed. Although a principle of rationality which admits God into the foundations of one's noetic structure has *not* yet been specified by Reformed epistemologists, they do indicate a debt to the work of John Calvin (1509-1564). Calvin, according to both Clark and Plantinga, maintains that God has implanted within each person "a tendency or disposition to believe in him in the appropriate circumstances" [p.149]. This tendency to believe in God is, however, often "suppressed or overlaid by the noetic effects of sin" [p.150], which would, argues Clark, explain unbelief. In any case, "the theist might contend that one of those noetic faculties which produces its effects immediately is Calvin's sense of the divine" [p.151].

Return to Reason is a lucid and carefully structured introduction to Reformed epistemology. Clark introduces the reader to the technical language necessary to this argument through the use of bold print to identify unfamiliar concepts and italics to define them. In this way he is able to guide the uninstructed through the Reformed case for belief in God as something which is properly basic. Unfortunately, however, there is no index by which to quickly locate the definitions and thus much of the careful work done in the body of the text is not easily accessible to the reader for review. Moreover, in his discussion of the fact that belief in God is basic, Clark could very well leave the impression that basic beliefs are somehow immune to criticism. Although his second chapter does take the atheological argument from evil as a serious threat to theism and thus one that requires a defence, Clark could have usefully introduced the concepts *defeater* and *defeater-defeater* which Plantinga employs relative to prima facie challenges to belief in God and Christian defenses against them [see his "Reason and Belief in God" in his and Nicholas Wolterstorff, eds., *Faith and Rationalism: Reason and Belief in God* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1983, p.82-87)]. If the Christian is rationally to maintain his or her basic belief in God, then potential challenges *(defeaters)* to this belief (e.g., the atheological argument from evil or the Marxist critique of religion) must be addressed by way of a defense (a *defeater-defeater*).

Reformed epistemologists, as Clark notes, are concerned primarily with arguing for the fact that belief in God is basic. They want to maintain that the Christian is within his or her epistemic rights in having belief in God among the foundations of his or her noetic structure. Like belief in other minds, belief in God is immediately justified, although a specification of the nature of this immediacy is needed. The direction in which these scholars seem to be looking at present, however, is that of "created dispositions." Following Calvin, it is claimed that God has implanted within the human creature "a tendency or disposition to believe in him in the appropriate circumstances" [p.149]. However, this tendency is not actuated in every person, because the noetic effects of sin "partially" suppress it. It is nevertheless universally present and may be "triggered or

actuated by widely realized conditions" [see Alvin Plantinga, "The Reformed Objections to Natural Theology", *Christian Scholars Review*, 11, No.3 (1982), 189-190].

It is no doubt the case that Calvin did support the notion that God created the human creature with a natural disposition to believe in God under the right conditions (*Institutes* 1.3.1). However, I think that Reformed epistemologists have not considered: (1) the degree to which this natural disposition is, for Calvin, in fallen humanity only vestigially operative, and then primarily in the direction of idolatry (*Institutes* 1.5.5); and therefore (2) how the human capacity to know God is, for Calvin, a gift of the Holy Spirit. The capacity to know God in fallen humanity is, on Calvin's view, for all practical purposes extinguished; for it is choked with dense ignorance, so that it cannot come forth effectively (*Institutes* 2.2.12). For this reason Calvin argues that we need Scripture (*Institutes* 1.6) - whose authority is established by the Holy Spirit (*Institutes* 1.7) - to come to a full knowledge of God, i.e. a knowledge of God as Creator and Redeemer (*Institutes* 1.6.1). Moreover, the human capacity which corresponds to this knowledge is created *ex nihilo* by the Holy Spirit. In other words, it falls into the realm of re-creation and not that of creation. As Calvin writes: "In another place, when we had to discuss the corruption of nature, we more fully showed how unfit men are to believe" (*Institutes* 2.2.18-25). Accordingly I shall not weary my readers with the same thing. Let it suffice to recall that Paul speaks only of the faith which the Spirit gives us, *but which we do not have by nature* [2 Cor 4:13] (*Institutes* 3.2.35).

If faith is, for Calvin, the re-created capacity to know God as Creator and Redeemer, then what are we to make of the Reformed epistemologist's notion of a created human disposition to believe in God? It seems to me that Clark and Plantinga can still make their main point that belief in God is properly basic, even if they do not ground it in a created human disposition to believe in God. They could argue that the Spirit's work of creating faith in Jesus Christ is immediate upon understanding the gospel accounts of the identity of Jesus Christ. However, the "appropriate circumstances" under which belief in God is "triggered" or "actuated" would have to include, at least tacitly, an understanding of the identity of Jesus Christ as he is depicted in Scripture. Calvin writes: "Nothing shall we find, I say, above or below, which can raise us up to God, until Christ shall have instructed us in his own school" [*Genesis*, trans., John King (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1984) p.63)]. Thus it is that belief in God is immediately justified upon grasping the Scripturally-depicted identity of the Mediator by the Spirit.

Richard Topping,
Wycliffe College, Toronto, Ontario.

Charles Colson, *The God of Stones and Spiders: Letters to a Church in Exile*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1990, 221 pages.

Those who view modern society with a growing sense of apprehension would be well advised *not* to read Charles Colson's latest book. It is not for the faint of heart. As a former White House legal advisor and founder of an international prison ministry, Colson is well placed to analyze some disturbing trends that are gaining ground in post-Christian Western culture. What he chronicles with chilling effect is the anti-Christian mentality that increasingly dominates our day.

Given both the brevity and the anecdotal nature of the columns here collected from Colson's regular contributions to *Christianity Today* and *Jubilee*, the book is somewhat unfocused. But this lack of logical progression is more than offset by the rich variety of stories which illustrate his four-fold concern for government and public policy, culture, the Church, and the criminal justice system. Each piece shines with Colson's moral sensitivity

and characteristic depth of conviction. Pungent good sense abounds, as does razor-sharp logic and a blood-hound nose for double standards.

What makes *Stones and Spiders* especially appealing is Colson's courage. He does not shy away from controversial social issues like AIDS and homosexual rights. Nor is the Church spared the probing of the scalpel-like pen. He denounces the pervasive celebrity worship which contributed to Jim Bakker's downfall, and powerfully exposes the hollowness of the health-and-wealth "gospel" (the latter critiqued with poignant force from the perspective of Colson's own cancer surgery).

It is not a penchant for controversy that drives Colson, but rather a profound concern for the dangers facing the modern Church. Colson fears that the Church, confronted with the anti-Christian bias of today, may succumb to one of two crippling temptations: either a retreat into private piety, or an aggressive demand for respect. Colson is convinced that either reaction will ultimately weaken the Church. Retreat into private religion he sees as a denial of discipleship; Christians are called to be salt and light. And an aggressive campaign against anti-Christian discrimination, besides provoking more hostility, is in his view an attempt to escape from what has always been the inevitable consequence of vibrant Christian witness, namely, conflict with the world.

Not that Colson wants Christians to seek out suffering, but *Stones and Spiders* is a warning that suffering awaits some whose moral convictions impel them to action. Such is the particularly distressing case of Joan Andrews, a soft-spoken Florida woman who received a 5 year maximum-security prison sentence. Her "crime"? Andrews entered an abortion clinic and attempted to unplug a suction machine used to dismember unborn babies. Yet the same day, before the same judge, two men convicted as accessories to murder received 4 years. Through the shock-therapy of such stories, Colson reminds the Church that there is a price to be paid for being salt and light today.

Some stories, however, are included for a different reason. *Stones and Spiders* (and this is its strength) is replete with individuals whose lives demonstrate Colson's underlying conviction: "The most important work of the gospel is done directly by citizens living out their Biblical responsibility in their everyday circumstances" [p.134]. Colson shares the exhilarating example of the founder of the Eckerd drug store chain, who became a Christian in 1983. Prodded by a newly awakened conscience, he decided (in spite of the potential financial loss) to stop selling *Playboy* and *Penthouse* magazines in his 1,700 stores. Not content with that, Eckerd wrote persistently to other retail stores, urging them to do the same. Spurred on by his example, other believers joined in. Soon stores that carried soft-core pornography were picketed and boycotted. Before long, Revco, Peoples, Rite Aid, Dart Drug, Gray Drug, and High's Dairy Stores had removed such adult magazines. Then in 1986, the massive retail chain 7-Eleven relented and followed suit. In all, pornography was removed from some 12,000 retail outlets nationwide! And it was not because of legal action, or government intervention, but primarily because of one man's determination to put his Christian faith into practice in his workplace.

Colson's book is a clarion call to Christian involvement in a world rotting from lack of salt and light. His piercingly effective critique of Christian complacency may cause some to squirm, but that is as it should be. The Church urgently needs a prophetic voice to rouse it from the stupor of worldliness and defeatism. May many heed Colson's call.

Daniel Lundy,
Central Baptist Seminary, Gormley, Ontario.

Harvie M. Conn, ed., *Practical Theology and the Ministry of the Church, 1952-1984: Essays in Honor of Edmund P. Clowney.* Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co., 1990, 310 pages.

What can Baptists learn from a *Festschrift* for Edmund Clowney, former president and professor of practical theology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia? As it turns out, a great deal. Clowney's ministry as a Presbyterian pastor, seminary professor and president, author, and conference speaker spanned four critical decades, during which evangelicalism emerged as a dominant force in modern Protestantism. The chief merit of *Practical Theology and the Ministry of the Church* lies in the perspective its essays provide on evangelical growth during these years.

The stature of the contributors (e.g. J.I. Packer, Roger Nicole, Jay Adams, and Arthur Glasser, to name a few) results in superb analyses of evangelical strengths and weaknesses. Packer provides a shrewd, succinct review of thirty years of debate over Scripture, while those who look to Jay Adams for radical insight into unbiblical assumptions that vitiate evangelical thinking will not be disappointed with his reflections on the history of biblical counselling. Lesser-known figures such as Bill Edgar ("Christ and Culture") and Derke Bergsma ("Preaching for Modern Times") round out this volume with valuable insight into the practice of ministry today.

Two areas in particular bear close consideration by evangelical Baptists. The first, predictably, is evangelism. The essays by Roger Greenway ("Evangelism") and Arthur Glasser ("The Evolution of Evangelical Mission Theology") point out some of the daunting challenges ahead (e.g. massive world-wide urbanization). In "The Church and Authentic Dialogue," Bruce Nicholls offers some proposals for responding to resurgent Eastern religions. Evangelical Baptists in Canada will need to rethink their evangelistic strategies in the face of these challenges.

Another area of strategic importance to Baptists (though, regretably, of much less interest to them) is theological education. Should seminaries train practitioners or thinkers? The way we respond to this dilemna has far-reaching implications for the on-going vitality of Baptist witness in Canada. Sam Rowen's "Theological Education Since World War II: The American Experience" and George Fuller's "Practical Theology: The State of the Art" supply helpful analysis of past and present trends in this crucial area. Clowney's influence on Westminster ensured that whatever needed practical emphasis would be added to the curriculum (e.g. counseling). Training for Christian ministry, however, would involve rigorous intellectual preparation built on a solid biblical foundation. While the practice of godliness *is* the ultimate goal of theological training, poor thinking leads to poor practice. It seems self-evident (at least to this reviewer) that Clowney's approach can offset some of the embarassingly vacuous contemporary manifestations of evangelical faith.

Westminster Seminary's redoubtable reputation for academic excellence, creative scholarship, and unswerving adherence to full-blooded biblical inerrancy is due in no small part to Ed Clowney's leadership. It would be a pity if the benefit of his legacy were confined to Presbyterian circles. Perhaps through this *Festschrift*, as well as through growing awareness of his writings (helpfully chronicled by Arthur Kuschke in the final chapter), E.P. Clowney will continue to shape future generations of evangelicals. Evangelicalism would be the stronger for it.

Daniel Lundy,
Central Baptist Seminary, Gormley, Ontario.

John W. Cowart, *People Whose Faith Got Them In Trouble.* Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1990, 149 pages.

If one has an inclination towards the study of Church history, then John W. Cowart's contribution will be of little use. In thirteen chapters Cowart chronologically covers the length and breadth of Christianity, beginning with Polycarp and ending with the Auca massacre in 1956. Along the journey he introduces a wide variety of notable characters, including Patrick of Ireland, Madam Guyon, C.H. Spurgeon and Mary Slessor of Calabar, to name just a few. The book is not designed to discuss the lasting contributions made by these people nor to provide exhaustive biographical data. In the author's own words, the chapters "merely give glimpses of people I find to be among the most fascinating characters who have ever lived" [p.9]. Cowart, true to his word, delivers exactly what he promises.

Given the nature of the book, it is unfair to scrutinize it with scholarly rigour. However, several items should be mentioned. Cowart often quotes the characters themselves or refers to documents written pertaining to the persons involved. Unfortunately, there are no footnotes, nor does Cowart provide a select bibliography. This seems a shame, especially if the reader finds one or more of these people particularly attractive.

Another drawback to the book is the manner in which historical facts are presented. For example, in the chapter devoted to William Carey, Cowart recounts the famous incident of the phony shilling. Historical testimony of the affair states that Carey's master discovered Carey's deception by sending another apprentice to collect a good shilling from the mischievous merchant, whereupon the merchant divulged that the counterfeit currency was given to Carey as a joke. Cowart's rendition has the master speaking to the customer directly, thus revealing the deception. This gloss neither affects the story nor disqualifies the book; however, one should be cautious in citing Cowart's treatment of history.

My overall opinion of the book is positive. Cowart has produced a tolerable work that is easy to read and simple to understand. It is by no stretch of the imagination a masterpiece, nor is it designed to be. I recommend this book for young readers who have never been introduced to historic Christianity. It may serve as a useful tool introducing the novice to the stimulating treasures from the past.

Heinz G. Dschankilic,
Toronto, Ontario.

Dale Ralph Davis, *Such a Great Salvation: Expositions of the Book of Judges.* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990, 227 pages.

As suggested by the title of the book, this volume is a collection of expositions which work through the text of Judges. As a collection, the reader should not be surprised to find that the quality of the book varies from section to section. As the author states, the purpose of the book is to provide a "theo-centric exposition" [p.7]. Quite naturally then, when the text of Judges is theo-centric, the exposition tends to be very good. But, when the text of Judges has a different focus, the imposition of the author's "theo-centric" bent tends to diminish the quality of the exposition. This, in my opinion, is the greatest single flaw in Davis' presentation of the text of Judges, and thus makes the book limited in its usefulness. For the reader, the imposition of Davis' theological preference can be a hindrance in coming to grips which the actual message of the text of Judges.

Part of the usefulness of a commentary is the extended bibliography or appropriate footnote material which guides the reader on to further study. In this respect the

commentary falters. Davis has chosen not to provide a bibliography at all and the footnotes cite material which is dated and often not the most significant on a given passage. Davis seems not to have interacted with a sizeable amount of scholarly discussion on the book of Judges and so is not able to pass on to his readers any benefit from that discussion. This is particularly true regarding the literary appreciation of the Biblical text, a topic which Davis mentions only briefly in passing. Neither will the reader find any help concerning the background or original purpose of the text of Judges, information which is generally found in the introduction of commentaries.

Davis is to be commended, however, for his attempt to provide a tool designed to aid in the understanding of Judges through a series of sermons which are very readable in their presentation. While the reader may not agree with the author in his understanding of a given section of Judges, Davis does provide a model in sermon construction and a platform from which the reader can improve and modify his own sermon preparation. This volume is of limited value if the reader desires to enter into a more accurate and detailed understanding of the text of Judges. If, however, the reader is in need of a body of ideas for sermon construction, then this volume commends itself.

Terry Giles,
Central Baptist Seminary, Gormley, Ontario.

Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Christian Life: A Doctrinal Introduction.* Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1989, 281 pages.

The Banner of Truth Trust has produced an edition of Sinclair B. Ferguson's work, which should certainly be a welcome part of any Christian worker's library. In this work, Ferguson takes up the great challenge in this work of balancing doctrine, experience and practice in the Christian life. He is targeting his work to all believers in order to bring them back to basics in all of these key areas of the Christian life.

He begins this challenge by addressing the great polarization that exists among authors around the topics of doctrine and experience. Though the title may suggest a dry, systematic theology, this book is a living testimony of the power of changed lives through the application of doctrinal truth. Ferguson makes extensive use of Scripture throughout the text and provides a useful index for quick reference. An open Bible is a must if one is to join in this fresh examination of the texts presented.

In the course of eighteen chapters, the author limits his focus on what is usually described as "The Application of Redemption." Though not identical in his layout, the author follows many of the topics addressed by John Calvin in his well-known *Institutes*. Beginning with the importance of the journey at hand, Ferguson soon launches us on a journey through the Christian life which will ultimately climax in glorification.

Any book which is to become a vital part of one's library must justify it's own necessity; Ferguson's work succeeds. Ferguson challenges the weakness in the contemporary Church in the area of biblical doctrine. He argues from the lives of key figures of Church history that all must become students of the Bible. Those who are practically oriented are challenged to consider the foundation of those who have had great practical impact on their generations. Any true understanding of doctrine, Ferguson argues, will influence our responses to all kinds of situations.

The author's only logical beginning point is that of the doctrine of hamartiology. He addresses the effects of sin in a four-fold outline of this great truth. We bear a defaced image of God. We are under sin's powerful dominion, as well as God's condemnation.

Satan's grip is truly seen in our lives. Our great need therefore is to have each of these areas met by Christ. Ferguson carefully and practically outlines how Christ provides the sufficient solution for our great problem. Since Christ has done all this, the only two remaining questions according to Ferguson are: (1) How do I get into Christ to receive his life? That is the large and great doctrine of justification. (2) And how do I get the grace and character of Christ into my life? This relates to the ongoing work of Christ within the believer, namely sanctification. The balance of the text is taken up with these two questions.

He begins with God's plan of grace and seeks to trace out the doctrines of justification, regeneration and sanctification, and how these three are related to each other as doctrines and in our experience. This section of the book typifies the strategy Ferguson follows throughout the text, namely exposition of key Scriptural passages accompanied by relevant applications. Coupled with fresh exegesis, Ferguson weaves throughout the text a great number of references to Church history figures. A range of theologians, hymnwriters, poets and preachers meet the reader briefly through illustrations and applications. Readers who are ignorant of some of these figures are introduced briefly to each and left with an appetite for further knowledge. This constant use of various people reflects Ferguson's ongoing strategy: that of seeing truth exemplified in principle and practice for daily living.

This text will appeal to both novice and experienced worker. The novice will find challenge and a solid pattern to follow in discipling others in the ways of Christ. Experienced workers will find their hearts encouraged with doctrines, which may have become contemptible through familiarity, freshly stirred within them.

Keith Edwards,
Thornloe Crossroads Baptist Church, Thornloe, Ontario.

John Goldingay, *Approaches to Old Testament Interpretation.* Rev. ed.; Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1990, 207 pages.

Judging by its absence from the pulpit ministries of many evangelical churches, you would almost think that there was no Old Testament. This condition is no doubt due, in part, to the relative difficulty which many in the pulpit ministry experience in interpreting the Old Testament in a meaningful fashion within the context of the life of the Church. The importance of Goldingay's book is evident in the nature by which it seeks to attack some of the most difficult problems of Old Testament interpretation which lie behind the Church's neglect. Goldingay states that his purpose, within this book, is to present the issues relevant to the understanding of the Old Testament within the "context of the Christian Church in the modern world" [p.11].

This edition of Goldingay's book appeared nine years after the first printing. He rightly identifies the hermeneutical problems associated with the Old Testament and offers a survey of the ways in which these problems have been resolved within the context of the Christian Church. Goldingay approaches such topics as the theological core of the Old Testament, the relationship between narrative and theology in the Old Testament, the understanding of the Old Testament as typology, and perhaps the most helpful, the interpretation of the law of the Old Testament within the context of the Christian Church. With each topic, Goldingay carefully establishes the problem, eliminates what he believes to be inadequate solutions, and finally presents to the reader a synthesis of his own. Goldingay does not give the impression that he expects the reader to agree with him on each issue, but is concerned to provide to the reader information by which to make an intelligent and meaningful decision.

Goldingay has included a fairly extensive and helpful bibliography, giving to the reader the opportunity to interact with the best literature on the topics discussed within the course of the book. The "Postscript," which is an addition to the 1981 edition of the book, takes note of developments within Old testament scholarship which have occurred since the first edition went to press. In the "Postscript," Goldingay offers helpful summaries of recent sociological analysis of the Old Testament, developments in literary analysis, and canonical criticism.

This small volume will certainly be of aid to an understanding of the fuction and station of the Old Testament in the life of the contemporary Church.

Terry Giles,
Central Baptist Seminary, Gormley, Ontario.

Gordon Harland, *Christian Faith and Society*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1989, 94 pages.

In 1987, Gordon Harland presented a series of lectures at the University of Calgary. The substance of those lectures have been reproduced in order to stimulate thought on the question of what is the relationship between faith and society in the Christian churches of today. Articulating a balanced perspective, Harland avoids the pitfall of polemical dogmatism. He accurately and insightfully critiques the various systems of Christian thought that have contributed to current Christian debates. In four chapters, Harland discusses "The Social Gospel and Christian Realism," "Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism," and "Liberation Theology." He pays particular attention "to the ways in which the social message of these movements is correlated with the understanding of the work of Christ, human nature and history" [p.1]. Harland has successfully captured the essence of these various theological platforms and presents them in their best possible light. This is especially evident in his treatment of "Liberation Theology."

In chapter three, Harland succinctly outlines the historical framework of the movement of liberation theology. He touches upon recurring themes and characteristics and examines some inherent flaws of the system. He insists that liberation theology, although worldwide in scope, is predominantly a Latin American phenomenon. Its religious tradition is best described as Roman Catholic syncretistic fatalism. "Poverty is a condition of birth, not something that can be changed by individual or collective endeavour;...with this came also a heritage of violence and disregard for human rights which forms the deeply rooted context of the situation today" [p.55]. One of liberation theology's emphasis, according to Harland, is its "preferential option for the poor" [p.61]. Life within society must be seen through the eyes of the poor, weak, and marginalised. The focus is not on the un-believer but the non-person. Harland recognizes the prophetic nature of liberation theology in that it reminds "us of the social substance of personal existence" [p.70]. In addition, it also testifies to the costliness of Christian witness, since over a thousand Christians in Latin America have been martyred in the past ten years. On the other side of the balance sheet, Harland indicates four major flaws. First, it has an intellectual instability that will undermine reconstruction should liberation occur. Second, it moves through Biblical themes into politics without passing through ethics. Third, there is no sustained analysis of the nature of humanity. Finally, there is no mechanism of self-criticism that can evaluate programs and visions against transcendent norms and judgements.

Harland's lucid style makes this book enjoyable and well worth the reading. It can be readily grasped by the non-academic while being sufficiently stimulating for the scholar.

I would recommend this book be used as a secondary introduction in any discussion of the Church in the twentieth century.

Heinz G. Dschankilic,
Toronto, Ontario.

A.A. Hodge, *Evangelical Theology: Lectures on Doctrine*. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1990, 456 pages.

This volume by Archibald Alexander Hodge (1823-1886) is a reprint of a series of theological lectures first published in 1890. Hodge was the third in a series of four outstanding theologians who sat in the chair of systematic theology in Princeton Seminary's first one hundred and ten years: Archibald Alexander, Charles Hodge, A.A. Hodge and B.B. Warfield. During his life, Hodge was a pastor, missionary, writer, professor and preacher.

Hodge's work is a series of nineteen popular lectures on the basics of the Christian Faith, delivered in 1886 in Philadelphia. Covering four main areas of Christian doctrine, Theology proper, Anthropology, Soteriology and Eschatology, these lectures range over the nature of God, the Trinity, the person and work of Christ, providence, predestination, prayer, the sacraments and last things.

The book has a number of excellent qualities which recommend itself to the keen Christian and especially to the pastor. First, although given a century ago, these lectures are very readable. It is not light and easy reading, but neither is it heavy and plodding. Sustained work and effort will be richly rewarded. Perhaps surprisingly there is much in the book that is still relevant and of concern today. Obviously the great truths about God, Christ, sin, salvation and prayer, are always timely because they are timeless. As well, there are profitable observations on inspiration [p.61-83], predestination, evolution [p.145 ff.], the Kingdom and the Church [p.249-270], and the relationship of Church and state [p. 235-248]. The book also contains many excellent illustrations (especially from the field of science) that help clarify truth.

Second, the lectures come from a Reformed Calvinistic Presbyterian perspective. The author has an excellent grasp of historical theology, philosophical and heretical views. And yet coupled with this is a tremendous desire for Biblical balance. His comments on Calvinism and Arminianism [p.136-137] are very helpful, as are his comments on heresy: "All truth is catholic; it embraces many elements, wide horizons, and therefore involves endless difficulties and apparent inconsistencies. The mind of man seeks for unity, and tends prematurely to force a unity in the sphere of his imperfect knowledge by sacrificing one element of truth or other to rest. This eminently true of all rationalists. They are clear and logical at the expense of being superficial and half-orbed. Almost all heresies are partial truths - true in what they affirm, but false in what they deny" [p.191].

Third, these lectures continually demonstrate that theology must be intensely personal and practical. For example, in discussing free will, Hodge says, "A man is free in proportion to the direction and development of his character. A holy character is the highest form of freedom" [p.160]. And he concludes his chapter on Predestination with this telling observation: "Predestination exalts God and abases man before God but high and strong before kings" [p.138].

As Baptists, we obviously will have some disagreements with this Presbyterian professor. The most notable is in the area of baptism. He has some good material on this ordinance, such as his comment that, "baptism is a sacramental action representing an

inward invisible grace. Consequently, the outward action ought never consciously and intentionally be applied where the inward invisible grace is absent" [p 326]. Then he goes on to justify, unconvincingly for me, why infants of Christians should be baptized [p.329-338].

We live at a time when theological and doctrinal illiteracy abounds in the Evangelical church. As a result many become easy prey for shallow and heretical teachings, superficial worship and underproductive witness. I highly recommend this work for both leaders and laymen alike. In our instant age, it is a book that will stretch the mind, warm the heart, strengthen faith, enrich worship and invigorate witness.

Don Theobald,
Binbrook Baptist Church, Binbrook, Ontario.

Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, *The Book of the Revelation: A Commentary.* Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1990, 242 pages.

This posthumous publication, the final work of the late Philip E. Hughes, takes its place alongside the author's other commentaries on 2 Cor and Heb. Although very much an admirer of the Cambridge tradition of New Testament exegesis represented by such names as B. F. Westcott, F. J. A. Hort, and J. B. Lightfoot, Hughes departs from this tradition by bringing to his readers a spirit of devotion and practicality, along with an uncommon ability to illuminate the biblical text from historical sources. Hughes was, in fact, equally at home in both historical theology and New Testament studies.

At a hurried first glance, I must confess that I was disappointed with the size of the present volume, considering the bulk of his two previous commentaries and that of many expositions of Revelation (e.g., R. H. Charles' two volume contribution to the *International Critical Commentary*). However, my initial disappointment was quickly dispelled as I began to read closely. Though somewhat slender page-wise, content-wise Hughes' book is a ready source of information on the text and of devotional thought for its readers. In keeping with his other commentaries, there is less emphasis on the minutiae of the original language and more on the actual content of John's book and its application. For instance, in commenting on Rev 9:20-21, which depicts the "rest of mankind...who did not repent of the works of their hands to give up worshipping demons and idols of gold," etc., Hughes remarks: "The much vaunted civilization of our day may be free from graven images, but it is certainly not free from idolatry. As St. Paul explained long since, the person who is covetous is an idolator (Eph 5:5; Col 3:5), and this means that virtually anything can become an idol: money, power, fame, pleasure, sex - in short, humanistic self-centredness in all its forms. Accordingly, the idolatry of which St. John speaks here is not remote from us and irrelevant to our situation" [p. 115]. Particular mention may be made of the treatment of the letters to the seven churches [p. 33-69].

The author's approach to the Apocalypse is the so-called "historicist" interpretation. Consequently, "the Patmos visions portray the development of the church and its affairs in a sequence of periods that stretch successively from the beginning to the end of its history" [p. 9]. Hughes finds a key to understanding Rev in "the Lord God's identification of himself as 'the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end'." "This self-designation signifies the absolute existence of God from eternity to eternity and, moreover, it implies that what God starts he finishes. The last two chapters of this book reveal the consummation of creation, the end for which the created order was intended and designed, the omega-point that is the actualization of the potential that was contained, like a germ, in the alpha-seed. For the end was enclosed in the beginning like a promise, and the beginning is there in the end that is its completion" [p. 10-11].

The eschatological position espoused is decidedly amillennial, though, in Hughes' words, the term is misleading since amillennialists "do not reject the teaching concerning the millenium, but only the interpretation proposed by pre- and post-millennialists" [p. 9]. Of particular interest here is Hughes' reading of the "first resurrection" of Rev 20:5-6 [p. 213-15], which is reproduced from his earlier study, "The First Resurrection: Another Interpretation," *Westminster Theological Journal*, 39 (1976-77), 315-18. For Hughes the "first resurrection" is organically one with the resurrection of Christ: the saints come to life and reign with Christ just because of their union with him, "the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" [1 Cor 15:20]. In other words, the "first resurrection" is that of Christ himself, in which the deceased saints, in John's throne room scene, participate. In this he differs with the customary amillennial exegesis, which views the "first resurrection" as the intermediate state. Hughes considers that such a construction "spiritualizes" the resurrection in question so as to leave it as "a mere theological concept unconnected with bodily resurrection" [p. 214].

It must be added that even though Hughes is convinced that the "amillennial" position is the most compatible with the Biblical revelation, his commentary is not, as he puts it, "polemical in its thrust, but positive and straightforward," because "there are many things in St. John's Revelation whose meaning will be fully clear to us only when we see and experience the wonderful realities to which they point in the pure light of that glory which is hereafter" [p. 10].

Readers may be concerned about Hughes' denial of the doctrine of eternal punishment in his book *The True Image: The Origin and Destiny of Man in Christ*, and its bearing on the exposition of Rev. As far as the present commentary is concerned, the language chosen by him is not objectionable in itself, though one does sense an inclination to resist any idea of the infliction of punishment on the wicked. He understands the "second death" of Rev 2:11; 20:6; 21:8 to be the effect of Adam's fall and is, properly speaking, *his* death: "To be in Adam is to partake of his death, the first death, of which one's own death on earth is the entail, and which leads on to the second death of final judgment" [p. 216]. The "second death," then, we infer from this statement, is the reversal of the "paradise of God" and the converse of the bliss of the creation covenant as symbolized by the Garden of Eden. Consequently, the "second death" "denotes total and endless exclusion from life and from the incomparable glory and perfection of the new heaven and earth" [p. 43]. On their own terms, these are legitimate and useful insights. However, taking into account Hughes' remarks in the earlier volume, it would seem that he wanted to suppress the punishment of the wicked and highlight their exclusion from the glory of God. This is precisely the thrust of the exposition of 21:8: "This statement makes it plain that there is no part or inheritance in the holy city for the types of persons named" [p. 225]. Interestingly, there is no comment offered on "the lake that burns with fire and brimstone" [21:8] nor on "they will be tormented day and night for ever and ever" [20:10].

Apart from this weakness, Hughes' exposition is warmly recommended. Busy pastors particularly will want to turn to this commentary first in order to come to grips with the central content of John's Apocalypse, and perhaps thereafter to more technical works for the details of language, etc. Hopefully, ministers of the gospel and others will be encouraged to preach and teach this book which was actually intended to *reveal*, not obscure the truth. As current events are forcing more and more people to ponder where history is going and what will be its outcome, Rev ought again to come to the forefront of Christian proclamation. Not only does this book of prophecy, visions, and symbols round off the biblical canon, "it brings the beginning of history to its authentic conclusion" [p. 10].

Don Garlington,
Toronto Baptist Seminary, Toronto, Ontario.

J.T.L. James, *A Living Tradition: Penitentiary Chaplaincy*. Ottawa: Correctional Service of Canada, 1990, 220 pages.

On May 19, 1873, 119 prisoners filed onto the steamship "Watertown" to be transferred from Kingston Penitentiary to the new St. Vincent de Paul Penitentiary in Quebec. One gentleman, Father Joseph Leclerc, boarded the steamship willingly as prison chaplain to make the voyage with the prisoners. History records that the quality of the chaplain's presence caused a number of the prisoners to desire a change in the course of their lives.

This story, etched into the history of penitentiaries in Canada, was the inspiration for this recent volume. Today, over 150 years since the beginning of corrections in Canada, penitentiary chaplains continue to have a significant influence on both prisoners and corrections officers.

The stated purpose of this volume is to give present chaplains a sense of pride in their work, and to foster greater understanding of a chaplain's work among the Correction Service of Canada employees. The author attempts to prove that the concept of a penitentiary has religious roots, and therefore religion has an important role to play in the institution today. Besides giving a history of penitentiaries and chaplaincy in Canada, the author examines the relation between the chaplain and churches. This book is by definition an in-house work, although it is useful and highly readable for anyone interested in chaplaincy among the hundreds of penitentiary prisoners.

Paul writes, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom 12:21). J.T.L. James succeeds in proving that chaplains are carrying out the mandate of this verse in a vital ministry among penitentiary prisoners today.

Darryl S. Dash,
Scarborough, Ontario.

Ben Campbell Johnson, *Discerning God's Will*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990, 167 pages.

Ben Campbell Johnson is yet another contributor who seeks to answer the question: what is the will of God for my life? Johnson equates the problem of determining the will of God with the question, what is the meaning of my life? The question of "meaning" plagues both Christian and non-Christian alike. Those who adhere to the classical Christian worldview realize that the question of "meaning" is answered on the basis of one's worldview and religious presuppositions. Johnson sees no problem here, since he universally assumes that "the hunger for meaning is a disguised hunger for the will of God" [p.7]. As one reads the opening chapters one perceives that this statement is not of logical necessity nor has any basis in Biblical exposition. Rather, Johnson has forged his assumption primarily on the basis of his own subjective experiences in a life dedicated to the ministry and through the discipline of psychoanalysis. Johnson's book is at the same time confusing and disturbing for two reasons. First, he redefines traditional Biblical terms without adequate warning. Second, he forces various Biblical texts to conform to his system without contextual warrant.

Johnson is extremely subtle when he redefines Biblical terminology. For example, in chapter two he states that "Christ was the incarnation of the will of God; in him the will of God becomes visible" [p.32]. In one sense this statement is true. It was God's intention to send Jesus Christ, in the flesh, as a substitutionary atonement. While Johnson affirms the historicity of Jesus, he reduces the significance of the incarnation to a mere tangible expression of acts and deeds that God may deem appropriate. "Christ stands as the norm for discerning God's will" [p.7].

Johnson is determined to base his system on Biblical foundations. Unfortunately, he established his formula for God's will and then worked backwards to find supporting texts for his position. Chapter three, entitled "The Will of God Made Flesh", contains numerous illustrations from John, as well as Luke, 1 Cor, Eph and Rev. His interpretation of John 14:6, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life", speaks of the physical dimension of human existence, and ignores the supernatural ramifications altogether. The verse conveniently fits his system, for he writes: "The way speaks of a direction and style, the truth aims at what is real and lasting, and the life speaks of final meaning and fulfillment" [p.41]. Moreover, his exposition of John 4:46-54, the raising of the centurion's son, leads Johnson to make the following conclusion: "We should always identify the will of God with health, wholeness, and completeness" [p.43].

The book also contains a few practical suggestions to aid the Christian in his quest for guidance. For instance, he emphasizes the importance of seeking wise and mature council during the decision-making process. Another suggestion has to do with the role of the Church as an institution for guidance. Johnson coins the phrase "the community of discernment" to describe the function of the Church. Comments by close friends, statements made by acquaintances, hymns, Scripture and sermons all contribute to assist people determined to seek God's will [p.115].

I do not recommend this book as an appropriate resource for the Christian's quest to know God's will. Johnson raises a number of exegetical problems which require a monograph of equal length to frame an adequate response. His obvious liberal leanings seriously undermine the doctrine of the Incarnation, the person and work of the Holy Spirit, the uniqueness of Scripture, the doctrine of sin, and the traditional view of the fall of humanity. A much better book, for anyone interested in researching the topic, would be Gary Friesen's *Decision Making and the Will of God.*

Heinz G. Dschankilic,
Toronto, Ontario.

Donald A. Leggett, *Loving God and Disturbing Men: Preaching from the Prophets.* Burlington: Welch Publishing Company, 1990, 208 pages.

I once heard a Church historian say that whenever the Church has become negligent in some area of doctrine or practice God has always raised someone up to correct the present deficiency. Donald Leggett, professor of Old Testament at Ontario Theological Seminary and pastor at Village Green Baptist Church, Ontario, is such a person as my historian friend described. Leggett has alerted the Christian Church of its oversight with regard to the Old Testament prophets, and specifically, their absence from modern homiletical usage. In fact, generally speaking, the use of the entire Old Testament is today one of the greatest deficiencies of contemporary pulpit ministry. And Leggett rightly considers this rather tragic.

While Leggett's book is not a commentary on the prophets, it is also not strictly a book on homiletical methodology and procedure. Rather, it is the interface between the

two. This work is a mixture of theology, hermeneutics, and homiletics, which is precisely what makes the book so valuable. Leggett not only shows the relevancy of the prophets to the Church today, but as well, he explains the procedure, precision, and the passion necessary to make these men of old come alive for our modern times. Subsequently, the great contribution of this work manifests itself not only because of the obvious lack of books in this area, but also because of its unique balance between a scholar's mind and a pastor's heart.

The book itself is broken down into various sections. The first is entitled: "Who are the prophets?" In this chapter Leggett seeks to develop an understanding of the identity and function of the prophetic office. He writes: "In order to preach and teach from the prophets we must know who the prophets are and their roles in the history of redemption" [p.7]. Consequently, he takes the reader on a short journey of present day interpretive opinions and issues. Contemporary scholarship would lead us to the ideas that the prophets were proclaimers of social justice, eschatological hope, or religious mysticism. Leggett, however, concludes: "The prophets were the messengers proclaiming the end of the old era and the beginning of the new" [p.9]. And then adding a final note he says: "Whatever is meant by a prophetic ministry,...They were privileged to be organs of revelation in a unique and once-and-for-all sense" [p.11].

The next section of this work addresses a second and more significant question of "Why Preach from the Prophets?" It is at this juncture that we best capture Leggett's own desire for a revival concerning the preaching of the prophets. As he states [p.13]:

> There is no substitute for the motivation that comes from seeing the relevance of proclaiming the message of the prophets. The "why preach" from the Old Testament question precedes the "how preach" from the Old Testament. If the "why" is not answered satisfactorily, the "how" won't matter! Some might argue that more help in methodology would lead to more preaching from the Old Testament. We welcome all such helps, but the most critical question remains, Why preach from the Prophets?

This chapter demonstrates that the message and example of the prophets can and should have particular relevance to our Christian faith.

The third section draws us to the practical "how to" principles. In this section, "How to Preach From the Prophets", Leggett explains the particular methodology one must use to successfully exegete, contextualize, and communicate a prophetic text, while at the same time remaining true to it. He, therefore, bids his readers to pay special attention to three main components: prophetic forms of speech, theological exegesis, and application. He concludes this chapter with a brief but excellent bibliography of books on preaching from the prophets.

The final three sections of the book entail separate commentaries on various prophetic writings. They include Hab, Hag, and Mal. Each of these studies are given the following format: an outline of the book, followed by the commentary itself, bibliographical material for further study, and finally questions pertaining to the material covered.

For those in the Church who continue to affirm that preaching is the primary means by which the Church proclaims Jesus Christ, then Leggett's work will be a welcome

volume. In the future I am convinced that it will prove to be not only a needed stimulus, but also an excellent resource for teachers, pastors and students who tend to shy away from Old Testament texts, and most specifically the prophets.

In this reviewer's opinion, there is, however, one glaring oversight that could have made this book even greater. What is this flaw? The lack of sermonic material. Even though the three small commentaries are helpful, and for the most part practical (even devotional at times), I do not feel they are as necessary as it would be to read some of Leggett's own sermons on the prophets. By this the reader would be allowed to grasp the end product of someone who applied the principles of this book on a specific prophetic passage.

One final comment I would like to make about this volume would be a personal one. This reviewer has had the privilege of having Leggett as an Old Testament professor. And so I speak from experience when I say that it was more than once I saw him moved to tears as he taught and applied the prophets to us. That same passion can be wrung from each of the pages of this book. May those of us who take our place in the pulpit each week be sure we stand in the tradition of Donald Leggett. Having now heard the alarm sounded, may we as well learn to love God and disturb men as we endeavour to preach from the prophets. As Leggett rightly desires [p.5]:

> My hope is that this material will be helpful and stimulating to those seeking to understand and expound the message of the Old Testament prophets and that God will raise up preachers with a contemporary message from the prophets "not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction" (1 Thess. 1:5).

Mark R. Rodgers,
Newtonbrook Baptist Church, Willowdale, Ontario.

Bill J. Leonard, ed., *Becoming Christian: Dimensions of Spiritual Formation*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990, 213 pages.

The last couple of decades have seen a growing torrent of literature devoted to Christian spirituality, leaving little doubt that spirituality has become one of the leading theological buzz-words of our day. The latest addition to this body of literature is this collection of essays by members of the faculty of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and it is particularly helpful in elucidating the multifaceted nature and practice of Christian spirituality. There are, however, a couple of the papers that promise more than they deliver.

The book is divided into three sections, which deal respectively with the theological, communal, and personal dimensions of spirituality. The section on the theological dimensions of spirituality begins with what amounts to an essay providing a working definition of Christian spirituality. This essay by Dan R. Stiver and Daniel O. Aleshire, entitled "Mapping the Spiritual Journey," argues that "the center of spirituality...is a relationship with God" [p.21]. This is a relationship which God initiates. Certainly, spirituality requires human responsiveness, but its origin lies in the grace and initiative of God. This fact, the authors rightly emphasize, means that various spiritual

disciplines such as fasting etc. are not at the heart of spirituality. Such disciplines can all too easily lead to legalism, though, as Stiver and Aleshire point out, "some sort of discipline is necessary to travel the spiritual path" [p.29]. The second essay in this section, "The Bible and the Spiritual Pilgrimage" by Pamela J. Scalise and Gerald L. Borchert, is an excellent exploration of the spirituality of two books of the Bible: Ps - "the prayer book of the church" [p.33], echoing Dietrich Bonhoeffer's characterization of the Ps - and Eph - "a guidebook to the nature of the spiritual life" [p.38]. The editor has co-authored the next essay, "Spirituality and Worship," with Hugh T. McElrath, and they provide a highly insightful discussion of the interplay of spirituality and worship. They emphasize that "no one worship tradition or method assures spiritual growth and encounter with the Spirit," for "the Spirit is elusive" [p.51]. This is an extremely significant point, for frequently advocates of spiritual renewal and growth tie such renewal to a particular format of worship. Leonard and McElrath also underscore the important need for the Church to cultivate silence as part of its worship experience. Due to the continual barrage of noise in our daily lives, "silence does not happen easily." But it is "essential to the life of the Spirit," which involves at its heart listening to and waiting upon God [p.54]. Three other essays round out this section: "Ethical Maturity and Spiritual Formation" by Paul D. Simmons and Larry L. McSwain; "Story and Spirituality" by James Hyde and Glen Harold Stassen; and "Christian Spirituality and the Arts" by William L. Hendricks and Robert Don Hughes.

The second section of the book, dealing with the "communal dimensions of spiritual formation," contains what is in some ways the most disappointing paper of the book, that by Molly T. Marshall-Green and E. Glenn Hinson on "The Contributions of Women to Spirituality." The paper falls into two parts; the first part is an overview of the contributions of women to Christian spirituality in the history of the Church. The second half of the paper analyzes the nature of feminine spirituality in terms of its biological, social, and ecclesiastical dimensions. The real problems lie in the first half of the paper. At the very beginning of the historical overview, it is asserted that "women shaped the directions of Christian spirituality from the early days of the church" [p.116]. Three examples of this formative role are then given: the involvement of women in Gnosticism and Montanism, and the prominent role of female martyrs. While one would not want to dispute the important place that women had among the Montanists and the early Martyrs, it is surprising to see Gnosticism described as a "parachurch" movement. Women did play a significant role in certain Gnostic groups, but such a description of "Gnosticism" is a complete blurring of the differences between orthodoxy and heresy in the early Church. Even more surprising is the later statement that mysticism, or spirituality, "suffered a setback in the condemnation of Gnosticism and Origenism" [p.121] in the patristic period. This assertion seems to show a profound lack of awareness of such rich treasuries of spirituality as can be found, for instance, in the Celtic Church, which flourished in the British Isles after the fall of the Roman Empire. Most disturbing, though, is the fact that the historical overview really only deals with the history of the Church to the end of the mediaeval era. The following centuries are hastily dismissed with the statement that:

> Protestantism short-circuited the opportunities for both women and men in the area of spirituality by closing the monasteries and negating the contemplative vocation. Women continued to make massive contributions to spirituality, as to the other areas of church, but we have difficulty singling out special contributions except among Quakers, "Protestant contemplatives,"...and the Shakers [p.124].

But surely Christian spirituality is to be construed as being broader than that produced by those following the contemplative life? Moreover, it seems odd to assert, on the one hand, that "women continued to make massive contributions to spirituality," but to be unable to cite any special instances of these contributions beyond that of the Quakers and the Shakers. The authors could have looked at the eighteenth century as an example. Here we have such authors as Ann Griffiths (1776-1805), a Welsh Calvinistic Methodist, whose rich spirituality A.M. Allchin has done much to make known [see his *Ann* Griffiths. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1976)]. Or consider Anne Steele (1717-1778), the Calvinistic Baptist hymnwriter, whose hymns rivalled in popularity those of Isaac Watts (1674-1748) and Charles Wesley (1707-1788) in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. According to Richard Arnold ["A "Veil of Interposing Night": The Hymns of Anne Steele (1717-1778)", *The Christian Scholar's Review*, 18, No.4 (June 1989), 371-387], the main effect of her hymns "is to encourage a reader or singer to ask certain fundamental questions about his or her position in God's grand scheme, and about the possibilities of God's response to, and intervention in, the Christian's life and aspirations" [p.387]. They thus "encourage an ongoing and variegated process of faith rather than the continual re-affirmation of a finished state of faith" [p.387]. A brief exploration of the legacy of such women as these two would have done much to enrich this essay. The other two essays in this section deal with "Learning Environments and Spiritual Formation" (by C. Anne Davis and John D. Hendrix) and minority groups ("Minorities and Spirituality" by Donoso Escobar and T. Vaughn Walker).

The book's final section concentrates on "personal dimensions of spirituality." Four essays comprise this section, dealing with spiritual mentors (Edward E. Thornton, "The Minister as Spiritual Friend"), spirituality and play (Gerald L. Keown and Glen Harold Stassen, "Spirituality, Joy, and the Value of Play"), sexuality and the spiritual life of the believer (Diana S. Richmond and Wayne E. Oates, "Spirituality and Sexuality"), and the relationship between one's life-work and spirituality (S. Milburn Price Jr. and William B. Rogers, Jr., "Spirituality and Vocation"). Of these four articles, this writer found that by Richmond and Oates probably the most valuable. The authors provide a fine sketch of what should be the nature of sexuality as it pertains to Christian spirituality and as it is lived out in a sex-saturated culture.

Overall this is a good introduction to a field which North American evangelical churches in this century have generally neglected, but which they are going to have to take seriously if they are to survive as places where God's presence, power and love are known and felt.

Michael A.G. Haykin,
Central Baptist Seminary, Gormley, Ontario.

Thomas Long and Dixon McCarter, eds., *Preaching In and Out of Season*. Louisville, Kentucky, Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990, 132 pages.

This is a book that most self-confessed non-liturgical Baptist preachers would never buy at first glance. It is neither a "how to" improve book nor is it comfortably evangelical in its perspective. It is specifically designed to assist the parish minister in planning sermons that balance the liturgical calendar with both secular holidays and local church emphases. Yet in spite of this it has some very good things to say to us, things that will stretch our thinking and force us out of our comfortable ruts.

The book deals with nine areas: race relations, family, patriotism, the universal church, work, evangelism, the ecumenical church, stewardship, and thanksgiving. Each chapter follows a pattern of stating the need of and opportunities to deal with the issue, then

exploring the theological basis of the issue and finally suggesting practical ways to deal with it through sermon starters on specific passages.

As stated, the book comes from a mainline Protestant, liturgical background. It is weak on the distinctions between evangelism and social action, the nature of stewardship, the nature of ecumenicalism, and inerrancy. So why would any evangelical Baptist want to buy it? It will stretch you to consider these issues from a different perspective and will force you to grapple with new insights from Scripture. For instance, in the chapter on evangelism the sample passage is John 4, the story of the Samaritan woman at the well. The author challenges the standard belief that the woman is wantonly immoral and instead suggests that "given the social circumstances of the time, that instead of abandoning husbands she has been abandoned by them and is now with a man who will not afford her the dignity of marriage. Jesus is not naming her promiscuity but rather her pain" [p.88]. This kind of fresh insight forces us to re-examine a comfortable and well-known passage. This is the strength of this book. While much in the book is weak, its insights and thought-provoking sermon starters make it a handy reference work to have.

Doug Tiffin,
Bradford Baptist Church, Bradford, Ontario.

James P. Mackey, ed., *An Introduction to Celtic Christianity*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd., 1989, 440 pages.

For much of the first few centuries after the fall of the western Roman Empire in the fifth century the liveliest centre of Christianity in western Europe was the Celtic Church in the British Isles. Cut asunder from the churches on the continent, the Celtic Church developed its own particular ethos and spirituality. Aspects of this ethos and spirituality are explored in eight of the fourteen essays which comprise this recent introduction to Celtic Christianity. This introduction, though, is a lot broader than what is traditionally denoted by the terms "Celtic Church" and "Celtic Christianity." The other six essays range over such diverse topics as the impact of Protestantism in Scottish Highland culture, the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival in Wales, the spiritual significance of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and the poetry of Séan O' Ríordáin (1916-1977). Given such a broad understanding of the term "Celtic Christianity," it is no surprise to find such vapid generalizations as the following about Patrick: "He was certainly a Celt in character, fiercy, religious, visionary, mystical" [p.64]. As Colm O' Baoill noted in a review of this book [*The Expository Times*, 102, No.4 (January) 1991, 121], "this kind of soft racism can be a drag on objective scholarship." Nevertheless, there is some very fine scholarship within these pages. Two essays are quite outstanding: that by the late R.P.C. Hanson on "The Mission of Saint Patrick" and the one by R. Tudur Jones on "The Evangelical Revival in Wales: A Study in Spirituality."

Over the course of more than twenty years Hanson made some substantial contributions to Patrician scholarship. His first major work on Patrick was his *St. Patrick: His Origins and Career* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), in which he set out the main lineaments of Patrick's historical context and career. His important study of Patrick's rule of faith followed in 1976 ["The Rule of Faith of Victorinus and of Patrick" in John J. O'Meara and Bernd Naumann, eds., *Latin Script and Letters A.D. 400-900* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1976), p.25-36] and then his critical edition of Patrick's works in 1978 [*Saint Patrick: Confession et Lettre à Coroticus* with Cécile Blanc (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf)]. His translation of Patrick's two works, the *Confession* and his *Letter to Coroticus*, appeared in 1983: *The Life and Writings of the Historical Saint Patrick* (New York: The Seabury Press). "The Mission of Saint Patrick" draws heavily upon the postions which

Hanson had reached in these definitive works on Patrick. Patrick, Hanson persuasively maintains, was born in Romanised Britain towards the end of the fourth century A.D. The dates of his career are difficult to determine, but Hanson argues that "Patrick was born about the year 390, came to Ireland some time not long after 431, and died between 450 and 460" [p.28]. Patrick's ministry in Ireland was an itinerant one, and extraordinarily successful. As Hanson concludes, he rightly "deserves the title 'Apostle of the Irish People' " [p.42]. Among the outstanding features of Patrick's Christian experience which Hanson notes is his interest in dreams. Hanson thinks that "we may perhaps see a touch of Celtic temperament here," though he admits many modern African believers, for example, also have an interest in dreams" [p.33]. One might add that the same was present in the Apostolic Church and is also present in many modern converts from Islam. Such an interest in dreams can thus hardly qualify as a distinguishing feature of the Celtic temperament! Although Patrick was not well educated, he had a deep grasp of the Scriptures. In fact, Hanson notes that on the basis of his two extant writings he shows "no acquaintance with any book...except the Latin (pre-Vulgate) Bible" [p.40; though cf. Thomas Finan's claim on p.69 in his essay "Hiberno-Latin Christian Literature"]. This biblicism issues in a very attractive and marrowy Christianity, which centres on "our redemption through Christ, the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, our duty of continual praise to God..., the necessity of faith, the hope of and...certainty of heaven, the call to imitate Christ..., the judgment to come" [p.40]. Of the items of Patrick's legacy to the Irish Church Hanson draws especial attention to his missionary zeal and his wholehearted commitment to the work of the Gospel.

Spiritual vitality is also the subject of the other outstanding essay in this collection of papers, "The Evangelical Revival in Wales: A Study in Spirituality" by R. Tudur Jones. Jones draws much of his illustrative material from the writings and experience of two of the key leaders in this revival, Howel Harris (1714-1773) and William Williams (1717-1791). From Harris' writings, Jones notes the important place that the Lord's Supper held in the Welsh evangelist's spirituality: "the significance of the sacrament for him rested...in the fact that it proved in his experience a place to meet the Lord" [p.246]. Moreover, Harris' Christian experience, like that of other leading figures in the revival, was pervaded by the power and authority of the Holy Spirit. Jones' discussion of this aspect of the revival is indeed insightful and of significance in our day when North American evangelicalism sorely needs such power and authority. Jones points out that for those in the Revival "the power of the Holy Spirit was emotionally apprehensible" [p.249]. Writing to the English Calvinistic Methodist George Whitefield (1714-1770) in 1743 about the ministry of his fellow Welshman Daniel Rowland (*ca.*1713-1790) Harris could state:

> I was last Sunday at the Ordinance with Brother Rowlands where I saw, felt and heard such things as I can't send on Paper any Idea of. The Power that continues with Him is uncommon. Such crying out and Heart breaking Groans, Silent Weeping and Holy Joy, and shouts of Rejoicing I never saw...Tis very common when He preaches for Scores to fall down by the Power of the Word, pierced and wounded or overcom'd by the Love of God and Sights of the Beauty and Excellency of Jesus, and lie on the Ground...Some lye there for Hours [p.251-252].

Jones shows how the Methodist leaders like Harris and Williams were not unaware of the dangers of such emotional experiences; but, he stresses, they were rightly convinced that "it would be very strange if He [the Holy Spirit] affected the mind and the will but left the

feelings untouched" [p.252]. The essence of the spirituality of the Evangelical Awakening may thus be found in "heart-religion" [*ibid.*]. While other essays in the book certainly provide much food for thought, for instance that by M. Forthomme Nicholson on Pelagius, these two alone by Hanson and Jones are worth the price of the book.

The first occurrence of "God's" on p.40, line 21 should be "God"; "Iris" on p.43, line 15 should be "Irish."

Michael A.G. Haykin,
Central Baptist Seminary, Gormley, Ontario.

Charles Malik, *A Christian Critique of the University.* Waterloo: North Waterloo Academic Press, 1987, 118 pages.

In this slim volume Charles Malik (1906-1987) directs his attention to the academic as a person, rather than as a scholar, exploring the *raison d'etre* for his or her scholarship and who the scholar really is. In pointing to the human needs and foibles of the scholar and his or her oft-made, exaggerated claims to omniscience, Malik presents Christ as more interested in the scholar's well-being than in his or her scholarship. Every scholar has a longing to be accepted, even admired - this is often the driving force behind much of their scholarship. Malik thus offers a profound and eloquent insight into the university, which, like all institutions, is not an entity unto itself. It is not merely brick buildings and a glorious tradition of educational splendour, but a society of human beings with clay feet.

It should be noted that Malik was not only a devout Christian but also a dedicated academic - one of the most learned men of his time, with fifty honorary degrees conferred on him by the major universities around the world. One may disagree with him, but none can disclaim his right and authority to critique the university. He does so as an insider - not with disdain but with a Christ-like love and compassion for the scholar, the scientist and the university as a whole.

Malik's central question in his critique of the university is: "What does Jesus Christ think of the university?" Wisely admitting that his own opinion, in spite of his credentials, is ultimately of limited importance, he focuses on this vital question: "How is Jesus treated by the university?" As Malik points out, many great universities were founded to serve Christ. For example, Harvard's motto is *Christo et Ecclesiae,* "for Christ and for the Church." But he rightly questions their fidelity to their motto. Sadly, this "swerving" from Christ is considered progress.

Malik then focuses on the specific areas of scholarship in the university. To the sciences, Malik directs the question: Can Jesus Christ ignore the intellectual, spiritual, moral havoc created by science: "unwarranted conclusions drawn from the theory of evolution;...the deadly sense of human self-sufficiency,...naturalistic monism,...the doctrine of the self-creativity of the universe" and the "unabashed atheism and the denial of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit? Can Jesus Christ ignore all this? He cannot!" [p.68]. It would have been easy to merely deliver a denunciation of science which might set some Christians leaping with joy. Malik chooses instead to remind the scientist of Jesus' great love for him. The scientist is ultimately more important than science. If the scientist objects that Jesus doesn't exist, Malik replies that the non-existence of beings is impossible to prove, and there have been many scientists who have believed, and do today, that Jesus existed and continues to exist. Scientific method, by its own nature and definitions, must remain mute in this discussion.

Malik regards the humanities as even more important than the sciences, for they should correct the sciences, but they don't. It is the humanities and their worldview that underlies the university's perspective on nature and human life, and which determines the spirit of the university. But while there is no end of diverse scholarship and speculation in the humanities, Malik sees it as most significant that the humanities "are silent" about the person of Jesus Christ. In all of the humanities he is absent, absent not as an object of study but as a Teacher. The truth about him is absent. Even "the religious departments are secularized." Malik proceeds to briefly and pointedly assess some twenty-one "fundamental presuppositions of the humanities." Among them are: naturalism, scepticism, materialism, rationalism, technologism, Freudianism, relativism, humanism, secularism - all of which Malik feels ultimately culminate in atheism.

Malik acknowledges that there is much interest in religion. But the distinctive character and content of the secular university's curriculum is nevertheless hostile to Jesus Christ. After eight years of exposure to this rationalist and relativist influence many "parents wring their hands and complain about what is happening to their children" [p.92]; yet many churches still appear unconcerned about the university and Jesus Christ's exclusion from it.

The hope of making great inroads in reclaiming the secular university for Christ "from whom it originates" seems slim. Malik realized this. But prompted by his love for Christ and the university he felt obligated to at least suggest a solution. He called it a "dream," which in practical terms he expressed as the Institute. Its purpose would be to monitor the university from the viewpoint of Jesus Christ, as Malik has done in this critique. It would be comprised of a paid staff to carry out the business of the Institute, and a fraternity of the most outstanding Christian scholars in all fields, as well as pastors and lay people from all denominational backgrounds. The fraternity would receive only travel expenses and offer its services voluntarily. Its mandate would be to meet four to six times a year to assess the state of the university by means of a fourfold standard: a) As objectively as possible ascertain the mind, morals, and spirit of the university in a scholarly fashion and how these came to be what they are; b) let the teaching of Jesus Christ judge the existing state of mind, morals and spirit, and the way it has developed; c) consider the possibility of bringing Christ back to the university and suggest practical ways of doing so; d) the Institute is to consider its mandate to last as long as there are universities - indefinitely.

Malik was a realist. He knew all the problems involved in attempting such a venture and the enomity of the task. Yet, as he said, "What then must be done, Nothing? Should we just rest in the dream?...Shall we simply let matters drift?" [p.113]. "The university is *there*, and Jesus Christ is *there* and the future is *there*, and both the university and the church and our children and grandchildren and the whole fate of man and civilization are crying for us to do something" [p.114]. The Institute was not merely an idealist's dream. It was a vision. It still waits for the Church and Christian scholars to take up Malik's - and Jesus Christ's - challenge and to do something.

Malik's *A Christian Critique of The University*, first presented in 1981 as the University of Waterloo's Third Annual Pascal Lectures on Christianity and the University, is a little gem, and really should be better known.

Walfried E. Goossen,
Dundas, Ontario.

Peter Matheson, ed., *The Third Reich and the Christian Churches.* Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd., 1981, 103 pages.

Martin Luther King Jr. once said that the proper role of the Church in society was one of conscience - the Church should be neither a slave of the state nor its master. History is replete with examples of the tragic consequences of these two extremes. Some, such as Martin Luther, saw hardly any political role for the Church save one of almost blind obedience (note for example his attitude toward the peasant uprising). Luther developed a doctrine that came to be known as the doctrine of the two kingdoms - the kingdom of this world and the kingdom of heaven. These two separate kingdoms were seen as dichotomous in nature with two distinct modus operandi.

In the early twentieth century we witnessed the rise of the social gospel and now as we approach the year 2000 we see movements such as liberation theology, the moral majority, and others, again raising questions and concerns as to what is the proper role of Christ's church in the socio-political arena. It is almost impossible to be neutral or impervious to this problem. Indifference and inaction become loud positions by virtue of their silence, and sectarian militancy can easily prostitute the gospel and sacrifice Christian freedom. In other words we must come to grips with this important debate whether we like it or not.

Our present position on these issues must be informed by what we can learn from the past or it will be shallow at best and dangerous at worst. We must heed Santayana's famous saying that those who ignore the mistakes of the past are condemned to repeat them. Books such as this one provide excellent historical case study material for the development of socio-political positions. It contains a wide variety of source material chronicling the relationship of the Nazi regime with many different confessional groups. These groups range from the Roman Catholics to mainline and sectarian Protestant groups.

The source documents are arranged chronologically and thereby demonstrate the growing and often mounting tensions between the Nazi authorities and various Christian leaders. Each document is given an adequate introduction but for the most part the story unfolds of its own accord. This chronological ordering of the source material provides for very dramatic reading as one sees this nightmarish period of world history unfold.

It is at times disappointing to note the indifference of various groups, but what comes through very clearly throughout the book is that many of these issues were not black and white at the time. As one reads through the book it is hard to avoid being frustrated and astonished that more Christian leaders didn't see through the deceptive ideology of National Socialism before it was too late. This is not to say that no one saw through it, for some most certainly did right from the outset. Karl Barth is a notable example of such a one and his letters make for refreshing reading. Much can be gained from reading how the Nazi authorities duped many Church leaders and used them for their own political ends. It becomes clear that the most powerful lies comes to us cloaked in apparent truth.

Another lesson these documents seem to teach is that the Christian gospel should never be identified with national interests, whether these are ideological in nature or not. To compromise the Christian freedom to be salt and light for political expediency and social legitimacy always seems to end in tragic consequences for both the Church and society. To some extent it would seem that the Church is to act as a sort of preservative in society. However, if we sacrifice our preserving power for temporal gain we do a disservice to both ourselves and the society we claim we are trying to reach out to.

Another lesson to be gained from reading a book such as this is that the illumination of the future has a tendency to recast history in stark black and white images. During the actual events themselves, however, the platform of history is a rich mixture of subtle hues. This book brings these hues into focus and offers many valuable lessons for us as we try to work out a practical theology for the intricate tapestry we so scientifically refer to as the socio-political structure.

Scott Dyer,
Burlington, Ontario.

Iain H. Murray, *D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The Fight of Faith, 1939-198l.* Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1990, 831 pages.

J.I. Packer said of his preaching: "All that I know about preaching I can honestly say I learned from the Doctor by example." Wilbur Smith said after listening to him preach: "My own language is utterly inadequate to communicate the experience of sitting under such Spirit-filled proclaiming of the eternal truths of our holy faith." Emil Brunner called him the greatest preacher in Christendom in his day. The man of whom they spoke in such superlatives was Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899-1981) (henceforth referred to as ML-J), the late minister of Westminster Chapel, London, and arguably one of the most important figures of twentieth-century evangelical Christianity. For any (like the present reviewer) whose spiritual life has been stimulated and even transformed by the writings of ML-J, this second volume of Iain Murray's comprehensive (and authorized) biography of ML-J is riveting, impossible-to-put-down reading. For those unfamiliar with "the Doctor," Murray's work will serve as a fascinating introduction to a man whose gospel ministry impacted (and continues to impact even after his death in 1981) literally hundreds of thousands of people world-wide with a depth perhaps unparalleled since the days of John Wesley, George Whitefield, and Jonathan Edwards.

In the limpid prose we have come to expect from Murray, the life and ministry of ML-J is chronicled with a wealth of personal (often revealing) information, stretching from his early days at Westminister Chapel during the London Blitz in World War II as assistant to G. Campbell Morgan, through his 30-year pulpit ministry there as sole preacher, to his growing (through unofficial) role as leader of British Nonconformist evangelicalism. Murray's account details the strategic importance of ML-J's guidance of the evangelical student movement as well as his affectionate, life-long involvement in his native Wales. In addition to his heavy responsibilities at Westminster Chapel, ML-J would routinely preach several times during the week at churches throughout Britain, and was a much sought-after preacher in North America. This exposure to hundreds of congregations in a variety of denominations in different cultures over forty years of ministry gave ML-J an unequalled depth of insight into the problems facing the Church in the twentieth century.

There are several compelling reasons why Murray's biography is highly relevant to the contemporary evangelical scene. First, we are reminded of the true source of powerful preaching. What explains preaching that can transform lives? Murray claims that it was not ML-J's Welsh powers of oratory. ML-J did in fact possess considerable native ability in speaking, which he recognized. But he saw this more as a potential liability than an asset, and shunned all attempts at audience manipulation. He was deeply conscious that true preaching which glorifies God is patterned after what is said in 1 Cor 2:1-5, and so he preached with full awareness of the awesome responsibility resting upon those who present God's eternal message of salvation to desperately needy sinners. It was his ever-present awareness of the solemnity of such a calling and the eternal consequences of accepting or rejecting the gospel message that, paradoxically, both energized and humbled him throughout his career. What men thought of him was immaterial; what mattered was what

they thought of his Lord. As for his own view of his preaching, he once said that he would not cross the road to listen to himself preaching. Indeed, as Murray shares, numerous people, at first sight, thought him physically unprepossessing, Yet, as he proceeded to preach, they felt an overpowering sense of the glory and majesty and presence of the Lord unlike anything they had ever before experienced. Murray lays before us the real source of ML-J's power in preaching: whole-hearted surrender to the Lord coupled with an equally whole-hearted acceptance of every word of the Bible as the inerrant Word of God. ML-J himself stated that great preaching depends on great themes, and in his opinion only an inerrant Word from God could supply great themes. He was living proof of the truth of that statement. What made his preaching remarkable was not only the passionate sincerity that marked his every word in the pulpit but also the fact that his withering indictments of modern "solutions" to the problems of this century came from one who had been trained in modern science. One of the many appealing features of Murray's biography is the frequent use of personal testimonies from those whose lives, previously blighted by liberalism and modern philosophy, were transformed by exposure to ML-J's preaching. Murray shows that ML-J's ability to expose the inadequacy of modern thought to meet spiritual needs was based on a thorough knowledge of current trends. ML-J was a voracious reader who kept abreast of the latest thought, and was known to chide his ministerial colleagues for the narrowness of their reading. His preaching demonstrated the relevancy and life-transforming power of the untruncated gospel message. Sunday by Sunday for three decades the faith once for all delivered to the saints was preached to a rapt audience of all ages and diverse backgrounds numbering well over a thousand in the heart of England's chief commercial, cultural and political centre - and that at a time when liberal preachers of the day were jettisoning the parts of the Bible that were particularly offensive to modern man.

The second reason Murray's biography of ML-J is so helpful for evangelicals today is that it reminds us of the importance of concentrating on central things in a balanced way. ML-J's admonition to younger men to beware of letting the negative squeeze out the positive was not always heeded by these younger men whose ardour for doctinal purity (which he had inculcated in many of them and fully shared) was sometimes not matched by a gracious spirit in theological controversy. The simultaneous demonstration of unswerving faithfulness to biblical truth and a loving and patient approach to those with whom we differ was to ML-J's mind a vital sign of the Spirit's presence. He exemplified that balance to a remarkable degree, though it was sorely tested at various times, particularly during his public split with John Stott in 1967 (which Murray explains in detail). ML-J foresaw that inner weakness would come to haunt British evangelicalism if it made common cause with those who watered down or even openly rejected cardinal doctrines of biblical faith. For this reason he strenuously opposed the ecumenical movement at a time when evangelicals were increasingly convinced that the future of the Church lay in that direction. It was not that ML-J was against dialogue with the liberals. Murray brings out the little-known fact that ML-J, even in the midst of overwhelming responsibilities, gave generously of time and energy in formal discussions with liberal churchmen on the possibility of cooperation in evangelism. This lack of party spirit in ML-J was not always appreciated by those who only saw him in the role of staunch opponent of ecumenism. Yet it was not cooperation among Christians that ML-J opposed; he was against treating evangelicalism as one among many equally acceptable expressions of Christianity. For him, the future of the Christian faith was at stake if liberal views of Scripture, the atonement and the deity of Christ were seen as possessing equal validity in the Church. Murray's detailed account of how ML-J dealt with this issue will no doubt prove helpful to future generations of believers who must wrestle with the same dilemma.

This balance can also be seen in ML-J's deepening conviction of the need for revival in the Church. Though his exegesis of certain verses concerning the Holy Spirit did

not convince all (Murray points out in a very helpful way some of the inconsistencies in ML-J's approach), nevertheless he put his finger on a pressing need in the evangelical Church at the very time that it was evidencing a resurgence of orthodoxy. ML-J was convinced that orthodoxy alone was not sufficient. What was urgently needed was a mighty outpouring of the Spirit of God, so that God's people would be purified from worldliness and energized for bolder witness. It was something ML-J longed to see. Yet he was not fixated on revival, and indeed was critical of those who were. His calm enjoyment of the present blessings of the gospel, coupled with a burning desire to know more of Christ and serve him better, are a salutary example of balance to all of us who similarly desire to see a greater work of God in our own lives and in our own day.

In an age marked by doctrinal indifference, moral relativism, and spiritual lassitude, this account of Martyn Lloyd-Jones will no doubt act to many as a powerful antidote (as it has to this reviewer), stirring the heart, strengthening the soul, and renewing the resolve to follow our Lord until He comes. We are greatly in Iain Murray's debt for this spiritual feast.

Daniel Lundy,
Central Baptist Seminary, Gormley, Ontario.

J.I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1990, 367 pages.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the Puritan and Reformed Studies Conference, held annually in Westminster Chapel, London, did much to plant, nurture and bring to maturity a robust evangelical Calvinism, which has been, and is being, greatly used of God around the world. Undoubtedly the two central figures in this annual event were the late D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones and J.I. Packer. While the masterly papers given by Lloyd-Jones at the annual meetings of this Conference and those of its successor, the Westminster Conference for Theological and Historical Study (with special reference to the Puritans), have appeared as *The Puritans*, recently published by the Banner of Truth, this latest volume from the pen of Packer now makes widely available many of the invaluable papers which he gave at the Puritan and Reformed Studies Conference. All but three of the twenty chapters of the book (the "Introduction", that on "Marriage and Family in Puritan Thought" and the "Afterward") have actually appeared in print before. Nine chapters were papers originally given at the Puritan Conference, four started out as introductions to various volumes, while the rest were either lectures or printed as articles in various journals.

In the "Introduction," Packer confesses that the centre of his interest in the Puritans for the past forty years has lain in Puritanism as a renewal movement and Puritan spirituality. This interest is certainly reflected in the chapters of the book, which bear titles such as "Puritanism as a Movement of Revival," "The Puritan Conscience," "The Witness of the Spirit in Puritan Thought," and "The Spirituality of John Owen." For Packer, "Puritanism was at heart a spiritual movement, passionately concerned with God and godliness" [p.28]. As such, there is much in their writings which is of great value for today's Church. While all of the chapters are well-crafted, incisive and marrowy, this reviewer found the following particularly excellent: the one on particular redemption (originally an introduction to John Owen's *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ,* a classic defence of this doctrine), that on "The Spirituality of John Owen," and the one dealing with Jonathan Edwards' perspective on revival. Owen (1616-1683) figures largely in many of the chapters; Packer admits that Owen "comes closer than anyone else to being the hero" of the book [p.191]. One of the great British theologians, hailed by some of his Puritans contemporaries as the "Calvin of England," he has been sadly neglected. Hopefully Packer's extensive treatment of aspects of his theology and spirituality will aid

and encourage a rediscovery of his legacy. It should be no surprise to find Edwards' thought being treated in a book devoted to the Puritans. Although he flourished after the Puritan era (which Packer places between 1550 and 1700 [p.11; see also p.60]) he was "a Puritan born out of due time" [p.310]. Packer finds major proof of Edwards' Puritanism in his lifelong concern with and vindication of "experimential religion" [p.312].

The only real blemishes in these solid "explanations in historical spirituality" [p.329] are typographical ones: p.68, line 4 "find" should be "finds;" nearly all of the final three lines on p.217 are repeated at the top of 218; the scene of much of Jonathan Edwards' pastoral labours was Northampton, Massachusetts, not New Hampshire, as stated on p.309. These blemishes aside, here is a book which can help in meeting the greatest need of late twentieth-century evangelicalism, namely, revival. Puritanism, as Packer contends, was a movement focused on what God does in us; thus, "opening the windows of our souls to let in a breath of fresh air from the seventeenth century would...be the wisest possible course" in the pursuit of revival [p.77].

Michael A.G. Haykin,
Central Baptist Seminary, Gormley, Ontario.

John Piper, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990, 119 pages.

"People are starving for the greatness of God" [p.9]. Thus John Piper, senior pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minneapolis, begins this slim, but meaty, study of preaching. According to Piper this hunger for God's grandeur is *the* deepest need of men and women in the pew. Their hidden cry to God is: "Show me thy glory!"

> It is not the job of the Christian preacher to give people moral or pyschological pep talks about how to get along in the world; someone else can do that. But most of our people have no one in the world to tell them...about the supreme beauty and majesty of God [p.12].

In the space of seven chapters Piper seeks to give the preacher a vision for such preaching.

The substance of the chapters was originally delivered as two sets of lectures, which Piper has prepared for publication. The Harold John Ockenga Lectures on Preaching, delivered at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in 1988, comprise Part I, which is entitled "Why God Should Be Supreme in Preaching." The Billy Graham Center Lectures given four years earlier at Wheaton College make up Part II, to which Piper has given the title "How to Make God Supreme in Preaching: Guidance from the Ministry of Jonathan Edwards."

God's glory as the ultimate goal of all preaching is the focus of the first chapter of Part I. Piper rightly regards it as imperative that preaching be informed by the recognition that God longs to use the words of the preacher to establish his reign in the hearts of men. Through the preaching of his messengers he seeks to ravish men's affections and irresistibly draw them into submission to himself. The next chapter locates the foundation of Biblical preaching in the atoning and propitiatory work of Christ: "without the cross, preaching that aims to glorify a righteous God in the gladness of sinful man has no validity" [p.33].

Reliance on the Spirit and his power is also a vital part of genuine preaching. Piper explores this aspect of the subject in chapter 3. He is quick to point out that belief in the irrerrancy of the Word of God is no guarantee that Biblical preaching will follow. The preaching must be manifestly tied to the passage of Scripture being preached. When the Word of God is used as the jumping-off point for the preacher's thoughts, the Spirit is not honoured and the authority of the Word he has inspired undercut. The chapter closes with a very helpful, though far too brief, guide to building reliance on the Spirit's power prior to, during, and after the act of preaching. For fuller discussions of this vital aspect of preaching, the reader might want to turn to D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1971), p.304-325 or Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Exegetical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981), p.235-247.

Chapter four is devoted to the seriousness of preaching God's Word. There is a deep gladness which occurs when the gravity of preaching is recognized. All too frequently, though, the gladness is sought without the gravity, and the result is "triviality, levity, carelessness, flippancy" in the pulpit [p.52]. Referring specifically to the North American scene, Piper rightly maintains that: "Laughter seems to have replaced repentance as the goal of many preachers" [p.55-56]. Then, in a personal aside, Piper illustrates this remark: "I have been literally amazed at conferences where preachers mention the need for revival and then proceed to cultivate an atmosphere in which it could never come" [p.56].

How different were preachers who knew revival, men like Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847), Asahel Nettleton (1783-1844) and Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758). Even Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892), who had a robust sense of humour, was careful to avoid levity in the pulpit. Writing about Spurgeon a few years after his death, Robertson Nicoll stated: "Mr Spurgeon is thought by those who do not know his sermons to have been a humorous preacher. As a matter of fact there was no preacher whose tone was more uniformly earnest, reverent and solemn" [p.57-58]. Reading this chapter is indeed sobering and thought-provoking; it should be required reading for all who preach.

The second half of the book features the model from whom Piper has clearly drawn much of his vision for peaching as outlined in the first half of the book: Jonathan Edwards. Piper's interest in Edwards began in seminary: "I found it to be life-changing advice when a wise seminary professor told us to find one great evangelical theologian and immerse ourselves in his life and writing" [p.61].

Piper chose Edwards. Recognized as the greatest American theologian and philosopher, Edwards was also outstanding as a preacher. Indeed his God-centred and God-entranced preaching was a key factor in the Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s. After a summary of Edwards' life and the leading features of his theology, Piper looks closely at ten characteristics of Edwards' preaching by means of which God's grandeur was displayed. These characteristics, however, were only effectual as means because they were rooted in Edwards' vision of God. As Piper rightly emphasizes [p.105]:

> If we don't share the greatness of his vision of God we will not approach the greatness of his preaching. On the other hand, if God in his grace should see fit to open our eyes to the vision of Edwards, if we were granted to taste the sweet sovereignty of the Almighty the way Edwards tasted, then a renewal of the pulpit in our day would be possible - indeed inevitable.

Michael A.G. Haykin,
Central Baptist Seminary, Gormley, Ontario.

O. Palmer Robertson, *Jonah: A Study in Compassion.* Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1990, 64 pages.

In the space of five small chapters O. Palmer Robertson, pastor of Wallace Memorial Church, Hyattsville, seeks to explore the contemporary meaning behind the story of Jonah the prophet. Robertson's ability to contexualize this story, without in the least way jeapordizing its historicity, is not only unique, but masterful. Throughout this commentary we are brought to understand the shallowness of our hearts in the light of God's magnificent grace. By dividing the book of Jonah into five major divisions we are able to trace not only the despairing flight of Jonah away from Nineveh (and his God), but also God's movement in grace toward his prophet and his world. Agreeing with the author of this work, I would have to say that the book of Jonah has a certain appeal unmatched in comparison to other prophetic books of the Old Testament canon. Even Robertson himself can write: "The story of Jonah is a great one. It has captured people's imagination for hundreds of years" [p.51]. Consequently, this volume is his own attempt to rekindle the imaginary flame within the contempory Church regarding the events and significance of the story of Jonah.

At first glance I was disenchanted with the size and approach of this small volume. Departing from his usual exegetical writings, Robertson shows his experience and adaptability as both scholar and pastor. Since this book is highly devotional in nature rather than academic, unlike most of his other works, immediate disappointment will come to those who have become accustomed to his previous volumes. Nonetheless, the value of this book is not lost. In fact, the opposite is true. Robertson has uniquely furnished the study of this Old Testament prophet with a practical, contemporary, and highly applicable resource.

As the subtitle of the book indicates, Robertson has chosen the concept of compassion (grace, mercy and forgiveness being derivatives that flesh out the main idea) to be the thematic thread which weaves the book together. Consequently, he can write: "The book of Jonah may be summarized in one word: compassion" [p.53]. Adding a further note to this statement he again writes: "The centrality of compassion does not become explicit until the last chapter. But that is the way a good story unfolds" [p.53]. True enough. Yet, it is precisely with these two statements that the book's main flaw is seen most clearly. Hence, my only criticism of this commentary does not fall on the choice of compassion as the main thrust of the book, but rather, whether or not Robertson has effectively led us up to the same conclusion. In this reviewer's estimation he has not. In fact, even the last chapter, which he says explicitly demonstrates God's compassion, is pale in comparison to his stress on the theme of obedience in response to God's will and commission. Again, this is not to argue for or against compassion as a valid and appropriate theme for the story of Jonah, but it is to question the author's success in developing that theme. It would seem to this reviewer that more weight is laid on Jonah's response (or lack of response) to God, than on God's response to a wicked world.

Apart from this I would highly recommend the work to pastors and laypersons alike. It is interesting and readable. As well, it is a book that will challenge. It will challenge us, first of all, to measure our own level of obedience and compassion. Do we, as Christians, have a heart desire to do God's will and love God's world? As Robertson suggests: "Follow closely the path of Jonah to see if perhaps you should make some critical corrections on your present course" [p.7]. And second, it challenges us to recognize our

own God-given commission today, to realize that we are to proclaim the message of God's compassion, and to further realize that we must "transfer that compassion to sinful men" [p.63]. It is for us as Christians to show the world through word and deed that "a greater than Jonah" has come.

Mark B. Rodgers,
Newtonbrook Baptist Church, Willowdale, Ontario.

Cyril S. Rodd, ed., *Foundation Documents of the Faith*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd., 1987, 152 pages.

Many modern Baptists, be they conservative or liberal, have a deep-seated distrust of credal statements, a fact which is amply noted in this book [p.viii, 89-90, 94, 96-97]. A reflective reading of this book, however, might well alleviate much of this mistrust. For the dominant thrust of the book is that credal statements, in particular those of the early Church, are a heritage which cannot be lightly ignored. The book consists of a collection of twelve articles (all but two first appeared in *The Expository Times*), which focus on most of the major credal and confessional statements of the past two millenia. Particularly noteworthy are the first three essays which focus on the Apostles' Creed (G.C. Stead) the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed of 381 (J.G. Davies) and the Chalcedonian Definition of 451 (John MacQuarrie). Close examination of these classical texts, both in relationship to their historical context and with regard to their contents, leaves the reader with the conviction that, in the words of J.G. Davies, these creeds are "not just a set of outdated answers to questions we no longer ask" [p.21]. Rather, they penetrate to the heart of what it means to be a Christian. And although these confessions of faith were written with the aid of Greek philosophical concepts, it does not follow that they are merely expressions of Hellenistic culture (thus Wolfhart Pannenberg, "The Place of the Creeds in Christianity Today", p.151). As MacQuarrie emphasizes: "Christian doctrines were not conformed to the mould of already existing terminologies [from Greek philosophy], but terms already available were adopted into Christian discourse and given new meanings" [p.34; see the similar emphasis on p.18-19, 119-120, 150-151]. Nor were these creeds written by men who found their deepest satisfaction in theological speculation. It was a pastoral concern for the preservation of the basis of our salvation that led to their writing [p.24; also see p.119]. Thus Avery Dulles, in a later essay on "Modern Credal Affirmations," can state of these ancient creeds: "as classics, they evince a certain capacity to transcend the limitations of their own time and culture. Simple and majestic in style, evocative in images and symbols, they appeal to persons of a vast range of epochs and conditions....Contemporary theologians still find in these creeds a suitable framework for expounding the essentials of Christian belief" [p.129].

Among those to whom these patristic creeds have had a distinct appeal are some Baptists, as W.M.S. West notes in his article, "Baptists and Statements of Faith" [p.82, 86-87, 96]. Moreover, West points out that "during the early years of their existence, Baptists did make considerable use of...confessions of faith," in particular, those that they themselves drew up [p.84]. In the seventeenth century a number of Baptist confessions were written in order to, among other things, establish the parameters of orthodoxy, clarify the Baptist position, and serve as a basis for fellowship [p.84-88]. The eighteenth century, however, saw the beginning of a movement in Baptist circles away from this widespread usage of confessional statements. Rooted in the conviction that the Bible is a sufficient touchstone for doctrine and in the fear that creeds and confessions cannot but exercise a tyranny over the conscience, this movement has done much to shape Baptist thinking down to the present day [p.88-97]. But if creeds and confessions of faith have the potential to be rivals to Scripture and tyrants of the conscience, how can one explain the position of our seventeenth-century Baptist forebears? They were thoroughly convinced of the preeminent

authority of Scripture and the fact that "God alone is Lord of the conscience" [p.87, 88]. Yet, they were not at all afraid to make considerable use of documents that set forth their convictions as both Baptists and Christians. Hopefully, the articles in this book will help modern Baptist readers to begin to see why this position of their forebears is not at all contradictory, but makes very good sense.

Nestorius was condemned in 431, not 381 [as alleged on p.23]; "leader" should be "leaders" [p.37, line 24]; "celtic" should be "Celtic" [p.151, line 11]. The lack of an index detracts somewhat from the book's usefulness.

Michael A.G. Haykin,
Central Baptist Seminary, Gormley, Ontario.

Alan P.F. Sell, *Aspects of Christian Integrity*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1990, 160 pages.

Alan P.F.Sell, Professor of Christian Thought at the University of Calgary, explores what integrity might entail in relation to six areas of Christian thought and practice. Christian thought, doctrine, ethics, ecclesial life, mission and pastoral ministry are each examined with a view to discerning what integrity (understood formally as wholeness and honesty) might mean in relation to each of them. The occasion for this book, originally given as a series of lectures, is related to a part of the mandate (i.e., "to serve the local and wider Christian communities in a variety of theological ways" [p.ix]), associated with the chair that Sell occupies at the University of Calgary.

In his first chapter Sell argues that Christian thought (i.e., the analytic study of Christian doctrine through history including its relationship to philosophical thought-forms) may be studied in the context of a secular university with integrity. He claims that although Christian thought draws on resources and contexts which are specifically Christian, it need not, and indeed ought not, to be partisan in its approach. Moreover, while Christian thought aims at wholeness, in the sense of comprehensiveness and thoroughness, honesty requires that we admit its provisionality, *in all its forms*, in the light of the mystery of God, the finitude and sinfulness of humanity and changing intellectual climates.

Doctrinal integrity likewise requires both wholeness and honesty. Christian doctrines ought to be expressed, on Sell's view, in such a way as to cohere with one another in a systematic whole. However, honesty requires that we recognize the perennial difficulties with every attempt to attain this coherent systematic expression. Due to human limitations and the mystery of God every doctrinal system will contain incoherent aspects which will, in turn, require further thought and work. For this reason doctrinal integrity is only ever a relative achievement.

Christian ethical integrity, as Sell develops it, might usefully be construed as ethical faithfulness in response to God's love. God's work of *agape* in Jesus Christ entails: (1) faithful reflection upon this act as the ground and possibility of the Christian moral life; and (2) Christian moral praxis which is "prompted by gratitude to God" [p.60]. Concretely, this means that Christians, in solidarity with one another, and, on occasion, with other human movements, will combat social and political evils such as apartheid motivated by gratitude for God's holy *agape*.

In chapter four Sell examines two areas of ecclesial life (confessional statements and ecclesiastical orders) which have threatened the wholeness (i.e., the given unity) of the Church. He does so in the hope that honesty in these matters may serve to make "the given wholeness of the church more nearly manifest..." [p.88]. Sell argues that while the unity

of the Church has often properly been threatened by doctrinal honesty in its history, it has also been threatened by personal ambition and false piety. He challenges the reader to consider the unity given to the Church by Christ, and then to ask "what are the permissible degrees of tolerance within the church" [p.98]?

In his chapter on the integrity of Christian mission Sell is concerned with whether Christians can, in the light of their provisional and finite grasp of Christian truth, justify with integrity their universal mission to the whole world. Is such an enterprise, asks Sell, inherently imperialistic and/or triumphalistic? Sell maintains that the justification for the Christian witness to the whole world is found in the gospel itself. "God gives life and salvation in the Christ he sent, and that Christ in turn sends out those who receive that gift to bear witness to it" [p.114]. The manner in which witness is given must, however, also find its basis in the gospel. Christians may not, with integrity, disregard the context or humanity of those persons to whom they seek to give witness. This caveat not withholding, Christians should not, on Sell's view, compromise the integrity of the gospel by delimiting the universality of its truth-claims to themselves in order to be tolerant or cordial toward other faiths.

In the final chapter, "Pastoral Integrity," Sell focuses on integrity understood exclusively as "wholeness" brought about by the Gospel in the people of God. He claims that "the *whole* church" (read: the entire church, pastor and people) "is challenged to be a *whole* people" (read: a people who are healed by grace, united in praise, worship and fellowship, and disciplined by the Word), "ministered to by a *whole* pastor" (read: a confident but not arrogant pastor, who is nourished by his devotional life and is loving, obedient and consistent) "making a *whole* witness" (read: successful - consistent and obedient - witness) [p.130].

Sell's book is a well-written and accessible piece of work on theological-ethical issues which are of relevance to both academics and non-academics. Although the central terms of the essays (honesty and wholeness) are sometimes over-freighted with equivocal meanings, the result of an overly restrictive formal definition of integrity, Sell makes his case clearly with interesting examples from eighteenth and nineteenth century theology and Church life. Perhaps the central contribution of the book, on my reading, is that Sell is able, on the one hand, to make his case for humility, provisionality and, in a certain way, relativity in theology without, on the other hand, giving up or compromising central evangelical beliefs (re: the person and work of Christ) and practices (world-wide mission). Sometimes evangelicals have regarded tentativeness and provisionality in theology as inconsistent with solid theological conviction; Sell demonstrates that this need not be the case. Overall, this is a fine contribution to the life of "the local and wider Christian community" [p.ix].

Richard Topping,
Wycliffe College, Toronto, Ontario.

John F. Thornbury, *God Sent Revival: The Story of Asahel Nettleton and the Second Great Awakening.* Durham: Evangelical Press, 1977, 238 pages.

Asahel Nettleton (1783-1844) is a name which is relatively unknown among Christians today. On October 13, 1812, American soldiers attacked the British army of General Isaac Brock at Queenston Heights, Canada. At the same time, according to author John F. Thornbury, spiritual warfare was being launched through the ministry of Nettleton in a small Connecticut town. This work is an account of this spiritual warfare in Asahel

Nettleton's life. Although Nettleton was poorly educated and a plain man, he had a great impact in what is now called the Second Great Awakening.

This volume is valuable and interesting for a number of reasons. First, revival is scarcely known or even expected today. Thornbury paints a vivid picture of "the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon virtually all evangelical denominations." Second, Nettleton emerges as a great figure in this revival. His faults show clearly in this work; nevertheless, he remains a valuable model for Christian leaders today.

The story of Nettleton's conversion is reminiscent of Bunyan's spiritual struggles described in *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. Nettleton eventually came to know Christ in a revival that broke out in Killingworth. Although he returned to the fields as a farmer, he soon became convicted of the need to labour for God's harvest. He then began his academic struggles to obtain a B.A. degree at Yale University. At this same time, beneath the shade of a haystack in a remote meadow in Massachusetts, a group of students at William College met on Saturday afternoons to pray about their duty to evangelize the heathen nations. With prayer and with willing servants, revival was about to begin. The Second Great Awakening was to last longer than the revival under Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. Literally thousands were converted under Nettleton's ministry. Scholars of history will find interesting his antithetical relationship to Charles Finney, who is known as the "Father of Modern Evangelism".

This is a clear, factual book. North American Christians can learn much from the story of Nettleton and his influence on Western Christianity. This book inspired me to consider my usefulness to God as a servant, and to pray once again for revival.

Darryl S. Dash,
Scarborough, Ontario.

Robert E. Van Voorst, *Building Your New Testament Greek Vocabulary*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1990, 110 pages.

Robert E. Van Voorst's work is a highly beneficial aid for gaining a comprehensive New Testament Greek vocabulary. It capitalizes on the fact that about three-quarters of the words in the Greek New Testament, found five times or more (1,650), are related to one another in terms of their cognates (roots or stems). Van Voorst lists such words by their families alphabetically and in large categories according to their frequency. The student has the advantage of learning families of words of the New Testament through their cognate relationship. For each entry within the family, the Greek word is given, the basic English definition, a derivative English word (if appropriate), and the number of times it appears in the New Testament. Words found in the New Testament five or more times without any cognate relationships are entered in the same way: alphabetically and in the larger categories according to their frequency. The book also contains lists of prefixes and suffixes with their meanings to help the student see how the meaning of a word may be derived beyond its basic root meaning.

The learning of the vocabulary of the Greek New Testament is for most a daunting task. Consequently, *Building Your New Testament Greek Vocabulary* is a welcome ally in this endeavour. It serves equally well the beginning student or the scholar who has already made significant progress in building his Greek vocabulary, but has not yet mastered it.

R.C. Mitchell,
Central Baptist Seminary, Gormley, Ontario.