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Book Reviews

THE DAILY STUDY BIBLE (OLD TESTAMENT): ISAIAH, vol.II

John F.A. Sawyer

225pp £3.95

ISBN 0 7152 0528 5

JEREMIAH, vol.II, and LAMENTATIONS Robert Davidson

214pp £3.95

ISBN 0 7152 0529 3

PROVERBS, Kenneth T. Aitken

264pp £4.25

ISBN 0 7152 0533 1

Saint Andrew Press, Edinburgh; Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1986.

Three new commentaries have been added to the Daily Study Bible series whose aim is to make the Bible come alive for the Christian believer in the twentieth century. The three books are addressed to a wide circle of non-specialist readers to help them read the biblical text devotionally. The commentators use the R.S.V. translation which is printed and divided into short sections to each of which a heading is given. The commentary that follows each section is popular in style but provides sufficient information based on sound scholarly knowledge to offer the reader some suggestive guidelines for understanding the text. The commentaries by Sawyer and Davidson are more exegetically oriented, giving the historical background, making use of recent research on the text, commenting on important points in a verse and explaining the meaning of words. The interest of Aitken's approach is that he sees in the book of Proverbs a kind of anthology, a collection of sayings and thoughts ordered thematically: types of character, wisdom in various settings (the home, law court, palace etc.). Although compressed into a relatively short commentary, there is a great deal of valuable material in these three new books.

London Bible College, Green Lane, Northwood

JEAN-MARC HEIMERDINGER

THE TREASURY OF HIS PROMISES 366 Daily Bible Readings

Graham Miller

Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh 1986 368pp £5.95pb. ISBN 0 85151 472 3

The title chosen for this collection of 366 daily Bible readings is both apt and challenging. Apt, because the author time and time again takes us back to God's covenant promises and purposes. And challenging, because these studies stimulate the believer to live as a child of the covenant.

These notes began their life as contributions to the 'Bible Study Notes' and 'Daily Notes' published by the Scripture Union. All were written before 1970 but they have obviously been edited (see pp.139 and 199) for publication in this form. They represent but a selection of Graham Miller's 'pithy expositions' and have been carefully chosen to introduce the reader to the main themes of Scripture. Here you find some helpful comments on Creation (Genesis), the Covenant (Genesis and Exodus), the Law (Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy), the Gospel (Romans), Faith and Life (David and I John), Worship (Psalms), the Life of Jesus Christ (Matthew) and his First (Luke) and Second (II Thessalonians) Advents. Mr. Miller's gifts as an expositor (and a very able one at that) shine through. His style is both fresh

and stimulating (see for example, the studies on pp.17, 39, 74 and 86). His application is apposite. His concern is that we should both know and live under the authority of God's Word written. Where appropriate quotations from other authors are given (see pp.2,3 and 4) and from time to time our attention is drawn to certain important Biblical distinctions (for example, 'The calling of Israel is unconditional, sovereign and irrevocable. The blessings are conditional upon obedience' p.87). The question arises as to which version of Scripture should be used with these studies? We used the *New International Version* but from time to time we were reminded that these notes are based upon the *Authorised Version* text (see p.87.) The latter uses the pronoun 'He' thrice in Deuteronomy 9.3 whereas the former employs it twice.). The only study to disappoint us is found on page 80, but we wholeheartedly commend the author's studies in Romans (pp.103-138). Unfortunately the proof reader has missed a few mistakes: on page 77 line 14 'in special' ought to read 'especially'; the Bible reading on page 40 should read Exodus 21.1-36 rather than 1-66. But of greater concern is the error on page 56. This study is based on Exodus 35, and not 33, verses 20-29 and, because it is out of sequence, ought to appear three pages later. All in all though, these are trifles when you realise what an exceedingly useful Bible study aid this book is. We know of no other quite like it and commend it most warmly.

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GEORGE CURRY

CHRIST THE END OF THE LAW: Romans 10:4 in Pauline

Perspective R. Badenas

J.S.O.T. Press, Sheffield 1985 xiv+311pp £25hb £10.95pb ISBN 0 905774 94 9

Following an Introduction (pp.1-7), the book consists of three main chapters: History of the interpretation of *telos* in Romans 10:4 (pp.7-37), The use of *telos* in biblical and cognate literature (pp.38-80), and An exegetical approach to the meaning of Romans 10:4 (pp.81-144). These are followed by a Summary and Conclusion (pp.144-151), Notes (pp.152-263) and Bibliography and Indices (pp.264-311).

In current exegetical discussion this *crux interpretum* has been understood normally as 'Christ is the end of the law', in the sense of Christ putting an end to the law (often understood: by fulfilling it). This is the so-called *terminal* interpretation of the Greek *telos* (= end, *finis*, purpose, etc.). The Author challenges the rightness of this interpretation arguing for the *teleological* interpretation (i.e. Christ is the aim, goal of the law). This he does on the grounds of the traditional Christian understanding, philological considerations and the exegesis of the passage.

Chapter I tries to show that the Greek Fathers (Theodoret is wrongly given as bishop of Cyprus (p.13); he was bishop of Cyrrhus on the Euphrates), and the Latins after them, interpreted the phrase teleologically. So did the Reformers as well as some of the Puritans. The modern terminal view (the situation today is rather complex) did not become dominant until the middle of the eighteenth century. Badenas charges the advocates of this view with dogmatic preconceptions and an erroneous methodological approach in bringing Gal.3:11-13 to bear on the meaning of Rm.10:4.

Chapter II claims that the fundamental meanings of *telos* are 'climax', 'goal', 'completion'. The term never indicates 'mere cessation' (pp.44)

(N.B. *telos* can be used also of 'death!'). The meaning of 'purpose', 'apex', 'climax' etc., is in Chapter III seen to be in accord with the exegesis of Rm.10:4 and its context in the Epistle. He concludes that what Paul intended was that the law pointed to Christ, had Christ as its supreme end in view and that Christ was the apex of the law. According to the author Rm.10:4 'contains in a nutshell the main themes of the epistle' (p.142). This understanding of Rm.10:4 no doubt frees Paul from anti-nomianism and anti-Jewishness (cf.p.149) and is conducive to present day Christian-Jewish dialogue, as another reviewer of this book wrote.

This is a fine piece of work. It is lucidly written. The author has taken great pains to acquaint himself with a massive literature (much larger than the bibliography indicates) and has paid attention to minutiae. The Reviewer has no doubt of the usefulness of the book and its place in the relevant literature.

But, alas, the Reviewer is not convinced. The dissent is not so much to do with the result — the author may well be right in his final conclusion — as with the way in which he arrives at that result. It is impossible to touch upon the many (technical) points with which the Reviewer disagrees. Hence only a few representative points will be taken up. The discussion in chapter II is too one-sided to do justice to the linguistic facts. The author is so bent upon seeing teleological meaning in the texts discussed that the sense of 'end' is greatly obscured, though not denied completely (p.59ff.). An example of this minimization of the sense of 'end' is Heb.3:14, where the sense of 'end' is brushed aside, and the term evaporates into a qualitative qualifier about confidence. Pages 71–76 contain a rather unconvincing attempt to make *telos* have uniformly teleological significance in a great number of New Testament texts. The author seems to labour under the assumption that unless he can banish the terminal meaning of *telos* from Greek literature he will not have proved his point about Rm.10:4. This leads him to a one-sided argumentation that seriously impairs his good arguments for his thesis and tends to weaken it. It must be stated that, given the fact that *telos* incontestably bears the sense of 'end' in Greek literature (from Homer to the present day!) as well as a number of other senses (e.g. aim, purpose, goal, tax), the meaning of *telos* in Rm.10:4 is not dependent upon how often the term means 'goal' etc. and how seldom it occurs with the sense of 'end', which the author unjustifiably begrudges (he allows only three examples with temporal meaning, p.76). And in this respect the discussion of chapter II is not really very illuminating or conducive to the point which the author wants to prove. In this connexion, too, it is illegitimate to speak of 'almost the same grammatical construction', as the author does in connexion with 1 Tim.1:5 (p.78f.) or Philo, *Leg.All.* 3.45 (p.69), because meaning does not depend merely upon a particular order in the occurrence of words (i.e. mere syntactics), but also and especially upon the intrinsic meaning of the words thus brought together and their mutual relations (i.e. semantics). Thus, while Philo's text to *gar telos tou logou alētheia estin* can only mean 'the aim/goal of discourse is truth' (especially in a philosophical context like Philo), Rm.10:4 *telos gar nomou Christos* can as a matter of grammatical possibility mean 'Christ is the end (= *fnis*) of the law'! Such a meaning is actually supported by 10:4b, which indicates that 10:4a is not intended as an absolute statement, but is subjective and contingent upon faith. In either case it is all the words together that contribute to the meaning of *telos* in each context. Hence the

author's reasoning is misplaced. As for the claim of what constitutes 'normal Greek use' (p.79), it is an overstatement.

In chapter III he chides other scholars for their theological *a priori*s and rejects the use of 'law' in Gal.3:11ff. in order to interpret Rm.10:4 uninfluenced. Even though Rm.10:4 need not be interpreted in accordance with Gal.3:11ff., the fact that Paul used 'law' antithetically to 'faith' there, at least implies that such an antithetical sense cannot be excluded from Rm.10:4. Astonishingly we are told that the author's proposed reconstruction of the Greek text of Rm.10:5 (based chiefly on Codex Sinaiticus) is supposed to be 'syntactically correct' and that the *hoti* following after *dikaiosune* is 'irregular' (p.119). The accusative is surely one of respect or general reference. But there is more. He tries to explain away the antithesis between righteousness by law and righteousness by faith, explaining the antithetical particle *de* in an unnatural way. The argument about the relation of verse 5 to verse 4 at the bottom of p.122 is problematic. Verse 5 explicates verse 4 by dealing with both concepts of that verse, sc. 'law' and 'Christ', which correspond to the two types of righteousness, the one through law and the other through faith. This is also clear from the careful wording: on the one hand 'Moses writes . . .' and on the other hand 'But the righteousness which comes through faith says . . .' an antithesis which cannot be denied. The very contraposition of the personified Righteousness-by-faith over against Moses, each of whom say quite different things, is indicative of the mighty antithesis in Paul's mind. This does not necessarily imply setting Moses against Moses (p.123). Badenas's attempt to brush aside the antithesis between 'law' and 'faith' and to force the quotations from Lev.18:5 and Deut.30:12-14, against their natural interpretation here, to support the desired interpretation of Rm.10:4, leaves me more than ever unconvinced.

In conclusion, the meaning of Rm.10:4 may well be 'Christ is the goal/climax/completion of the law'—as Badenas claims (especially in view of 9:31)—but the argumentation of the present book cannot be said to have proved it. It will have to be demonstrated differently and without denying what was a basic Pauline tenet: the antithesis between law and faith. However laudable such an attempt may be from the viewpoint of modern Jewish-Christian dialogue and relations, such modern concerns cannot impinge upon historical New Testament exegesis. Still, when all this is said, the interpretation which sees Christ's rôle as putting an end to the law as a way of attaining righteousness by realizing it in himself, remains the more probable interpretation of Paul's meaning here. Nevertheless, the author deserves our thanks for a stimulating discussion.

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CHRY S CARAGOUNIS

**THE HYMNS OF LUKE'S INFANCY NARRATIVES: Their Origin,
Meaning and Significance Stephen Farris**

J.S.O.T. Press, Sheffield 1985 220pp £21hb £9.95pb ISBN 0 905774 912 (922pb)

The three canticles found in chapters one and two of Luke's Gospel, the Magnificat, Benedictus and Nunc Dimittis, have a particularly prominent and much-loved place at the centre of Anglican liturgy. It cannot, however, be

claimed that they are always well understood in their original setting in Luke's Gospel. This study by Stephen Farris will go a long way towards a fresh appreciation of these beautiful little hymns.

Farris's work is academic rather than liturgical and the range of issues tackled by him reflects this bias. Controversies over composition and purpose are the type of problem tackled. The idea that the hymns are written by those to whom Luke attributes them, that is Mary, Zechariah and Simeon, is quickly dispensed with in half a page (p.14). From then on the major options are that they were written in a deliberately semitising Greek or that they are translations from a Hebrew or Aramaic original. The result of this contest seems to be a draw, as Raymond Brown had previously observed. It is at this point that help is sought from the methodology of Raymond Martin. And it is here that we find the major contribution of this work. Though not uncritical of Martin's approach to recognising translation Greek, Dr. Farris is able to reach the judicious conclusion that the hymns are translations from a Hebrew original. Luke simply composed 1:48 and 1:76-77 to fit them to the narrative.

The next section of the work deals with the actual form of the hymns. The choice lies between Gunkel's description of them as 'eschatological hymns' and Westermann's as 'declarative psalms of praise'. The discussion is important since to describe the hymns as 'eschatological' would entail a *future* expectation. 'Declarative psalms of praise' looks back to a *past* event. After some fascinating discussion, Farris concludes that Westermann's is the correct designation. Given that 'declarative psalms of praise' are written against some event in history, looking back to it as a saving event, the question before us is Which event? Who wrote them?

Dispensing with Winter's suggestion that they hail from the time of the Maccabean Wars, Farris examines the views of such as Wink who regard the hymns as the product of followers of John the Baptist. Was the Magnificat initially placed in the mouth of Mary or, as proponents of this theory hold, spoken by Elizabeth? Farris regards the 'Elizabeth hypothesis' as unlikely, and points to the improbability of Zechariah praising Jesus in Lk. 1:76 if the hymns originated from a 'Baptist' source. Farris's conclusion is that the most likely source of the hymns is the early Jewish-Christian church. He suggests that they were all 'part of the general hymnody of the early church', even the *Nunc Dimittis* (p.146). They express joy at the past event of the Davidic Messiah.

Part Two engages in an exegesis of the passages under scrutiny with Farris making use of the researches of Part One. Finally, Part Three seeks to assess the significance of the hymns within the overall thrust of the theology of Luke-Acts. It must be confessed that it is at this point that the book is most disappointing, lacking the interest and penetration of Part One. To take but one example, in his introduction Dr. Farris draws attention to the way in which the Magnificat is popular within Liberation Theology. It has been shown how powerfully this hymn can speak to the poor. Yet the three pages devoted to this application (pp.122-124) fail really to grasp the issues with any great penetration. With respect to the theological significance of the hymns, Farris contents himself with that of promise and fulfilment and of the restoration of Israel.

This is a lively and especially well-written account which provides much food for thought. By far the most interesting section is Part One; in contrast

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the exegetical sections and discussions of Luke's theology are lacking in depth. It would have been refreshing to have some more contemporary application of Dr. Farris's research, for example in the area of Liberation Theology. But perhaps this is unjust criticism of what is a very good and thought-provoking piece of work.

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ROBERT WILLOUGHBY

THE HOLINESS OF GOD R.C. Sproul

Tyndale Press 1986 224pp £2.50

ISBN 0 946515 14 X

At a time when the pursuit of personal holiness appears to have been forgone as a mark of evangelical spirituality it is beyond praise to have a book given wholly to this subject by a theological Professor. In his view holiness is the fulfilment of personality and the outworking of the soul's increasing wholeness in daily life and Christian service. Its theological essence is separateness, just as God is transcendent and above the world. But this is not deification as some classical mystics hold. To justify his views Sproul analyses the spiritual experience of Old Testament saints, Jesus, Paul and Luther as evidenced by ethical 'non-conformity' to the sinful world.

As to sin he makes incisive definitions. Thus, man's guilt towards God does not lie in indifference to him, but in positive malice. In his view it is 'cosmic treason'. Or again, 'The slightest sin is an act of defiance against cosmic authority.' In particular it is that which prevents holiness being out-lived. He here comes near to Jonathan Edwards's dictum, that every sin is infinite because committed against an infinite God, and therefore deserves infinite punishment. On this level Sproul explains God's dealing with Israel and the slaughter of the Canaanites—'The holiness of God is at the heart of the conquest of Canaan.' He qualifies this view by pointing out that God's justice is not injustice, but is tempered with mercy. So it was with Job, and many ethical and theological questions about God that are met with in Scripture.

The author's stark concept of God's active judgment in history and upon individuals leads him to pass severe strictures on man's failure to live by divine law, as in his comment: 'If the Old Testament laws were in effect to-day, every television network executive would have long ago been executed.'

This book should be in the hands of every young Christian to help him in his pilgrimage towards a holy heaven, for it would counter the view that spiritual and moral perfection is possible in human life. In a concluding point, Sproul admits that while progressive sanctification begins at justification, until his death the Christian is still a sinner.

5, Green Lane, Clapham, Bedford

ARTHUR BENNETT

THE GOD WHO RESPONDS H.D. Macdonald

James Clarke, Edinburgh 1986 204pp £5.95

ISBN 0 227 67 8923

In these days it is no longer fashionable to direct theological students to text books and as a result they are often 'carried away with every blast of vain

doctrine'. Here is a book which, thirty years ago, would have been the basic reading of every orthodox student of theology for H.D. Macdonald has produced a book which not only surveys in a quite masterly way the various approaches which have been made to a doctrine of God down the years but also essays some most illuminating conclusions of his own, conclusions which are most thought-provoking while at the same time being orthodox and biblical.

In other words this book will be of the very greatest value to those who are beginning the study of theology while at the same time being the kind of resource which will be of great help to the busy pastor who wants to re-think his doctrine of God—especially in the light of current controversies. For, while I detected no reference to David Jenkins and his remarkable speech in Synod when he seemed to imply that orthodox Christianity was in danger of worshipping 'the very devil', this book is in fact a profound answer to that assault as well as being objective exposition in its own right.

He begins with a chapter on God as Person, a subject which sorely needs setting out clearly in these days. For example perceptively he points out that 'It is possible to speculate on the Divine or even to swoon into the Divine without ever asking if God is personal or even when believing He is not' (p.16). Again as he considers Moral Evil and the Constitution of Nature he points out how 'Mysticism tends to minimize the reality of sin by its failure to take seriously the breach between God and Man. Man is conceived as a chip of deity; as such man can rationally become aware of his essential divine nature' (p.159). It is not true that 'God only acts occasionally in His world. For the truth is that He is ever active in the universe He has made. The God of the Christian faith is not the "Unmoved Mover" of Aristotle' (p.96). I believe that the great heresy of our days is that which attempts to exclude God from His universe and this book is one which brings us back to a biblical understanding of the personal God. 'What is required, and what we know to be true, is that God can and does meet every contingency, even those brought about by man's free determination, so that they all promote His ultimate purpose' (p.68).

This is a book of great interest and relevance for the working pastor—but it also ought to be on the shelves of the theological student. It is invaluable.

34 Milner Street, London S.W. 3

JOHN PEARCE

THE EVIDENCE FOR JESUS R.T. France

Hodder and Stoughton, London 1986 192pp £5.95

ISBN 0 340 38172 8

This book is one in the 'Jesus Library', a series edited by Michael Green. It was already projected when Channel Four screened the series *Jesus—the Evidence*, and its writing could hardly have been more opportune. Those who know Dr. France will expect what this book gives them: first-class scholarship, reasoned and reasonable apologetic, conclusions firmly evangelical but never outrunning the evidence, scrupulous fairness to opponents, and an attractive and winning style. There is no special pleading here, only an infectious honesty.

The first and longest chapter deals with *Non-Christian Evidence*, both direct and indirect. An interesting and wide-ranging survey indicates that

there is very little to shake the confirmed sceptic (nor to encourage him). A shorter chapter deals with *Christian Evidence outside the New Testament*—the apocryphal gospels, for instance. Do these represent an alternative (and more reliable) tradition which lost out to the canonical tradition through power politics or the vagaries of history? Some would have it this way. The author tackles the problem in another long chapter, this time on *The Evidence of the New Testament*. What is the historical value of our four gospels? Is the portrait of Jesus which they give us to be trusted? Why is their witness so often disputed to-day? I found this a thrilling chapter, calm yet compelling. The gospel portrait is one which, 'in strictly historical terms, we have no reason to doubt'. If we choose to do so it can only be because we raise philosophical and theological objections, not because we can fault the evidence. Two shorter but equally impressive chapters conclude the book: *The Evidence of Archaeology*, and *Jesus in History* (that is, in His own historical setting). There are nineteen further pages of notes and an index of names and authors.

I cannot commend this book too highly. Anyone, from puzzled sixth-former to ordained man facing a crisis of faith, might well find it a godsend.

Wantage, Oxon.

DOUGLAS SPANNER

THE HEALINGS OF JESUS Michael Harper

Hodder and Stoughton, London 1986 194pp £5.95pb

ISBN 0 340 27235 X

This book is a very important publication, not because it can be recommended as a definitive study of the healing miracles of Jesus, but because it is representative of the understanding of an influential movement within the church today. Half the book consists of a detailed examination of the many healing miracles which Christ performed during his earthly ministry. For the sake of analysis Michael Harper groups these miracles into various types which he considers in turn. He has many perceptive comments on the details of these healings. The last half of the book seeks to apply the lessons of Jesus' healings to the present day church.

It is inevitable (and deliberate) that this book raises questions about the way in which the Holy Spirit works today, and about the place of healing miracles in church life. Michael Harper is no extremist on these issues (for instance he cautions against seeing healing in the atonement) but hard questions must be asked of the underlying assumptions on which his conclusions are based.

Throughout the book it is assumed that healing miracles are powerful evangelistic tools, and that these signs and wonders will persuade sceptics to believe in Christ. However this is not only untrue of the book of Acts (see Paul's experiences in chapter 14), it is also untrue of Jesus' own ministry. By the time of his Crucifixion Jesus was left with a mere handful of disciples. The earlier crowds who hungered after miracles, and indeed witnessed them, had melted away. In addition we are specifically told (John 10 v.41) that the great preaching of John the Baptist, which crowds flocked to hear, was done without the aid of any signs at all.

So, what was the purpose of the healings of Jesus? Essentially Michael Harper sees them as models which we can now follow. Yet this assumption

must also be challenged. Of course there are features of Jesus' ministry which we are called to follow, but there is an essential difference between the Son of God and the Christian believer which must be respected. If we do not then we are treading on dangerous ground. Michael Harper makes an equation between the 'word of knowledge' and the way Jesus could 'read people like a book' when he dealt with them. Apart from the fact that the former is a very ill-defined spiritual gift, it is surely better to see the way Jesus 'knew what was in a man' as part of his divine omniscience. It needs to be emphasised that recognising this difference between the ministry of Christ (and the apostles) and that of the Christian believer is in no way tantamount to a denial of God's supernatural activity today.

There are good insights into the details of Jesus' healings in this book, but these healings have not been put into their proper context. Their rôle in teaching the disciples spiritual truth needs to be examined, and above all they must be seen as testifying to the unique Messiahship of Jesus.

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MARK BURKILL

GOD IN CREATION: An Ecological Doctrine of Creation Jürgen Moltmann The Gifford Lectures 1984-1985

S.C.M. Press, London 1985 xv+365pp £10.50

ISBN 0 334 00571 X

As Professor Moltmann explains in his Preface this is the second in his series of systematic contributions to theology which began in 1980 with *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*. Five volumes in all are planned, the last three being *Christology*, *Eschatology* and *The Foundations and Methods of Christian Theology*. The overall title of the series is *Messianic Theology*. According to Moltmann, the subject of Creation has come into importance again, especially in German theology, since the days when the controversy which gave rise to the Barmen Declaration (1934) sharpened and polarised the issue of our knowledge of God as between those who looked, like Karl Barth, to God's revelation given solely in Jesus Christ, and those who looked rather, or also, to natural theology. As a result of that controversy the doctrine of Creation receded into the background; now, as a result of the ecological crisis, it has sprung into the foreground again. Then, the emphasis had to be on Christ; now, Moltmann says, this 'must be matched . . . by an extension of theology's horizon to cosmic breadth, so that it takes in the whole of God's creation'. By his title, 'God in Creation', he means God the Holy Spirit, the Spirit which is *in* all created things. Accordingly, the doctrine he develops takes 'as its starting point the indwelling divine Spirit of creation'. 'The divine secret of creation is the Shekinah, God's indwelling; and the purpose of the Shekinah is to make the whole creation the house of God'. This (along with the more obvious meaning of the world as man's dwelling place) is the point of the sub-title, 'An Ecological Doctrine of Creation'.

Moltmann is a profound theologian, biblical in his outlook, though by his own assertion not 'fundamentalist' or 'biblicist'. I gained the impression that to him Genesis had an authority on Creation to be compared with that of, say, Einstein on Relativity—the best insight at present available, an indispensable foundation for further thought, but no more than a 'successful synthesis between belief in creation and knowledge of nature'. He is at times

very difficult to understand, and I am not sure that I have done him full justice at this point; but he speaks of 'the biblical traditions . . . offering themselves for productive new interpretation and further development', and of it 'being necessary to reformulate the biblical testimonies in the light of new insights (blessed word!) about nature', and theories based on such. All this could mean a number of things. Theologians to-day seem often unable or unwilling to declare in plain language where they stand on the question of the authority of Scripture. Is this because they fear to be identified with those referred to pejoratively as 'fundamentalists' on the one hand or 'liberals' on the other? Perhaps the last volume of the series will make his position clearer.

Moltmann's chapters, all profound and some decidedly difficult, are as follows: 'God in Creation' (God's immanence); 'In the Ecological Crisis' (man's alienation); 'The Knowledge of Creation' (the creation narratives in the light of the Gospel); 'God the Creator' (the specifically trinitarian doctrine); 'The Time of Creation' (a philosophical analysis of time); 'The Space of Creation' (a similar remark applies); 'Heaven and Earth' (why two? and the meaning of the distinction); 'The Evolution of Creation' (a bringing-together of the two ideas but without apologetic purpose); 'God's Image in Creation: Human Beings' (the meaning of man as God's image—individually, socially and eschatologically); 'Embodiment is the End of All God's Works' (man as soul and body in health and sickness); 'The Sabbath: The Feast of Creation' (the meaning of the sabbath and its relation to the Christian Sunday); with finally, 'Appendix: Symbols of the World' (the Great World Mother, the world as Dance, or as Work and as Machine, etc.). There are forty pages of notes and an index of names, but none of subjects.

This is magisterial writing, taxing to the non-specialist but well-worth the effort of reading. It is clearly the work of a theologian who takes the Bible seriously, even if the function of Scripture seems sometimes to be to illustrate his points rather than to establish them. 'If we think in terms of environment and biotypes the construction of the first creation account is astonishingly clear and logical. Modern reproaches that it is the mere outcome of mythical speculations, or that it displays a naive knowledge of nature, are quite wide of the mark', he writes (p.149):

The goal of this history of creation is not a return to the paradisaical primordial condition. Its goal is the revelation of the glory of God . . . the new creation of heaven and earth in the kingdom of glory surpasses everything that can be told about creation in the beginning (p.207).

The celebration of the sabbath leads to an intensified capacity for perceiving the loveliness of everything—food, clothing, the body and the soul—because existence itself is glorious. Questions about the possibility of 'producing' something, or about utility, are forgotten in the face of the beauty of all created things, which have their meaning simply in their very selves (p.286).

Moltmann certainly has some very worthwhile things to say to our generation. It is to be hoped that his message will be heard.

THE DOCTRINE OF ENDLESS PUNISHMENT W.G.T. Shedd

Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh 1987 201pp £4.95hb. ISBN 0 86151 491 X

Having read two new books on this subject recently I am of the opinion that this reprint (of the 1887 second edition) is not superfluous. Indeed I believe the very opposite. This attractive and well produced hardback volume should be prescribed reading for every minister and ordinand. All who read it will be humbled and moved to a more earnest concern for those who are rushing headlong into a lost eternity.

The choice, for reprint, of the second edition of this work is a happy one for the first edition (1885) did not include either reference to the truth that 'the necessity for endless retribution is grounded in the action of *man*, and not of God' (pp.163–169) nor the Appendix (pp.171–201). These important additions were made in 1887. Despite its age you will not find a clearer or fuller treatment of this subject in print today. Basically speaking the author does the following.

First, he introduces us to a brief history of this doctrine. In some eleven pages we are given an overview of the popularity or otherwise of this doctrine from the early church to the late nineteenth century. According to the author the Ancient, Mediaeval and Reformation Churches held the doctrine of Endless Punishment for the impenitent. 'The principal deviation from the catholic teaching' in the early church 'was in the Alexandrine school, founded by Clement and Origen' (p.2). These men held to a form of Restorationism (they saw the punishment of the wicked as remedial rather than eternal). Traces of such a belief also appear in the writings of Didymus, Diodore, the Gregories and Theodore of Mopuestia. With regard to the nineteenth century it is the view of Shedd that Universalism took a stronger hold on German theology than upon any other. Schleiermacher, Nitzsch and Rothe, who contended for the Annihilation of the wicked, are the main theologians mentioned.

Secondly, the author presents the biblical argument for the doctrine of Endless Punishment (pp.12–117). This is the 'meat' of the book. Correctly, Shedd shows that the scriptural case for this doctrine turns on the meaning of three words: *sheol*, *hades* and *aiōnios*. It was his view that 'there is no dispute respecting the meaning of *gehenna*. It denotes the place of retributive suffering' (p.42). This section of the book begins robustly with the statement that 'The strongest support of the doctrine . . . is the teaching of Christ' (p.12). Numerous quotations, with comment, follow. Shedd then turns to a consideration of the meaning of the terms *sheol* and *hades*. We are taken carefully through the possible meanings of these words and shown that they signify, depending on the context, either the place of future retribution or the grave. The immortality of the soul is established (p.48ff.) and the Reformed view of the intermediate and final states of both the saved and lost is presented (p.59f.). The mythological understanding of Sheol and Hades as the underworld is examined, as in the pagan (all embracing) conception of the terms. On page 75 the focus of attention turns to a consideration of the nature and duration of the punishment experienced by the wicked in hell. The scriptural use of the adjective *aiōnios* is analysed and the conclusion drawn that 'In by far the greater number of instances, *aiōn* and *aiōnios* refer to the future infinite age, and not to the present finite age; to eternity, and

not to time' (p.87). This section of the book concludes with comments on Annihilation, the intermediate state and redemption in a future world.

Thirdly, in the final chapter, Shedd presents the 'Rational Argument' for this doctrine. This represents the oldest portion of the book as this chapter first appeared as an article in the 'North American Review'. This argument is included for the simple reason that 'The chief objections to the doctrine . . . are not Biblical, but speculative' (p.118). There is much of immense value in this section, especially the author's comments on the true nature of punishment. Primarily, he argues, it is justice (retribution) rather than deterrence or reformation. This simple truth needs to be heard and taught today.

All in all this is a first class introduction to and treatment of a much neglected doctrine today. My only quibbles concern the spelling of 'crime' on page 153 and the extent of hell. Is it really correct to say that the number of the wicked is small in comparison to the number of unfallen angels and redeemed men? (p.159). But these are minor issues when you consider that

No theological tenet is more important than eternal retribution to those modern nations which, like England, Germany, and the United States, are growing rapidly in riches, luxury, and earthly power. Without it, they will infallibly go down in that vortex of sensuality and wickedness that swallowed up Babylon and Rome (p.158).

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GEORGE CURRY

BETWEEN JESUS AND PAUL: Studies in the Earliest History of Christianity Martin Hengel

S.C.M. Press, London 1983 xx+220pp £6.95

ISBN 0 334 00092 0

Martin Hengel has for quite some time now been known as the German scholar who persists in confounding the assured results of German scholarship. Professor in Tübingen, he has a confident mastery of an immense range of ancient literature and an ease of presentation which, unlike some, reads just as well in English (not least because of the superlative translating skills of John Bowden). His manner is enjoyably trenchant, his themes central to the study of the New Testament and the meaning of Christianity.

In this book are collected six articles originally published (some not before in English) between 1971 and 1983. Whereas some collections of articles are a bit artificial, this one is coherent: all the pieces deal with the crucial first thirty years of the emerging Christian movement. New Testament scholarship has been worrying away at this period for a long time, postulating all sorts of developments and trajectories, some of which, as Hengel says, would have resulted in a totally fragmented church by the end of the century. Forswearing such fantasy, Hengel explores as a genuine historian the shadowy period in question, and comes up with new and surprisingly clear insights, on the way to the larger history which he intends to write.

The crucial rôle in the development is played by the Greek-speaking early Jewish Christians, through whom 'more of the proclamation of Jesus is present in the synoptic gospels than basically anti-historical modern hyper-criticism is willing to concede'. The development of a 'high' Christology took

place very early, and cannot be ascribed as easily to different stages or groups as many scholars have suggested. This Christological development is seen particularly in the New Testament hymns, which are also evidence for the way in which the early Christians transformed Jewish worship under the leading of the Spirit. Luke is trying to be a hellenistic-style historian, and actually succeeds rather well. Thus, essays 1, 2, 5 and 6: and most English readers, I think, will be delighted. Essay 3, on the origins of the Christian mission, will seem to many to stand too firmly on what one might call a pre-Sanders view of Judaism and the law (to say this is not to agree with Sanders's conclusions, but to be alert to the problems that he has raised): there may well be more convincing explanations yet to be given of why Christianity was, from its inceptions, a missionary movement, though this essay would need to be taken seriously in any such reconstruction. And Essay 4, on the meaning of 'Christos' in Paul, starts (to my mind) from the false presupposition that the word had effectively lost, for Paul, its titular significance ('Messiah') and become just a proper name, and thus fails to explore the nuances of the word in anything like the right manner. If these comments are found to be tendentious, they are at least responding in kind to a stimulating and provocative book.

I am quite often asked by parish clergy what, from the plethora of New Testament scholarship, they might read in order to keep the grey matter working. A book like this would do them a lot of good, not least when they wanted to disagree with it and tried to work out why.

Worcester College, Oxford

TOM WRIGHT

FROM CHRIST TO GOD D.G.A. Calvert
Epworth Press, London 1983 xii+116pp £4.95

ISBN 0 7162 0391 X

This is a remarkable little book, by a Methodist minister who has taught in both East Africa and in an English Anglican theological college. In a short space he manages to introduce the present state of discussion of christology, to set out some of the key issues in the debate, and to suggest some ways forward, particularly in the area of the view of God held within Christianity. Though the book is written very clearly and would not be difficult for the proverbial intelligent layperson to read, it is neither simplistic nor over-popularized, but clearly reflects a good deal of hard thinking and the experience of teaching abstract thought to people to whom it does not come naturally.

The main contention of the book is that, if incarnational christology is taken seriously, as the author agrees it must be, the Christian view of God must be adjusted to fit. It advocates, in other words, 'a more theological understanding of the task of christology'. 'The incarnation challenges everything people had previously believed about God'. Calvert rightly sees that this is not a matter of rejecting Greek thought because it is Greek: the Judaism of Jesus' day was already soaked in Hellenistic thought-patterns, and the Fathers borrowed from Platonism because they found in it one way of tenaciously affirming monotheism, their fundamental belief. From this point of view he suggests modifications to the way in which Christians speak about mediatorship, prayer, the omnipotence of God, and so forth.

At the level of detail, a book this size will obviously disappoint: there is no space to develop the ideas. But, even though some of the suggestions seem to appeal to a typically twentieth-century way of thought (his account of prayer does not seem to me to conform either to the biblical picture or to the experience of many Christians), we can only be grateful for a useful and provocative little book. It certainly should be put into the hands of any who had been puzzled or annoyed by the 'myth' debate. It does not have all the answers, but it asks a lot of the right questions and points in some exciting directions.

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TOM WRIGHT

ZOHAR, THE BOOK OF ENLIGHTENMENT Translation and Introduction by Daniel Chanan Matt

S.P.C.K., London 1983 310pp £11.50

ISBN 0 281 04068 0

This book appears in the series 'The Classics of Western Spirituality', and certainly deserves its place there. The Zohar is the magnum opus of Spanish-Jewish Kabbalah in the late thirteenth century, and remains to this day the major text of Kabbalah, the Jewish mystical tradition. Readers who enjoy regular or occasional explorations into mystical texts will need little encouragement to spend time with this book, but I am delighted to be able to encourage those others also to pick up this translation and introduction. The poetry has been captured beautifully, allowing the text to come over with real intimacy and power. Apart from being a very influential work in its own right within Jewish traditions, the Zohar has also been at different times a source of intense study by Christian thinkers and missionaries, and so might be seen yet as a possible bridge between ecumenically-minded Christians and Jews.

The author teaches at the Center for Judaic Studies in the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California, and is one of the leading lights in this area of study.

To deal first with the text itself, this is a fine selection and translation, and was a joy to read. Matt is committed to working through the successive layers of increasingly cryptic commentaries on the Zohar to get to the direct appeal of the poetic symbolism. This selection is only about a fiftieth of the full Zohar, chosen to reflect real spiritual pilgrimage.

A special word must now be said about the thirty-nine page Introduction, helpfully organised into six sections, and a model of clarity and readability. He deals very competently with the history of Kabbalah generally, then with the Zohar and its author, Moses de León. On pp.12, 18-23 he gives an interesting section on Christian fascination with the Zohar. Here is an excellent Introduction to a wonderful text. His full notes on the text at the end of the book are enlightening and detailed.

I conclude with his own conclusion from page 38:

Zohar is an adventure, a challenge to the normal workings of consciousness. It dares you to examine your usual ways of making sense, your assumptions about tradition, God, and self. Textual analysis is essential, but you must engage Zohar and cultivate a taste for its multiple layers of meaning. It is tempting and

safe to reduce the symbols to a familiar scheme: psychological, historical, literary, or religious. But do not forfeit wonder.

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WALTER RIGGANS

TEN GROWING SOVIET CHURCHES Lorna and Michael Bourdeaux
Keston College and Marc Europe, Bromley 1987 210pp £2.50

ISBN 0 947697 47 0

As the authors of this book know only too well, a study of ten growing churches in the Soviet Union will be unlike anything we in the West would expect at home. Conditions in the U.S.S.R. are so different from ours that the normal criteria used to record 'growth' are virtually inapplicable. Nothing can be measured in terms of increased resources and what statistics there are have to be taken with the utmost caution. About all that can be said with reasonable certainty about them is that they are underestimates of the true growth which the churches have experienced.

To obtain a representative picture of what is happening in the Soviet Union is impossible at the best of times, owing to the fact that our information is so patchy. For a number of reasons, churches belonging to minority groups with links outside the country are better known than the others, and so this book reflects a certain bias towards them. This is not to belittle the very real growth which they have experienced, but it needs to be remembered that there are vast differences between the relatively free atmosphere of Estonia, for example, and the situation in the Russian heartland, which is not really tackled in this book at all.

The denominations covered include five different Protestant ones (of which the Lutherans, the Methodists and the Mennonites are confined to ethnic minorities), Uniate and Roman Catholics (also confined to ethnic minorities) and the Orthodox. These last, together with the Baptists and the Pentecostals, are the only churches which can claim to be represented more or less everywhere in the country, and they dominate among the Slavic population which comprises 75% of the total. However, even here the Protestant churches have a disproportionately high ethnic minority membership (mostly German), which must be taken into account when 'growth', if measured in terms of evangelism, is being considered.

As far as the churches themselves are concerned, readers will be very much encouraged by the stories told in this book. The heroism and tenacity of Soviet Christians is legendary, and this account does much to reinforce our general impressions. In some cases, there is quite recent information which may be unknown even to regular students of the subject. In this respect however, the chapter on Moscow is disappointing. The story centres around the activities of Fr. Dmitri Dudko, who was most active in the 1970s, and there is little updating here. This is a pity, especially as it is in Moscow that most foreigners are likely to make their first and most important Christian contacts. Nevertheless, the book as a whole is a good read, and one which will encourage flagging spirits everywhere.

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GERALD BRAY

EVANGELICAL WITNESS IN SOUTH AFRICA South African
Evangelicals Critique Their Own Theology and Practice
132 Concerned Evangelicals

Regnum Books, Oxford 1987 40pp £0.95

ISBN 1 870345 00 2

This book ought to carry a warning sign (for the smug evangelicals who feel unworried about the status quo in South Africa) saying 'Not for your comfort'. At last the voice of the oppressed Bible-believing Christians in South Africa is heard loud and clear. The '132 concerned Evangelicals' (named and clearly identified at the end of the book) have undertaken to critique their 'own theology and practice, not to disparage our faith, but to turn it into an effective evangelical witness in South Africa today.' (p.10)

In critiquing their theology they identified certain areas of concern that have helped to create 'a crisis of faith' for the oppressed Christians in South Africa. These include:

Evangelical conservatism

Referring to Acts 17:6 the point was made that 'Jesus was a radical and we are moderates. He was committed to a radical change and we are committed to moderation, to reformist liberal tendencies which leave the system intact . . .' (p.15).

The concept of dualism

The idea that one can live a pietistic 'spiritual life' and still continue to oppress, exploit and dehumanize people was challenged on the ground that ' . . . those who are victims of this oppression, exploitation and dehumanization are prohibited from complaining or resisting it because this would amount to worrying about material things that have nothing to do with one's spirituality . . .' (p.16).

The Concept of Reconciliation

They pointed out that the weakness of evangelical approach is that 'we use the word reconciliation simply as a slogan and hope that reconciliation will take place . . .' The scripture makes it clear that 'reconciliation goes hand in hand with repentance where there is consciousness about one's sins, leading to confession followed by forgiveness and cleansing. This is the only way in which South Africans can be reconciled . . .' (p.19).

Theology of the Status Quo

Romans 13 is used to maintain the status quo and to make Christians feel guilty when challenging the injustices in society: 'Our understanding of Romans 13 is that although governments are "ordained" by God what these governments do is not necessarily from God and at times can be completely opposed to God' (cf. Acts 4:19-20) (p.21). Regarding the position of evangelical missionaries in South Africa who for fear of jeopardising their ministry (and of deportation!) refuse to interfere with those in power: 'This position to us actually means preaching the gospel at the expense of the gospel. It means leaving sin to prevail in society to be able to preach against sin. What a contradiction!' (p.23).

Structural Conformity

What Western missionaries see in South Africa is 'winning souls for Christ rather than the pain and suffering the people are going through . . . they see blacks as the 'mission field' and whites as the bearers of truth and civilization . . .' (p.25).

A radical gospel will always be at loggerheads with apartheid because

converts who have repented from their sin of racism cannot be allowed to live where they choose to live to break away from the structural sin of separation of races [in South Africa] (p.36).

This book effectively challenges the unbiblical position of many evangelical Christians on the question of racial equality and social justice.

The problem with us [evangelicals] is that we become very radical and uncompromising against a well selected set of sins while ignoring the rest for reasons that are not clear to many . . . ' (p.35).

There is a lot in this book that will induce heart-searching and hopefully lead its humble readers to repentance. It is not sufficient to believe that 'social change does not guarantee the salvation of individuals'. We must also realise that the salvation of individuals does not 'guarantee social change'. (p.35). Committed Christians need to be involved in relieving the plight of the down-trodden and the oppressed everywhere—far beyond the confines of South Africa.

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YEMI LADIPO

PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE: The Natural Sciences in Christian Perspective Del Ratzsch

Inter-Varsity Press, Nottingham 1986 165pp £3.50pb ISBN 0 85110 763 X

This book is one in the 'Contours of Christian Philosophy Series', edited by C. Stephen Evans. The author is Professor of Philosophy at Calvin College, and holds a doctorate of the University of Massachusetts. It can be said at once that he has given us an extremely helpful, well-written and up-to-date account of a subject which is vital to a highly-important area of present-day apologetics. I have read it with pleasure and learnt much from it.

The author first discusses the traditional conception of science, arising in the seventeenth century and still held by many: scientific method consists in the collection of observational data, their organization by a process of logical induction into hypotheses about nature, and then the experimental testing of the latter following logical deduction of their consequences, if true. This understanding guaranteed the three great characteristics of science: its objectivity, its empirical nature and its rationality. It underscored the philosophical position known as logical positivism, which was of course a foe to the truth-claims of religion. However, views on the nature of scientific activity have changed enormously in this century, and the author gives us an account of the era which began with the publication of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* by Thomas Kuhn in 1962. It is an exciting tale, well-told. Kuhn no doubt went too far. But the movement of thought that he set in motion has led to great changes in our understanding of science, and in a lucid chapter the author gives us a picture of roughly where the present consensus lies. Things now are certainly more congenial to faith than was the old positivism.

Next come two chapters on 'The Competence of Science: What can it not tell us?' Both these discussions are thoughtful and well-informed, though I feel a little uneasy at the idea that 'purpose' was a concept that fell into scientific disfavour mainly as merely 'less fruitful' than more naturalistic explanations, but which could in principle be worked in. If Michael Foster's definition of what constitutes scientific evidence (evidence which is 'in principle accessible at will to man as man') is accepted, then purpose, being a function of will, God's purposes in the natural order are not accessible to us *at will* (that is, at *our* will), and the author's position becomes untenable. God's purposes are known to Him alone unless He sovereignly chooses to reveal them (I Cor 2.11). The last three chapters discuss possible ways in which 'science' can challenge religious beliefs; the influence of Christian faith on the origin and practice of science; and the question of the relationship between faith and science. All are dealt with clearly and succinctly.

This is an excellent short introduction to a subject little understood even by scientists. It concludes with eleven pages of notes and two of suggestions for further reading. An index would be an improvement, and here and there further examples might well be added to illustrate conclusions, but these are relatively minor points.

Wantage, Oxon

DOUGLAS SPANNER

BETWEEN FAITH AND CRITICISM Mark A. Noll

Harper and Row, New York 1986 255pp \$19.95

ISBN 0 06 066302 2

The resurgence of Evangelicalism as a force to be reckoned with in the United States is one of the more surprising developments of recent years. Outsiders tend to associate it, not always favourably, with Billy Graham and 'born-again' presidents, and have little real interest in what may lie below this rather high-profile surface. Yet the Evangelical revival is far more than a flash in the pan, as this comprehensive study of its approach to Scripture demonstrates.

Mark Noll recognises that the heart of Evangelicalism must always lie in its approach to the Bible, and he begins his account in the late nineteenth century, when the hitherto standard Evangelicalism of most American Protestantism first came under critical attack. He traces the resistance of men like Warfield, and gives a lucid account of Evangelical decline in the first half of the twentieth century. He then outlines the process of revival, and describes the current scene and scholarly output of the 'new Evangelical' community.

British readers will be gratified to read of how the United Kingdom has played a key rôle in this development, and the author is generous in mentioning Canadian, Australian and European influences as well. He is not blind to the fact that in proportion to their numbers and resources, Evangelicals in these other countries have done far more than their American counterparts to promote respectable conservative scholarship, a fact which he attributes to their greater involvement in mainstream university life.

Nevertheless, when all is said and done, Evangelicalism would not be the

force it is if it were not for the American constituency, and so it is right that the U.S.A. should be the main focus of his work. The proliferation of Evangelical seminaries and colleges, and the large number of first-class students and teachers which they are now turning out means that American Biblical Studies will dominate the field in the future, and the effects of this are already being felt in Britain, where retrenchment is the order of the day in so many places.

This book will be of immense value to all who want to know what the background to current Evangelical Biblical scholarship is, and who want to explore the likely developments in the future. It is up to date, well-researched (even if it does say that David Wright is a Scot!), fair to all sides in debate and easy to read—a combination which makes it fairly unbeatable in the current market.

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GERALD BRAY

ULTIMATE QUESTIONS John Blanchard

Evangelical Press, Welwyn 1987 32pp £0.50pb

ISBN 0 85234 237 3

This is vintage John Blanchard. I know of no other evangelistic book quite like this one. The text is well laid out; the illustrations (colour photographs), of which there are many (approximately one a page), are tasteful and apposite; and the message crystal clear. As the title suggests, the author tackles the main questions that any serious inquirer asks.

Questions like 'Is there a God?', 'What is he like?', 'Who am I?', 'What's gone wrong?', 'Why the Cross?', and 'How can I be saved?' Each question is answered succinctly from Scripture. In fact, Mr. Blanchard includes copious quotations from the Bible. These are highlighted in the text in bold italic print and usually form part of a sentence or paragraph. This means that the flow is not broken. If you want to know where to find a quotation in the Scriptures you have to turn to the last page and work it out. There are no references cited in the actual text. This makes for easy reading as well as good presentation. I have no hesitation in urging you to purchase this booklet in bulk and to use it widely. It is too good to be 'thrown around' unthinkingly but it is also too good not to be used by all who earnestly seek to 'make disciples of all nations'. It is undoubtedly the best evangelistic booklet in print.

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GEORGE CURRY

A HEART FOR GOD Sinclair B. Ferguson

Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh 1987 128pp £2.25pb

ISBN 0 85151 502 9

This is yet another excellent book from the pen of the Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, U.S.A. The most appropriate, and best, thing that can be said about this little volume has already been said by Dr. J.I. Packer. He describes it as 'Practical, pastoral and profound'. Dr. Ferguson's thesis is that 'the

knowledge of God is the heart of salvation and all true spiritual experience' (p.1). This knowledge, he says, is personal in character, a great preservative from sin, essential to Christian growth and our greatest privilege. Sadly, though, evangelicals have been preoccupied, in recent decades, with secondary issues. As the author says, '*Strikingly absent has been concentration on God himself*' (p.5) [author's emphasis]. We need to redress the balance and to make it our aim to grow in the knowledge of God. Dr. Ferguson argues that if we are to do this then we must (i) be taught by God, (ii) be students of Scripture, (iii) endure and persevere patiently, and (iv) obey the Lord. This is the argument of chapter 1. In chapters 2-9 we are helpfully introduced to eight characteristics of the Living God; to him as 'Three-Personed', the 'Maker of Heaven and Earth', 'The Covenant Lord', 'The Ever Present One', 'The Saviour', 'God Only Wise', 'The Holy One of Israel', and 'The Faithful Provider'. Each chapter is clearly constructed and packed with truths of which we all need to be reminded. Throughout, as you would expect, the author is thoroughly biblical. He is also fresh and stimulating. His comments on marriage (p.32), for example, though reminiscent of the Book of Common Prayer, hit home in a fresh way. Clarity is a major feature of this book. So too is application. Each chapter ends with a personal challenge, as does the book itself. The last two chapters (10 and 11) represent a summons to worship God and to remember him. There is so much valuable material within this volume. It deserves careful reading and prolonged meditation. All Christians should read it for, as we are taught on p.52, 'If we are to be whole Christians, we need to allow the whole of the gospel to make its impact on our thinking and feeling, our attitudes and every aspect of our lifestyle'. This little book opens up to us some of the riches of the gospel and powerfully reminds us that 'The knowledge of God is our greatest privilege. Yet it is perhaps the Church's greatest need today' (p.10).

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GEORGE CURRY

DOING THEOLOGY TOGETHER G.R. Evans

Canterbury Press, Norwich 1987 209pp £2.95

ISBN 0 907547 87 7

Have you ever tried to think yourself into a modern ecumenical discussion? Have you ever wondered how a group of theologians from different and conflicting backgrounds can sit down together and come to some surprising agreements? If so, this is the book for you. Written with a light touch and a fair degree of imagination, it comes in the form of an imaginary dialogue among representatives of the main Christian traditions, and endeavours to show by induction how an ecumenical document comes to be written.

The joker in the pack is that there are two invited guests from the past history of the Church—Augustine of Hippo and Anselm of Canterbury. The first of these is an obvious choice, the second less so (particularly as he was involved in polemic against the Greek Orthodox), but their presence is largely to be explained by Dr. Evans's own research interests. As the country's leading Anselm scholar she is well placed to interpret his views to us; Augustine appears less frequently, but he too has his piece to contribute.

The aim of the book is to show how modern concerns were present throughout Church history in one form or another, and to show too that they could be reconciled, or at least held in tension, without disrupting the unity of the Church. Dr. Evans does not blame any one group for the reformation splits; rather, she tries to go back behind them to find common ground in an earlier era.

Of course, in many ways this is not a new idea. B.B. Warfield once remarked that the Reformation was in many ways the conflict between Augustine's ecclesiology and his doctrine of grace, and Anselm can certainly be claimed by both sides as well! Whether this is enough to solve our current dilemmas, though, is a different question. The past can often serve as a useful corrective to the imbalances of the present, but the Reformation was too serious, and its effects have been too long-lasting, for a simple return to an earlier era to provide the *deus ex machina* which will resolve all problems. If that were the answer, our problems would have been solved years ago! This book then remains an interesting and engaging attempt to find common ground, but it probably does not offer the Church a lasting answer to its unfortunate divisions.

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GERALD BRAY

TEN WORSHIPPING CHURCHES ed. Graham Kendrick

Marc Europe, Bromley and British Church Growth Association 1987 192pp

£2.25

ISBN 0 947697 31 4

This is a collection of ten accounts of the worship of ten churches or fellowships, well edited by Graham Kendrick, who also gives an introduction which is as good as any of the chapters.

The ten churches include two Church of England, one Church of Scotland, one Church of Ireland, one Baptist, one Methodist and four which are difficult to categorize (they would like that) but perhaps 'house church' or 'non-denominational' is as near as one can get, though it may not be very near. About half of the chapters are written by the pastor/vicar, three by the chief musician and others by an elder of the church. All the churches would probably be happy to say that their worship had experienced renewal in some sense or other. One of the chapters tells us that 'this book is about new developments in creative worship.'

All the authors speak of the history of their church, the area it serves and the development of its present forms of worship, and they all tell of the difficulties and tensions (some more convincingly than others) that they have encountered in developing their worship. Different readers with different backgrounds will relate to different chapters. This Anglican clergyman reviewer found the chapters written by the pastor on the more liturgical churches the most telling, but then directors of music may well prefer the chapters written by the musicians.

Some readers will be unhappy with some of what is said. One author speaks of 'prophetic worship'. 'We believe', says another, 'that God is able to endow his (Christ's) body in these days with the same qualities with which he

Churchman

endowed the body of Jesus in the days of his flesh.' And, we may ask, just how much is our worship supposed to be governed by some of the Bible incidents appealed to in these pages?

This is not a major work on worship but it is quite an interesting read. It has been enthusiastically written. Music is given a high priority. People who regard their church's worship as dull will probably be encouraged by what is going on elsewhere. All will see what painstaking care is needed for participatory worship that is 'in spirit and in truth'.

Two quotes:

Truly creative worship sweeps us up . . . to offer ourselves to God. Too long a sermon, twenty minutes standing on our feet, or repeating the same song three times, can easily disengage one from what otherwise was a helpful and meaningful act of worship.

On singing with a loud voice: 'Although the Lord is not deaf, neither is he nervous.'

(There are misprints of Bible references on pp.19 and 164.)

St. Matthew's, St. Leonards-on-Sea

ROGER COMBES

A LISTENING EAR Paul Tournier

Hodder and Stoughton, London 1986 143pp £4.95

ISBN 0 340 38165 5

Few men have done so much to personalize medicine as has Paul Tournier, and his every utterance is worth pondering upon. In this book, emanating from old age, he opens his mind and heart on what becomes a mini-autobiography from a sensitive childhood and youth, through a discovery of a need for daily meditation, to a rich and vibrant Christian faith that has dominated his life and work.

Although written from a medical viewpoint he has much of value to say to ministers of religion, secular counsellors, and the ordinary person. His intention is that 'a reader will pick up some remark which will help him to live . . . For men and women are lonely in their search for the heart of the matter, for personal contact.'

The book is 'a collection of interviews, conversations, talks, lectures, and symposium contributions. Although styled 'A Listening Ear,' it has no continuing theme. In this lies its value, for it deals with such subjects as silence, personal problems, the enigma of suffering, making a marriage work, and knowing how to grow old, that touch a wide range of people in their needs. He passes severe strictures on doctors who limit themselves to six minutes per patient, tending to regard each one as a machine and not as a person, and making each one comply with an order from one who knows all.

His assessment of the technological age as being destructive of personal relationships, and the need for a discovery of small communities other than the institutional churches, is a major contribution to modern thought. As western civilization, in his view, is sick, he finds in the ministry of women, with their affective temperament, the basis of a healing society. Conversely,

he is unhappy at theological training that aims at granting degrees but does nothing to inculcate a personal caring ministry in the would-be minister.

There is much more to this end in Tournier's book. Sensitive read, it will help the young to find meaning and purpose in life, the professional person to discover reality, the Christian to find a basic spirituality, and the old to grasp Browning's sentiment that, 'The best is yet to be!'

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ARTHUR BENNETT

C.S. LEWIS: The Man and His Achievement John Peters

Paternoster, Exeter 1985 143pp £4.95

ISBN 0 85364 365 2

This book is perhaps best described as a portrait of C.S. Lewis, rather than as a biography or as a critical study of his work. The biographical details are sketchy and inadequate to form a complete picture, though we are told enough to know, for example, that Lewis made plenty of enemies, as well as friends, for his robust defence of Christianity. We are also reminded that Lewis was born an Ulster Protestant, and never lost that touch, though probably very few of his readers would ever be aware of it.

Most of the book is a description of Lewis's major works. It is heavy on details of content and relatively weak on analysis. Not everyone would agree with the author's judgments here, especially with his rather surprising dismissal of *The Four Loves*. In other places it is difficult not to feel that the author has chosen his material in order to fit the agenda of modern Evangelicals, especially in the U.S.A. (hence the rather long discussion of Biblical inerrancy, which is otherwise rather out of place), and that Lewis himself has suffered as a result.

At a time when studies of C.S. Lewis threaten to become a major industry, it is useful to have a brief introduction of this kind, though scholars will not find anything new in it, and readers of Lewis will know most of it already—though perhaps not have put it in the correct chronological order. It must be regretted that the author's instinctive leanings towards critical analysis of Lewis's work have not taken him further, and those who want to know more about him will have to look elsewhere for their information.

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GERALD BRAY

JOHNATHAN EDWARDS: A New Biography Iain H. Murray

The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh 1987 xxxi+503pp £10.95

ISBN 0 85151 494 4

Murray tells us that his chief purpose in producing this biography of Edwards 'has been to further [sic] encourage the reading of Edwards himself' (p.xii), since 'We believe that all the truths exemplified in Edwards's life remain relevant today' (p.xiii). He certainly has reason for thinking this way for Edwards is one of those appreciated more by posterity than by his own generation. Murray indicates how far it was the rediscovery of the

hitherto neglected Edwards corpus that acted as catalyst for the great missionary movement of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, simultaneously stimulating far-reaching renewal of the church in America. For a wide variety of reasons fresh attention has been devoted to Edwards in recent years, from editions of his sermons and treatises intended for a general Christian readership to the definitive Yale University Press series, seven volumes of which have currently been published. Murray is concerned to stress that Edwards's significance lies not so much as a philosopher,—perhaps the greatest thinker in colonial America—but rather as a theologian and preacher. He wants today's church to preach Edwards's gospel with the same utter reliance on God the Holy Spirit, with the same unwavering focus on the centrality of God, with the same marriage of theology and piety, and its inseparable concomitant of practical godliness.

Murray traces Edwards's career through all its ups and downs; his childhood and education; his long pastorate in Northampton, Massachusetts, including the Awakenings of 1735 and 1740–42, to its untimely end with his dismissal in 1750 following protracted controversy over the terms of Communion and Church membership; his spell as missionary to the Indians at Stockbridge from 1751–58; and his Presidency of the College of New Jersey at Princeton (later Princeton University), cut short after a matter of weeks by his death following a smallpox vaccination in 1758. Edwards's pastoral ministry, his scholarly work, family life and piety all receive thorough and detailed attention. Above all, Murray is able to communicate Edwards's overwhelming concern for the glory of God which coexisted happily and naturally with the nexus of human relationships and responsibilities in which he found himself.

The book is well written. In fact, I found it gripping. It is enhanced by beautiful illustrations and at least one dazzling photograph. Murray writes with empathy for his subject, an essential qualification for a good biographer (I almost said, hagiographer!). Perhaps a fraction more detachment might have come in useful on occasion. I must emphasise that this is biography. It is not a scientific study of Edwards's theology. That would be too much to ask of one work. Nevertheless, Edwards's life and ministry is placed squarely in the setting of the theological context which gave it impetus. Yet one would have wished for a little more discussion on the cultural and philosophical presuppositions which coloured the times. The conflict between Deism and the Awakenings might conceivably have received more pronounced attention. Nor does Murray tackle the criticism that Edwards made justice an essential attribute of God and grace only arbitrary. Clarification of this issue, far-reaching for his theology, preaching and piety, would have been of great help. Again, Murray does not ask how far the experimental Calvinism of Edwards and the Great Awakening, together with the English Puritanism that preceded it, was a tributary of Reformed Protestantism rather than its mainstream. He gives the impression that its strong emphasis on individual soteriology and personal individual piety is to be equated with historic Calvinism without remainder. This requires modification, for the strong corporate dimension of Reformed theology, the individual finding his place in church and society in the covenant of grace under the authority of Christ, seen in such as Knox, Bullinger, Bucer, Calvin and classic Confessional documents such as those of the Westminster Assembly, is missing. How far

this may have been encouraged by the predominantly Congregational polity of New England in which Edwards ministered for the bulk of his career could be explored further.

This book deserves a wide circulation. Alone, Edwards's judicious reflections on the work of the Spirit in a time of revival are worth hearing and heeding. His profound sense of the overwhelming majesty and greatness of God dominated his life and work. A recovery of that is essential for today's church.

London Bible College, Green Lane, Northwood, Middlesex

ROBERT LETHAM

PULPIT AND PEOPLE—Essays in honour of William Still on his 75th birthday.

Rutherford House Books, Edinburgh 1986 148pp £8.90 ISBN 0 946 068 19 4

Generations of students have been enthralled by the preaching of William Still in Aberdeen. It was fitting therefore that some of his friends should produce a Festschrift on the occasion of his 75th birthday. The series of essays cover such topics as Expository Preaching, Confessions, Psychological Aspects of Inner Healing and Infant Baptism.

James Philip, a fellow minister in the Church of Scotland, contributes a most useful historical survey of expository preaching from New Testament times to the present day. Without such preaching he concludes 'the process of decay in the life of the church is likely to continue, and its future history likely to be short.' Another contributor writes of the recovery of Christian realism through the Scottish expository ministry of such men as William Still.

Still believes strongly that the two main weapons the Lord has given to his Church are preaching and praying. The minister therefore is called to be an expositor of the Word and to lead the congregation in prayer. Still emphasized that the paramount duty of Christian people is that of diligent attendance at worship for the hearing of the Word. Dr. Howard Marshall contributes a chapter on 'Church and Ministry' in 1 Timothy. He points out that Paul laid great stress on the need for teaching which will both expound the apostolic gospel and enable the church to resist heresy. 'The truth handed down from the past is to be handed on, and there is little if any scope for creativity in the formulation of the message.'

In a symposium of this nature it is perhaps surprising to find an essay on 'Psychological Aspects of Inner Healing.' The writer is Montagu Barker, himself a distinguished practising Christian psychiatrist. Many will find this a particularly helpful contribution. Barker faces the fact that Christians are inevitably influenced by current emphases and that there are psychological factors which must be taken into account in relation to Christian experience.

Another essay which will undoubtedly arouse considerable debate is Douglas Cameron's defence of infant baptism. He refers to Mr. Still's federal or covenantal theology whereby 'children were restored to the place which they had once held in Scottish churches.' Macmillan admits 'that no single passage or text in the New Testament can be pointed to as affording undisputed evidence that the New Testament practice was the baptism of children' but goes on to argue that this fact in itself is no adequate reason for

Churchman

abandoning the practice. He stresses the unity of the Old and New Testament Scriptures and points out that the Covenant of Grace has always included infants in its provisions and he maintains it still does under the Gospel. Thus baptism replaces circumcision as the covenant sign of inward renewal in the New Testament era. The principle of the admission of children as church members was and still is the Covenant status of their parents.

Henry Tait's essay on those difficult passages in the Epistle to the Hebrews which appear to militate against the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints is another worthwhile contribution although the writer finds no really satisfactory explanation. He rightly suggests that such warnings are primarily aimed to help the man who is not yet guilty of apostasy but is in terrible danger of going that way.

Altogether a very readable series of essays covering a wide range of topics—sadly rather expensive!

78 Hallowell Road, Northwood, Middlesex

GILBERT KIRBY

THE POWER OF THE PULPIT Gardiner Spring

The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh 1986 244pp £5.95 ISBN 0 85151 4928

Of books on preaching there is no end. This hard back reprint of one written in 1848 seeks to explain the influence of pulpit preaching to Christian ministers and hearers. It is expansive in treatment, somewhat verbose, turgid, and in places repetitive. But the style does not defeat Spring's aim: 'to suggest a few plain thoughts . . . To his younger brethren.' He is deeply moved by his subject, and claims that there is no profession comparable to pulpit work in challenging sin and stimulating godliness. To this consideration he devotes his first five chapters, yet he offers no counsel on the science of homiletics, being less interested in the 'how' to preach than in the 'what'. To him a preacher without the word of truth is 'Just a block of wood, or a slab of marble,' like his pulpit. Of great value is his insistence that the man behind the message is the God-given agent of the Church in a calling that demands diligence, wide reading, humility, spirituality, and a concept that the pulpit is pre-eminent over all other types of ministerial work. Above all, Spring holds that prayer should saturate the choice of subject, its preparation, and delivery, and that unless the preacher feels his message and preaches in the sight of the cross he will not have an attentive audience. In relation to the supply of Christian ministers, he lists ministerial forbears, the Christian family, encouragements put to well-qualified young men, and the needs of evangelical colleges in which to train them. His remarks on the payment of ministers is apposite, but in judging that wealthy ministers are of little use in the pulpit he forgets that some who appear to be well off are so through a strict exercise of thrift and wise use of their resources.

The danger in magnifying the pulpit so wholeheartedly, as Spring does, in the regeneration and edifying of souls is to ignore the fact that the Bible alone, in lands where preaching is prohibited can lead to conversion to Christ, and that by the direct influence of the Holy Spirit many outstanding ministers, such as Thomas Scott and Charles Simeon, have found salvation in isolation. The author would no doubt have admitted as much, but does not

say so. Although written for preachers the book is useful for Sunday School teachers, youth leaders and church members, especially his reflections on personal holiness and in living the Christian life. All who heed Christian doctrine and themselves as Christians will find much in this book to stimulate their minds, stir their hearts, and make them more effective witnesses of their Lord.

5 Green Lane, Clapham, Bedford

ARTHUR BENNETT

PREACHING—The Art of Connecting God and People

F. Dean Leuking

Word Books, Waco, Texas 1985 128pp \$12.95 hb

ISBN 0 8499 0480 3

The author, who has ministered to the same congregation for 30 years defines preaching as 'witnessing to the mighty works of God' but, he maintains 'preaching barren of reference to people is preaching that is critically deficient.' He says: 'Preaching is for people and the preacher must be with people to reach and to relate to them effectively'. Dr. Leuking is clearly a 'people person'—he loves listening to people and in so doing he finds material which he weaves into his sermons. At the same time he recognises there is an inevitable distance between the pastor and his people created by the very Message he proclaims. He also acknowledges that discretion is called for in retailing real life experiences to a congregation. Due propriety is also essential. Dr. Leuking's main point is that preachers should learn to integrate people into preaching. It is evident that the writer has himself succeeded in mastering the art. He is at the same time at pains to point out that 'citing people in preaching needs to be constantly focussed upon the redeeming work of God in Jesus Christ'. Nothing must distract the preacher from the central theme of Christ and Him crucified.

The writer reminds us that 'the parables of Jesus are drawn from life-situations.' People and commonplace things may become the workshop of the Spirit. 'Preaching that mirrors faith at work in people presents a broad spectrum of life experiences.' There are plenty of real-life illustrations in this book to prove the validity of the writer's contention. The chapter on 'The Art of Telling a Story' will benefit many a preacher for whom this is a major difficulty. Apparently black preachers excel at it!

Anyone expecting to find in Dr. Leuking's book a setting forth of techniques or detailed advice on sermon preparation will be disappointed. This is a very readable book built around the author's main thesis that preaching should be closely related to the life experiences of the congregation. The writer is an American Lutheran pastor and this fact does emerge very occasionally. For example in a book on preaching it may seem strange to us that there is not even a passing reference to such pulpit 'greats' as C.H. Spurgeon, W.E. Sangster, D.M. Lloyd-Jones and John Stott. To be fair however, the author sticks closely to this theme which is people in preaching and he makes his point convincingly.

78 Hallowell Road, Northwood, Middlesex

GILBERT KIRBY

FOCUS ON GOD Frances M. Young and Kenneth Wilson

Epworth Press, London 1986 133pp £4.95

ISBN 0 7162 0424 X

In the contemporary flurry of discussion about the nature and rôle of Christian ministry, this book is a timely reminder that at the core of authentic ministry lies not a corpus of skills but God. The point is repeatedly made but nowhere more succinctly and powerfully than in the final chapter:

The principal aim of this book is to review what Christian ministry is fundamentally about, and to suggest that its distinguishing mark, its source and its end, is to focus on God.

In eight chapters, the authors argue that whilst the acquisition of pastoral skills is necessary to the minister, it is even more necessary to understand the development of ministry as a *theological* enterprise. 'This focus on God distinguishes ministry from social work, and the church from a club.' (p.105).

Young and Wilson, therefore, whilst acknowledging the value of psychology, counselling and sociology for ministry, nevertheless wish to shift the centre of gravity back to the distinctive resources of theology. Thus, after an initial chapter exploring the idea of vocation from a biblical standpoint, they spend seven chapters discussing in turn the Bible, tradition, science, history, literature and community wisdom as essential resources for the formation of theologically-informed ministry.

In each area they make out a strong case for viewing the traditional theological disciplines not as arid or outmoded relics of a bygone age but as riches to be tapped. Poor learning methods should not be confused with poor substance. The problem with much ministerial training which emphasises the notion of 'relevance' is that in seeking to develop a hermeneutic which enables would-be ministers to integrate learning with experience and present context, it actually gives rise to a false hermeneutic. Far from a genuine dialogue being established between theology (past and present) and context, a one-sided conversation takes place, the terms of which are dictated predominantly by the agenda of the minister. Listening to God becomes listening to oneself. In counselling parlance, it is reflective listening with a vengeance!

It is to prevent this slide into narcissistic superficiality that Young and Wilson advocate a model of ministry and ministerial training which draws deeply upon the resources mentioned above. The minister who understands the history of his (or her) church and theological tradition will be a better minister, not simply a better-informed minister. Similarly in the field of biblical studies which to so many students seems like a lifeless desert, and to so many laity seems irrelevant, the minister must learn to recognise the activity of the God who inspired the Scriptures. But (and this is an important caveat), the task of understanding and using the Bible is never simply a process of hijacking texts to suit immediate needs (however important these may be) but involves the act of critical reflection. God speaks through the process of *understanding* a text not just through feeling its impact.

It would be a mistake, however, to see *Focus on God* as a plea for the reinstatement of unreconstructed analytical intellectualism. Throughout, Young and Wilson show convincingly that at the heart of ministerial formation must lie the life of prayer and worship both for the individual minister and for the whole people of God. To focus on God means much

more than to concentrate on an intellectual image of God. Still less does it mean the development of a new scholasticism. The vocation to ministry must include the intellectual dimension but it must not terminate there.

Young and Wilson, both of whom are involved in theological education, have done the church a service by producing a tightly-argued, jargon-free book which does much to dispel the myths both of the past and the present about the rôle of ministry and the purpose of the minister. My only misgiving is that they omit to discuss the importance of an understanding of philosophy (particularly social philosophy). A chapter dealing with the resources of philosophy would have complemented the other chapters well, but we may yet hope that a revised edition might include such. This omission notwithstanding, for the cogency of their reinstatement of theology we should all be grateful.

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FRANCIS BRIDGER

THE SPIRIT OF PROMISE Donald Macleod

Christian Focus Publications, Tain 1986 101pp £2.50pb ISBN 0 906731 48 8

This book originated as a series of editorials in the Monthly Record of the Free Church of Scotland. In it Professor Macleod examines several controversial areas of teaching about the Holy Spirit. It is impressive to see how many of these issues he manages to analyse in such a small volume. The discussion of Spirit baptism and the sealing of the Spirit are especially helpful.

There are two areas in which one could wish that space had permitted Professor Macleod to expand his comments. One is the issue of prophecy and the cessation of spiritual gifts. Much current thinking on this is shallow and confused, and we need as much light on the subject as we can find.

The other issue is that of the compatibility of Reformed and Pentecostal theology. At one time their marriage would have appeared unthinkable. The situation today demands that the question of the authority and application of Scripture raised by this controversy is examined in depth. Professor Macleod gives a useful outline of how this issue should be tackled.

This book is easy to read and as such it can be wholeheartedly recommended to anyone who is serious about examining what Scripture teaches about the Holy Spirit. Sadly it is not always the case that people are willing to examine Scripture thoroughly in this matter, but to those who are this book is an excellent guide.

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MARK BURKILL

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO COUNSELLING Gary Collins

Word Books, Texas 1986 223pp ISBN 0 8499 0510 9

Gary Collins is a Christian clinical psychologist. Until recently he was Professor of Psychology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, where he continues to teach part-time. He has written other counselling books including *Christian Counselling* and written numerous scientific and popular articles. He strives hard to integrate psychological insights with his Christian faith.

Innovative Approaches to Counselling is the first book of a new series called 'Resources for Christian Counselling'. If this volume is a taste of things to come, it is well worth investing in the series. The series is a practical attempt, according to Collins, to provide books that keep the contemporary Christian up to date with different counselling issues. It aims to be accurate in its use of psychology and Scripture. The first volume testifies that Collins has indeed achieved all that he set out to do.

The book looks at different approaches to counselling, covering such areas as preventive, community, environmental and brief counselling. It looks not only at what is actually going on and how to do it, but also at any problems there might be. It is impressive in its ability clearly to explain how to do the counselling without getting swamped by technical jargon. It approaches the different counselling methods from an evangelical foundation.

At times it would have been good to see some points developed, such as the rôle of the Church and community counselling, which was only touched on. However that may be expecting too much from one book, which covers such a wide variety of subjects. Each chapter could be developed into its own book.

Innovative Approaches to Counselling makes you think about the aim of counselling and gives you a broad vision of counselling, taking away some of the fences we put around it. It looks at individual and group needs and tries creatively to see how, as Christians, we can effectively minister to those needs. It also sees counselling as an integral part of the church's ministry—not as something you do at certain times. For instance, preaching is seen in some ways as a form of counselling, after all, both deal with applying Biblical principles to everyday life. Can you really put a barrier between the two? Collins quotes from John Stott's *Between Two Worlds* 'Preachers who know people intimately and who take counselling seriously find that this deepens their preaching'.

Innovative Approaches to Counselling challenges our traditional concept of counselling. It is a very refreshing, practical and thought-provoking book—well worth reading.

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CLARE WOODHOUSE

MEDICINE AND THE BIBLE ed. B. Palmer

Paternoster, Exeter 1986 272pp £7.95 pb

ISBN 0 85364 423 3

This book is made up of chapters written by different authors, who each have their own style of writing, so as a whole the book does not flow very easily.

Chapters 1 and 4, in particular, were not easy to read, and at times were confusing, dealing in quite some depth with the Hebrew words and text, rather than medicine in the Bible.

In contrast, chapters 2 and 3 were clear, gave a good overall picture with various views, yet indicating their own beliefs, such as a belief in God who can do miracles above the explanation of science and medicine. Chapter 3 on the levitical code gave a convincing medical and spiritual argument, that although there were some hygienic benefits, the main thrust was ceremonial with spiritual lessons.

Chapter 5 was clearly written with brief overviews but mainly concentrates on the abortion issue. The civil law was put on par with the biblical evidence, and the arguments that the foetus has life but not equal to that when it would be born, did not come across very convincingly. Chapter 9 on conscience, put forward a different view on the issue of abortion.

Chapter 6 on homosexuality was clear, saw homosexuality as wrong and yet did not want to condemn but to help those involved in it.

Chapter 7 on demon possession sought to look at all sides yet quickly supported his present psychiatric view, only mentioning extremes of ceremonial exorcism and not the less demonstrative deliverance and 'inner healing' ministries. Psychiatry was presented as a precise science whereas it is in flux, though sensible caution in a difficult area was advised.

Chapter 8 gave a good balanced view of healing, looking at the failures of the extreme views either way, and put forward a middle view linking modern medicine, prayer, faith, and God's supernatural power.

In summary, this is not a book for leisurely reading, but is of interest to read a chapter as a starting point for further study and thought into a particular subject.

2, The Lowlands, Hailsham, East Sussex

JOHN CHAPLIN

A WORLD WITHOUT WINDOWS Derek Tidball

Scripture Union, London 1987 160pp £2.50

ISBN 0 8620 1 382

The title of this book is taken from the words of Peter Berger in *Against the World, For the World*: 'The reality of ordinary life is increasingly posited as the only reality . . . the commonsense world becomes a world without windows . . . Modernity produces an awful lot of noise, which makes it difficult to listen to the Gods.' The clear aim of the book is to equip the ordinary thinking Christian to understand and handle a society where God increasingly does not get a 'look in'. Tidball is very anxious that the Christian should engage with a society in such a way as to direct its gaze to and through those windows.

To this end, Tidball identifies those historical factors which have now relegated religion to a private leisure pursuit. Folk religion, the occult, even personal Christianity may survive in the private world. But it is the public world that defines reality, and here religion is regarded as irrelevant. Formerly Christianity was influential in politics and education; now 'the place of bishops in the House of Lords and the continued practice of school assemblies are little more than cultural leftovers'. Tidball cites secularizing forces as diverse as the rise of experimental science, the dissenting churches' fight for toleration, and the destructive power of capitalism on local community. The analysis is sketchy but apt.

Tidball is most telling in his description of how the church itself absorbs uncritically the spirit of the age. All too often what is considered 'reasonable' subtly determines our interpretation of the Bible. The Bible may teach about the blessing of financial giving to the Lord's work; but economic realism protects scarce resources, and gives only when it can safely afford to. Even amongst those Christians confident in the supernatural power of God, the power is so often limited to the individual. Thus:

testimonies abound as to the way God has healed backache and emotional scars, or to how he provided parking spaces at convenient points, kept the weather fine for a church event, and provided money, or even one's favourite fruit juice on journeys. But little is said about God's concern for the starving, or about social injustice, racial hatred, or violence between nations.

So much popular Christian literature—taking its cue from the surrounding culture—is 'preoccupied with self, with ironing-out all inner suffering, with ease, with a trouble-free and fulfilled life.'

Tidball is keen to demonstrate the relevance of both Old and New Testaments to the present problems facing a Christian in a secular society. His sociological analysis of the Bible is stimulating and helpful. His handling of Daniel chapters 1–6 and of Hebrews 11 is in deft expository style. He is clearly a preacher at heart who seeks to make the Bible speak in today's language.

Tidball admits that his handling of the sociological concept of 'secularization' will prove dissatisfying, and it does. He raises the debate as to whether or not our society has become more secular in its outlook, but treats it only superficially. But this does not mar the impact of his argument that we do indeed face very powerful secularizing forces around us.

He argues that Christians should take up a position of 'healthy resistance' to these forces. This is the biblical way. Such resistance should be 'healthy', not 'negative, pernickety and continuous opposition'; choosing to fight on the right issues, and looking for practical results even at the cost of compromise. He does not build up any idealistic picture of building God's Kingdom on earth. It is not always clear how he would see the average Christian combatting secular thought and action. But a pressure group such as CARE Trust receives his commendation. This is a balanced book, easy to read, and yet distilling a great deal of open-minded thinking.

St. Paul's Parsonage, Hay Lane, Braintree, Essex

STEPHEN LLOYD

A NATION UNDER GOD David Holloway

Kingsway Publications, Eastbourne 1987 190pp £4.95

ISBN 0 86065 479 6

In certain circles of the church at the moment there are those who are anxious to promote the gift of prophecy. If anyone displays such a gift in realistic terms it is the Vicar of Jesmond. The contacts which he has and the positions which he holds enable him to survey the present scene in a privileged manner. He is able to bring together facts and to comment upon them from a well-informed perspective.

He is one who believes that our nation's public faith is symbolized by the Queen as 'the Supreme Governor of the Church of England' and that we are clearly a nation with a Christian ethos. Against this, however, he maintains that 'no study of contemporary society is complete without reflection on the influence on the culture of television and radio'.

His opening chapter illustrates how evangelical Christianity so often portrayed as being 'pie in the sky' does in fact have a powerful and political influence.

With an increasing number realising the decay of public morals and the decadence of national life, not only are evangelical Christians praying, they

are also taking action. Using, in particular, the events of April 1986, he points out the significance of the success of the 'Keep Sunday Special' campaign. In this he is convinced of the strength of the new evangelicalism, which has highlighted that the United Kingdom is by no means as secular as it is sometimes made out to be.

He draws a very similar conclusion to that drawn by David Frost in a programme comparing the 1980s with the 1960s:

We are better off, better informed and more efficient in our use of time. Our homes are brighter, we have more amenities and we are more hedonistic. We also have less peace of mind, we are more frightened and more insecure. The Country itself feels more ill-tempered, self-centred, more looking after No. 1.

What is needed is a new vision, but this, by and large, is not being achieved. Recognizing that there exists a crisis of values, Mr. Holloway makes it clear that this can only be overcome by shared values and shared goals. It cannot be found in the acceptance of pluralism, for in so doing Britain would no longer be considered a 'Christian society', despite its wide acceptance even in some Christian circles. Surveys both by Gallup and the Bible Society have shown this to be untrue.

The author is concerned by so much pessimism expressed by Christians in these days. If there is concern for the well-being of our Nation it will not be found in the lack of theological integrity and the loss of the sense of God's rule. The low attendance at church has caused a vacuum and this calls for definite action on the part of all who have this concern at heart. He makes it clear that this action must be undertaken publicly from a deep sense of Christian commitment.

And this is where the analysis of the situation given in this book comes in. Being easy to read, it will enrich both our knowledge and our Christian discernment and should lead us to an active support of those individuals and organizations seeking to restore our Nation to its true historical heritage, theologically, socially and ultimately economically. And in Mr. Holloway's opinion this is needed mainly in recognizing the forces that, at the moment, are behind broadcasting and the press in this country.

Stamford, Lincolnshire

JOHN BOURNON

REACTIVATING THE EXTENDED FAMILY: from Biblical norms to public policy in Britain Michael Schluter and Roy Clements

Jubilee Centre Publications, Cambridge 1986 70pp £1.50 ISBN 0 948476 02 8

When the architect planned your house, your street, or your estate, did he take into account the dwelling-patterns of the Hebrews three millenia ago? According to Schluter and Clements, he should have done; this is how God wants society organised.

The Jubilee Centre and Jubilee Trust (to be clearly distinguished from the Jubilee Group) promise a series of papers resulting from 'research into Biblical teaching on politics and economics'. If this first one is any guide, they offer a far more radical approach to our twentieth-century assumptions than anything yet offered by the 'Group'.

Any work which takes seriously the neglected parts of Scripture is to be warmly welcomed. Genealogies, lists, and detailed rules are not ideal for public reading or group study, but they are equally the word of God; the Tyndale commentaries in particular provide much help in appreciating the treasures not far below their surface.

So these authors take the bold step of linking Israel's tribal and family patterns to contemporary needs, and relating them to the way we treat our grandparents, how and to whom we lend our money, and how we design the family house—if any. They are not so naive as to think that we can make an instant journey back in time, ignoring centuries of technology and change, but they do suggest moderate aims to be seen as steps towards the Biblical norms. Pages 43–45 are a modest but model programme for financial incentives for families, while on charging interest, page 18 expounds the ideal and page 36 the practical policy.

Love, they say, 'is the dynamic which lies beneath the structures of society laid out in the Law'. And 'Israel as a nation is a model not just for God's dealings with the Church, but also for God's dealings with society'. That is crucial: how far is Mosaic or Davidic social organisation appropriate for all time, and how much was fitted only, or mainly, for nomadic tribes or virgin settlements? The answer may well surprise us; here lies much of the freshness of this book and its parent body. Some material, like footnote 35, makes little sense to a non-academic; but a brief and trenchant Foreword comes from Sir Frederick Catherwood, who has been known to change his mind.

Such a thoroughgoing faith in all the Scriptures raises other questions, some of which are listed as in need of further research. But what would the Old Testament say about people in luxury homes living side-by-side with 'hard-to-let' flats? People with no jobs? People with two or more 'homes' while many have none at all? Do lords and ladies need their castles, or monarchs their palaces? These questions are not raised here; they are in some places.

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- Darton, Longman & Todd** G. O'Collins, *Jesus Risen*, 1987, £6.95
- Eerdmans** A. van Selms, *Job: A Practical Commentary*, 1985, \$8.95
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- Hodder & Stoughton** J. Bentley, *Martin Niemöller*, 1986, £2.50
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R. Ecker, *The Stress Myth*, 1985, £3.95;
M. Hillyer, *Salt in the Air*, 1985, £1.95
- Marc Europe** C. Radley, *Message on a Shoestring*, 1986, £2.25
- Paternoster** D.K. McKim, ed., *How Kail Barth Changed My Mind*, 1986, £8.10
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- Victor Books** D.A. Seamands, *Putting Away Childish Things*, 1987, £2.25
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