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## Book Reviews

Marsden, George M, **Reforming Fundamentalism** (Grand Rapids: Wm B Eerdmans Publ Co, 1987, 311 pp hard \$19.95); reviewed by E Robert Jordan

I believe the most important book published in the Christian world in 1987 is the book *Reforming Fundamentalism* by George M Marsden. Unwittingly George Marsden has done true Biblical Fundamentalism a real service with the writing and publishing of this book. As Fundamentalists we can teach the doctrinal position and the associational position of the New Evangelicals. But we haven't been able to document the ethical position of the New Evangelical. This book certainly does it in bold black and white print.

So often you hear a few fundamentalists saying "The Neo Evangelical loves, or the Neo Evangelical forgives, or the New Evangelical is compassionate." But after reading this book and seeing the relationship of the professors, business men, trustees, etc, you will certainly have a change of mind. One thing is certain after reading it. . . ll of true love is not on the side of the New Evangelical, and all of the heat is not on the side of real Fundamentalism.

Marsden shows clearly how Fundamentalism at Fuller and other institutions went from true Fundamentalism to the extreme position of New Evangelicals and their denial of the inerrancy of Scripture as it is today. Every pastor and student considering the ministry should read this book and have it in their library.

Lindsell, Harold, **The New Paganism** (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987, 279 pp hard \$16.95); reviewed by E Robert Jordan

Dr. Lindsell finds himself in no-man's-land theologically today since the writing of his last several books, on inerrancy, etc. Now this book has alienated many of the Neo Evangelicals from him, and certainly Biblical Fundamentalists do not want to trust him, because of his past positions in New Evangelicalism.

In *The New Paganism* Harold Lindsell takes the term Humanism and defines it as Paganism. Dr. Lindsell does an excellent job of covering the Christian faith definition and the enlightenment. It would make an excellent textbook on Philosophy on college level, since he does in small segments give the views of the different philosophers. He gives the effect the enlightenment had on the Founding Fathers and the United States of America. It shows the effect of New Paganism, the church and morals of our society and upon the theology of our society.

Dr. Lindsell has a unique way of defining his words so that no one can possibly, unless they were perverted, take a wrong view of what he was saying. The book is full of definitions. He is weak in that he promotes the Gap Theory, page 4. He is also weak on his eschatology, obviously not a defender of Pre-Millennialism, page 214. And he is obviously a Protestant not a Baptist. We cannot recommend everything in this book. This book is a good book to be on the shelves of pastors in this country so that they may be able to hand it to the people that have problems which are dealt with in this book.

Osbeck, Kenneth W, **The Endless Song** (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publ, 1987, 142 pp paper \$6.95); reviewed by Dean Kurtz

This book is a rather novel presentation of sacred music history with commentary. Each chapter is broken up into readable, concise subheadings that give a thumbnail sketch of movements in an historic time period and an analysis from a generally conservative perspective. Summaries, group discussions, reflective comments, songs, and even suggested prayers are offered with each chapter. This may be used as a basis for self study or as a text for an adult teaching program such as a Bible Institute. Many music programs in fundamental Baptist churches seem to run along with little thought given to direction or purpose. This book will stimulate your thought on some basics, although you may disagree with some conclusions, or perhaps the author's lack of them.

Balchin, John, editor, **The Compact Survey of the Bible** (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publ, 1985, 286 pp paper \$6.95); reviewed by John M Garber

For each book of the Bible a brief background of the writer is given along with his times and the purpose of the book. . . general outline, a brief statement of the message with practical applications are also included. The book will be found useful in giving anyone untaught in the Scriptures a good overview of the Bible. It would also be helpful for one preparing to teach a Bible survey course on the Bible Institute level or could well be used as a text for such a course.

Kaiser, Walter C Jr, **Toward Rediscovering the Old Testament** (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publ House, 1987, 219 pp hard \$16.95); reviewed by E Robert Jordan

I found this volume to be extremely interesting because of my own interest in the Old Testament. Dr. Kaiser tries to keep as much balance as he possibly can and still try not to overdo the Old Testament and keep it in its proper perspective for the Christian and for the preacher. He finds the key word of the Old Testament to be promise and does a good job in answering such questions as: Was the salvation of the Old Testament the same as the New? What was the Holy Spirit's work in the Old Testament? How to preach from the prophetic portions of the Old Testament? I think the weakness of this book is the tremendous emphasis that he places on the Old Testament, almost to the weakening or exclusion of the New Testament. Dr. Kaiser does not write from a fundamental, separatist point of view but one of an evangelical point of view. He tends to mediate and avoid the eschatological importance of the Old and New Testament plus the book is almost void of any real view of dispensationalism.

Livingston, G Herbert, **The Pentateuch in Its Cultural Environment** (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987, 322 pp paper \$14.95); reviewed by Charles E McLain

The stated purpose of the author is to "acquaint ministerial candidates, pastors, and laymen having a basic knowledge of the Bible with the cultural world in which the Patriarchs and the newly-formed Hebrew nation lived." To accomplish this the author divides the material into three sections. First, he deals with the general background of the entire Old Testament covering such subjects as chronology, nations, languages and scripts. Secondly, he considers the thought patterns of the Pentateuch as compared with and contrasted to the literature of surrounding peoples. In so doing he includes a discussion of religious and historic literature as well as evidence dealing with priesthood, kingship, festivals and rituals, etc. Thirdly, he focuses on "problems of basic import related to manuscripts of the Pentateuch." This section deals with various views of the Pentateuch, manuscripts, Mosaic authorship, critical methodologies, etc.

The author's treatment of such a comprehensive field of subjects relating to Old Testament studies in general and Pentateuchal studies in particular is very thorough and well-balanced. Each section provides a well-written, clear, easily understood digest of information and views with a list of suggested readings for further study. The pages of this volume are rich in footnotes, pictures, diagrams, and maps to aid comprehension.

This book is the most complete and evenhanded survey of subjects related to Old Testament studies that this reviewer has read in quite awhile. It is highly recommended for its clarity and content. This reviewer intends to make it part of the reading required of students in his OT courses.

MacArthur, John Jr, **The Legacy of Jesus** (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986, 142 pp paper \$5.95); reviewed by Jack Brown

*The Legacy of Jesus* is basically a devotional commentary of the Gospel of John chapters 13,14,&15. According to the title page the chapters of the book were originally pamphlets that have been united together. The author presents a basic and good view of the last teachings of Christ to His disciples. He adeptly shows the emotions and meanings of Christ as He gives His final instructions. The book is very well written and very useful in gaining insight about these

chapters of John. Though it may not have been in the author's scope and purpose, the book lacks strong application to the believer's own personal life. And though the author never fully explains his view, he speaks several times of being "chosen to salvation" in a strong calvinistic sense, at least as this reviewer saw it. This book would be helpful to the pastor and the discerning layman.

Storms, C Samuel, **Chosen for Life** (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987, 142 pp paper \$6.95); reviewed by E Robert Jordan

On the back cover of the book appears "C Samuel Storms clears away the confusion and the misrepresentations associated with Calvinistic Theology." That statement is far from the truth and the most misleading statement you could make about this book. All this book does is rehash the Calvinistic Reformed Covenant Theological position. There is nothing new in this book and there are many things that are terribly confusing.

Dr Storms like the average Calvinist believes that you must be a Calvinist or Arminian. He thinks that no matter what you believe you must be one of those two. But of course, they give no Bible for it. It is incomprehensible to the reformed thinker that a person could be a Biblicist and not be a Calvinist or an Arminian, which are pure Protestant Philosophy.

Another one of the weaknesses of this book is his usage of many translations, RSV, the New RSV, and NIV and the King James, which means he uses the translation that best suits him for proving that Calvinism has some truth in it. Page 33 he makes the statement that "The real point of dispute between Arminians and Calvinists is not the nature of God and His will, but the nature of man and his." I don't know where Mr Storms gets this idea. But as usual he misses the mark by a mile.

If you have read any book on Calvinism there is no sense buying this one. There is nothing new and the old is just rehashed again.

Eidsmoe, John, **Christianity and the Constitution** (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987, 415 pp hard \$19.95); reviewed by E Robert Jordan

*Christianity and the Constitution* is the best book I have read so far in 1988. This book is particularly clever in its layout. The first chapters deal with the background of the Founding Fathers, what they read, what philosophers influenced them, how their home life was, and their religious background. Dr Eidsmoe has done an outstanding job in the early chapters to prepare you to read the lives of thirteen of our Founding Fathers. The chapters on the Founding Fathers are so absolutely frank, honest and outstanding. No one will read this without learning much about the true influence of Christianity in the founding of the United States of America.

The main thesis of this book is that the Founding Fathers were not Deists as proclaimed by our liberal press and liberal educators. Dr Eidsmoe does an outstanding job in demonstrating the religious preferences and background of these men to show beyond a shadow of a doubt that as usual the press and liberal educators are in willful ignorance.

I highly recommend *Christianity and the Constitution* to every pastor, to every Christian Day School teacher and administrator. This book will be used many times by the pastors and educators of our time I do predict.

Tucker, Bruce, **Twisting the Truth** (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publ, 1987, 170 pp paper \$5.95); reviewed by Glenn Harris

*Twisting the Truth*, subtitled "Recognizing How Cult Groups Subtly Distort Basic Christian Doctrines," is not a book that is informative about cults, but rather an effort to get to the core of the problem that Christians are being readily seduced by burgeoning cults today. An astonishing eighty percent of membership in cults comes from Christian churches according to Walter Martin. Bruce Tucker, pastor of University Baptist Church in Gainesville, Florida, uses the sound approach of addressing the reader's knowledge, understanding, and application of Biblical doctrine to arm him against cultic inroads. In explaining doctrine, the Biblical truths are clearly and simply laid out and the irrefutable Scriptural teachings form a solid foundation of defense.

Buss, Gerald, **The Bear's Hug: Christian Belief and the Soviet State** (Grand Rapids: Wm B Eerdmans, 1987, 223 pp paper \$8.95); reviewed by John M Garber

Gerald Buss is Senior Chaplain at Hurstpierpoint College in Sussex, England, where he teaches history. He is a member of Keston College, a Fellow Commoner of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and received the Airey Neave Memorial Scholarship for research into freedom under law, to enable him to write this book. Here is documentation of the loss of religious freedom in the Soviet Union. Christians of all denominations are still discriminated against in Gorbachev's Russia. What visitors see, namely churches packed with people for a three or four hour beautiful service, is a government controlled religious exercise.

The book is not written necessarily from a fundamentalist point of view in that the persecutions of all groups including the Jehovah's Witnesses is demonstrated. However, it takes little discernment of the Bible-believer to understand that to serve the Lord biblically in Russia must be done at the risk of great persecution and even to the loss of one's life. In spite of all this, the true church as fundamentalists know it to be continues well and alive and growing even with the great pressures of an atheistic government. The book is worthwhile reading for one who would know and understand as well as pray for brethren who have no concept of the freedoms that we enjoy here in America.

Robb, Edmund W and Julia Robb, **The Betrayal of the Church** (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1986, 296 pp paper \$8.95); reviewed by Andy Counterman

*The Betrayal of the Church* is a timely book for every conservative to read and own. Filled with documentation of the religio-political activities and social philosophies of our country's main-line denominations, this book becomes a valuable tool in understanding, identifying, and ultimately combating the liberal track that their unity has produced. A quick review of the chapter headings will show the contemporary importance of this work (ie, Disarmament; Attack on Free Enterprise; Liberation Theology; The Sandinista Persecution; The WCC and African Terrorism). Chapter Eleven, "Is Reform Possible" is the weakest part

of the book. The fundamental problem of the Religious Left is missed. The author, Rev Robb, a renewalist within the United Methodist Church has done his nation a great service in the identification and analysis of this ecumenical leftist movement.

Getz, Gene A, **God's Plan for Building a Good Reputation** (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1987, 144 pp paper \$5.95); reviewed by Earl Binkley

This book gives guidelines on how Christians can live above reproach. The author deals with topics like honesty, anger, overindulgence, love, self-control, and many more. The basis for the book is drawn from the apostle Paul's letter to Titus on the qualifications of church leaders. Much of the material therefore would be beneficial to those in leadership positions. Since the book is well written and abounds with illustrations, all would benefit from the author's very practical approach to Christian living. There is a "Leaders Guide" available as well, which would make the book usable for group study, such as a Sunday School class.

Payne, Franklin E Jr, **Biblical Medical Ethics** (Milford, MI: Mott Media Inc, 1985, 267 pp hard \$19.95); reviewed by Larry R Thornton

This book is a welcomed, needed volume on the Christian and the practice of medicine. Christian doctors, nurses, social workers, counselors, pastors and laypersons will desire to read this book. The author is an evangelical Christian doctor who writes from a biblical (nouthetic) counseling approach. He evaluates current medical ethics, proposes biblical medical ethics, discusses the relation of theology to medicine and treats health care, abortion, the death and dying movement, euthanasia and psychotherapy: friend or foe? This book is a challenge to the medical thinking which is so readily accepted by even believers. It is written from a depth of knowledge of medicine and the Scriptures and is thoroughly documented. It is highly recommended to those in the medical professions and those pastors and laypersons who counsel.

Talley, Jim A and Bobbie Reed, **Too Close, Too Soon** (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publ, 1982, 169 pp paper \$6.95); reviewed by Charles E McLain

Survey after survey and single adult after single adult tell us that the greatest problem that single adults face is loneliness. The problem of loneliness pervades the entire spectrum of single adults in society today; no age or social group is immune. Complicating this problem is our society's portrayal of instant gratification coupled with almost total lack of commitment. Loneliness combined with society's misconceptions have resulted in self-gratifying recreational romance; in a lack of understanding the dynamics of building and maintaining relationships; and in an almost total disregard for the emotional consequences of mismanaged relationships.

Talley and Reed's thesis is that "relationships can be understood and their progression controlled so that heartaches can be avoided and lasting unions developed" (p 10). Their aim is to provide a tool "forged in the fires of experience and proven effective" by which the dynamics of the growth and development of relationships can be measured and directed. In the opening chapters they survey reasons for fragile relationships and chart the stages of progression and levels of commitment in a relationship as it develops from the stage of friendship to that of marriage. In this analysis they point out the distinct ways in which a

man and a woman view a relationship and the accompanying effects on a relationship. They also discuss the importance of time, quantitatively and qualitatively, and suggest an ideal progression for the proper development of a relationship. Finally, they discuss the difference between romance and true love.

The remaining chapters deal with topics such as self-esteem, communication, stereotypes, expectations, goal setting, and pitfalls. These chapters progress to a discussion of the emotional and spiritual damage from and danger in becoming 'too close, too soon.' The book contains a study guide for each chapter to aid in further development of and understanding in each area. The book besides being "forged in the fires of experience" contains many Scripture references (particularly in the study guide section). Having worked closely with single adults, I would highly recommend this book to any pastor or Christian layman who ministers to singles. This is the type of book that could safely be handed to a single without fear of their being misguided. It also provides helpful information in dealing with married couples since the elements and dynamics that grow relationships also maintain relationships.

Streeter, Carole Sanderson, **Reflections for Women Alone** (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1987, 180 pp paper \$6.95); reviewed by Kevin Cassidy

*Reflections for Women Alone* deals with the thoughts of single women and is a frank discussion of the feelings of today's single woman in society. This book explores deeply the concerns of women and analyzes why these feelings occur. It offers a helpful insight for the pastor and lay person ministering to single women, especially those who have been single a long time. It touches on feelings which are encountered by widows, divorced and the never married. Good spiritual wisdom and application seems to be missing. The perspective spiritually is soft New Evangelical at best. The author seems to illustrate extensively and often gives wordy irrelevant observations. However this book does offer valuable insight into the mind of the single woman.

Martin, Glenn, **Please Don't Hurt Me** (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1987, 192 pp paper \$6.95); reviewed by E Robert Jordan

The title of this book immediately intrigued me, but more so the subtitle, "The Growing Problem of Abuse in Christian Homes." As I read the book I was completely disappointed in Dr Martin's ability to demonstrate that this is what is going on in Christian homes. As I read his book, it seems to me that Christian to him is church not fundamental, not separated homes, not real born again Christian homes but church homes. I think his title and subtitle has set you to look at the growing problem of abuse in Christian homes and then fit in that category, but he does not demonstrate in his book that this is happening in any great amount in good fundamental saved Christian separated homes.

On page 47 he recommends the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and you will find this kind of recommendation I believe several times in the book which shows his position is not from a fundamental or separatist position. I don't know of any good fundamental Christian pastor that would recommend Alcoholics Anonymous to anyone much less the program. This type of recommendation appears again on page 59 where it says "Your local rape relief center will be able



to direct you to support services and personnel if you need someone outside your immediate circle of family or friends." I am confident that Dr Martin is a born again Christian but he doesn't seem to recommend pastors and counselors in the church for spiritual advice to these poor people. This is seen again on page 75 where he says, "But it is also true that a well trained and ethical counselor will not seek to undermine you or your child's christian belief or value." I don't know where Dr Martin gets his information from but I have never known of a heathen counselor trained with heathen philosophy that does not undermine our Christian faith. I do not recommend the book for fundamental Christians. I think it is a very poorly written book, and as far as its title is concerned it fails to meet its goal.

Sell, Charles M, **Achieving the Impossible: Intimate Marriage** (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1981, 230 pp paper \$6.95); reviewed by Larry R Thornton

This is one of the better books available on intimacy in marriage. Charles Sell treats the subject in a popular, practical way with spiritual insights and depth. He does not hesitate to biblically evaluate views other than his own. Especially helpful for marriage enrichment seminars are the questionnaires and communication exercises at the conclusion of each chapter. A selected bibliography is recommended by the author for further reading. *Intimate Marriage* by Sell is highly recommended.

Dobson, James, **Love for a Lifetime** (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1987, 125 pp hard \$13.95); reviewed by Vincent W Deagler

In *Love for a Lifetime* Dr Dobson has provided a simple yet helpful work which is designed as a gift idea for young couples preparing to marry. It begins with the problems faced by today's Christian singles trying to find a spiritually qualified marriage partner within our eroding society. It then seeks to deal with basic biblical principles which will armorcoat a marriage to build permanency. Chapters deal with courtship, virtue, commitment, finances, problem areas, and the distinctiveness of men and women. The strong point of this book is clarity. Dr Dobson has given his reader a non-complicated, non-technical book which will profit every Christian couple trying to build permanency in their homes. Pastors would also profit from this concise resource in their pre-marital counseling.

Adolph, Harold Paul with Dave Bourne, **Stop Making Yourself Sick** (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986, 132 pp paper \$4.95); reviewed by Larry R Thornton

Very few books treat the relationship between physical health problems and spiritual problems. Here is one that does. Writing from years of medical experience, Harold Adolph reveals the connection between disobedience of God's laws and a person's physical health. He discusses guilt, anger, worry, greed, complaining, stress, depression and wrong thinking and their relationship to health problems. Pastors and laypeople alike would profit from reading this excellent book.

McConnell, Patty, **A Workbook for Healing: Adult Children of Alcoholics** (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986, 170 pp paper \$9.95); reviewed by Larry R Thornton

Some twenty-eight million Americans are adult children of alcoholics with problems which may include low self-esteem, intimacy difficulties, eating disorders, compulsive behavior, sexual disorders or even alcoholism. This workbook was written to help them to evaluate their childhood experiences, to resolve their lingering problems, to transform their patterns of reacting and to forgive the alcoholic parent. This book is written from a secular psychological perspective. From a Christian point-of-view, this workbook could be helpful to the adult children of an alcoholic by allowing him/her to put off incorrect thinking and to put on biblical patterns of thinking. The terminology of this workbook is medical and is characteristic of the healing of memories movement. The exercises in this workbook would be helpful to adult children of alcoholics and others who have wrong patterns of thinking and behavior.

Manning, Doug, **Comforting Those Who Grieve**, "A Guide for Helping Others." (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987, 71 pp paper \$6.95); reviewed by John M Garber

Thought-provoking and practical suggestions may be found in this book; however, a fundamental pastor will need to read with good discernment. As so many writers on death and dying, it seems that Doug Manning speaks as he thinks things ought to be rather than as they really are and can be proved to be based on the authority of God's Word.

In the conduct of funerals, we would disagree with the author's view that a public eulogy is usually needful and useful, particularly if the deceased was a known unbeliever and reprobate. His expression to a businessman following the funeral for a murderer who died in solitary confinement that, "There are some people who do bad things, but I don't know any bad people," indicates an error in theological understanding concerning the sinful nature of every man. The most useful suggestions of the book have to do with keeping in touch with people during the weeks and months following a bereavement in helping them to adjust to live without the loved one.

Foster, Richard J, **Money, Sex & Power** (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987, 260 pp paper \$8.95); reviewed by John M Garber

While not a textbook on ethics, the author's stated purpose to describe how we are to live ethically is well accomplished. Throughout history, as in our own time, the three issues of money, sex, and power are intertwined in daily living. Christians would do well to read a fresh articulation of what it means to live faithfully in these areas. Revivals have always been accompanied with a biblical response in ethical life. The reader must read with discernment. Some Scripture interpretations of this writer will not fit well with the thinking of fundamentalists. Liberal theologians are also quoted. The attitude toward divorce and some other areas of encouragement in the "sex" section of the book might well be questioned. Certainly his treatment of "money" both its dark and light sides is well worth contemplation.

The one-third of the book dealing with "power" is exceedingly valuable. Power greatly influences our social relationships and our relationship with God. Power can be destructive or creative, and therefore, it demands total control. Power of men in effort to control others and to do so using money and sex as well as prestige are destructive to man's relationship with God as well as to his relationship with men. Power in the ministry of Jesus as our great example is well described. The book is well indexed with subjects, Scripture references, and well footnoted giving the source of the many quotations. Although it is a provocative book dealing with timely issues it is to be read with biblical discernment.

Rush, Myron D, **Burnout** (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1987, 153 pp paper \$5.95); reviewed by Clint Banz

From the Christian homemaker to the professional, burnout is a potential problem. The author of this book, a Christian businessman, asserts that fact from his own personal experience. First he defines the syndrome and attempts to identify its causes. This is followed by a discussion of its symptoms and eventual consequences. Advice for recovery is then conveyed which includes tips on counseling a burnout victim. Since the book is written from the perspective of a Christian layman's experience, it provides practical advice. However its use of Scripture is pragmatic and at times inaccurate. Nevertheless it would be a helpful book to both the pastor and the layman, providing common sense principles to maintain or regain a balanced perspective in daily living.

Swindoll, Charles R, **The Quest for Character** (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1987, 216 pp hard \$12.95); reviewed by Christopher Adams

The basic purpose of the book is to encourage the reader to begin a life-long quest for the development of character. The book is organized in a devotional format covering forty different topics relating to character development. Half of the book is under the theme of guarding your heart while the other half relates to giving your heart. It is very easy reading and very enjoyable. His style is very witty and he is able to make very significant points while he has you smiling. Each devotional explores an area and then directs you to Scripture on that theme. The book would benefit anyone yet may be of particular help to a new believer as they seek to put on the new life in Christ.