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A table of contents for *The Baptist Review of Theology* can be found here:

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## BOOK REVIEWS

**Barbara Von Der Heydt, *Candles Behind the Wall: Heroes of the Peaceful Revolution that Shattered Communism*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1993, xxi + 266 pages.**

It has often been said, in one form or another, that the Church is built on the blood of the martyrs. This remarkably gripping book is a series of testimonials that describe the courage of conviction sustained by devout followers of Jesus Christ under Eastern European Communist rule. It also drove home the principle that historical events have religious causes. One may analyse the demise of European Communism from any number of perspectives including politics or economics. Most conventional histories however, fail to take into account the fact that empires have risen and fallen at the quiet whisper of the Triune God into the hearts and souls of those who earnestly sought Him.

I must confess that reading this book was a slow and painful process for me personally. Barely a chapter rolled by without a tear being shed. It was a disquieting and humbling experience to continually confront believers who risked everything for the sake of Christ, while I sat comfortably in my Canadian home attempting to critique their lives and actions. I heartily endorse this book as a must read for every Christian who hungers to know if the Faith really makes any difference in a world ravaged by evil. (Spelling mistake page 58 “miny” should be “many”).

Heinz G. Dshankilic,  
Cambridge, Ontario.

**George Sayer, *Jack: A Life of C.S. Lewis*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1994. xx + 21-457 pages. ISBN: 0-89107-761-8.**

George Sayer, one of Lewis' students and friends, has written a sympathetic and yet critical account of this well-known tutor and professor from Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Other biographies have been penned about Lewis, but this one claims to be written "to present the factual background to the motivation and character of a remarkable man who has had, and is having, a profound effect on the modern world" (xx). Sayer, I believe, has met this claim. Besides this, one aspect of the biography I enjoyed in particular was Sayer's critical commentary on Lewis' books; he quotes some of the reviews given, and explains how and why the books were conceived and written. For example, the Narnia Chronicles were

written first as stories that children could wholeheartedly enjoy, and secondly as stories in which some of the imaginary episodes rather resemble the true events of the Christian faith. He did not want the resemblances to be pointed out by adults, nor even did he expect them to be noticed by more than a few children. His hope was that when, at an older age, the child came into contact with the real truths of Christianity, he or she would find these truths easier to accept because of reading with pleasure and accepting stories with similar themes years before (419f).

Sayer personally knew Lewis and was in constant contact with him for 29 years. He not only used this personal knowledge but also a multitude of personal letters, among other things, to put together this biography. Sayer does not hide anything of importance from his readers; Lewis' warts, as well as his beauty, come out in this biography in a sensitive and Christ-centred way. We see the humanity of Lewis and yet the victory and centrality of Christ in his life. One of the chapters I appreciated was entitled, "Escape," which looks at some of the personal experiences of the author with Lewis; through the author I felt I was really getting to know Lewis.

I cannot say anything I really disliked about the biography. It is quite readable; at points it makes you laugh; and it is certainly illuminating. It is a must read for Lewis scholars, simply for its critical interaction with other

Lewis commentators, as well as for the author's own personal knowledge of his subject. For those who have read some of Lewis' books, and want to know more about the man and his other works, I highly recommend this work. As one who fits into this latter group, I am glad to have read it. As a result I have been inspired to read more of Lewis, and to become more conversant with English literature. We should be thankful for this inexpensive volume from Crossway.

Barry Howson  
Vankleek Hill, ON

***Origen: Treatise on the Passover and Dialogue of Origen with Heraclides and His Fellow Bishops on the Father, the Son and the Soul.*** Translated and annotated by Robert J. Daly. New York, N.Y.: S.J. Paulist Press, 1992, 121 pages.

This translation provides access to two significant works by Origen, both probably from the last decade of his activity when he was in his prime. Daly gives a clear and thorough introduction to both works, with an outline, discussion of genre, and notes on manuscripts, editions and translations. There are Scripture and General indices, extensive notes, and a bibliography.

The *Treatise on the Passover* was probably a refutation of Hippolytus' treatise on the same subject. Origen was concerned to refute those who interpreted Passover as "passion," interpreting it rather as "passage" (that of Christ and all Christians to the Father). It is primarily an exegesis of Exodus 12, but it gives an illuminating example of Origen's hermeneutics. As Daly explains: "It is a genuinely existential interpretation in that the historical "passage" of the Jews from Egypt is seen primarily as a prefiguring of the passage accomplished by Christ and still being accomplished in the souls of Christians" (10).

The *Dialogue* "seems to be the record of a synod-type meeting of bishops, in the presence of lay people, called to discuss matters of belief and worship" (20). It is probably the summary of a longer discussion, and far from being a dialogue it is Origen who dominates. The first part is indeed a question and answer session with Heraclides, who is steered by Origen to a "more acceptable formulation of the unicity of God which does not deny

the distinct existence of divinity of Jesus, the Son” (20). The subjects then addressed are prayer, faith and works, and the nature of the soul (provoked by the LXX translation of Lev. 17:11). The value of this work is that it affords a glimpse of Origen’s immense authority and eloquence, and a taste of both the style and the substance of his theology.

Sharon James,  
Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

**Dominic J. Unger, Tr., *St. Irenaeus of Lyons Against the Heresies*. Revised by John J. Dillon. Vol. 1. New York: Paulist Press, 1992, 300 pages.**

This is a new, careful and highly readable translation of the first of Irenaeus’ five books against the Gnostic heresies of his day. Until now English readers have had to depend on the less reliable translation of Roberts and Rambaut in the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* series (1886). In Book I Irenaeus (ca. 130-200 AD) explains the teachings of a wide variety of Gnostic sects and teachers which, he says, “have sprung up and shot out of the ground like mushrooms” (93). Irenaeus’ interest in detail makes for fascinating reading as well as providing historians with a key source of information on second-century Gnosticism and early Christian faith. An influential early Christian leader, the bishop of Lyons is certainly worthy of such a modern edition of his work.

The editors have provided an authoritative introduction to the work and a detailed commentary (comprising two thirds of the book) on each of the 31 chapters, including bibliographies. The reader will appreciate the Scripture, Subject and Author indexes. Paulist Press deserves our thanks for this latest addition to its series, *Ancient Christian Writers, The Works of the Fathers in Translation*.

Douglas H. Shantz,  
Associate Professor of Religious Studies,  
Trinity Western University.

**Casper Olevanius, *A Firm Foundation: An Aid to Interpreting the Heidelberg Catechism*, trans. & ed. by Lyle D. Bierma. Grand Rapids & Carlisle: Baker Books & Paternoster Press, 1995.**

This is the first volume of a series of Reformation and Post-Reformation texts and studies edited by Richard Muller. In total there will be seven volumes published including Calvin's *The Bondage and Liberation of the Will* and Jerome Zanchi's *On the Christian Faith*. These works are intended to address both the academic and church communities. Concerning the latter communities the hope is these texts and studies will "stimulate interest in the roots of the Reformation." This first volume entitled, *A Firm Foundation* by Olevanius is translated and edited by Lyle Bierma, an Olevanius scholar. The hope is that this work will introduce laypeople to the theology and piety of this second generation Reformed theologian, and will help Reformed scholars with their study of the relationship between Calvin and Calvinism.

The book is divided into two parts: the first part is a scholarly introduction examining the history and background to *A Firm Foundation*; and the second is the translation of it with helpful interpretive tools including boldface type where it parallels the Heidelberg Catechism (HC).

*A Firm Foundation* was published as a catechism in 1567 with 179 questions and answers. It, for the most part, is a commentary on HC's section on the Apostle's Creed. Bierma in the introduction examines the relationship between HC and *A Firm foundation*. It is believed by some that Olevanius co-authored the former with Ursinius, but it is not known what the nature and extent of the literary relationship is between the two documents. Bierma shows that *A Firm Foundation* heavily borrowed from HC and its sources so that "it became in effect a commentary on HC's commentary of the Creed"(xxviii). It is "the first known commentary on HC by one of the participants in its preparation"(xxviii) and so is significant for our understanding of HC. Theologically *A Firm Foundation* is significant because it is where Olevanius, now identified as a major figure in the development of Reformed Covenant theology in the late sixteenth-century, first outlines his covenant theology. This document "marks the beginning of the first effort in the history of reformed theology to employ the covenant idea as a unifying theological principle over a lifetime of theological reflection and writing" (xxix). Moreover, Bierma shows that the "focus of Olevanius's covenant theology is personal and practical" (xxix) providing the believer with assurance of salvation. Bierma also believes this document

hints at “the close relationship between covenant and predestination that [Olevanius] would later develop more fully” (xxx). In conclusion Bierma states, “In FF we encounter what some have called the first real Reformed *covenant theologian*”(xxx).

In this first English translation of *A Firm Foundation*, Bierma divides its questions up into the twenty Lord’s Days of the *Heidelberg Catechism* (5-24), and in the margin he notes the latter’s question and answer numbers. He also adds numerous footnotes with cross references, Scripture references, and explanatory comments. The translation is quite readable. *A Firm Foundation* is a warm and personal doctrinal statement of the Christian faith geared to encourage and help those who are going through difficult times.

I recommend this translation to scholars who are interested in the study of covenant theology and Reformed theology; but I recommend it even more to pastors and laypeople who are interested in thinking about their faith and who know the encouragement that can be received from reading the works of the sixteenth-century reformers.

Barry Howson  
Vankleek Hill, Ontario.

**James S. Murray, ed., *Through Him Who Strengthens Me: Selected Shorter Writings and Sermons of Stuart Eldon Murray*. Hantsport, NS: Lancelot Press, 1989, 270 pages.**

The Baptist Historical Committee (United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces) and Acadia Divinity College continue to sponsor the publication of important books on Baptist history.

*Through Him Who Strengthens Me* begins with an informative twenty-seven page biography of Dr. Murray (1919-1985) written by his son. Dr. Murray was born in New Brunswick and the Maritimes was the site of most of his ministry. The book is a fine tribute to one who served Christ as pastor and evangelist in his denomination (UBCAP) and, for fifteen years, as faculty and president of Atlantic Baptist College.

He was a strong leader who was willing to challenge practices he thought were wrong. For example, in “The Fallacy of Non-resident Memberships in Local Churches” (136-146) he bluntly exposes loose membership

practices in area Baptist churches. He concludes that inactive membership and non-resident membership (a practise which appears to be prevalent in the Maritimes) is “completely foreign to the covenant nature of the church.” Of so-called backsliders he complains that most are not really converted and laments that unregenerate persons comprise “a large proportion, if not the majority” of church membership. These are forceful words and he admits that changing these practices will be “long and difficult” and “fraught with much agony.”

A weakness for the reader outside of the Maritimes is that the book includes some material of little interest to them. This would include his talks to students, limericks written for school functions, school curriculum listing faculty, and some of his sermons preached on special occasions. However, no doubt this book will be of particular value to alumni of Atlantic Baptist College and to the many influenced by his faithful ministry.

Grant Gordon,  
Aurora, Ontario.

**Dorothy May Lovesey, *To Be a Pilgrim: A Biography of Silas Rand, 1810-1889, Nineteenth Century Protestant Missionary to the Micmac.* Hantsport, NS: Lancelot Press, 1992, 282 pages.**

The book, *To Be a Pilgrim: A Biography of Silas Rand, 1810-1889* is of interest to a wide audience because Rand was the first major Protestant missionary to the Micmac people in the Maritimes. Lovesey provides us with a significant biography of this pioneer.

Rand, a cousin of Sir Charles Tupper who was the sixth Prime Minister of Canada, was ordained in 1834 and served as a Baptist pastor in Westbrook (now Parrsboro NS), Liverpool (NS), Windsor (NS), and Charlottetown (PEI). Although he had shown a burden for native people, it was not until his pastorate in Charlottetown that he began the difficult task of learning the Micmac language.

As his facility in the Micmac language grew so did his desire to devote himself fully in ministry to the native people. He encouraged the Baptists to begin a home mission ministry to this neglected group and through his leadership the Micmac Mission was formed (c.1850). However, because the Baptists did not think they could fully support it on their own it was



established as a transdenominational mission. This was a bold experiment and not without its problems, particularly over how the word βαπτίζω should be translated.

On account of Rand's reading of George Muller's books and his frustration with fundraising, in 1865 the mission adopted a faith mission approach. Through direct contacts with the Plymouth Brethren he became frustrated with some of the Baptist procedures and joined the Brethren. George Rawlyk, in his preceptive preface, says that Rand, who at times was influenced by dreams and who traced his conversion in stages, was a "fascinating Protestant mystic whose spirituality made him a frustrated Baptist and for a time a member of the Plymouth Brethren." But eventually he clashed with their leaders over his resistance to closed communion, was removed from their number, and consequently, returned to the Baptist ranks in 1885.

Rand was energetic in translating, preaching, and being an advocate for Micmac causes. Although his evangelistic work among the Micmac was not a success in numbers of converts, his major contribution was his Micmac translation of whole New Testament, Genesis, Exodus, Psalms, a compilation of a Micmac dictionary, and a translation of their major legends. These significant achievements made him the leading English expert of the Micmac language and culture; and in recognition of this he received honorary doctorates from Queen's, King's and Acadia.

The book provides detail that will be new to many readers unfamiliar with Baptist life in the Maritimes of the nineteenth-century. For that reason, it would have helped to have included a map locating the various places named. It is useful that at the beginning the author has included a brief chronology of Rand's life, and at the end of the book provided an index. Overall, *To Be a Pilgrim* is a well researched and detailed account of Silas Rand.

Grant Gordon,  
Aurora, Ontario.

**G.A. Philip Griffin-Allwood, George A. Rawlyk, Jarold K. Zeman, *Baptists in Canada (1760-1990): A Bibliography of Selected Printed Resources in English.* Hantsport, NS: Lancelot Press, 1989, 206 pages.**

This is a superb contribution to our study of Canadian Baptist life, theology, and practice. Although it is a "selective" bibliography, the coverage is quite extensive and lists 1383 books, journal articles and academic theses. A full index is included.

Part one includes general reference works, followed by sections on each of the major Canadian Baptist groups as well as most of the smaller ones. Part two contains biographies and autobiographies of leading Baptists in Canada. Part three focuses on topics such as baptism, church membership, Baptist distinctives, missions, ordination, theology, women, and worship. Part four has further reference works and appendices.

There are many excellent features of this fine volume. It includes sources probably unknown to many researchers. Even for the experienced researcher, this book is a time saver and place to begin. It lists items which, though published outside Canada, focus on a Canadian Baptist personality or issue. For example on T.T. Shields it not only includes the widely known resources by Shields and Tarr but also the "Des Moines University and Dr. T.T. Shields," in the *Iowa Journal of History* and a large three-part article in the *Central Conservative Baptist Quarterly* (Minneapolis). The editors are all Baptist Federation members and part of the Baptist Historical Committee in the Maritimes but because they invited input from historians and leaders from a wide variety of Baptist denominations across Canada the volume is quite comprehensive. A helpful feature is that the authors mention the length of each item included.

I very much appreciate this book and am therefore somewhat reluctant to mention two weaknesses in the biographical section. The editors chose not to refer to biographies in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. This could have been done easily with an asterisk beside the name of each person in their list. The *DCB* is a substantial reference work and available in most public libraries. Second, I was unacquainted with some individuals listed and it would have helped to have each briefly identified. This was done for the three Baptist Prime Ministers (J. Diefenbaker, A. MacKenzie and C. Tupper) but not others.

It is hoped that this work will be updated periodically to include material published after 1990 as well as some items overlooked this time. With such

a wide scope it is understandable that some important items were missed. For example, it makes no reference to the biography of Dr. Jack Scott, the first president of Central Baptist Seminary, or any of the other writings of Arnold Dallimore, a Fellowship Baptist pastor and prolific author.

*Baptists in Canada* mentions some long out-of-print materials and readers may assume these are available only in Baptist archives or specialized libraries. But many of these have been microfilmed recently in the extensive project of the Canadian Institutes for Historical Microproductions (CIHM) and are available on microtext in secular university libraries and possibly larger city libraries. For example, *Baptists in Canada* lists works by John Mockett Cramp (1794-1881) the noted Baptist historian and educator. Fifteen of his books, smaller essays, and published sermons are now available on CIHM microtext.

*Baptists in Canada* is a boon to anyone wanting to read up on their Baptist heritage or examine a Baptist issue. It is an excellent resource for pastors and church libraries. In his preface Dr. Zeman expressed his hope that this work would “encourage, in the years to come, better mutual understanding and closer links among all Canadian Baptists.” If my own experience in using this fine resource is any indication, that goal will be achieved.

Grant Gordon,  
Aurora, Ontario.

**George E. Simpson, *Basic Baptist Beliefs* ([.]: Church Leadership Unlimited, 1991), 74 pages; ISBN: 0-921600-06-2.**

All too many Baptists in the late twentieth-century are woefully ignorant of their theological and spiritual heritage as Baptists. This slim volume by Simpson, who has served in Baptist pastorates both in the Maritimes and Ontario and who has been vitally involved in the leadership of the Atlantic Baptist Convention, seeks to correct this situation by providing a concise summary of Baptist distinctives. After detailing Baptist origins in the seventeenth-century in the first chapter, Simpson moves on to consider the authority of the Scriptures, the lordship of Christ, Baptist convictions regarding the separation of Church and state, the vital need for a regenerate

church membership, the meaning and practice of believer's baptism, the Lord's Supper, the evangelical message of salvation by grace alone, and the nature of the Church. Succinct treatments of these various topics certainly go to the heart of what it has meant in the past and what it means today to be a Baptist. Familiarity with key figures and documents in Baptist history gives substance to these treatments. For instance, Simpson ably quotes from the works of Andrew Fuller (1754-1815) on a couple of occasions (17, 43) and knows well the works of the seventeenth-century Baptists John Smyth (d. ca. 1612) and Thomas Helwys (d. ca. 1615). Each chapter is followed by a series of questions that would enable it to be used as a teaching tool in a Sunday School class or a class for new Christians. Unfortunately, the book is marred by some historical errors-Smyth's baptism of his Separatist congregation in 1611 was by affusion or pouring, not by immersion (11); Calvin was not responsible for the arrest and burning of Servetus, though he was a key witness for the prosecution in his trial (21)-and a number of typographical mistakes-e.g. "Armenian" should be "Arminian" (11,12); "Servitus" should be "Servetus" (21); "publiclly" (35, line 35) should be "publicly." Notwithstanding, this book can well serve as a good tool for helping today's Baptists lay claim to some of the riches of their inheritance.

Michael A. G. Haykin  
Cambridge, Ontario.

***The Shorter Catechism. A Baptist Version* (Boonton, New Jersey: Simpson Publishing Co., 1991), xiv, 50 pages. Available from: Simpson Publishing Co., Avinger, Texas 75630.**

"Next to the Bible and Pilgrim's Progress, no other document since the Reformation has played such an important role in forming Christian thought and character as The Westminster Shorter Catechism" (p.v). So states the opening sentence of the publisher's "Preface" to this recent version of The Shorter Catechism. And prominent among those whose minds and hearts have been so formed are English-speaking Calvinistic Baptists. For instance, at the 1693 assembly of Calvinistic Baptist churches in London, encouragement was given to William Collins (d.1702), pastor of Petty France Baptist Church, London, to draw up a catechism primarily for children and for servants. Whether or not Collins ever completed this task

is not known. Calvinistic Baptists, however, did come to be supplied with a catechism. Known to history as Keach's Catechism, so named because its author was Benjamin Keach (1640-1705), the influential seventeenth-century Baptist leader, it was largely based upon the Shorter Catechism and had as its main goal the unabashed promotion of Reformed truth among Baptist believers. It is in accord with the main purpose of this earlier Baptist catechism that this present version has been issued.

In this version, the Shorter Catechism has been modified in only a few areas: primarily those with regard to Baptist distinctives—for instance, the questions about the proper subjects and mode of baptism (Questions #100-103 [p. 41-42])—and those where central Christian truths under attack today need greater clarification—for example, a question has been added that succinctly captures the cardinal doctrine of inerrancy (Question #3 [p. 1-2]; not, incidentally, Question #4, as is stated in the "Preface" [p.v]). There have also been a limited number of changes made in relation to the spelling and punctuation so as to bring the catechism "more into conformity with modern usage" (p.vi). Most of the proof texts from the original edition have been retained, though with one main difference: they are taken from the New King James Version instead of the Authorized Version, from which the Shorter Catechism originally drew its proof texts.

An extremely helpful "Practical Introduction" by Samuel E. Waldron, pastor of the Reformed Baptist Church in Grand Rapids, is also provided. In it Waldron outlines from his own experience as a father and a pastor how the catechism can be used both in the home and in the church. The practicality of Waldron's suggestions so impressed this reviewer that he too has begun to unpack the catechism's "neat bundle of truth" into the hearts and memories of his children (p. vii). Catechetical instruction is certainly not in vogue in contemporary Anglophone evangelicalism, which may be one reason that growing numbers of those who include themselves in its ranks are woefully ignorant of much of the panorama of scriptural truth. But under God this attractively-produced version of the Shorter Catechism has the potential of helping to reverse this deeply disturbing trend.

Michael A.G. Haykin,  
Cambridge, Ontario.

**L. John Van Til, *Liberty of Conscience: The History of a Puritan Idea*.  
Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publ. Co., 1992 reprint of  
1972 edition, 192 pages.**

This reprint of Van Til's work of 1972 provides a readable overview of the development of an idea which has become central to modern thinking. The survey extends from a discussion of Toleration and Liberty of Conscience in Elizabethan England, through to the American Revolution.

Van Til concentrates his discussion of Elizabethan England on the writings of William Perkins. Perkins is interesting in that, like Calvin, he seems to allow for a theory of civil disobedience in some cases (23). In the section on the early seventeenth-century, Van Til outlines the policy of limited toleration followed by the first two Stuart kings, and the growing demands for liberty of conscience from various quarters. He treats the teachings of Ames in some detail, and examines the influence of the Amesian view of conscience on the leaders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The ferment of ideas in England during the period 1640-1660 is considered next, and then the Restoration period. The Toleration Act of 1689 is seen as a grudging concession rather than a triumph for liberty; as Van Til puts it, Dissenters "might be able to worship God as they pleased, but it was difficult to serve the king" (124). The last two sections survey the acceptance of the concept of liberty of conscience in America in the years following 1630 and the place of this concept in the American Revolution. Attention is given to the constitutions of the various States, as well as to the Declaration of Independence and the Federal Constitution.

Van Til begins with the premise that from Christian freedom all other freedoms flow, and it is evidently an issue about which he feels passionately. Central to his argument is the distinction between mere "toleration" and full "liberty of conscience." Whereas the former is shown to have been granted in England, the latter is shown to have triumphed in America. Unfortunately this distinction is, in the view of this reviewer, overdrawn, and the author seems to be somewhat selective in his search for evidence to support his argument. Also, since this work was written, crucial studies have appeared such as Michael Watts on *The Dissenters* (1978) and Robert S. Paul on *The Assembly of the Lord* (1985).

A work on the development of the concepts of toleration and liberty would be enhanced by a more sympathetic explanation of the "world view" in which social stability was believed to stand or fall with religious

uniformity and orthodoxy. This is, of course, utterly alien to the modern pluralistic mind-set. Moreover, the inseparable connection between church and state, whereby dissent and sedition could be identified, has to be explained to the twentieth-century reader. Van Til's statement: "As for toleration, it has always been the policy of English government, its roots being somewhere in the deep past" (124) is unhelpful to say the least; more helpful would have been an explanation of why throughout the middle ages heresy was a punishable offence.

Van Til quotes many appeals for "Liberty of Conscience" and attempts to trace a line of development between Perkins, the Westminster Divines, the Levellers and Cromwell in its defence (cf. 101, 185). But the deep differences between them and the variety of meanings which could be attached to this phrase are somewhat glossed over in the selection of quotations.

One example of an over-selective presentation of evidence is that of John Owen. Owen is portrayed as a champion of liberty of conscience (116-123). Certainly he was a champion of the cause of Dissent. Van Til quotes from the *Truth and Innocence Vindicated: Survey of a Discourse Concerning Ecclesiastical Polity, and the Authority of the Civil Magistrate Over the Consciences of Subjects in Matters of Religion*, and concludes that, "For Owen, the matter of worship, the nature of gathered groups of believers, is a matter that is distinct from the affairs of state." (122). True enough. But Owen *also* argued for the responsibility of magistrates to ensure orthodoxy and repress heresy; which Van Til fails to mention. In a sermon to Parliament on October 13, 1652, Owen preached: "If once it comes to that, that you shall say you have nothing to do with *religion as rulers of the nation*, God will quickly manifest that he hath nothing to do with you as rulers of the nation" (*Sermons to the Nation. Works*, VIII, 385). And in answering two questions concerning the power of the magistrate, Owen asserted categorically that it is his duty to further the true worship of God and to restrain principles and practices contrary to true worship (*Ministry and Fellowship, Works*, XIII, 507-514). To argue otherwise, wrote Owen, would call into question the whole Reformation. Rather, the work of the magistrates in removing idolatry, destroying images, prohibiting the mass, and asserting the gospel has been "visibly owned and blessed of God" (*Works*, XIII, 513). Owen "abhorred the Leveller demand for complete

religious freedom” and did not advocate toleration for heretics (*The Dissenters*, I, 139).

To attempt a survey of such a complex and shifting concept is indeed a bold undertaking. Despite reservations about Van Til’s work, it is admitted that his book is useful in raising a number of important issues.

Sharon James,  
Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

**Paul C. Vitz, *Sigmund Freud's Christian Unconscious*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1993, 287 pages.**

If there is one figure whose influence on the twentieth-century is immense, it is surely Sigmund Freud. To him we owe the idea, long since apotheosized into a basic assumption of modern Western educational theory and popular culture, that one’s adult existence is determined to a large degree by childhood experience (particularly of a sexual nature). Christians commonly see Freud as a major enemy of the faith, who asserted in *The Future Of An Illusion* (1927) that religious belief is built on wish-fulfilment that is unsupported by any foundation in reality. What Paul Vitz’s fascinating biographical study argues is that, paradoxically, it is nothing other than Freud’s *attraction* to the Christian faith which provides the interpretative framework for best understanding this Jewish thinker who attempted to show the absurdity of religious belief.

This provocative interpretation of Freud is supported by Vitz’s remarkable ability to build his case in true Sherlock Holmes fashion, with factual data that cannot reasonably be understood in any other way. Beginning with Freud’s childhood, and continuing through his student days at the University of Vienna and his subsequent career as the leading psychoanalyst of his time, Vitz demonstrates the strong Christian influence exerted on Freud by various individuals, most notably his Catholic nanny, who acted virtually as Freud’s mother during the first three years of his life. Extensive quotations from Freud’s letters are interwoven with biographical details to reveal a man who, for all his public statements against Christianity, was unable to rid himself of a deep interest in Christian art and literature. It is not common knowledge that Freud was obsessed (here, as Vitz shows, the term “obsessed” really fits) with Easter and Pentecost and visits to Rome,



specifically, in the latter, to make what amounted to a religious pilgrimage to Christian sites, whereupon he would remark in his correspondence that he felt renewed in his spirit and able to face life again.

For all his fascination with Christianity, Freud not only did not convert (unlike a number of his Jewish colleagues at the university) but even used his considerable intellectual and literary powers to prove that religion was an illusion. This is not surprising, given that, as the chapter on Freud's student years indicates (69-72), Freud's basic outlook on life was shaped by biological science and Darwinian theories which emphasized a deterministic approach to understanding human behaviour. Yet Freud was never deeply interested in science; his true passion was literature (especially Goethe and Hugo). Indeed, Freud himself freely admitted that his analytical theories and methods owed more to literature than to science (see the striking quotation on page 104), an admission which prompts Vitz to observe:

I believe it is fair to say that psychoanalysis (and with it much of modern psychology) was created by the collision and integration of literature and biology, and that literature was the dominant force in this process... Freud's impact on the biological sciences has been minimal. If anything, the possibility of finding a biological grounding for most of Freudian theory looks more remote today than it did in the early part of the century...[Yet] in the last few decades Freud's ideas have had really an enormous impact on literary criticism, as well as on the other fields in the humanities, such as history and biography (104).

Vitz, himself a Professor of Psychology at New York University, adroitly exploits this scientific weakness in Freud's thought to suggest that Freud's very idea of religion as wish-fulfilment is *itself* an expression of Freud's wish to get rid of God! (220)

Freud himself has given us the conceptual basis for understanding atheism as Oedipal wish-fulfilment. By Freud's own definition, atheism is an illusion like any other--a belief where (here Vitz quotes from Freud's scorn for religious belief) "wish-fulfilment is a prominent factor in its motivation."

Vitz, however, is a sympathetic observer of Freud's struggle with religion, noting that *not a single patient of Freud's was a born-again Christian*. It is worth pondering what effect exposure to evangelical faith would have had on Freud's understanding of religious belief, and, by way of application, what kinds of conclusions about Christianity our contemporaries draw from observing our lives.

Although this was not Vitz's main purpose, his study of Freud provides a valuable historical window into the intellectual foundations of the twentieth-century. For that alone, his book deserves to be read. But Vitz's main strength is as a biographical detective, carefully and convincingly building his case with layer upon layer of richly detailed evidence. It will now be hard to deny that a figure long seen as a foe of the faith (as indeed Freud has proved to be) was drawn to the very faith he so vehemently opposed.

Daniel Lundy,  
Toronto, Ontario.

**Gary W. McHale with Michael A.G. Haykin. *The 'Toronto Blessing': A Renewal From God? V.1 - Historical Perspectives Early Church History to Present Day Events. V.3 - Jonathan Edwards: The Man, His Experience and His Theology.* Richmond Hill, Ontario: Canadian Christian Publications, 1995, 318 pages and 308 pages resp.**

These valuable volumes put at our fingertips the resources we need to make an informed assessment of the 'Toronto Blessing' and the Vineyard movement from which it sprang. Proponents of the 'Toronto Blessing' use Scripture, experience and history to buttress their claims. Proving from the Word that uproarious laughter or shaking are evidences of the Spirit's work has proven impossible. And experience is just that--experience. Apologists of the movement have been forced to rely more and more on their claim that it fulfills historic precedent.

Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship (formerly Toronto Airport Vineyard) staffer, Guy Chevreau did his doctoral work in historical theology. In his best seller, *Catch the Fire*, he asserts that "while the manifestations [at the airport] may be new to many of us, they are not untypical experiences when the Spirit of God comes to renew His people"

(*Catch The Fire*, Toronto: Harper Collins, 1995, p. 90). He then takes up one third of his book trying to prove that Jonathan Edwards, preacher of the Great Awakening in the eighteenth-century, would be comfortable with the 'Toronto Blessing.' In another Vineyard apologetic, *Quenching the Spirit*, William DeArteaga tries to use Edwards to support the Vineyard movement's antipathy towards cessationism, theology and Calvinism--views that Edwards ardently espoused! (*Quenching the Spirit*, Lake Mary, Fla.: Creation House, 1992)

Claims such as these highlight the urgent necessity for a thorough perusal of historical material, particularly from the era of Jonathan Edwards. But since history is an arcane subject to most of us, we need help in sorting through the mass of historical texts. This series admirably fills that need. It also reprints more recent Vineyard writings so that readers can compare historic revivals with current events.

Avoiding the temptation to string a series of brief quotes together, Gary McHale has reprinted extended quotations from primary sources so we can have the benefit of balance and context. By enlisting Dr. Michael Haykin's counsel in the selection of texts and adding Haykin's observations, McHale has increased greatly the value of the series.

Volume One is in four sections. Section One summarizes issues related to the debate about 'signs and wonders' from the time of the early church until that of John Wesley. The sometimes puzzling beliefs of Irenaeus, Montanus, Tertullian, Augustine, Theresa of Avila, Martin Luther, John Calvin are frankly discussed. Events and personalities of the Great Awakening in the eighteenth-century are summarized. Writings from Polycarp, Clement and Jonathan Edwards are added as an appendix. McHale makes some telling points. For example, "With over two hundred years of martyrdom,...The power of the Holy Spirit was not signs and wonders, but the ability to publicly profess your faith boldly while being tortured" (37).

Section Two reprints a masterful paper by Michael Haykin in which he probes the evangelical perspectives of the great men involved in the revivals of the eighteenth-century. He summarizes their views on signs and wonders, unusual phenomena, prophecy, etc. He establishes that, while evangelicals of the period longed for and experienced God's power in revival, they were nevertheless cessationist. He honestly documents the occasional occurrence of a variety of "unusual physical and emotional manifestations." In the process he points out that God has mightily worked in history--in the

missionary movement following William Carey, for example, without any signs and wonders. He concludes, "We must...not confine him within the limits of what some today call 'signs and wonders'" (46).

Section Three summarizes charismatic events from 1946 to the present. McHale reprints in its entirety an article by Albert James Dager tracing aberrant charismatic beliefs from the Latter Rain Movement in 1946 through The Manifest Sons of God to the Kansas City prophets and their connection with the Vineyard movement. McHale goes on to establish from writings and sermons the changing positions of John Wimber and Jack Deere, two key personalities in the development of the Vineyard movement. He then gives a brief sketch of events in Toronto from January 1994. He concludes this section by reprinting several articles critical of the Toronto Blessing.

Section Four concludes with relevant reprints of comments by Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones on B. B. Warfield who is being widely dismissed, unfairly, for his writings on cessationism. It also includes reviews of *Quenching the Spirit* by William DeArteaga and *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit* by Jack Deere; two of the most formative books in the Vineyard's current armoury. Bill Jackson's Vineyard paper on *Cessationism*, an attempt to prove the error and hurtful fallout of belief in the cessation of signs and wonders, is reprinted without comment.

Volume Three is devoted entirely to Jonathan Edwards, widely recognized by those on all sides of the debate as the theologian of revival, par excellence. This volume wisely begins in chapter one with a chronology and overview of Edward's life and concludes with several invaluable summaries of his most important works on revival.

The main body of the work is divided into three equal chapters (chapters 2 - 4). In chapter two a reprint of two sermons and a personal narrative by Edwards about his early years highlight both his devotional habits and his delight in the truth of God's absolute sovereignty. Chapter three records his views on the Bible, cessationism, the role of doctrine in awakening and sanctifying sinners, the superiority of Scriptural exhortation over the miraculous, and the superiority of love over the 'extraordinary gifts.'

At the beginning of chapter four, the largest section in the book, Haykin gives a helpful overview of four of Edwards most important works; his *Faithful Narrative*, *Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit*, *Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival*, and *Religious Affections*. This chapter, over 173 pages in the book, reprints lengthy selections from these works.

In the brief, final chapter Edward's voluminous materials are analysed to assess whether or not he would support the 'Toronto Blessing.' Edward's Calvinist and cessationist views, his stress on preaching and on Christ, his advocacy of self-control, and the importance of the mind, among other principles, lead the writers to a resounding conclusion. No!

The volume affords us the opportunity to mentally walk with this astonishing man as he reflects on the glory of God in biblical revelation and historical revival, and as he applies his extraordinary intellect and overpowering devotion to the subject of revival and the convolutions of human psychology. The experience leaves one longing for his brand of Scripturally informed God-intoxication and some measure of the breadth of his insight. It also leaves one with the sadness that comes from comparing current renewal movements with the Great Awakening. Most important it creates a hunger for genuine revival.

While these two volumes are extremely useful additions to the current debate they have certain deficiencies. Organizationally, they are sometimes confusing due to a puzzling lack of chapter numbers in Volume One and inconsistent numbering in Volume Three. Transitions between comments by the writers and reprints of historical material are not always smooth. Writing style and proof-reading could be improved--but these are minor peccadilloes.

Eric Wright,  
Campbellcroft, Ontario.

**Derek Tidball, *On the Bridge. A Study Guide for Preachers and Worship Leaders.* Christian Training Programme Manual D5. Baptist Union of Great Britain, 1992, 94 pages.**

This is a study guide intended for both personal and group/class use. Tidball's thesis is that the preacher and/or worship leader is like a captain on the "bridge" of a ship or a "bridge" between worlds.

He first deals with worship and develops sound theological and biblical foundations, objectively examines various traditions, and gives insightful suggestions concerning present practices. He then outlines the basics of homiletics with helpful cautions and advice.

He states his purpose as “to widen horizons and enable the reader to get behind the surface battles and grasp some broader principles”(7). Throughout the study he has included highlighted boxes entitled “To Think About” in which he asks serious questions about present norms.

The strength of the manual is Tidball’s thoughtfulness. It is an excellent resource for anyone who seeks to take worship and proclamation seriously.

David G. Barker,  
Cambridge, Ontario.

**Thomas Manton, *The Works of Thomas Manton*. 1870 ed.; repr. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1993 . 3 vols.**

In a day when good, biblical preaching is hard to find the sermons of Thomas Manton have something to say about making the Word of God clear by giving the meaning to those listening in order that they might understand what God wants them to know and do (cf. Neh 8:8). We, who live at the end of the twentieth-century, may wonder what an “old puritan” of the seventeenth-century who served as a pastor, a chaplain to Oliver Cromwell, and later, a royal chaplain can teach us about preaching the Word. But those who take the time to read Manton will discover that he has much to say to our superficial age which too often does not want to do the work required to grasp the riches of God’s Word.

The first three volumes, like the rest of this twenty-two volume set, are full of sermons on an interesting array of Biblical subjects and passages including the Lord’s Prayer, the Temptations of Christ , His Transfiguration, and a Practical Exposition of Isaiah 53. Though his style is not as arresting as his contemporary Richard Baxter, Manton demonstrates how to explain a text as he methodically presents what it teaches while he integrates what he finds with the teaching of the Bible as a whole. If that sounds dry and dusty, let me add that Manton never goes on for very long without drawing our attention to some area of practical application and he always seems to find a way to impress upon us the glories of our great God and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

When reading Manton, it is important to remember that while he has much to teach us about biblical exposition, he was a man of his times. We need to learn from him without uncritically imitating him. Sometimes he wanders

too far afield and comments on things that confuse or have no real bearing on the text he is explaining. I do not believe it would be wise to adopt the complicated structure and numbering system he uses, nor should his sermons, or any other sermons both ancient or modern, be used in the place of commentaries when it comes to the preparation of the Word. However, if he is read as a gifted Christian pastor who loved his Lord and sought to minister as best he could to the people of his day, he will encourage and inspire us to search the Scriptures more carefully in order to know Jesus better and be able to apply the gospel more accurately to the needy world in which we live.

Kirk Wellum,  
Sarnia, Ontario.

**William Perkins, *The Art of Prophesying*. Rev. ed. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1996, xv+191 pages.**

William Perkins (1558-1602), an Elizabethan Puritan, wrote many works in his brief lifetime. He is considered the premier theologian of the sixteenth-century and one of the most influential in both seventeenth-century England and New England. Perkins, however, was not only gifted as a theologian but also as a preacher, effectively communicating and applying the Scriptures to the common person. In this book Sinclair Ferguson has provided us with a modernized version of two of Perkins' works concerning the pastoral ministry: *The Art of Prophesying* and *The Calling of the Ministry*.

*The Art of Prophesying* is a brief treatise on preaching. The subjects he handles include: the Scriptures and its content, its interpretation, principles for its exposition, its application, preaching, and public prayer. Perkins was quite up-to-date in many ways. For example, in his chapter on interpretation he deals with issues pastors face today such as apparent contradictions in Scripture and variant Greek texts. In addition, I appreciated his discussion of application; he encouraged the pastors to apply the scriptures to their listeners by categorizing them into seven groups. e.g. unbelievers who are ignorant and unteachable, unbelievers who are teachable but ignorant, etc., etc. Moreover, Perkins was passionately concerned for the salvation and

edification of the people who heard the Word of God. Consequently, he instructs ministers to preach to these ends. This little treatise would be helpful for budding preachers, and be refreshing encouragement for experienced ones. This could be a good book for pastors to use for training elders and lay-preachers in their church.

The second treatise, *The Calling of the Ministry* is a powerful work written to encourage and challenge pastors. Perkins expounds two passages of Scripture for this purpose, Job 33:23-24 and Isa. 6:5-9. In this treatise he shares some excellent insights into the ministry. For example, he highlights the importance of study and learning for a pastor, the necessity of the Spirit's work in his heart, the need for pastoral fellowship, the necessity of a pure tongue and life, and the need to be sure one is called of God for this work. On this last point Perkins believes that not only must one be convinced in his own conscience of his call but so must the church; if he is called the pastoral gifts must be apparent to the Church.

Furthermore, Perkins instructs pastors in their duties, which include: preaching the law and the gospel in order to bring conviction and salvation; to visit in order to admonish and rebuke; to save souls; and to shine before the flock with holy lives. In addition, he teaches them to know their flocks, to not worry about finances, to keep clear of corrupt company, and to be holy in their service. Moreover, he instructs churches in the calling of pastors and in their maintenance. This treatise is an excellent challenge to those who are already pastors to reassess their calling. It is also good for young men aspiring to the ministry to realize what God is calling them to. I found this treatise most beneficial.

I recommend this work to pastors, elders and those interested in entering into pastoral work. These treatises are not the definitive works on preaching or the pastoral call but they will certainly benefit those who read them.

Barry Howson  
Vankleek Hill, Ontario.

**C.H. Spurgeon, *Advice for Seekers*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1993, 85 pages.**

Spurgeon's *Advice for Seekers* is a short, concise, poignant and powerful treatise challenging all men to seek the salvation freely offered by Christ.



The book begins by showing the folly of attempting to obtain salvation through works and the author's premise is clearly evident: "You must understand that there is only one door to salvation, and that is Christ; there is one way, and that is Christ; one truth, and that is Christ; one life, and that is Christ." Spurgeon then proceeds to remove the barriers created by the errors of deceived hearts which blind men to the simple truth of the gospel. Misgivings held by the rich, the poor, the religious, the self-righteous, the proud, and those searching for peace are skilfully addressed by expounding the person, love, offices and the cross of Christ. Finally, the method of securing salvation is plainly defined by Spurgeon, namely, by faith and faith alone. *Advice for Seekers* is an excellent evangelistic tool and will also offer the most seasoned of Christians a greater understanding of the assurance he possesses in Christ.

Denis Chitouras,  
Halifax, Nova Scotia

**R.C. Sproul, *The Hunger for Significance*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1991, 264 pages.**

Sproul, chair of Ligonier Ministries, writes the way he preaches. He is an excellent communicator who tackles difficult or neglected themes and who illustrates well from a wide variety of sources.

The first, *The Hunger for Significance*, a revision of *In Search of Dignity* (1983), is written largely for Christians who are in search of dignity for themselves and of nurturing it in others. The first three chapters focus on our search to experience personal worth, love, and dignity. After this introduction the author exposes indignities in the home, school, hospital, prisons, church and the workplace and challenges us with ways of treating others with their God-given dignity. Each chapter ends with a series of questions for further reflection. For me the least satisfying chapter was also the longest, entitled "The Marxist option" which focuses on Christianity and capitalism. It is more factual and describes the political changes in eastern Europe in the 1980s. Possibly it would have been better placed as an appendix.

The book abounds with references to philosophers, popular literature, sports, and movies. The author admits that this book at times is autobiographical, and I personally was moved most by these illustrations from his own life. *The Hunger for Significance* is not heavy reading but one should not assume that it is light in content. In fact it is disarmingly profound and I found myself highlighting many statements for further contemplation. Because of the broad focus, the treatment in each chapter is of necessity introductory but each is a helpful stimulus for reflection or discussion. The book would make an excellent starter for a series of sermons or Sunday School lessons.

Grant Gordon,  
Aurora, Ontario.

**R.C. Sproul, *The Soul's Quest for God*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1992, 254 pages.**

The focus of *The Soul's Quest for God*, is clear from its title and not surprisingly begins with the well-known words of Augustine "O Lord, Thou hast created us for Thyself and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee." Sproul addresses our need for "spiritual communion with God" and laments that our lives are more "marked by a sense of the absence than a vital sense of his presence." He pleads for Christians to use both their head and heart in their earnest search for intimacy with God.

A key requirement is loving the Word of God and this is illustrated in the experience of Ezekiel. It is at this point that the book begins to focus on one of the most neglected doctrines: the illumination of the Spirit. This Divine illumination, which we are to seek, "not only impresses the mind, but more importantly it changes the disposition of the heart. What was odious becomes a matter of delight"(60). Sproul's detailed analysis of a 1734 sermon of Jonathan Edwards on this subject is more helpful. And his elaboration on Calvin's threefold function of the law of God helps us to appreciate what God desires to do for us and to receive from us. This is seen in the obedient response of Mary in Luke 1:26-55 and the sensitised conscience of Joseph in Genesis 39. Sproul outlines the barriers to spiritual intimacy and points out how proper attention to the means of grace can help us overcome these.

At times Sproul appears to wander off his topic, or at least spends too much time making his point, as in the philosophical discussion of Kant and Descartes (158-163), in debating the dichotomous or trichotomous nature of man (164-171), and in describing the Roman Catholic doctrine of Mary (117-126). Yet I often find these tangents interesting and informative. Here is a theologian who draws from philosophy, church history and theology in order to inform the average reader. *The Soul's Quest for God* is not a "how to" book, but one which enables believers to see their unique purpose and to appreciate what God has provided to assist us in our quest.

Grant Gordon,  
Aurora, Ontario.

**Horatius Bonar, ed., *Words Old and New*. 1866 ed.; repr. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1994, 386 pages.**

The landmarks of Metro Toronto's skyline are many-and, after a time, monotonous. I have so often motored along the Gardiner Expressway that I have nearly lost any awe for the Royal York Hotel, the CN Tower or the Skydome.

But of all I see on the northern horizon of that freeway, nothing so charms or delights as the Inglis Appliances Pixelboard. I take that bend of the road with a zest akin to getting a fortune cookie after a Chinese buffet. Am I the wiser for the assorted quotables it flashes each day? Perhaps. (I do know my wife bought an Inglis washer).

The moral in all this? Simple: garnish your sermon and your people will relish it. TV understands this: witness the soundbytes of the newscast, the 30-second commercial. Marketers know this: subways sport manic TransAd pieces; shops and restaurants abound in double-entendre titles. By sermons, bulletins, local news ads, preachers need to leave mustard seeds of holy thought and godly counsel in their hearers' minds. The mighty epigrams of our Saviour, the book of Proverbs itself, and Ecclesiastes 12:10-11 give ample, proper justification for it.

You can too readily empty your pocket and fill your shelves with such jars of literary preserves. May I suggest these? Among the more general collections: the *Penguin Dictionary of Quotations*, *Bartlett's Familiar*

*Quotations, Peter's Quotations, and Columbo's Canadian Quotations.* Among specifically religious collections: C.H. Spurgeon's *Salt-Cellars*, Frank S. Mead's *Encyclopedia of Religious Quotations*, Ewald M. Plass' *What Luther Says*, Tom Carter's *2,200 Quotations from C.H. Spurgeon*, and John Blanchard's masterful *Gathered Gold*.

Now, about the work in hand. Bonar's *Words Old and New* came out first in 1866 (that might make its re-issue title *Words Old and Even Older*). Nonetheless, unlike Elon Foster's contemporary collections, which are often badly "dated", Bonar's quotes have a timeless appeal as fresh as his great hymns. The diligent preacher does need, however, to cull and condense this material to his own uses. The publishers have helpfully added brief sketches of the quoted authors, and just as shrewdly appended a current list of their reprints available. This is a CD sampler aimed at selling other, boxed sets.

As Montaigne declared, "I quote others only the better to express myself." To this Winston Churchill justly added, "It is a good thing for an uneducated man to read books of quotations." And you know who said, "Try it! You'll like it!"

John Peter Bodner,  
Mississauga, Ontario.

**Max DePree, *Leadership is an Art*. New York: Dell Publishers, 1990, 148 pages.**

*Leadership is an Art* is an unusually compelling book. It is written by the CEO of the Herman Miller Company, a company that was ranked by a 1988 Fortune poll as one of the top ten most admired companies. In the same year Herman Miller was ranked first in its industry and fourth out of all U.S. companies in the category of "quality of products or service."

As the title indicates this book is about leadership, which for DePree, is the essential ingredient for cultivating holistic success. He argues that leadership must liberate people "to do what is required of them in the most effective and humane way possible," and insists that the nature of the task is more "tribal than scientific, more a weaving of relationships than an amassing of information."

Throughout this treatise on leadership, the reader will find a clear illustration of organizational culture that facilitates growth in individuals through a participative style of management which emphasizes sharing, humanizing, and reaching maximum potential.

The author's philosophy of life is clearly integrated into his style of management and leadership. He understands people as bringing a variety of worthwhile gifts to the organization, and the task of leadership is to ensure that those gifts are polished, liberated, and enabled. This is the philosophy that unlocks potential and invites participation. DePree cautions, however, that although participative management is presently a "buzz" word in North American industry, it will only attain the status of empty slang without the supportive belief in the potential of people and strong convictions about the gifts they bring to organizations. For the author a healthy, productive organizational culture is one that feeds on high quality relationships, respects diversity, acts on values, and creates covenants rather than contracts.

As part of his proposal, the author makes an interesting and brave attempt to improve on the capitalistic concept that has ruled through contractual agreements for the last 200 years. From a religious perspective, he makes a case for an inclusive rather than exclusive system. An inclusive system requires everyone to be insiders, interdependent and unable to be optimally productive by oneself. Accordingly, DePree is fully persuaded that all employees want to be cared about, needed, involved, treated fairly, have opportunity, and get a "piece of the action." Speaking from his experience at Herman Miller he suggests that when this concept is fostered, employees will respond actively to inclusiveness and bear the cost of belonging. Belonging, communicating, participating, and sharing in the cost and benefits of the organization create an image that is portrayed as the appropriate paradigm of employee ownership.

Although the book is brief, it acts as a compendium of leadership philosophy and organizational culture, and the author's proliferation of easily adaptable lists will, no doubt, be useful to many as a backdrop for their personal or organizational analysis. *Leadership is An Art* takes the form of a persuasive, heart felt discourse of an experienced leader who is firmly committed to a form of leadership that spawns vision, cultivates relationships, is thankful for the giftedness that comes with every employee, and adds a greater dimension to business success than profit. Further,

DePree appears ardently influenced by Christian perspectives, and his principles are widely applicable to churches and other Christian institutions.

Jim Cianca,  
Cambridge, Ontario.

**Mary Louise Bringle, *Despair: Sickness or Sin? Hopelessness and Healing in the Christian Life*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990, 186 pages.**

The Editor may have wondered why this book was so long in review. That calls for a little soul-baring. Not long after receiving this elegant paperback, I fell upon some despair of my own. But, after a while, the Lord Jesus graciously restored my spirits enough to look at this book without feeling darkness within.

It is just as well I did not take this piece for reading while under the juniper tree. The lady is certainly learned, undoubtedly endowed with a fine empathy of spirit, and possessed of a warm, humanity which breathes life even into the bones of an academic treatment. But, alas, she had no solace for my soul.

The fault is not with the lady; she has wisely addressed a serious pastoral problem. She has shown more than enough wits to merit the doctor's beret. The fault is in her mentors and the sterile religious liberalism of her school.

Let's be straight about this. This is a case of good author, bad book. If this is, as a publisher's blurb proclaims, "applied theology at its best," it ain't good enough.

Beloved, here is a fascinating study in "doing theology" without the Bible. Check it out! There is (count' em) one solitary quote from the Book of God in the piece, falling just 33 pages short of the end; and that, mind, merely to 'package' a dialectic of theological traditions. Imagine it! To "do theology" about despair without Cain's tantrums or Jacob's dreams. Not a peep out of Job; not a strain from David's brooding harp in Psalms 42-43 or Asaph in Psalms 73, 77. Not an allusion to the agonies of Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Elijah or Micah. Not a whisper of Lord Christ's travail in Gethsemane or His anguish in Calvary's darkness. Not a footprint along the road to Emmaus. Naught from Paul's riven heart in 2 Corinthians 1 or the pleas of Hebrews

12. Not a tear-drop from the seer of Patmos over the sealed book. This is “applied theology”??

Here is an astounding analysis of contemporary experience out of the dime novels. I don’t care if Mary Gordon or Alice Walker were later-day Brontes or Austens. How can you get facts out of fiction? Isn’t there a real world, with pastoral anecdote, counsellor’s case-studies, medical journals, even psychiatric reports, to draw upon?

The historical analysis is helpful but sadly selective. How could a contemporary theologian ignore the wisdom of Martyn Lloyd-Jones? How could an American theologian ignore the riches of Puritan experimental theology? The blindness of a few “happy-face” holiness folks is not a fair reflection on the orthodox Protestant evangelical tradition.

Fact is, the rot sits in the roots of the book, back on pages 19-21. The entire enterprise rests on pragmatic, existential, subjective religious liberalism. If I sound testy, it is because I am concerned that our pastors and students learn early and well that such a book is not the way to “do theology,” no way.

For the sickness and sin of despair, there is Lloyd-Jones’ *Spiritual Depression* in the present, William Bridges’ *Lifting Up for the Downcast* in the past. In my own case, I can testify there are more Bible, more truth and more help in these hymns by our mothers in Israel: Christina Rossetti’s, “None Other Lamb”, Charlotte Elliot’s “Clouds and Darkness”, Lucy Bennett’s “O Teach me What it Meaneth”, Anne Steele’s “Father! Whate’er of Earthly Bliss”, and Eliza Hamilton’s “O Saviour, Thou Hast Offered Rest.”

Friend Bringle! learn these hymns—and read your Bible.

John Peter Bodner,  
Mississauga, Ontario.

**George Herbert, *George Herbert: The Complete English Poems*. Ed. John Tobin. England: Penguin Books, 1991, 460 pages.**

George Herbert (1593-1633) describes his collection of poems, entitled *The Temple*, as “a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have passed betwixt God and my soul, before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus

my Master” (Walton’s *Life*). Richard Baxter commends Herbert’s poems for their “Heart-work and Heaven-work.” Herbert doesn’t merely allude to the Bible, or include Scriptural truths, or use the Bible as a background to his poems: he immerses himself in the Scriptures and re-enacts in his own life and poetry their thinking and activity.

John Tobin, the editor of this text, points out in his introduction that Herbert’s poems sometimes present difficulties to the modern reader: obscure scriptural references, unfamiliar typology, shifts in meanings of words over time, unexpected puns, quaint images, startling associations, and a very compressed style. Tobin’s thorough notes, which frequently refer to other literary works to give insight, clarify and expand meaning for the reader. His careful scholarship is evident throughout.

Besides the illuminating notes, this edition includes: a number of poems not included in *The Temple*; selected Latin poems with a translation; Izaak Walton’s *The Life of Mr. George Herbert*; and Herbert’s prose character sketch *A Priest to the Temple*. This latter work, subtitled *The Country Parson: His Character and Rule of Holy Life*, describes the practical outworking of the struggle presented to us in *The Temple*. To have all this available in one compact volume, plus suggestions for further reading and helpful indexes, benefits those who are just introducing themselves to the delights of Herbert’s poetry as well as longtime devotees.

Sheila Evans

Toronto Baptist Seminary and Bible College,  
Toronto, Ontario.

**Willard M. Swartley, ed., *The Love of Enemy and Non-Retaliatioin in the New Testament*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992, xv + 336 pages.**

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus demanded that a radical love be displayed towards one’s enemies by anyone daring to identify himself as a follower of the Nazarene. That love consisted in an attitude that would not only verbally bless the antagonist of the Christian faith but seek his or her physical well being in spite of opposition. Today, as in Jesus day, the application of the “Golden Rule” runs counter to human inclination. How are we to understand the principles of non-retaliation as left by our Lord?



Does turning the other cheek, in an apparent frontal assault, render the Christian as nothing more than a door mat for Jesus? In what ways has the *Lex Talionis* changed from its ancient Hebrew context? Who are the Christian's enemies or for that matter who are his neighbours? These questions, and others like them, form a superb collection of essays that seeks to examine the area of non-violent response in the face of violent confrontation.

I found Walter Wink's contribution in chapter four entitled *Neither Passivity nor Violence: Jesus' Third Way (Matt. 5:38-42)*, particularly appealing. The example Jesus poses to his listeners, is that of a person deliberately refraining from active aggression against an assailant who strikes one's cheek. Rather than retaliating in self defence, Jesus encourages his audience to present the other cheek for battery as well. Jesus further presents two more pictures of submission to authority that seem to advocate passivity in the extreme. First, is the counsel to give up one's undergarment if the court awards the outer mantel as security to be held overnight by a creditor. This was clearly an unjust verdict and violated Old Testament mandate. Second, if pressed into temporary duty by Roman occupational forces, the unfortunate conscript is advised to walk a voluntary second mile instead of the mandatory one.

According to Wink, the social context of the blow to the right cheek is not that of an arbitrary assailant. He points out that the right cheek is the one specifically mentioned in the Matthean text. Is this significant? Wink seems to think so, and provides ample sociological background to make his case. In order for the right cheek to be struck the blow could only be delivered in one of two ways. First, by the use of a left handed clenched fist. Wink rules out this possibility by virtue of the fact that in a head to head struggle the preferred hand for attack would be the right hand. If the right-handed clenched fist is used it would be impossible for the assailant to strike the right cheek of his intended victim. In addition, Wink refers to references from Qumran that indicate in Judea, as well as the Arab world, the left hand was considered unclean, and therefore, socially unacceptable for most purposes. Wink's preferred method for delivering the blow is via the right hand in an open back handed slap. This would make the delivery physically possible.

The implications of such an assault, in Wink's reckoning, has the effect of negating the traditional exegesis of the text. It has been commonly held,

that the struggle depicted by the two antagonists was that of either arbitrary assault, as in the case of a random mugging, or two individuals of equal social standing who resort to settling their personal disputes by fisticuffs. If Wink is correct in his assertion, then neither the mugging theory nor the brawl theory are appropriate to the text. The relationship of the assailant to the victim is one of superior to inferior, master to slave, employer to employee etc. It is in such a relationship that a back handed slap could be inflicted with relative impunity. The urge to offer the other cheek is not intended to convey passivity, rather “this action robs the oppressor of the power to humiliate” (105). In fact, Wink firmly believes that the courtroom illustration of the voluntary relinquishing of the undergarment in an unfair judgement and the voluntary performance of a two mile forced march enables the Christian to utilize an avenue that is neither “submission nor assault, neither flight nor fight, a way that can secure (one’s) human dignity...they break the cycle of humiliation with humour and even ridicule, exposing the injustice of the system. They recover for the poor a modicum of initiative that can force the oppressor to see them in a new light”(115).

In most collections of essays a perennial problem is an imbalance in research quality and writing ability. I was pleasantly surprised, that in this instance, the standards of excellence exceeded the norm. This work should be included in any teacher’s personal library.

Heinz G. Dschankilic,  
Cambridge, Ontario.

**C.L. Seow, *A Grammar For Biblical Hebrew*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1987, 308 pages.**

In recent years, there have been published several very good grammars for biblical Hebrew. This boon has become a mixed blessing. Some, like Seow’s grammar have made positive contributions by writing simply and clearly, providing just enough explanatory text to aid the new student without overwhelming the reader with unnecessary detail. On the other hand, the profusion of new grammars has had negative results as well. Among these grammars there is a variety of terminology employed which makes it very confusing for the new student trying to supplement the explanation found in his or her primary text. For example, what is referred to in most grammars as the “qal” verbal type is in Seow’s grammar called

the “G” and labelled as the “qal” only as a traditional name. Further, and this is not limited only to Seow’s work, those verbal patterns traditionally called perfects are alternately among other grammars, called affirmitive patterns due to the placement of pronominal identifiers. The confusion is heightened even in the presentation of paradigms. Some grammars list verb paradigms beginning with the first person and ending with the third while others list the paradigm in reverse order. For the new student grappling with what seems an unsurmountable amount of detail, these seemingly innocuous variations can be devastating. Certainly, the situation could be easily remedied with an industry wide standardization of terminology and format. But, just such a standardization would greatly reduce the need for new presentations in an already glutted market.

Having made these introductory comments about grammars in general, it is time to turn attention to Seow’s in particular. If I have read the situation correctly, Seow’s grammar has become one of the more popular textbooks among first year biblical Hebrew classes. The reason for this popularity is a result of a variety of factors. First, Seow’s grammar is well organized. Second, the explanatory text is well balanced, providing enough help without overwhelming the student. Third, it is one of the lower priced grammars on the market, making it attractive to budget conscience instructors. Finally, there is a companion work book which provides reviews of the exercises listed in the grammar.

The current profusion of biblical Hebrew grammars are mostly introductory texts. Lamdin’s grammar still remains the standard intermediate text among most universities and seminaries. Consequently, the consistency of presentation between the introductory grammar and intermediate and advanced grammars must be considered when choosing a text. Seow’s grammar, in my opinion, does provide a usable connection with the more advanced grammars.

Grammars formatted for computer programs are becoming much more common. These provide interactive ways of learning grammar and vocabulary which provide immediate feedback and evaluation to the student thereby enhancing the learning process. To my knowledge, Seow’s grammar has not been so formatted and is limited in this respect.

Terry Giles,  
Erie, Pennsylvania.

**W.D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel of Saint Matthew, International Critical Commentary*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, volume 1, 1988, 731 pages; Volume Two, 1991, 807 pages. Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1992, 781 pages.**

The new edition of *The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments* quite evidently has set for itself a very high standard. The first installment was C.E.B. Cranfield's magisterial volumes on Romans (1975, 1979), and now have appeared the first two of three projected volumes on Matthew by the capable team of the veteran New Testament scholar W.D. Davies and his protege Dale C. Allison. Inasmuch as this renewed version of the ICC seeks to continue the tradition of meticulous philological and historical research set by its predecessor, the commentary of Davies/Allison is certainly no disappointment.

For the user of the commentary, the most important consideration is the methodological-hermeneutical approach of its authors. One of the phenomena of modern biblical study has been the trend to dismiss the factor of context and concentrate on "the text in itself." For the practitioners of such disciplines as the "new hermeneutic," "structuralism," and the various brands of "post-structuralism," the historical study of the Bible has been assigned only a preliminary role in interpretation, the primary assumption being that any author (biblical or otherwise) creates a literary world of his own, an art for art's sake, upon which extraneous factors must not be allowed to obtrude. The result has been that traditional introductory matters such as date, authorship, readers, as well as the consultation of parallel literature falling within the milieu of the document in question, has been replaced by a concentration on the "deep structures" of a writing, i.e., the underlying features which form the basis of all narratives: the functions, motives and interactions of the main characters (and objects), and - most notably - the types of oppositions and their resolutions which develop as the text unfolds. In short, the thrust of the literary critical method is its disavowal of an "intended meaning" of an author within a historical/cultural context, an intention which addresses issues contemporary with the author.

It is against such a hermeneutic that Davies/Allison react. In their words, "We cannot gather grapes from briars nor figs from thistles: our expectation of the fruit to be harvested depends on the nature of the plant" (I.2). This

being the case, What can we expect Matthew to yield? And the answer to the question, for the authors, does indeed depend on an assessment of the kind of document (genre) the First Gospel actually is, an assessment contingent on the necessity of historical research. For this reason, the commentary follows the “historical-critical” method. Although negative connotations are frequently attached to this phrase, in itself it means only the procedure of interpreting each New Testament book in light of its first-century Palestinian or Hellenistic context in order to uncover its intended sense. As Davies/Allison state:

Our concentration on the historical-critical method is due to our understanding of the central demands which the text itself makes on the reader. The text of Matthew has a history in the sense that it has taken up into itself pre-existing sources. Like a nation or a person, a text is its history. To a large degree it is conditioned, if not determined, by that history, knowledge of which is necessary for its full understanding. This calls for attention to sources, form, and redaction criticism. This is not to deny that literary and canonical criticism have their subsequent place. But what we cannot concede is that the text can be adequately dealt with in isolation from its historical character in the sense indicated (I.3-4).

Perhaps a more fundamental reason for the concentration on the historical-critical method, they say, is that Matthew assumes that standing behind his Gospel is an actual person, the historical Jesus of Nazareth. As the other Gospels, Matthew is not art for art’s sake. Indeed, the aim of the Gospels is not primarily literary at all, which is why they do not fall into any ready-made genre of ancient literature, “rather do they intend to point to the manifold significance of Jesus of Nazareth for the communities within which they wrote and for humankind and his *mysterium tremendum*” (I.4-5).

In view of such considerations, the authors clarify that their task is to uncover the “plain sense” of Matthew’s text. As they explain, this is not the “literal” or “original” sense, which varies in different parts of the Gospel. It is, rather, the sense which the sentences, paragraphs, and the longer unity, the structure, shape and flow of the Gospel as a totality present. Accordingly: To seek the “plain sense” requires dealing with its original language; with its historical and cultural setting; with its history, and therefore, with its sources; with the literary forms and the final literary and canonical shape with which it confronts us, so that the interpretation arrived at is not strained or against the grain of the text, but is governed by the criteria which the text itself supplies (I.5).

At this juncture, an important methodological factor of the commentary is introduced, viz., the citation of extra-biblical parallels to Matthew. By way of justification of the procedure, three comments are offered. One is that the Evangelist, like his readers, did not live in an “extra-textual” world; and in as far as possible, his Gospel should not be isolated from his world, “lest we, inhabitants of another place and a very different time, lose too much understanding of Matthew’s meaning ... Context defines meaning; and if our gospel text is the foreground, then it cannot be placed in perspective without its background” (I.6). Second is the conviction that ancient Jewish sources are the most important tool in the interpreter’s hands for fathoming the First Gospel. While the Jewish materials are not to be rigidly isolated from the Hellenistic sources, the authors are convinced that Matthew was a Jew whose mind was first of all steeped in the Old Testament and Jewish tradition. Third, Davies/Allison clarify their frequent reference to rabbinic literature in the elucidation of Matthew. They are aware that because of the problem of dating, caution must be exercised in the way one draws on these later texts. Even so, they discern that the rabbinic mentality shows strong elements of conservatism, and the antiquity of some of the rabbinic traditions is accepted by all. However, in a nuanced statement, the authors admit that their citations from the Mishnah, Talmud, etc., assume only what *might* be of historical-critical or interpretive significance.

The authorship of the First Gospel is a matter of lengthy discussion (I.7-58), which in itself contains a wealth of historical and linguistic/stylistic information, along with an account of the theological tendencies of the Gospel and its patterns of Old Testament quotations (the charts comprising 34-57 are an amazingly detailed source of ready information). While Davies/Allison prefer not to commit themselves to the apostle Matthew as

the author of this Gospel, they do conclude that he was a Jew writing for Jews, for two reasons. One is that much of Matthew's special material contains a distinctively Jewish flavour; another is that his use of the Old Testament strongly implies that he could read Hebrew.

When we turn to the exposition itself, we find that the authors are admirably consistent with their methodological presuppositions. At point after point, they are able to bring an encyclopaedic knowledge of the ancient world and of Matthew's theology to bear on individual passages. For example, their treatment of the temptation narrative invokes the context of the insurgent Zealot movement at the time of Jesus' manifestation to Israel. In point of fact, we come to learn that Jesus is represented as saying "no" to the solicitations of the Devil, whereas the Zealots said "yes" to his enticements to embrace a worldly kingdom.

Another instance is the Beatitudes. Modern evangelicalism tends to look upon the Beatitudes as the "entrance requirements" of the kingdom. However, Davies/Allison demonstrate clearly that instead of being "entrance requirements," the Beatitudes are the pronouncement of eschatological blessing on the new people of God. The practical effect of this observation is that the Beatitudes do not make demands so much as offer comfort and promise to the poor in spirit, etc. Before hearing Jesus' hard imperatives of the remainder of the Sermon on the Mount, the Christian reader is first built up, encouraged, and consoled. To my mind, if preachers come to the realization of the true intent of the Beatitudes, as clarified by Davies/Allison, it will make a world of difference in their handling of them.

A final example is the exegesis of Matthew's transfiguration account. By a meticulous reconstruction of the Old Testament and Jewish background, the authors show that Matthew's intention is to set forth Jesus as the one who displaces the institutions - most notably the Torah - and the revered personages of Israel. He is the new law giver, and the advent of his word has now rendered all previous forms of revelation obsolete.

The commentary of Leon Morris on the same Gospel is something of a study in contrast. For one thing, the exposition is confined to one volume, as opposed to the projected three volumes of Davies/Allison, the first two of which are mammoth in proportion. (See, however, Allison's defence of the size of the work in his *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993], xi.) This means that one might be tempted to turn to Morris first in order to get to the heart of the text. For another,

Morris' presuppositions are thoroughly evangelical, with the result that he assumes the authenticity of all the sayings and doings of Jesus in the First Gospel. Therefore, the reader is not burdened with extended discussions of such points. By the same token, Morris's introduction to the Gospel is far less technical and detailed (should I say, less instructive?) than Davies/Allison. As one would expect, Morris thinks the apostle Matthew is the most likely candidate for the authorship of the Gospel.

However, it is the very predictability of Morris' book which is its shortcoming. I sensed that despite the bulk of this volume, it really does not advance our understanding of Matthew beyond that of the commentaries, say, of Hendriksen, Lenski, and Carson. Conspicuously absent is the lack of sensitivity to both the historical context of the First Gospel and the salvation history propounded by its author. The result is that Morris tends to explain the text in broad, generic (moralistic) terms, rather than in keeping with the specific salvation-historical (biblical-theological) agenda of Matthew himself. The treatment of the Beatitudes is a conspicuous example, especially as contrasted with Davies/Allison. But the methodology also extends to bite size portions of the Gospel, such as Matt 3:7. In calling the Pharisees a "brood of vipers," John the Baptist, according to Morris, has in mind the "venomous nature" of their opposition to the kingdom of God (58, 321). What Morris fails to perceive is that the words of the Baptist go beyond such a generalization and serve pointedly to identify the Pharisees as the "seed of the serpent," as opposed to the "seed of the woman!" Needless to say, it is such a charge that infuriated the Pharisees to the extent that they could not tolerate the Jesus movement. It is just the frontal assault of Christianity on the Jewish establishment, as exemplified by Matt 3:7, which provides the rationale of the crucifixion. It is in this and many other instances that the Gospel assails Jewish nationalistic self-identification and promotes the messiahship of Jesus. Yet the real impact of much of Matthew's polemic is unnoticed by Morris.

In fairness, it is true that the reader will find a good deal of helpful information at a considerably lower price than Davies/Allison. The commentary is certainly not a waste, and this review does not intend to place it in such a light. It is likewise understandable that evangelicals will want to turn to one of their own in order to understand and teach the New Testament. Nevertheless, it is the opinion of the present reviewer that preachers in particular need to wrestle with the treasury of biblical, historical, and philological information provided by a commentary such as



Davies/Allison in order to forge an understanding of the text in its original intention as articulated within its own proper context. It is only thereby that the power of this and the other Gospels will be released and become applicable in ways hitherto unimagined.

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**Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Fellowship with God, Studies in First John Vol. 1.* Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1993, 157 pages.**

Since the death of Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones in 1981 Christopher Catherwood, the Doctor's eldest grandson, has edited many of his sermons and compiled them into numerous books. For those of us who have benefited from the Doctor's sermons on Ephesians and Romans these posthumous works are deeply appreciated.

This particular book of sermons titled *Fellowship with God* is on the first chapter of the First Epistle of John. It is the first of a five-volume paperback set on the whole Epistle. Dr Lloyd-Jones began to preach this series of messages in the year of 1948.

Those looking for a detailed exegetical study of the verses and passages will need to look elsewhere. These sermons assume that study, and as such go to the heart of the listener and reader. They are insightful and practical. Dr Lloyd-Jones was able to cut through the haze of an issue and to help his hearers see the truth clearly. For example, in chapter one using verse 5:19 he points out that there are two groups of people in the world, those of God and those who lie in the power of the Evil One. From this he goes on to say, "The New Testament teaching is that however much the world may change on the surface, it is always under the control of evil and of sin." (17) How many of us have thought of the world in less than Biblical terms as Dr Lloyd-Jones states here. Have we mistakenly thought that the last generation was better off eternally because it was more outwardly moral than we are today? Do we think of our friendly neighbour as controlled by the devil? The point the Doctor makes is that we as Christians should not be fooled or misled by the world we live in. This is reality, consequently, we should neither be surprised nor depressed by it. He goes on to give some practical

help in how the Christian should relate to the world. Dr L.J. was able to see what Scripture teaches and perceptively apply it to our generation.

In this volume Dr Lloyd-Jones deals with important subjects for today such as: joy and how to know true joy, knowing God, sin, mysticism and justification. Realize also that from a healthy dose of the Doctor's sermons one can learn much theology and church history. There are thirteen sermons in this volume of which the first three are introductory to the whole series. The last ten look at the verses of the first chapter of the Epistle in more of a topical than a verse by verse fashion.

For sermon and lesson preparation this book is most helpful to pastors and teachers after they have done their exegetical spade work. The Doctor will give insight into the meaning of the verses as well as their practical application. I also recommend it for the Adult Bible teacher as a base for a quarter study. They would need to do some exegetical study as well but they will not go far astray with Dr. Lloyd-Jones leading the way. And finally I recommend this volume most of all to the Christian who wants to read a good sermon to be encouraged and built up in the faith.

One criticism I would make of this series is not with the content but with its five-volume format. For those of us whose budget is not that of the Queen's it might have been better to publish the whole series in one or two hardback volumes which would likely be less than the cost of the five paperback volumes put together. I do, however, see the contrary argument that twelve dollars at a time is less than fifty dollars all at once. Nevertheless I encourage pastors and laypeople to buy and read this series. The result will be a feeding of your soul and mind.

There is one error I noticed on page 34; instead of chapter 2 verse 3 it should read chapter 2 verse 9.

Barry Howson  
Vankleek Hill, Ontario.

**Bernard Brandon Scott, Margaret Dean, Kristen Sparks, Frances LaZar, *Reading New Testament Greek*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993, 189 pages.**

Bernard Scott, Professor of NT at Phillips Graduate Seminary at the University of Tulsa, in conjunction with three former graduate students has

produced this valuable tool to assist students in their efforts to read and master NT Greek. Using the latest critical editions of the Greek text the vocabularies contain every word of the Greek NT. The book is divided into three sections. The first section tackles vocabulary. The verbs list all principal parts found in the NT, while nouns show the article, and nominative and genitive cases. Third declension nouns are keyed to the appropriate paradigm found in section three. Section two lists all infrequent words (9 times or less) by book and chapter of the NT. Verbs are listed as found in the text followed by the verb's first principal part. Worth noting is the listing of vocabulary for the Synoptic gospels to be used with Aland's *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum*. Section three lists paradigms to assist the reader, including four diagrams to illustrate the various uses of prepositions. An appendix lists all the words of section one (10 times or more) in alphabetical order with the page reference. This is a valuable book that should be considered as a textbook for students in intermediate Greek courses and a welcome addition for pastors who desire to continue their exposure to and mastery of NT Greek.

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London, Ontario.

**John H. Hayes, *Amos: The Eighth Century Prophet. His Times and His Preaching*. Nashville, Abingdon, 1988, 240 pages.**

Within recent years a number of significant studies on the prophecy of Amos have been produced. *Amos: The Eighth Century Prophet* has taken its place among the more influential of these publications. That is not to say that John Hayes has produced the definitive conclusion on each issue which he touches within his book. On the contrary, Hayes has produced a very controversial treatment of the prophecy of Amos but in so doing has asked pertinent questions and challenged long held assumptions causing biblical scholars to reexamine the validity of earlier positions.

Within his short book on Amos, Hayes establishes an historical reconstruction which he insists must be appreciated if the prophecy of Amos is to be rightly understood. This historical reconstruction is utilized in the comments which Hayes offers to his original translation of the

prophecy. While some of these comments and translations could receive due criticism, this review will focus upon the seven basic positions upon which the treatment offered by Hayes is based (38-39).

First, Hayes indicates that, "The book of Amos must be understood in terms of a close reading of the text in light of the historical events as reconstructed from all available sources" (38). As a working principle, this position cannot be faulted. However, the reconstruction offered from all available sources is open to interpretation and not all agree with the particular reconstruction which Hayes offers and upon which many of his comments are based. In particular, Hayes argues that Amos worked within the environment of a rapidly declining reign of a pro-Assyrian king during which time Assyria could offer little real aid in the face of hostile anti-Assyrian neighbours. The ministry of the prophet probably "lasted only a single day at the least and a few days at the most" (38). This prophetic activity took place, according to Hayes, just prior to the coronation of Pekah as a rival king to Jeroboam II. The first of these reconstructions is well supported and instructive regarding the international politics facing the prophet. The last two reconstructions, regarding the duration of the prophetic event and the place of Pekah in the unfolding drama, while supported by some within the scholarly community, are not as sure and incapable of sustaining an interpretation of the book.

The second of Hayes fundamental positions is that there is "nothing especially creative in Amos's (*sic*) preaching" (38). Hayes denies that there is any clear evidence that Amos drew upon any collection of Old Testament laws. This, I believe is a fundamental misunderstanding of Amos' use of Israel's legal tradition. Contrary to the position held by Hayes, there is clear evidence that Amos knew of and used at least portions of the Book of the Covenant, now couched within the biblical book of Exodus. Amos was able to deal quite effectively with international moral codes as well as those more applicable to Israel. This leads to a refutation of Hayes second supporting assumption, that there is no evidence within the book of Amos of a covenant theology relationship between Yahweh and Israel. Evidence of a religious concept of covenant and the use of the law codes are interrelated, and so Hayes' earlier position makes him susceptible to criticism here as well.

The third basic premise upon which Hayes builds his interpretation is that "Too little is known about Amos' (*sic*) background to speculate on how this influenced his preaching." This assumption removes the benefit of fruitful research into the prophet's use of and interaction with the wisdom tradition

and cultic tradition of ancient Israel. The resulting commentary offered by Hayes suffers from his refusal to acknowledge such cultural interaction.

The fourth premise utilized by Hayes is that there is nothing in the book of Amos to suggest that the Israelites were practising any other form of religion other than Yahwism. While the point may be debated, Hayes is on safer ground here if for no other reason than that, except for chapter seven, pronouncements against cultic practices play a minor role in the prophecy.

The fifth and sixth premises which Hayes identifies deal with the construction of the book and are somewhat interrelated. Hayes is of the opinion that by and large the history of how the book received its final form is unknown, and that it is therefore best to focus upon large rhetorical units rather than small isolated units of interpretation. In this, Hayes is representative of a shift in current Amos studies. The rather extreme identification of a multiplicity of sources and layers within the prophecy which was characteristic of Amos studies earlier in this century resulted in a loss of the continuity within the message of the book. Recent Amos studies have seen the pendulum swing back in the other direction toward an appreciation for the final form of the prophecy.

The last foundational premise which Hayes used to guide his interpretation of Amos is that "Amos never proclaimed total destruction and the end of the people" (39). At first glance it might seem that this premise is not all that significant. The truth is, however, that the premise does impact upon a very substantial idea within the prophecy, that being the nature of hope made available by the prophet. The prophecy is famous for some of its statements of impending doom and destruction (3:13-15; 4:12; 5:18-24; 8:2-3). While it may well be argued, as does Hayes, that these very foreboding passages do not explicitly call for the total destruction of the people, the tone set by these and other warnings is bleak and filled with condemnation. These passages contrast strikingly with those unexpected glimpses of a future hope which the prophet also sets before his readers (most explicitly 9:11-15). It is true that most are of the opinion that the salvation oracle at the end of the book is a late addition. Hayes, however, has, in an earlier premise, stated his preference for viewing the book holistically and thereby including the salvation oracle as an integral part of the extant of the prophecy. Consequently, since the presentation of the contrast between judgement and restoration found in the book is so significant, the approach which the interpreter takes to this contrast is crucial in determining the message of the

present book. This last premise, made by Hayes, is in many respects the most important of all in developing his interpretation of the book of Amos.

It is unlikely that the commentary offered by Hayes will replace some of the other recent publications (for example, Paul's commentary in the Hermeneia series) as a standard work on Amos. *Amos: The Eighth Century Prophet* will, however, continue to function as a call to careful thinking when considering this most remarkable of Hebrew prophets.

Terry Giles,  
Erie, Pennsylvania.

**Carol Myers, *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context*. New York: Oxford, 1988, 238 pages.**

Since its publication, *Discovering Eve* has taken its place next to other recent and major examinations of the role of women in the formation of ancient Israelite society. Meyers eludes the temptation to which so many have succumbed by refusing to exegete key biblical passages without first establishing a social context within which those biblical descriptions and assertions made sense.

Combining recent archaeological data with significant strides in social theory, Meyers analyses the biblical material and concludes that far from existing simply as submissive players in a patriarchal society, the women of ancient Israel were actors competently playing major and significant power roles in family and society. Meyers recognizes how powerfully the Eden narratives of Genesis 1 and 2 have impacted the shaping of western attitudes about gender relationships. In exploring these narratives, Meyers posits an initial question which is deceptively simple: In what way does Eve represent Israelite women? In answering the question, Meyers employs social scientific methodologies to reconstruct what can be known of the role and function of women in ancient Israelite society. To this is added information gleaned by archaeologists from investigations of the Israelite Highlands in order to establish basic demographic and cultural paradigms. Having set these parameters, an examination of the biblical text is ready to begin. In Meyers words, "Understanding the contextual reality of the Israelites is thus central to interpreting the original message and function of Genesis 3" (93).

Meyers examination of the Genesis account is both thorough and detailed. She rightly acknowledges that the passages of the early chapters in Genesis are indispensable for understanding both Jewish and Christian notions of creation, sex, gender, and sin. This importance is reflected in the care which Meyers gives to her exegesis. Following her detailed examination of Genesis and other significant passages of the Old Testament Canon, Meyers offers substantial conclusions regarding gender relationships. For example, following her discussion of portions of the Song of Songs, Meyers offers, "The Song is a product of domestic life and not of the public world of kings and priests, bureaucrats and soldiers. It preserves a glimpse of gender mutuality and female power that existed in family households" (180).

*Discovering Eve*, and a host of works like it, many of which are mentioned in the extensive bibliography provided by Meyers, can no longer be marginalized within the currents of either Christian thought or biblical studies. Gender relationships form fundamental social constructs. Meyers has provided a voice suggesting one way in which the biblical text present a challenge to accepted norms.

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**Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 In Light Of Ancient Evidence*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992, 253 pages.**

This work is written by a husband and wife team who are avowed egalitarians and in the case of Catherine Kroeger, she is proclaimed on the back cover of the book as the founder and president of Christians for Biblical Equality (CBE). The book has been the subject of much discussion already and recently a favourable endorsement of the book was given to evangelical Baptists by Dr Larry Perkins of Northwest Baptist Seminary (*Northwest Evangelical Baptist Journal*, 3 [June 1993], pp. 17-18).

The book consists of three main parts comprising sixteen chapters, with seven appendices. The first major section seeks to establish the context of the passage by briefly addressing issues of authorship, destination, purpose for writing and the context of 1 Timothy 1:3-2:11. The second section of the

book is an examination of 1 Timothy 2:12, which includes a discussion of the meaning of the controversial Greek verb ἀύθεντείν. A new translation of the verse is proposed; “I do not permit a woman to teach nor to represent herself as originator of man but she is to be in conformity [with the Scriptures] [or that she keeps it a secret]. For Adam was created first, then Eve” (103). The third section proclaims that to understand 1 Timothy 2:13-15, the rationale for the prohibition of verse 12, one must recognize the historical and cultural environment of Ephesus and the church there to properly interpret the prohibition. The proposed background is one of a proto-Gnostic heresy which taught that Adam originated from Eve, and Adam was deceived but Eve enlightened him. In this context, childbearing was considered malfeasance (176). The appendices address issues such as: the proposal that ἀύθεντείν could mean “murder”; comments on the syntax and Greek grammar in the translation of 2:12; and alternate versions of the creation story, to name but a few. Each is intended to offer support for the thesis by exposing the reader to extra-biblical literature which purportedly bears upon the historical and cultural background of the text. The practical significance for our day and the ongoing debate concerning the role of women in the church is, of course, that the passage can no longer be read as a universal restriction upon women’s rights to exercise leadership in the church. Women were being exhorted to learn the truth and refrain from teaching error (18).

The book offers a wealth of material for the reader to sift through and analyse, and presents conclusions from much study and research surrounding both the text itself and its historical context. The writers have an evident concern for the church of Jesus Christ and, in particular, women within it who have too often suffered unjustly at the hands of their male Christian co-workers. This book appears as the ripe reflection of many years of study upon this passage by the authors and as the fullest expression of views that they had previously published in “Women in the Church” in the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (1984). Catherine Kroeger had also published previously two significant articles on this passage, “Ancient Heresies and a Strange Greek Verb,” *Reformed Journal*, 29:3 (March 1979), pp. 12-15, and “1 Timothy 2:12—A Classicist’s View,” in *Women, Authority and the Bible* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1986), pp. 225-44. This book continues to build upon the thesis which was proposed in the latter article in particular.



I have a number of serious reservations concerning this book. The authors begin by engaging in the practice of “consciousness raising” that Mary Kassian so clearly discusses in *The Feminist Gospel* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1992). Throughout the book I encountered statements which I perceive to be imbalanced and provocative. A few examples will have to suffice. We are told that 1 Timothy 2:12 according to the traditionalist view forbids women from teaching or making decisions (17). Traditionalists are inconsistent in praying for workers for the harvest (Matt 9:38) and then deterring half of the labourers from going into it (24). Traditionalists are portrayed as teaching the superiority of men over women (18). While “some” (as they are described in the book, without documentation) may teach such distortions, this can hardly be described as the common viewpoint. A constant and underlying theme is that true equality means equality of roles and any functional differences in roles produces inequality (30). This is certainly a focal point of the controversy.

Having stated my dissatisfaction with the “tone” of the book, let me address the issue of scholarship. We are told that serious scholarly endeavour requires a thorough knowledge of the exegesis of those with whom we disagree (38). I heartily endorse such sentiments, the question is, do the Krøegers practice what they preach? If a “thorough knowledge” implies scholarly interaction with opposing viewpoints, then the answer must be a resounding no! The extent of interaction with opposing viewpoints is limited to one footnote where the works of Knight, Osburn, and Panning are listed with reference to their studies on the meaning of *αὐθεντεῖν*. The study by L.E. Wilshire (*New Testament Studies* 34 (1988), pp. 120-34) is not even listed. Criticisms of a previous article made by Walter Liefeld in *Women, Authority and the Bible* still apply to this more recent work and are not addressed, particularly the failure to apply a rigorous methodology in dating and evaluating sources. Throughout the book one is constantly confronted with unsubstantiated declarations. No documentation is given to prove that Priscilla was called “a teacher of teachers” in the early church (55). What evidence is there that women sometimes disrobed during worship services in the early church (74)? What contextual support is there for the statement that 1 Timothy 5:5-10 speaks of widows who are to be enrolled as members of the clergy (91)? No documentation is provided but we are confidently told that, “To be in silence” can mean “to keep something a secret?” (103). One should also

consider the highly speculative argument for the development of the Eve Lore, where I counted six hypothetical postulates in the proposed construction (150). Those statements which are provided with exegetical support often prove very unconvincing. I find proposals such as the presence of a nascent form of Ophitism in the New Testament (162), or that a number of Christian women presided over churches which met in their home (92), to be unconvincing.

Readers should become aware of several recent studies which refute the arguments of this book and will be published in a forthcoming book, *Women and the Church: A Fresh Analysis of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Its Literary, Cultural, and Theological Contexts* (Grand Rapids: Baker). Several of these studies were presented at the 44th annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in San Francisco in November, 1992. A. Kostenberger in a paper entitled, "1 Timothy 2:12: Syntactical Background Studies In The New Testament" argues that the use of ἀϋθεντεῖν in 2:12 coordinates concepts that are either both viewed positively or negatively. This leaves two possible translations: (1) "I do not permit a woman to teach error or to usurp a man's authority." or (2) "I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man." Kostenberger concludes that since the term "teach" is always perceived positively when used absolutely by Paul and elsewhere in the New Testament, the second translation is the best one based upon syntactical usage. H. Baldwin in a paper entitled, "New Evidence Concerning the Use of Authenteo" argues for a methodology which carefully documents the dates of the occurrences and proposed meanings of the verb and which differentiates between the suggested meanings of the use of the verb and those where the word appears as another part of speech (noun, adjective, adverb). The Kroegers consistently fail to follow through on these methodological principles. Baldwin argues that the 58 occurrences of the verb have one unifying concept, that of authority, and the uses do not suggest that a negative meaning in and of itself is to be attached to the verb. These two studies from a lexical and syntactical perspective appear to lend further support for translation number two above.

Although, some seem persuaded by the background proposed by the Kroegers (e.g. Perkins), it remains highly speculative. The Kroegers' study of Gnosticism suffers from some of the same methodological flaws as their lexical study of ἀϋθεντεῖν. That is, they selectively choose certain elements from different Gnostic groups and from different centuries in formulating their proposed Gnostic background to 1 Timothy 2:11-15. One

should now consult the refutation of this proposed background by S.M. Baugh, "The Apostle Among the Amazons," *WTJ* 56 (1994), pp. 153-171. An even more detailed refutation is to appear in the above mentioned book.

In conclusion, this book is a major contribution to the ongoing debate surrounding 1 Timothy 2:12 and offers a new and provocative thesis. The question is can the thesis be substantiated? In my opinion, the answer is no.

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London, Ontario.

**Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, Annelies Knoppers, Margaret L. Koch, Douglas J. Schuurman and Helen M. Sterk, *After Eden: Facing the Challenge of Gender Reconciliation*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1993, 651 pages. ISBN: 0-8028-0645-5.**

This is an important integrative work on an essential topic by a collection of first rate scholars. It will be the standard textbook on women's issues from an evangelical perspective for years to come. It is well written and interesting. It strives to be transcultural with helpful and sympathetic studies of women in India and Egypt. Generally it is written from a Christian Reformed perspective, and carries the reformed perspective that Christianity should influence all areas of life. This leads to a view that is somewhat different from American evangelicalism, which is primarily concerned with personal sin rather than the systemic social sin of oppression on the basis of gender. Sometimes there is a complaining tone in the work, but in general the writers are objective and scholarly in approach.

In such a wide ranging work there are bound to be weaknesses. A significant irritant is the lack of Biblical content. None of the high powered scholar-writers is an exegete. Dr. Schuurman is a theologian-ethicist but does not contribute exegesis. Dr. Sterk attempts to deal with the creation text as a layperson, showing an impressive mastery of commentaries and tools (199ff). However, she failed to see how the creation story is told in summary fashion and then expanded, but chose to go with a two-differing accounts view. Her exegesis failed to consider Paul's understanding of creation (1 Timothy 2:13-14) which most evangelical exegetes would consider essential for understanding Genesis. In discussions of theology and

exegesis the whole book tends to cite feminist authors uncritically. It also ignores the significant works of the Reformed exegete Susan T. Foh.

Another significant omission is the lack of major discussion of the hot topic of abortion, which is a significant issue in gender relationships. Sadly, abortion has driven a wedge between feminism and most evangelicals, so that the good ideas of feminists are not heard. Another general weakness in studying such a well documented work is the lack of a good index.

With such a great sweep of material it is easy to pick out the specific blemishes. Here is a brief sample following the book's order. It is difficult to understand how Christian feminism can include Mary Daly and Skyhawk who apostatized because they view Christianity as opposed to "feminist perspectives." Another irritant is the quick dismissal of Calvin's view of women by Schuurman (144,219). There appears to be no understanding that abused women in the sixteenth-century had many alternatives. The nunneries were sometimes places for further abuse, and often there was no one to take in an abused women. Calvin was cognizant of the problems. There is not enough evidence to say that Calvin was soft on wife abuse. Another irritant was the use of societal surveys to state Christian attitudes (229-230). Michigan state data does not indicate what the church actually believes, for Christians do not think and behave the same as their neighbours. The popularity of the television show *Xena: Warrior Princess* seems to discredit their assertion that society's attractive women are never muscular. In such a massive work, some discredited studies are bound to creep in. There is no wave of Superbowl related violence against women (*contra* 295-296). There is a backwards statement in the discussion of God-talk. Evangelicals do not name God, we translate and contextualize the Almighty's language of self disclosure. The whole discussion of which group should name God is irrelevant, for He has already named Himself.

This work has flaws because it attempts to do so much. Yet it is a magnificent book with good insights. It is highly recommended for college courses and for all who want an introduction to feminist thought from a Christian perspective. Pastors should read it carefully and examine themselves to make sure that they are not making any non-Biblical barriers to women obeying the gospel.

Paul Marshall,  
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**Priscilla Pope-Levison and John R. Levison, *Jesus in Global Contexts*.  
Louisville, Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992, 232 pages.**

The Levison's have done the theological community a great service in *Jesus in Global Contexts*. For the first time that I am aware of, the student of contemporary Christianity has at his disposal a one volume synthesis of Christology from the perspective of the emerging Third World. The authors stated in their opening chapter that this book may prove "unsettling." They were right.

What I found most disturbing is not that other theologians have widely differing opinions on the person and nature of Jesus Christ. Historically, this of all the central doctrines of the Church has been the locus of heated debate. This is understandable. If you undermine the traditional picture of Jesus as presented in the New Testament, you inevitably undermine the very essence of soteriology. Rather, what ought to concern every thinking Christian is the manner in which these conclusions concerning Jesus are being developed by so-called Christian theologians.

The Levisons' point out that the accepted method of biblical hermeneutics has been the grammatical-historical approach. This method seeks to uncover the original meaning of the biblical narrative by linguistic analysis and historical research. The purpose is for the researcher to place him or herself within the context of, for example, first century Palestine and determine how a listener of that day would have understood one of Jesus's sermons. They correctly state that the interpreter must jettison his own modern bias so as not to distort the original meaning of the Bible by imposing modern questions on the text (14). The danger imposed by some Third World theologians and that of the Levisons, is that since an absolute bias free interpretation is impossible, then the method should be abandoned in favour of what the Levisons call contextual theology or contextual Christology.

In essence, contextual theology maintains that both the present human circumstances and the biblical narrative have primacy in determining the manner in which Scripture should speak to a local context. According to the Levisons, since bias is inevitable, the reader then "engages the Bible as a dialogue partner with specific questions that arise from his or her context. The goal of interpretation is to allow the conversation between the Bible and

its interpreters to develop a life of its own. Deepest insight and relevance lie neither in the original meaning of the Bible alone nor in the contemporary context but in the to-and-fro of question and answer between them" (14). On the surface, this statement seems reasonable and harmless. After all, the purpose of Bible reading and study is to understand God's will for our lives and ought to be the life long pursuit of every Christian. Problematic to this methodology is the fact that there can be no reliable absolutes, for the Levison's also state, "Since every interpretation is a creative fusion of text and context, no interpretation is universal, because each context is unique" (15). In other words, the Bible alone is insufficient for life and faith. It is the Bible plus a given context which is salvific.

While I strongly disagree with contextual methodology I would nevertheless highly recommend this book as a valuable addition to any pastor's library. In the chapters that follow the Levisons have given a fair representation of what some consider to be the cutting edge of Third World Christology.

Heinz G. Dschankilic,  
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**Hughes Oliphant Old, *Themes and Variations for a Christian Doxology*.  
Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1992, xi-147 pages.**

This book is the publication of The Clinton Lectures given at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary (Iowa) in 1989. As such the book is very readable and accessible to the serious student or pastor whose aim is to lead God's people in Christian worship, the audience Old seeks to address (cf. ix).

His first chapter, entitled "Doxology as the Theology of Worship," in the tradition of Geoffrey Wainwright (*Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship Doctrine and Life* (Oxford, 1980), seeks to refocus liturgy and service on God and his glory. He stresses the notion that how "enjoyable" a worship service is to the worshipper cannot be the ultimate question in evaluation. "The delight is not so much in the worshipping as in the one who is worshipped" (6). Further, he stresses that service rendered to others must first be service rendered to God. He correctly observes that New Testament

and early Christian worship was firmly rooted in the Old Testament worship practices with their clear doxological orientation.

With these premises established, Old develops a series of themes of doxological worship in the remaining five chapters: epicletic doxology--the worship of invoking, supplicating, calling upon God; kerygmatic doxology--worship as proclamation and acclamation; wisdom doxology--focus on the "Word" in worship and celebration; prophetic doxology--worship that is rooted in the holiness of God and as such demands the holiness of his people; and covenantal doxology--emphasizing the worship of God by his people bonded by covenant and communion.

Each of these chapters follows the same basic format. After explaining the point of the theme under investigation, Old develops a theological history beginning with its root in the Old Testament, its subsequent development in the New Testament, and then a sketch of its practice and further development throughout church history from the patristic era to the present. Throughout the discussions Old regularly cites colourful and lucid examples of doxological expressions ranging from biblical texts of lament and ecstasy to liturgical expressions of Protestant tradition to modern hymnology and spirituals.

Old is not afraid to critique the practices of the modern church, and effectively refocuses the point of worship in each theme. In discussing epicletic doxology he is fearless in reminding his readers that supplication, lament, and complaint are legitimate and necessary expressions of doxology. All too often the modern Christian community has been taught that to ask the question "why?" is to evidence faithlessness.

The reminder that gospel proclamation (kerygma) must revolve around the glory of Christ rather than an anthropocentric focus is a necessary message for the church to hear clearly again. We bear an evangelistic message of the arrival of Christ and his Kingdom and the invitation to be a part of it.

Certainly the emphasis on the Word (Wisdom Doxology)--study, meditation, and proclamation--so that divine wisdom may enlighten the life of the worshipper is a note that ought to be well received. This chapter will challenge most readers since Old takes some rather fascinating turns in presenting some of the mystical means the church used (sacraments) to "incarnate" the Word in the lives of the worshippers. Further, it was disappointing not to hear Old at least mention the foundational theological notion of "the fear of the Lord" in his discussion of wisdom doxology.

The emphasis on the holiness of God, and thus a demanded holiness of people is a well received premise for prophetic doxology. Sincerity of worship practice, the danger of icons serving as worship ends, and justice and morality in church and society all point to an appropriate context of “prophesying.”

Finally, to conclude with an emphasis on community and covenant revolving around redemption and eucharist is highly appropriate as the last and lingering point of doxology to be heard. A most intriguing discourse is given by Old to the role and significance of church architecture, a discussion that modern evangelical Protestants need to consider seriously in light of the fact that most present church architecture is based in non-worship and non-communal purposes.

Old’s book is a welcome and refreshing contribution to the contemporary on-going resurgence of interest in worship in evangelical circles. He speaks from a sound theological base (doxology *is* the foundational context for worship and service) and points the people of God in appropriate directions for implementing the practices of piety, celebration, and proclamation.

David G. Barker,  
Cambridge, Ontario.

**David Peterson, *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1992, 317 pages.**

David Peterson is lecturer in New Testament and head of the department of ministry at Moore Theological College in Sydney, Australia. In a time of burgeoning publications and seminars on worship, Peterson has made a significant and foundational contribution to the discussion. He observes that “we have enough how-to-do-it books and not enough reflection on worship as a total biblical idea” (21). He has worked hard in providing a start to a “total biblical idea” of worship.

Peterson defines worship as “an engagement with God on the terms that he proposes and in the way alone that he makes possible” (20). He concludes that the terminology for worship encompasses service, homage, and respect to/for God. He has captured well the biblical idea that worship is much more than a meeting with God or an ascription of his worth.



The dominating strength of the book is his biblical-theological approach, and in particular a NT theology of worship. There is a cursory discussion of the OT in which he discusses the exodus/Sinai event as the central redemptive event celebrated in Israel's worship, and sketches an overview of Israel's cult emphasizing the presence of God, and its gracious provision for "engaging" with Him.

In the Gospels, particularly from a Matthean and Johannine perspective, he presents Jesus as the focus of NT worship as the fulfilment of the temple/cult and the initiator and basis of the New Covenant. Both these themes are developed through Acts. When he comes to Paul, he points to Paul's concern for a consecrated and ministering people of God (Rom. 12:1-2). Further, now the church/assembly is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and the meeting place of God and humanity. The Lord's Table speaks to the redemptive foundations of the faith, a community found in a common meal, and an eschatological anticipation of kingdom consummation. In Hebrews, Jesus is presented as the focus of worship as the fulfilment of the OT cult and hope. Finally, John's Apocalypse is explored, with its call to definite loyalty to Jesus in the context of powers arrayed against God and his people. The book concludes with a brief discussion of "Worship and the Gospel," and a re-emphasis of the reality of revelation and redemption (grace) as the basis for acceptable worship in Church life.

While perhaps somewhat uneven in his handling of the biblical material, Peterson emphasizes that a biblical theology of worship is theo/christocentric in focus, redemptive in basis, and eschatological in anticipation. Peterson has provided a foundational study that is essential reading for anyone who desires to lead the people of God in worship with theological and biblical integrity.

David G. Barker,  
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**O. Palmer Robertson, *The Final Word*. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1993, vi +150 pages.**

Though this book is only some 135 pages long, it deals with a very important subject, about which there is much confusion in today's Church.

Carefully, graciously and biblically presented, it deserves to be read and distributed widely. It especially needs to be read by those who are clamouring for more immediacy in their dealings with God, who believe we need more than God's voice in his written word.

In the first chapter of the book, Robertson argues that the voice of the Old Testament Prophet was not primarily prophetic in the sense of foretelling the future. The Old Testament prophets did make infallible predictions about the future. Indeed, this is what separated true prophecy from that which was false, for that which was from God came to pass as God had said. But the Prophet in the Old Testament was also one who told forth the Word of God, and delivered it to the people in such a way that there was no mistaking it to be the very word of God. Moreover, Robertson stresses that the origin of the true prophetic word is not to be found in the prophet's subjective experience. God's own word has come to the prophet, and its vehicle of communication is the chosen man's voice or pen. God, not man, originates the true prophetic word.

The second chapter deals with God's revelatory gifts of tongues and prophecy. Robertson discusses this in a masterful way. First, he argues that tongues in Scripture were revelational, and unless revelation continues, then the tongues in the church today are entirely different. Second, he maintains that tongues in Scripture were languages, not just unintelligible words. It would be great for missionaries if God would give the gift of tongues today. I personally went through three hard years of language study, taught by a person who was not a Christian. This enabled me to preach and teach in another language, but not without harmful mistakes, and even after 26 years of prayerful and thoughtful service I am still learning.

On page 52, the author reaches the crux of the debate: what does it mean when someone says revelation has ceased? Certainly God's revelation in nature and providence has not ceased. Psalm 19 and Romans 1 show that when men reject God, and do not love, obey and worship him, it is not the case that they are in the dark regarding his existence. What they know and have seen and heard, they have rejected, suppressed, held down or refused to accept. Moreover, God continues to speak to men and women through his Word. What changes have been wrought in the lives of individuals, families, and nations by the entrance of the Word of God, and by the reading, acceptance of and obedience to that Word. History has been changed when God has powerfully applied his Word to hearts. Thus, Robertson argues that

the Scriptures are final and sufficient, containing all that we need to guide us and how to live for his glory.

Now, this does not mean that we do not expect God to speak to us today. Daily and consciously, we quiet ourselves in his presence with his Word, in an attitude of prayer and humility, desiring that he would speak afresh to our souls, and guide us. Those like Robertson who are cessationists have no desire to put God in a box or tell God what he can and cannot do. But God always acts consistently, and his speaking today is through his Word, according to the standard of his Word.

Hugh Gordon,  
Toronto, Ontario.

**Thomas R. Schreiner & Bruce A. Ware, eds., *The Grace of God: The Bondage of the Will*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1995, 256 pages.**

The theological debate between “Calvinism” and “Arminianism” has been going on for a long time and isn’t about to end soon! The volume under review here seeks to make a contribution to this debate and enlists ten able authors in doing so, among them John Piper, Wayne Grudem, Jerry Bridges and Edmund Clowney. There are two major sections to the book under the headings “Biblical Analyses” and “Pastoral Reflections,” with the preponderance of material going to the first section (seven chapters).

It needs to be understood that this book is not bedtime reading. The authors come to grips with themes that are profound and challenging and which call for careful and concentrated study; it is not a book for beginners. Some of the chapter titles are: Divine election in the Pauline literature (D.J. Westblade); Does Romans 9 teach individual election unto salvation? (T.R. Schreiner); Are there two wills in God? Divine election and God’s desire for all to be saved (J. Piper); and Perseverance of the saints: a case study from Heb 6:4-6 and other warning passages in Hebrews (W. Grudem).

I suspect that these titles alone will whet the appetites of pastors and others interested in serious study of great Biblical themes. For this reviewer the best part of the book was Grudem’s treatment of the notoriously difficult passage in Hebrews 6:4-6. Perhaps I am somewhat biased by the fact that

I am currently engaged in an exposition of Hebrews in my regular church ministry! Certainly Grudem's treatment of this challenging and often perplexing passage will prove helpful to all students of Scripture. The following statement near the beginning of the chapter will be of interest:

In this chapter, I hope to demonstrate that people who hold that true Christians can never lose their salvation do not have to look outside of Hebrews in order to find doctrinal ammunition to hold these verses at bay. Rather, by focusing our attention within the book of Hebrews itself we can see that this passage in its immediate context, and within the larger context of the book, is consistent with the Reformed doctrine of the perseverance of the saints.

I am inclined to go so far as to suggest that this chapter alone is just about worth the price of the book.

Special reference should be made to the last part of the book giving us "Pastoral Reflections." Though this section is comparatively brief it is nevertheless very helpful. Jerry Bridges, dealing with the theme "Does Divine Sovereignty Make a Difference In Everyday Life?" makes a number of statements which "wrestlers with the troubled sea" of life will find very helpful. For instance:

If God is not in control, then I ought to be afraid. It is of little comfort to me to know that God loves me if He is not in control of the events of my life.

And:

God's sovereignty over people does not mean we do not experience pain and suffering. It means that God is in control of our pain and suffering, and that he has in mind a beneficial purpose for it. There is no such thing as pain without purpose for the child of God.

And also this very searching word:

But the comfort God intends for us to derive from His sovereignty is dependent upon our believing it. Those who do not believe God is sovereign over the intents and actions of others do not enjoy this comfort. They often struggle unduly with the sinful actions of other people, and, in many instances, allow bitterness to ruin their lives. Those who do believe God is in control can take courage in the fact that God is working in and through their pain and suffering for their ultimate good.

Samuel Storms reminds us of the consistency and necessity of “Prayer and Evangelism Under God’s Sovereignty,” and the section ends with a helpful chapter on “Preaching And the Sovereignty of God.”

Those particularly interested in the Old Testament may feel that this part of biblical revelation has been a little short changed in receiving only one chapter in the book, but no doubt the inevitable constraints of limited space made their impact upon the editors. All in all this is a helpful addition to the literature on this important aspect of divine truth.

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**Rowan Williams, *The Wound of Knowledge: Christian Spirituality from the New Testament to St. John of the Cross*. Revised ed. Cambridge: Cowley, 1990, 198 pages.**

Williams, Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Oxford, has written an insightful description of the quest for spiritual maturity of some of the great Christian saints, from the apostle Paul and Ignatius of Antioch to Martin Luther and John of the Cross. It is Williams’ intention that these models of faith become a nourishing tradition for us and a community with which we can identify.

There are several impressive features about this study. Williams’ study challenges and inspires the reader through the many wise examples it sets before us. The book is provocative in identifying certain classic themes of Christian spirituality that it finds to be present equally in St. John of the

Cross and Luther. "For both of them the test of integrity is whether a man or woman has lived in the central darkness of the paschal event." Finally, I was impressed by Williams' perspective on the importance of this study: "If we want to discover what Christian identify means historically, we must look at this area of reflection...that we call 'spirituality' at least as much as we look at the systematic theology which is properly inseparable from it." The book has a helpful bibliography for each chapter, and a names and titles index.

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**David F. Wells, *No Place For Truth: Or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology?* Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1993, xii+318 pages.**

With this book David Wells joins the chorus of voices indicting modern Evangelicalism; some of these voices include Os Guinness, Thomas Oden, Charles Colson, Mark Noll, John MacArthur and Michael Horton. Wells believes that the Church has unconsciously fallen prey to "modernity" and as a result theology (correct understanding of the Scriptures) has been pushed to the fringes. There is no place for truth. With theology on the fringes, Evangelicalism is greatly fragmented, with no theological unity to direct it. Wells' book is not about how to correct this problem but about exposing it. His goal is to show us how modernity is destroying Evangelicalism. It is a wake up call to modernity's subtle intrusion into the Church, and from this vantage point move us to reformation, that is, to be people who dissent from modernity and embrace the truth. He says, "The requisite dissent arises out of a vision of God in His otherness, and this vision has now largely faded, a fact most obviously evidenced by the disappearance of theology in the evangelical church" (288). Wells' second book *God in the Wasteland* looks at how we are to reform; *No Place For Truth* is an expose of our need for reform.

In this critique Wells primarily speaks to American Evangelicals but much of what he says can be applied to us in Canada and to other English speaking countries if for no other reason than the American influence

through its media and publishers. In many ways Evangelicalism and modernity on either side of the 49th parallel differ little. This book applies to all of us.

In the first two chapters Wells seeks “to get at the essence of modernity so that we might more easily discuss its intrusion into the minds of the Church and the minds of the scholars” (12). In these chapters he defines modernity specifically as referring “to the public environment created largely by urbanization, the moral etiquette, style of thought, and relationships of which are shaped by the large, impersonal structures that fill it” (74). These values offer the only appropriate ways of looking at life and the technological pyramids that we are building” (78). Wells sees “Our Time” as novel and without historical precedent because: 1) modern consciousness is being shaped by a *world* civilization; 2) today’s mass media...are so intrusive, so pervasive, so enveloping as to render the experience of modernity intense to a degree that is without precedent”; and 3) “we are seeing on a social scale that is without precedent the mass experimentation with and adoption of the values of modernity” (89, 90). According to Wells these factors “have generated enormous power in reshaping the inner psyche of both believers and unbelievers” (91). The Christian can be subtly conformed to this world without even knowing it.

After defining modernity and the novelty of “Our Time” Wells lays out the problem “in the inner life of the evangelical world.” He begins in chapter three by explaining “why the sense of truth is disappearing” from Evangelicalism. He believes that the pastors who are the main disseminators of truth to the Church are the key to the problem. They are encouraged by the Church to be managers and psychologists primarily, and only preachers of the Word secondarily. Theology “remains on the edges of evangelical life...dislodged from its center” (106). This is evidenced in the Church’s life and practice. Theology, therefore, doesn’t define practice as it ought to. Ironically and convincingly Wells shows that what Liberalism did in the early part of the century to Christianity, modernity is doing to Evangelicalism today. The former was blatant, the latter subtle. As Liberalism then was self-oriented, pragmatic and this-worldly, so is modern-day Evangelicalism presently. As Wells says, “Evangelicals...have now abandoned doctrine in favor of ‘life’.” The result is that “Evangelicals are not driven by theological vision,” and those who are in positions of leadership “most commonly reflect modernity not this vision.” This is the

result of modernity's severance of the private and public spheres of life. It places meaning and truth in the private realm of the self, and disdains objective truth. Christians regrettably are listening to this pied piper.

In the next three chapters Wells explains how Evangelicalism in various ways is being effected by modernity. In chapter four he looks at how "American individualism threatens to undermine the nature of theology" (137) by turning "individualism into the self movement" (140). The modern American is to pursue the satisfaction of the self, and Evangelical faith has followed this philosophy. As a result theology is irrelevant. He shows that the modern American has moved from concern about human nature to human personality. Human nature can be judged by an objective measure whereas human personality is unique with its private consciousness. Here modern man finds meaning to life, access to reality. It is found in the self. "Our Time" is characterized by "image," "manipulation" and "self-fulfilment" rather than "work," "character" and "accomplishment." Wells believes that television has powerfully passed this philosophy on to "Our Time". After describing the effect of modernity on Americans in general he turns to show its effect on Evangelicals. Evangelicals now believe that self-fulfilment and happiness are the central pursuits of a Christian life. Its hymnody, books, televangelism, magazines, Study Bibles, and seminaries primarily promote experience and self over God and objective truth. In conclusion Wells shows how this modern Evangelicalism is contrary to Biblical Christianity. Modern Evangelicalism is self-centred, feeling-oriented, and self-concerned whereas Biblical Christianity is self-denying, thought-oriented and other-concerned.

In chapter five Wells examines American conformity and how it "changes the politics of theology and hence its 'function'" (138). He shows how the modern American is a conformer and the effect this conformity has on the Church. The culprit is Democracy. It teaches that "culture and truth belong to the people" (189). As a result knowledge has become democratized. Again Wells shows how television has had such a powerful influence causing everyone to think the same way. He says, "Values today are being most effectively transmitted within the video culture" (202). He also shows that democracy has greatly affected Evangelicalism since the Second Great Awakening. Two ideas emerged out of that event: 1) the audience is sovereign; and 2) ideas are legitimate and valuable only within the marketplace (207). These ideas have had a powerful impact on theological knowledge today. For an example he considers the content of *Christianity*



*Today* over a period of 30 years. In this publication Wells sees “Biblical truth eclipsed by the self and holiness by wholeness” (210). He believes, “(the) triumph of the audience...has been affected far more radically among evangelicals than in the nation as a whole” (211). As a result modernity is redefining what Christian leadership should mean and so redefining Christian theology. The best Christian leader is the one who knows how to manage, not pastor. Wells concludes with the counter argument that the true leader is the one who knows, lives and preaches the truth in, and where necessary against, the prevailing culture.

In the sixth chapter Wells shows how the pastorate has capitulated to modernity. It has become professionalised with specialization in management and psychology. Due to society’s loss of respect for religion and its leaders, pastors have pursued professionalisation. Professionalisation for a pastor brings outward recognition, larger visibility or gain, and advancement. This encourages the pastor to entertain the people and to teach them how to satisfy self and be happy, not to preach the truth to them and to teach the Word to the building of Christian character. Wells uses studies done in 1934 and 1986 to show how the Church’s concept of a pastor’s role has changed from a spiritual to a sociological one. Today the pastor’s “authority and professional status rides...on interpersonal skills, administrative talents and ability to organize the community” (234). According to Wells the Doctor of Ministry degree has been a part of this modern-day professionalisation of the ministry. It is designed to give the minister respect in society and prepare him for modern ministry that specializes in management and psychology. Wells believes that this professionalisation makes theology irrelevant. Theology is even seen as unfriendly to modern Evangelicalism. Consequently, the pastors are not teaching truth which the Church vitally needs for its existence and life. What is Wells’ answer? Pastors “have to resist the inclination to look to the life of the church as the center that defines what they should do and turn instead to the knowledge of God to unify their activities in the Church.” This means pastors are to “do theology” which for Wells is synonymous with the knowledge of God. Pastors who “do theology” will probably collide with modernity in their own hearts, and with modernity in the Church even at the expense of their careers.

In the last two chapters Wells turns a corner and points us in the direction of reform. He does this in chapter seven by contrasting our present society

with the society of Biblical times. The old pagan worldview was experience-centred, subjective, amoral, anti-historical, self-interpreted and privatized. The Biblical worldview was truth-centred, objective, moral, historical, God-interpreted and publicized. Christian faith stands out among others because it is presented as objectively true. And so the Church's prime function is to declare and teach this public truth.

In chapter eight Wells calls each of us to be a new kind of Evangelical, one that is Biblically-minded. This chapter is his call for reformation in the Church: He calls the believer to dissent from the modern world, not physically but from its mind-set and values. This means we need a vision of God and His truth. And this comes through theology, the knowledge of God as revealed in Scripture. A theology that is centred on God and not on easy terms with modernity. Wells gives a tremendous statement of who this person would be and what he would face as a pastor in our Evangelical society (290, 291). For Wells it is theology that makes our worship, piety, thought and identity truly Christian. He, therefore, calls for reformation in the modern Evangelical Church. We need to stop trying to manage God and instead depend upon God; follow Him not lead Him. This means seeing God as He truly is, holy and transcendent. This is "the very cornerstone of Christian faith" (300). For Wells only when we know God do we truly know life as it really is. The Church needs to reform putting to death the habits of the modern world. If we want to help our world it will be by being relevant to God not relevant to the world. This means getting back to theology, the knowledge of God.

What do we conclude from this book and Wells' thesis? One might want to question some of his assumptions and conclusions within the book or even the very heart of his thesis (i.e. modern culture is anti-Christian). Maybe some would say he is building a straw man; that most Evangelicals are not as he paints them. Unfortunately I disagree. In general I concur with Wells' thesis. His case may be somewhat overstated but I believe he sees the underlying sickness in Evangelicalism today, which, if not corrected, will destroy her. We already see how little impact modern Evangelicalism has on society in the US with a significant number of adults calling themselves "born again" Christians. Doesn't this tell us that something is terribly wrong with the Evangelical Church?

Some would see his criticisms as merely generalizations (e.g. modern Evangelicalism is centred on the immanence of God, not his transcendence). This is a valid criticism. However, we need to realize this book is meant to

be general. Its purpose is to expose the faults of modern Evangelicalism as a whole. Not all Evangelicals, and not all Evangelicals to the same degree, espouse modern Evangelicalism.

Another criticism is that this book doesn't define for us what a Biblical theology for Evangelicalism ought to be. Wells implicitly answers this by telling us his second volume will show how Evangelicalism can be reformed. Hopefully this volume will define a proper Biblical theology for "Our Time".

Another criticism we could make is his use of the term "modernity" for "Our Time." Some would not call our Time "modern" but "post-modern." But there are various opinions on the use of this term and its proper place in history. When we read Wells we understand what he means when he uses "modernity" to describe "Our Time" (He is describing our culture sociologically not intellectually).

I have found Wells argument both cogent and believable. He has said things that need to be said, and I wish would be read by a wide Evangelical audience. Unfortunately those who ought to read it will probably not, and those who do will probably to a lesser or greater degree justify their dance with modernity and profess Wells to be overreacting. But I have to agree with Wells, if Evangelicalism is healthy, why is it having so appallingly little effect on society when the early Church with just a few people turned the world upside down? Is it not that the power of God is missing because the truth of God is not taught and lived as it was then? The apostles believed it was God who built the Church but we believe it is us. Maybe Wells is wrong about Evangelicalism in the 1990s. But I don't think so. See if he is wrong. Read the book. If you are a pastor, professor or church leader, or if you're a Christian who is concerned about the Church, read this book.

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**Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Truth Unchanged Unchanging*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1993, 125 pages.**

This book is a series of five lectures that Doctor Martyn Lloyd-Jones gave at Wheaton College in 1947. This is the second publication, the first was in

1951. Generally speaking the date of the Doctor's sermons do not concern us. However, in this book we might be tempted to think otherwise because of the nature of the lectures. These lectures show the relevance of the Biblical-Christian worldview in light of the bankruptcy of modernity. Things have changed since 1947, and therefore, to a certain extent the person of the 1990s thinks differently. But do not think for a moment that this book is irrelevant for us as believers in 1997, or that Dr Lloyd-Jones' analysis of humanity in 1947 is out of date. He says, "This modern view can be best described, perhaps, as the cult of self-expression, a view which has pervaded and influenced almost every department of life" (15). Dr. Lane Dennis who writes the Forward says, "By the 'cult of self-expression' Lloyd-Jones is referring to what we would today describe as self-fulfilment, self-gratification, the pursuit of personal pleasure, the 'if-it-feels-good-do-it' mentality and the like" (x).

This book is helpful for Christians and non-Christians alike. In the first chapter, 'What is Man?' Dr. L.J. states that according to modern man, he is "nothing but a biological mechanism, and his self, his personality is purely the interplay of biological forces" (22). He is what he is by instincts and by his social environment. For the Doctor the element that is missing is the distinction between the biological self and the soul that sets humans apart from the rest of creation. True self-expression is found in our relationship with God through Christ.

Chapter two, 'What is Wrong with Man?' critiques modern humanity's ever confident hope that the solutions to his problems are just around the corner. Give him time and education and he will correct them. At the heart of it, humans make happiness and ease the end of life instead of the by-product of a relationship with God. Humans think they are essentially good and therefore not sinful. They believe the problem lies outside of them. The Biblical view, however, sees humans as unhealthy, the problem lies within them. It is sin, and only Christ can deal with this problem.

The third chapter, 'Sincerity verses Truth' is an excellent critique of the modern belief that truth is unimportant. What is important is that the one who seeks truth is sincere. What matters is not whether he finds it but whether he is sincere in his search. "Seeking has become more important than finding" (65). The Doctor helps us to see that only sincerity guided by truth and knowledge in Jesus Christ brings salvation, satisfaction and hope.

The fourth chapter 'The Simple Gospel' shows that the individual human's problem is found at the centre of his being, his soul. Man can do

much to change the externals of society and to improve himself in the world, but this is only treating the symptoms and not the disease. The disease is inside, in the soul, and it is sin. Sin has to be dealt with and the only One Who can deal with it is Jesus Christ.

In the last chapter, 'Is the Gospel Relevant?' Lloyd-Jones proves that though the good news is 2000 years old, and modern humanity tends to reject the old for the new, only the Gospel is able to help it out of its problems. No matter how much humans have grown in scientific and technical knowledge they continue to be plagued by problems of pride, hatred, immorality, etc.. The history of humanity shows this to be true. The chief problem is within us. It is our sinfulness and separation from God. Only Jesus Christ has the solution to this problem.

This book is an excellent and simple apologetic for the average Christian who rubs shoulders day after day with non-Christians. Lloyd-Jones helps us to understand the way people think and the fallacy of their thinking. He is easy to read and uses numerous helpful analogies from life to make his argument clear. In this book we see the utter foolishness of modern humanity's beliefs, and that the only answer to its problems is to be found in Jesus Christ. For those who can benefit from it, the print size is large.

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**Tom Wells, *A Price For a People*. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1992, 158 pages.**

Tom Wells' book tackles an age old question among God's people: for whom did Christ die? This question deals with the intent and extent of the atonement. Did Jesus die for the entire world - every person ever born? Or did Jesus die only for the elect, those chosen to be saved? The issue, of course, arouses strong feelings and emotions and passionate views on both sides of the debate. But the issue must be resolved by careful Bible study.

Pastor Wells has divided the book into two parts. Before looking at "for whom did Christ die," the author first considers the question, "What kind of act was the death of Christ?" Man's sinful condition necessitates Christ's death. Man is a slave to sin, therefore he needs redemption. Man is alienated

from God, therefore he needs reconciliation. And man lives under the wrath and punishment of God, therefore he needs propitiation. Wells shows Biblically that Christ's death is described as *securing* redemption, reconciliation and propitiation.

After describing what kind of death Christ died, the author moves on to explore Biblically for whom Christ died that death,

When I ask, 'For whom did Christ die,' I mean, 'For whom was His death a redemption and a reconciliation and a propitiation?' There may be side benefits from the death of the Saviour that come to all men. I do not mean to deny that. But I am raising the question 'was what is called the "atonement" offered for all men, or was it offered *only* for those who would eventually be saved?

For Wells the answer is clear, "He died for His people, all those - and only those - whom He would bring into God's family forever." Christ's death did not just create the opportunity for men to be saved. He died to secure salvation.

Wells has very helpful chapters on the difficulties of his view, in terms of the Bible's use of words like 'world', 'all', etc. He concludes, "We must get our doctrine of the atonement from the words that describe it - like redemption, reconciliation and propitiation - and not from the universal terms that are used of those who benefit from it."

The writer then goes on in succeeding chapters to show that Biblically the atonement is specifically for God's new family, for the church, for the many, for those who died with Christ. After looking at what he calls some "hard texts" such as 2 Peter 2:1, Heb 2:9 and 1 Tim 4:10, Pastor Wells then concludes by considering some of the practical issues of this doctrine in terms of our preaching and the Gospel message. The book ends with seven very helpful appendices dealing with some of the terms and issues in fuller detail.

No theology is "easy reading" - especially that of the extent of the atonement. Yet, I feel Tom Wells has done a superb job of making a difficult topic "easier" to read and understand. Every pastor and serious Bible student needs to read and wrestle through what Wells has written. *A Price For A People* is an excellent primer on the Atonement - to be read and shared with others. From it, one will be enabled to move on to John

Murray's book, *Redemption, Accomplished and Applied* and John Owen's *Death of Death*. This is a much needed book in our day of fuzzy and sentimental notions of what Christ did on the cross and for whom He did it. Heartily recommended.

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**Henri Heyer, *Guillaume Farel: An Introduction to His Theology*. Trans. by Blair Reynolds. Lewiston: The Edwin Mellon Press, 1990, ii+103 pages.**

This century old work, though certainly not up-to-date, is a helpful introduction to the life and thought of a very important minor figure of the Reformation. Most people only know Farel as the fiery man who threatened Calvin with God's judgment if he forsook Geneva in its time of need. Needless to say Farel's usefulness in the Reformation goes much beyond this one event. Heyer in this brief work on Farel introduces us to the significant events and theology of this reformer. And from it we see just how important and influential he was particularly in the French Swiss and Upper German Reformation. Farel knew and interacted with such reformers as Zwingli, Bullinger, Oecolampadius, Capiton, Bucer, Myconius, Luther, Melancthon, and of course, Calvin. In addition, Heyer shows that though Farel was educated and a theologian in his own right his heart and efforts were in evangelism. He sought to preach salvation by grace through faith in Christ and so liberate people from the false teachings of Rome.

Heyer's book looks at Farel's life and theology in two parts: the time before he met Calvin in 1536, and the time after. In each section Heyer looks at those people, events and controversies in Farel's life that helped shape his theology; and then he explicates his theology from his writings giving reasons for certain deficiencies or emphases in it. For example, before 1536 Farel in his statements on salvation focused on God the Father rather than on God the Son. Heyer believes the reason for this is that having broken out of Roman Catholicism, Farel was "totally overwhelmed with gratitude for this God who had delivered him from papal superstitions, and, by sending of His Son, had revealed His love and assured him of his

pardon” (33). The points of Farel’s theology which Heyer examines include Holy Scripture, the Trinity, sin & freewill, redemption, justification, faith, works, predestination, resurrection & judgment, the Church, pastors, excommunication, the Sabbath and the sacraments. In Heyer’s examination of Farel’s post-Calvin theology he shows where the former’s theology was changed through the latter’s influence. For example, Farel’s doctrine of the Trinity became more precise on the Deity of Christ, and the Personality of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, he became more balanced in his doctrine of salvation giving more emphasis to the work of Christ.

Something I found interesting in Farel’s pre-Calvin theology was its Anabaptist overtones. For example: he held to a Zwinglian interpretation of the Lord’s Supper; he preferred adult baptism to infant baptism; he strongly promoted discipline in the church; and he believed that all confusion between church and state be avoided. If he had come in contact with more Anabaptists prior to 1536 might he have become one? My guess is no, but his early theology is still intriguing.

In addition, this study points out Farel’s intensely practical nature even though he was well educated and esteemed for his thought. For example, when dealing with the subject of predestination he saw in this decree a great consolation for the elect but he also saw that the Scriptures affirm that God wishes all men to be saved and arrive at the knowledge of the truth. Consequently, he recommended pastors to work actively to lead souls to Christ without being disturbed by the incomprehensible counsel of God. A good word for pastors today.

This is a good introduction for scholars, pastors, and laypeople to this significant Reformer. It is unfortunate for scholars that Heyer did not cite his sources although the titles are usually noted in the text (and there is no index). Nevertheless I recommend this work to all those who are interested in knowing more about the Reformation, and in particular, to those who want to explore their roots as Protestants. Farel had a passion for the Gospel and for the wellbeing of the Church of Christ; his life and theology testify to this. May all of us who name the Name of Christ follow his example.

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**Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics, Vol. 1: Prolegomena to Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987, 365 pages.**

Richard Muller has written (and is writing) a much needed detailed survey of post-Reformation Reformed theology. The present volume under review is the first of a projected three volume series dealing with the subjects of prolegomena, Scripture and God, respectively. Muller has been working in this field of research for nearly twenty years and this first volume demonstrates his scholarly competence in it. In his preface he states his purpose for these volumes: "The intention is to provide both a statement of the doctrine taught by the reformed orthodox and an analysis of Protestant orthodoxy in the context of contemporary scholarly and theological discussion" (9). He admirably fulfils both of these purposes in this first volume. In particular, concerning the latter, he shows that, contra Brian Armstrong, John S. Bray *et al*, post-Reformation Reformed dogmatics can not be "identified specifically with the use of Aristotelian philosophy, a pronounced metaphysical interest and the use of predestination as an organizing principle in theological system" (18). And against those who see marked discontinuity between the Reformers and the orthodox Muller shows that the discontinuity is not in thought but only in form and method. Concerning the relevance of a study like this Muller further states: "It is clearly a theology both like and unlike that of the Reformation, standing in continuity with the great theological insights of the Reformers but developing a systematic and scholastic fashion different from the patterns of the Reformation and frequently reliant on the forms and methods of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries ... The contemporary relevance of Protestant orthodox theology arises from the fact that it remains the basis for normative Protestant theology in the present" (15). Muller sees, and I believe rightly, that this orthodox theology is "the historical link that binds us to the Reformation" and is "the form of theological system in and through which modern Protestantism has received most of its doctrinal principles and definitions" (18-19).

In this first volume which examines the orthodox prolegomena to theology Muller wants to develop part of the groundwork for the reassessment and further study of Protestant scholasticism. Muller states, "It is an attempt to provide a detailed exposition of the presuppositions and principles of

Reformed orthodox [*sic*] theology as stated in the prolegomena to the orthodox systems and in the *loci* on Scripture and God" (22). Chapters two to nine look at these presuppositions and principles in fair detail. Chapter two addresses the development of theological prolegomena showing its linkage to certain species of medieval scholasticism (e.g. Henry of Ghent, Duns Scotus) and to the Reformation (e.g. Hyperius, Vermigli). As the pressures of institutionalization and instruction grew the need for a more detailed prolegomena was apparent. Hence, high orthodoxy (seventeenth-century, e.g. Francis Turretin) produced some important and thorough prolegomena. Moreover, in this chapter Muller shows that Reformed orthodoxy was not a predestinarian system or a form of rationalism.

In chapter three Muller deals with the meaning of the terms 'Theology' and 'Religion' for the Reformed scholastics. Here he shows that the orthodox were not primarily concerned with the theoretical but with both the practical and theoretical aspects of theology.

In chapter four Muller explains the parts or divisions of theology in the scholastic system. Here he deals with epistemology and such derivative subjects as archetypal and ectypal theology, the causes and ends of theology, Christ's knowledge of God, and revealed theology as nature and grace. In this section we see that the orthodox were quite Christocentric in their theology.

Chapter five looks at the natural and supernatural theology of the orthodox. Muller shows that though the orthodox taught natural theology they insisted that it was not efficacious in salvation and that it was a disjunction from the special revelation of God. Muller also shows in this chapter the continuity of the orthodox with Calvin's concept of divine revelation found in nature, in Scripture and redemptively in the Spirit. For Calvin and the Reformed dogmaticians natural revelation or natural theology results in praise for the regenerate but not in salvation for the unsaved. For them supernatural revelation is absolutely necessary for salvation.

Chapter six looks at the object and genus of Reformed theology. For the orthodox the object of theology is God and the things directed toward God; both of these are within the context of redemption in Christ. The proof that this is the correct object rests solely on revelation and not natural theology. God is the *principium essendi* and Christ-centred Scripture is the *principium cognoscendi* for the orthodox. Concerning the genus of Reformed theology it is a subalternate science or a derived wisdom because it is based on

revelation. It is a discipline that is not only theoretical but very much practical.

In chapter seven Muller examines the Reformed use of philosophy in theology. He shows that the orthodox emphasized the instrumental use of reason; the tools of reason were necessary for the construction of a theological system. This was not a synthesis of Aristotelian philosophy or any other philosophy. Theology, grounded in the Scriptures, always stood over philosophy. For the Reformed theologians philosophy was never on a par with theology but only a handmaid in their service. It was not until the eighteenth-century that some of the Reformed dogmaticians placed Cartesian rationalism on the same footing as theology.

Chapter eight looks at the orthodox view of theology as a discipline. Their method of theology began with Scripture and exegesis, next moved to positive doctrine, then responded to controversies and disputed points, and finally applied the doctrine to the individual. Muller notes a marked difference between Calvin's discursive method of theology and the Reformed propositional/logically ordered method. The difference results from the catechetical nature of the Reformer's theology in its early stages versus the Reformed theologian's need to systematize theology once the Reformation had been firmly established. In this chapter Muller points out that the scholastic method only "indicates the topical approach of the ... 'commonplaces' and the method of exposition by definition, division, argument, and answer utilized in the Protestant scholastic theological prolegomena" (259). The pattern of argument for the Reformed in their theological works was to move inductively from Scripture with the use of reason toward doctrinal conclusions.

In the last chapter Muller examines the fundamental articles and principles of orthodox theology. These fundamental articles for the Reformed were only those doctrines that were necessary for salvation with Christ as "the foundation of foundations." Muller also shows that their *principia* or grounds of theology were God and his self-revelation; hence their theologies invariably began with the doctrines of God and Scripture. These *principia* were based on the theology of the Reformers. At the end of this chapter Muller makes this comment about his survey of the orthodox prolegomena: "It is fairly clear from the prolegomena that the reformed orthodox system is primarily a soteriological system, rather than a speculative, philosophical or metaphysical one" (309). For him there is a clear continuity with both the

medieval scholastics and the Reformers. With the former it is primarily a continuity of form and method, and with the latter it is primarily one of doctrine.

Muller has given scholars an excellent survey of post-Reformation Reformed dogmatics. For those interested in the 'Calvin against the Calvinists' debate this volume is a must read. And for those interested in the Rogers/McKim Proposal, I presume volume 2 on the Reformed doctrine of Scripture will be important. I recommend this three volume series to anyone working in this area of church history or historical theology. I also recommend it for anyone interested in Reformed theology. Those who take up this first volume will be helped if they have a little knowledge of Ecclesiastical Latin; most of the many phrases and brief quotes are translated but not all. It should also be noted that there is no concluding chapter, index or bibliography in this volume; all three will appear in the last book of the series.

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**Wilhem Neuser, ed., *Calvinus Sacrae Scripturae Professor: Calvin as Confessor of Scripture*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1994, xiv + 277 pages.**

This is a collection of lectures, seminars, and reports given at the 1990 International Congress on Calvin Research held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The book is divided up into three sections with twenty lectures, seminars and business reports in all: three in German, two in French, and fifteen in English given by Calvin scholars from around the world, and so are a wealth of knowledge of the latest research in Calvin studies. The lecturers include: James De Jong who searches for insights into Calvin's spirituality from his Psalms Commentary; James Torrance who discusses whether Calvin was a federal theologian; Wilhem Neuser who looks at Calvin's understanding of Scripture (e.g. unity, proclamation, inspiration); Paul Rorem who discusses the question of Calvin's compromise in the *Consensus Tigurinus*; Richard Gamble who presents current trends in Calvin research with some future prospects for further research; Heiko Oberman who searches for the early influences on Calvin's thought before Geneva; Richard Horesik who

examines Calvin's first stay in Geneva; and Cornelis Augustijn who looks at Calvin's time in Strasbourg. The seminars include: Luke Anderson's comparison of Calvin and Bernard's doctrine of the *imago dei*; Erik de Boer's search for the hermeneutical key to Old Testament prophecy from Calvin's Ezekiel sermons; John Hesslink's discussion of the reactions to William Bouwsma's psycho-biography of Calvin; Francis Higman's attempt to better understand Calvin and Farel's relationship through a little-known letter from the former to the latter; Nobou Watanabe's discussion of Calvin's second Catechism with reference to its question and answer format, its purpose, its order, and its numbering of the Ten Commandments; Irena Backus' examination of Calvin's judgment of the historian Eusebius of Caesarea; Adrianus Pont's brief look at the *Articles concernant l'organisation de l'église et du culte a Geneve* which Calvin drew up shortly after his arrival in Geneva (1536); Mitsura Shimura's discussion of what the early evangelical movement in Meaux (France) taught concerning the mass, purgatory, the Bible in the common tongue, and the worship of saints; Jeffrey Watt's examination of the marriage laws which Calvin drafted for Geneva; and Kwang-Woong Yu's study of the *sylogismus practicus* in Calvin's writings. The book closes with two brief reports, one is from the secretary and the other is by Jean-Francois Gilmont on the work, publication, and presentation of a new Calvin bibliography.

All of these articles are important for Calvin scholars to read. For those who are interested in Calvin on a more popular level some of these essays will be interesting, in particular. De Jong's

s, Watt's and Neuser's (if you can read German) essays. Many of these essays seek to understand Calvin, the person, which is a more recent trend in Calvin studies. One of them, De Jong's article on Calvin's spirituality, I very much enjoyed. Calvin's commentary on the Psalms were for him a mirror on the soul and on its pages we see something of Calvin's soul. Calvin, De Jong tells us, "was most comfortable with a spirituality that included a wide variety of emotions expressed in moderation" (5). The key to the spiritual life for Calvin was trust in the promises of a sovereign God which manifests itself in confident prayer. In the Psalms we also see that Calvin abhorred vengeance which has significant implications for understanding his motives when dealing with Bolsec, Castellio and Servetus (these Psalms sermons were given and written during his confrontations with these men in the 1550's). Calvin also recognized that contrary

affections dwelt in the believer and so he continuously counsels “moderation, self-control, self-denial, cross-bearing, and discipleship” (12). Because the Psalms were concerned with the affections of the soul, De Jong believes that for Calvin, “The Psalms are about ‘the fear of the Lord,’ not the technicalities of the worship service” (12). For Calvin the fear of the Lord is “the root or origin of all righteousness” (quoting Calvin from Ps. 119:63). And the Psalms encourage believers to praise God from the heart with their tongues.

On the other hand I was disappointed with Torrance’s essay on Calvin and federal theology. Torrance argues that Calvin was not a federal theologian as were his followers, although he admits that “the seeds of federal theology may be seen in his writings” (16). To support his case he argues that Calvin did not teach: a doctrine of limited atonement; that God was not a “contract” God dispensing his grace conditionally like Calvinistic scholastic theology taught; the nature-grace model of federal theology; the covenant of works which makes grace subordinate to law; the limiting of grace and the mediatorial Headship of Christ to the elect; that God is a Stoic God of legal justice who created men and women for legal obedience like Owen and Edwards believed; and that Scripture is a Book which tells us our duty to God as espoused in the *Westminster Confession*. It appears to me that Torrance reads Calvin through Barthian spectacles. There are many good things that Barth can teach us as Evangelicals but Calvin was not a Barthian. He must be studied through his own grid. And when we do we find much agreement between Calvin and the federal theologians as Richard Muller has shown (e.g. *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics* Vol. 1). For example, just as Calvin made Christ the central theme of the Word so did the orthodox theologians. In addition, John von Rohr (*The Covenant of Grace in Puritan Thought*) has shown that the Puritans who were undoubtedly federal theologians emphasized both the conditional and unconditional aspects of the covenant just as Calvin did (Peter Lillback in an article in the April 1994 *Calvin Theological Journal* has shown that Calvin emphasized both the conditional and unconditional aspects of the covenant; and even used the terminology of “contract” in one place, see Ps. 78:57). Moreover, is not one of the main themes of Calvin’s teaching and preaching the holiness and justice of God, maybe even more than the love of God in Christ? I don’t know. But the justice and holiness of God are certainly chief attributes of God for him. Did he not say in his *Institutes*, “The will of God is so much the supreme and sovereign rule of justice that whatever He wills

must be held to be just in so far as he wills. So that when one asks, Why did God do this? we must reply, Because he willed it" (3,23,2). Overall, I found Torrance's argument unconvincing. Aside from this criticism I highly recommend this book to those who are involved or interested in Calvin studies. It should be noted that there is no index or bibliography, but a plethora of bibliographic material is found in the footnotes.

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**Paul Helm, *Eternal God: A Study of God without Time*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988. xv + 230 pages. ISBN: 0-19-824478-9.**

Paul Helm, a well-known Christian philosopher-theologian, has produced a philosophic theology of the first order concerning the Eternal Christian God, and our understanding of Him. Helm states, "This book aims to provide a sympathetic account and defence of the idea that God exists in a timeless eternity, rejecting the idea that God exists at some or at all times, and to do this as a contribution to the philosophy of the Christian religion" (1). He also states, that in the book he seeks to maintain the coherence of the idea of timeless eternity and "an attempt is made to draw out some of its consequences for each of the traditional loci of that somewhat arbitrary abbreviation known as "classical theism." "In particular," he continues, "I try to show that some of the allegedly more calamitous consequences of an unattenuated version of divine immutability and divine omniscience for human freedom and responsibility are either not calamitous or are not consequences. In particular an attempt is made to argue that given certain assumptions which in other contexts are plausible enough, assumptions about determinism, divine omniscience and human freedom can cohabit amicably, and that to ascribe timeless eternity to the creator does not lead inevitably to Spinoza's pantheism" (xiii, xiv). In this work Helm does not give us philosophical arguments that prove that God is eternal but that there are good, rational and logical reasons for believing so. In fact, to give up belief in God's timelessness may lead to more problems than benefits.

In his introductory chapter, Helm answers the argument put forward against the concept of God's timelessness, that is, that it is not a Biblical but

a neo-platonic concept brought into Christian theology. Helm answers: 1) by showing that there is nothing in the Bible that teaches against the timelessness of God; and 2) by giving reasons why God must be timeless for Christians.

In chapter two, he addresses the coherence of the idea of God's timeless eternity. He interacts with other philosophers who challenge the traditional belief of God's timelessness, such as Swinburne; and analyses Stump's and Kretzman's theory of ET- simultaneity. Helm encourages us to see God as 'timefree,' totally outside the concept of time. Timelessness is only incoherent to us because we are timebound. Chapter three continues to answer objections to the concept of an eternal God, by arguing that if we concede that God is in time then we must also concede that He is in space, and therefore, finite. This will not do for traditional theism. Chapter four answers the philosophical argument put forward by Hume, Coburn and Swinburne that a 'person' cannot be timeless. Helm does not answer this argument by seeking to prove that a person can be timeless but by answering the major objections to the belief in a timeless person eg. memory, purpose, knowledge and agency. For example, concerning God's agency in creating the spatio-temporal universe, God could have decreed the universe and all the acts which took place in it by a 'timeless decree.'

In chapter five, in a more positive way, Helm argues for the logical consistency of the idea of God's timelessness, omniscience and immutability. Helm does not prove that the timeless eternity of God and divine omniscience go hand and hand. He does, however, show that the former is more compatible with a definition of omniscience that may not (from our point of view) include using temporal indexical expressions but does include God's knowledge of all things at the same eternal moment. He also shows that God's immutability and eternity are at least conceptually connected although God's eternity cannot be proved from His immutability.

In chapter six, Helm begins to address the problem of God's timelessness and foreknowledge in relation to human freedom. In this and the next two chapters he argues that a timeless God is logically inconsistent with any belief in the indeterministic freedom of creatures. In chapter six, he makes a good point concerning God Who is timeless and spaceless in relation to humans who are timebound and spacebound, by helping us see that when we speak of God in terms of time and space, it does not mean He is 'in' time and space. We must speak this way in order to refer to a timeless, spaceless God. We must realize that God accommodates Himself to us in



order to communicate to timebound creatures (e.g. anthropomorphisms). In chapter seven, Helm interacts with those, like Swinburne, Ward and Geach, who believe they can reconcile divine foreknowledge and human freedom by positing a God in time. He shows that their views lead to difficulties with God's providence. Helm makes a good observation for all philosophic theology when he says, "developing a satisfactory concept of God is partly a matter of straight philosophical argument but also partly a matter of judgement as to which difficulties are least disadvantageous [from a traditional Christian theistic point of view]" (124). Chapter eight answers the charge that God's timelessness implies logical fatalism. In the defence of his position Helm: 1) uses Plantinga's notion of a timeless proposition (138); and 2) shows that "God's A-foreknowledge [His knowledge based on His ordaining and ensuring something to be true] of the actual world is not necessitated by the laws of logic alone" (141).

Continuing to look at the same subject of the last three chapters, chapter nine addresses the claims of certain philosophers who believe that human freedom and divine omniscience are incompatible. They contend, therefore, that the traditional theistic belief in divine omniscience must be cast aside. If it is not, then there will be unfavourable consequences for human responsibility and sin. Helm seeks to cast doubt on this claim by paralleling the arguments of those who hold to atheistic determinism and maintain human freedom (e.g. Flew), with those Christians who hold to compatibilism. This chapter is a good study of the relationships among sin/evil, human responsibility and God's omniscience.

In chapter ten, Helm, recognizing that a timeless God must be free in order to avoid the charge of logical fatalism, argues that God is free to choose just as humans are. He is self-sufficient, and makes choices freely out of His nature. For example, He created the universe not because He had to but because He freely desired to. In the concluding chapter, Helm speaks about the possibility of referring to God. Flew and Nielsen argue that a timeless God is unknowable as an object of discourse. Helm gives three arguments that have been presented by others to answer this dilemma, but he acknowledges their inadequacy. A fourth argument he proposes which he feels is more hopeful is based on Kripke's theory of names, and his distinction between giving its meaning and fixing its reference. Helm posits that even though God is an incorporeal being, it is possible to make identifying reference to Him. A person is known from his actions.

Therefore, from God's acts in space and time, we understand Who God is. His collective magnificent attributes are manifested by those acts. These attributes tell us that this One Who acts, is God.

In conclusion, I feel that Helm has written a very solid book answering a number of important philosophical questions about God's eternity. He certainly hasn't addressed all the questions nor has he given irrefutable answers to all the arguments against an eternal God nor has he responded to all the concerns of traditional theists. But then again he would acknowledge the impossibility of such a task. For example, it is impossible for anyone to give irrefutable answers for the simple reason that God is infinite and eternal, and we are finite and timebound. The wonder of God is that we cannot understand Him. Is this not what makes Him God? As traditional theists we wouldn't want to surrender this for any god of our own philosophical making, no matter how sound our arguments. I recommend this book to students of philosophy of religion, Christian philosophers, and of course to all those who are Christians and enjoy philosophical thought. Helm interacts with philosophers and theologians past and present, including recent material on the subject.

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**Samuel Bolton, Nathaniel Vincent, Thomas Watson, *The Puritans On Conversion*. Ligonier, PA: Soli Deo Gloria Publications.**

This small, attractively presented volume, consists of three sermons by seventeenth-century Puritan authors, of whom Thomas Watson is probably the best known. The theme, as indicated by the title, is conversion, and given the sad state of modern evangelicalism and the importance of the theme, these old worthies deserve to be heard again.

In his introductory comments A.N. Martin states:

One of the curses of our day is the widespread notion that salvation is "simple." While the essence of the message of God's salvation is indeed simple, to have the sinner thoroughly divorced from his sins, his own righteousness,

and to give himself up to God on Gospel terms is a *thing* which our Lord Himself said is “impossible with men.”

Those familiar with the Puritan way of presenting their material will find the familiar structure with plenty of “uses” (i.e. application) given, and also the typical and excellent “pithy sayings.” Bolton for instance reminds us that sin “required no less than the infinite power of God to conquer, the infinite mercy of God to pardon, and the infinite merit of Christ to answer for it.” Vincent gives the lie to the ignorant suggestion that the Puritans were lifeless dry preachers when we read, “I think I would be willing to expire and be carried dead out of the pulpit upon the condition that all of you might hear so as to turn from your evil ways and live.”

To this reviewer the “best wine” comes last with Thomas Watson’s message “The One Thing Necessary.” Full of power and fire Watson presses the need of salvation upon his hearers and readers and fastens the truth upon the mind with many memorable statements. He encourages the pastors: “It is better to love as a pastor than to speak as an angel”; he encourages the sinner: “still look up to Christ’s merit. It is not your sweat but His blood that saves”; he encourages the Christian: “prayer beats the weapon out of the enemy’s hand, and gets the blessing out of God’s hand.”

All in all a book to do you good.

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## BOOK NOTICES

**Luise Schottroff, *Let the Oppressed Go Free: Feminist Perspectives on the New Testament*. Translated by Annemarie S. Kidder. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993, 192 pages. ISBN: 0-664-25426-8.**

This is a fine exegetical work in the mainline, non-evangelical, feminist tradition. It is marred by an emphasis on institutional sin and almost ignores personal sin. This trend is something that liberal feminists share with liberation theologians. The author's observation that the women who watched the Crucifixion were at risk because Romans sometimes executed sympathetic spectators, is insightful and fresh. However, her insight that Lydia was poor because she is only named by her city is weak since it ignores the financial resources she needed for her business. It is more likely that she went by this name because of the risks she took for the sake of the gospel. This work is a fine example of the wealth that different perspectives can bring to Biblical interpretation. However, the Russell work (*Church in the Round*) is a more valuable introduction to feminist exegesis.

**Terry Schlossberg and Elizabeth Achtemeier, *Not My Own; Abortion and the Marks of the Church*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1995, 137 pages. ISBN: 0-8028-0857-1.**

We sometimes get the impression that all feminists and liberal church theologians are pro-abortion. Not so! Achtemeier, adjunct Bible professor at Union, coauthored this well written and researched book attacking abortion in a fresh way. The authors begin by stating that all people are valuable for we are not our own, and the call to discipleship is universal, so there are no throw away people. They continue by condemning the arrogance that many have when they state what they think the text says to them before examining what it says in context. To our shame, this methodology has crept into evangelical circles as well.

Achtemeier showed great courage in writing this work, since she is going against the nearly monolithic liberal mentality and thus jeopardizing her

career. She further demonstrates this courage in stating that abortion is “nearly always the result of sexual sin” and calling for more discipline and awareness of this sin. It is “dehumanizing” a woman to take responsibility away from the woman for her sinful actions. Courage, sensitivity and scholarship is also seen in the treatment of the hard issues of rape, incest and birth defects.

This book is highly recommended for its good research and presentation of the facts on abortion, as well as its implications for Christians. All who wish to understand Christian views on abortion should master this work.

**Letty M. Russell, *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993, 272 pages. ISBN: 0-664-25070-X.**

This is a good primary source introduction to non-evangelical feminist thought by a distinguished practitioner and professor. Like many mainline feminist works it is marred by a lack of attention to personal sin and an improper centre. Instead of centring on Jesus, the one way to God, it centres on “patriarchal theology” and reacts against it. The church Russell envisions has the positive element of including all the disfranchised, but it ignores two major factors. First, her version of the Rainbow Coalition includes groups that dislike each other intensely. Therefore, they will not have the harmonious dialogue she hopes. Second, there is still only One Way--Jesus. Groups that have power are not more or less sinful than groups that are not in power. Members of the groups are sinners or saints, based on their relationship to Jesus. While these two factors flaw the work, she has many good insights. This is a profitable book for all who want to understand the background of liberal university humanities students.

**E. John Hamlin, *Surely There is A Future: A Commentary on the Book of Ruth*. International Theological Commentary. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1996.**

The author has given us a carefully crafted interpretation of Ruth that interprets the message on a literary level (how the artistry contributes to our

understanding), while keeping the plot and theme(s) before our eyes (lose the plot, lose the meaning). He successfully explains background information for the reader (kinsman redeemer, covenant loyalty/love, resident alien) and shows how such background clarifies interpretation. He also indicates how various themes merge with the redemptive panorama of the whole canon, and gives useful applications for our present situation. One very helpful feature is Hamlin's discussion of words and phrases, for example, his discussion of 'Bethlehem and Judah', and 'Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah' (5, 6). I predict it will become a favourite among pastors and students.

There are, however, discordant notes. Less serious, but vexing, are such comments as, "The basic meaning of the Hebrew verb translated 'started' (*qum*) is to rise up out of a condition of lethargy, sorrow, and discouragement." (13). There is a difference between contextual nuance and word meaning, as anyone can see from a Hebrew lexicon or concordance. Secondly, he suggests that the marriage of Ruth is an alternative to what he calls the "ethnocentric view" seen in Ezra and Nehemiah (77). His setting Scripture against Scripture mars an otherwise provocative commentary. The cautious student can still profit immensely from Hamlin's commentary. A real delight!

**Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church Under Persecution*. 2nd Edition. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1982, 1984. ISBN: 0-8028-0735-6.**

This is one of the most controversial evangelical commentaries of the last twenty years because of Gundry's statements that Matthew used Midrash techniques. These issues, extensively discussed in *Trinity Journal* by Moo and Carson, are a significant weakness of the book. However, if this is overlooked, the rest of the commentary is a fresh and insightful study. Unfortunately it uses the methodologically flawed redaction criticism style. While little is new in this paperback second edition it remains a very helpful commentary, that I have found valuable in preaching through Matthew. This book is recommended for those who would like a thoughtful commentary from a non-evangelical perspective.

**W. Dow Edgerton, *The Passion of Interpretation in Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation*. Louisville: Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992, 160 pages. ISBN: 0-664-25394-6.**

This is a helpful and fresh study on the hermeneutics of narrative using different types of broadly religious literature as examples. The author deals with the interpretive nature of hermeneutics, showing that even the most careful expositor sometimes obscures the text. A personal favourite was the chapter on the exegesis of tears. It is true- the Lord hears the prayers of the hurting and the Bible is primarily a book of comfort, for it shows the way of deliverance from sin and the abundant spirit-filled life. The title chapter is an important one, for it states that interpretation is passionate. Although the author does not alert us to the dangers, we can take warning that interpreters do have a passion, and evangelicals must be careful that our passion is properly harnessed for ministry. Specifically, if we have the God-given desire to write a commentary then we must do so. Otherwise we risk leaving the commentaries, theologies and sermons to the radicals who do not share our respect for the Bible. This is a fine and careful work.

**Al Fasol, *With a Bible in Their Hands: Baptist Preaching in the South 1679-1979*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994, 196 pages.**

The Southern Baptist Convention has existed since the mid nineteenth-century. However, Baptist preaching in America predates the rise of this denomination by over a hundred years. Al Fasol has done Baptists of all stripes a tremendous service by tracing the development of Southern Baptist preaching in the southern United States beginning roughly in 1679 with the founding of the first Baptist church in Charles Town, South Carolina, through the development of what would be the Southern Baptist Convention up to the present day. As Fasol embarks on this all too brief whirl-wind excursion, the reader is exposed to dozens of fascinating pastors, preachers and theologians from our Baptist heritage and their influence in shaping a nation for Jesus Christ. While this work is by no means exhaustive and little more than a cursory introduction to American Baptist history, it still

provides a valuable glimpse into the shape and flavour of Baptist preaching and congregational life.

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**Eberhard Bethge, *Friendship and Resistance: Essays on Dietrich Bonhoeffer*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995, 111 pages. ISBN: 0-8028-4123-6.**

This work is jointly published by the World Council of Churches Publications in Geneva. This brief collection of essays relates some of the background behind Bonhoeffer's actions and beliefs. Bonhoeffer walked a path that some evangelicals may walk, from support of the government to realization that the state is distorting the essence of the gospel. Instead of a Biblical Christ, Hitler wanted a Teutonic-heroic Christ. This drove Dietrich to active resistance against Hitler. Bethge was Bonhoeffer's friend and biographer who married his niece, and had the distinction of being the recipient of the *Letters From Prison*. In these essays we see how the Gestapo censorship weakened and disoriented the Church, and slowed Christian opposition to the regime. Bethge is proud of the martyrdom of Bonhoeffer, for it allows a greater audience for his Jewish dialogue and ecumenical work. This book is recommended for Bonhoeffer and church-state relationship students.

**James W. Aageson, *Written Also For Our Sake: Paul and the Art of Biblical Interpretation*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993, 156 pages. ISBN: 0-664-25361-X.**

This is a helpful and fresh work on exegesis and interpretation, making more available some of the latest in Pauline scholarship. Aageson's understanding of exegesis as a conversation between reader and text is a helpful paradigm. While it is very true that we have preunderstandings of the text, these must be continually reexamined in light of all the Biblical texts. This is a valuable advanced work for students and pastors who want to progress beyond *The Hermeneutical Spiral*.