Reviews

The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind

Mark A. Noll

IVP, Leicester, 1994; 274pp., £19.99; ISBN 0 85111 148 3

'The scandal of the evangelical mind seems to be that no minds arise from evangelicalism.' This startling censure emerges from Mark Noll's serious book and comes as a '*cri du coeur* on behalf of the intellectual life' by one 'who... still embraces the Christian faith in an evangelical form'. The book excels in tracing an evangelical intellectual history in the United States, with some useful sidelights on developments in Europe. Noll's argument is that, from the middle of the eighteenth century, American Evangelicalism has existed primarily as an 'affectional and organizational movement'. This great strength has also spelt doom to its intellectual power. The intellectual system which it did adopt in the following period had weaknesses, fatally overlooked because of the preoccupation with building a stable society. In due time the power of public finance, Darwinianism and scientific naturalism finally undermined the combination of faith, social idealism and 'common-sense Baconian science'. The flaw became an intellectual disaster with the arrival of fundamentalism and friends. These were mere survival strategies in the face of new crises and challenges. It became impossible to find strength and succour for the evangelical intellectual life in the 'self-assured dogmatism of fundamentalism'.

Noll's handling is surefooted, clear and balanced. He holds experience and intellect together but is concerned that the intellect is now the Cinderella of human values in Evangelicalism. Evangelicals seem to fare best in philosophy and politics but very badly in science. Where Christian thought has scored successes, it is more likely to have come from traditions other than evangelical.

Probes for a practical answer focus primarily on the state of the evangelical centres of scholarship in the United States. The critique is novel for tackling not just the evangelical hobby there of theology-bashing, but also the insularity of theology from other academic disciplines. However, he is over-generous to the British scene in comparing it favourably with his own. It is true, as he says, that theology

is often taught here in the universities and therefore in the physical presence of other disciplines. However, many evangelical theological scholars still work in the training colleges and in a manner not so different from that in the American seminary scene. There are only a few specialist postgraduate centres arising which are dedicated to the carrying of a Christian worldview into non-theological areas of learning. Noll's lament about the isolation of theological scholars from their evangelical counterparts in other fields applies in the United Kingdom. He can take little comfort or direction from us, though he is probably right to see in the highly independent Christian education scene in North America a major contribution to the insularity of many Christians there.

However, Noll thinks that the answer does not lie in solving a merely practical problem through such things as organising and fund-raising ('the sort of tasks that are the glory of the evangelical enterprise'). The main task is that of changing attitude. We need, Noll argues, to have the *intention* to use the mind for Christ.

True. But how will we bring about that key-shift in intention amongst enough people to make a difference, if not by long-term programmes dedicated to promoting it? Noll's book is a start, but a whole generation, or more, needs re-education and re-inculturation. It is going to be a long job, but the more people read books like this one, the more chance there is of at least beginning an intellectual renaissance in Evangelicalism. And, in any case, we shall have to break out of narrow evangelical sectionalism within world Christianity if we wish to see a revolution in the academy worthy of the depth and potential of Christian faith.

Roy Kearsley, South Wales Baptist College, Cardiff

Calvin and the Atonement

Robert A. Peterson, Sr

Christian Focus Publications, Fearn, 1999; 154pp., £9.99; ISBN 1 85792 377 4

This publication by Dr Peterson – a revised edition of his 1983 monograph on John Calvin's doctrine of the atonement – was written, he says in the preface, to fill a perceived gap in Calvin studies, being the first book to present that doctrine as Calvin did.

In the opening chapter Dr Peterson reminds us that Calvin traces the ultimate source of Christ's work to the eternal councils of the triune God, and to the free love of God in Christ Jesus. Subsequent chapters deal with the Incarnation, Christ's three-fold office of prophet, king, and priest, (the order in which the *munus triplex* occurs in *Institutes* 2:15) and the six

biblical themes of the work of Christ. These themes are: Christ the obedient second Adam, the victor, the legal substitute, the sacrifice, our merit, and an example in his death on the cross.

The *Institutes*, mainly Book 2, chapters 12-17, and his New Testament commentaries, are copiously cited in order to bring out the comprehensive nature of Calvin's teaching.

In this new edition Dr Peterson has taken into account the books and articles written on this subject between 1983 and 1999. That material has provided him with new insights which have been incorporated into the text, as well as causing him to rewrite the conclusion, in which he modifies his judgement as to Calvin's position on the extent of the atonement. Dr Peterson is not persuaded that it is proper to claim Calvin as an advocate of particular redemption, his conclusion being that it is uncertain what position Calvin would have taken if he had been living at the time of the debates over the extent of the atonement.

Each of the book's ten chapters are comparatively short and easily read, all of them carrying extensive foot-notes for those who wish to follow up any particular theme, and most of them having a final paragraph admirably summing up the topic dealt with. The theme 'Christ the victor' in Chapter 5, for example, is summed up in these words:

> Calvin's second theme of the atonement portrays Christ as the divine-human victor who defeats sin, death, the world, and Satan chiefly through his death and resurrection and thereby gains a great victory for every believer.

Dr Peterson is a competent guide through Calvin's thought on the atonement, on the whole letting the great man speak for himself, and no doubt sending those who read this book back to the *Institutes* and the commentaries themselves.

In many ways it might be helpful if the last chapter of this book were read first. In it the author not only summarises Calvin's understanding of Christ's saving work, but in describing him as a pastoral theologian he is describing his own approach and the spirit in which he wrote this book.

> Would that theologians today would use their academic tools to make God's Word serviceable to Christians. Too frequently theologians write only for other theologians and this is one reason why Christian book stores are stocked with books that are long on popular appeal but short on substance. Calvin calls us to both intellectual integrity and practical application.

Dr Peterson has both heard and heeded that call of Calvin in the writing of this admirable book.

John Scoales, Edinburgh

Augustine Through The Ages

Allan D. Fitzgerald (general editor)
Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1999; il+902pp., £45; ISBN 0 8028 3843 X

As far as I am aware, this is the only encyclopedia devoted entirely to the teachings, writings and influence of Augustine of Hippo. Authored by an international team of some 140 Augustine scholars, the entries cover the following categories:

(i) Augustine's individual writings. The publicity material says that all of Augustine's works have an entry, although I have not verified this on account of the epic nature of such an exercise. I recently had to give a talk on Augustine's *City of God*, and certainly found the article on it extremely helpful. In the nature of the case, the quality of articles will inevitably vary in a work like this, but here at least is the student's opportunity to find out in summary form what Augustine says in his various writings – especially useful for those which have not been rendered into English. It seems incredible that there are still gems of patristic theology unavailable in English, not to mention many of the great works of 16th and 17th century Protestant theology written in Latin and as yet untranslated. Someone should set up a centre dedicated to abolishing this painful anomaly.

(ii) Augustine's relationship with the personalities, events and movements of the patristic era – entries, for example, on Monnica, Ambrose, Jerome, Manicheism, Novatianism, Pelagianism. Perhaps the most interesting are entries that deal with figures like Athanasius, with whom Augustine had no contact (indeed, the great bishop of Alexandria died 13 years before Augustine's conversion). What evidence is there that Augustine read the various writings of his various patristic predecessors? What did he make of them? How does their outlook relate to his? The encyclopedia offers much food for thought here.

(iii) Augustine's teachings on specific theological, philosophical, moral, political, aesthetic and other topics. Some of these are obvious; no doubt readers will quickly turn up the entries on the Trinity, original sin, grace and predestination. Others are less obvious and more intriguing: Augustine on abortion, contraception, friendship, imagination, marriage, memory, music, nature, prayer, preaching, society, time, war and women. Here is a cornucopia of patristic wisdom (and possibly folly, in some

respects). But then, even Augustine's follies can be more profound and fruitful than what usually passes for modern wisdom.

(iv) The relationship of the post-Augustine Church to Augustine. What did later generations do with the Augustinian legacy? This seems the weakest section of the encyclopedia. There are no articles, for example, on John Wycliffe or John Huss, two of Augustine's most ardent and influential medieval disciples, and (amazingly!) nothing on Puritanism or Jonathan Edwards. This may reflect a Roman Catholic bias in the encyclopedia. The Protestant Augustinian tradition fares badly in *Augustine through the Ages*, not really getting beyond a couple of (decent enough) articles on Luther and Calvin. This is irony at its richest, for where does Augustine's vision of sin and salvation live on most vibrantly? Not in the modern Roman Catholic Church, which since the Second Vatican Council has largely embraced a Semi Pelagian or Pelagian view of the nobility of fallen human nature and the possibility of anyone's being saved by their own sincerity. We must turn to conservative Lutherans and the Reformed tradition to discover living Augustinianism today.

This last criticism apart, I recommend this encyclopedia as an outstanding one-volume introduction to the life and work of the Western Church's greatest father.

Nick Needham, Highland Theological College, Dingwall

The Rhetoric of the Reformation

Peter Matheson
T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1998; x+267pp., £24.95; ISBN 0 567 08593 7

The Reformation was, among other things, a movement that relied upon an appeal to a wider public for support, thus making it as much a popular movement as an academic one. In this respect it is set apart from previous movements for reform of the Church (popular or otherwise), which – because of the inability to make such a broad appeal – were restricted to the place(s) wherein they had their origin and restricted as well in the breadth of their appeal. It goes without saying that the advent of the printing press was the decisive factor that accounts for much of the difference: the appeal for change could now be broadcast widely by means of the printed literature aimed at the popular level – pamphlets, broadsheets, and the like.

None of this is particularly new, but the implications of an appeal to a broader reading (or listening) public have yet to be fully explored, and the way in which writers of the printed literature intended for this audience pursued their goals remains to be thoroughly examined. Peter Matheson's work is a helpful (and very readable) contribution in this regard. His aim is

to consider the Reformation not as a theological phenomenon but rather as a literary one, and to consider its character as an appeal to 'public opinion' – a concept which he argues is a distinguishing feature and creation of the age. In view of the fact that only a small portion of this public could read, the majority relied on someone else to read out loud the pamphlets, and one of the features of this literature which Matheson underscores is the way in which it reflects spoken discourse, especially the sermon. It was addressed to its audience in a direct way, involving them as it were in the debates of the age and thus creating in them a sense of participation that was a key feature of its appeal and impact.

The heart of the book is securely grounded in the literature that Matheson sets himself to study, and provides access to figures that (apart from Luther) are not as well known as they deserve to be with respect to the subject under consideration. He confines his discussion to the 1520s, which was the heyday of pamphlet literature, and he selects for examination those writers whom he knows best – Martin Luther, Andreas Karlstadt, Thomas Müntzer, and Argula von Grumbach. As the translator of Müntzer and Grumbach, Matheson is eminently qualified to handle this material in particular and more broadly the German literature of this era. The strength of the book is in its attention to the language used by these writers in appealing to the broader public. He discusses in turn dialogues (a critically important form of literature for the early Reformation), the language employed by the writers he studies, the polemical aspect of the literature, and dialogue as a concept and tool for composing differences. Where the book focuses on the concrete aspects of the subject, it is at its best. The introductory chapters are less helpful (and tell us more about the present than the past), but nevertheless situate the book in reference to modern historiographical debates. Though aimed at a more specialist audience, Matheson's work is accessible to readers interested in the early Reformation and contributes to our understanding of a key aspect of this era.

N. Scott Amos, St Mary's College, University of St Andrews

The Doctrine of Sin in Reformed and Neo-Orthodox Thought

Iain D. Campbell
Christian Focus Publications, Fearn, 1999; 272pp., £10.99; ISBN 1 85792 438X

Books on the Doctrine of Sin are few and far between, so I was looking forward to reading this one by Iain Campbell, a minister of the Free

Church on Lewis. It comes in the Mentor series of studies and is aimed at pastors and students. I was disappointed, for while the main title is *The Doctrine of Sin* it is the subtitle that casts more light on the intention of the book – *in Reformed and Neo-orthodox Thought*. It is, in fact, a piece of polemic. There's nothing wrong in that of itself but polemic should be relevant to the times and often while reading it I felt I had entered a time warp somewhere in the 1950s or 60s.

Sin is taken as a case study in four parts, first in Scripture, then in the Reformed tradition from the Reformers to the twentieth century. Part three consists of chapters on Barth, Bultmann and Brunner, and the book concludes with a chapter on how Campbell views the relationship between Reformed and Neo-orthodox theology. Since the book is effectively around 250 pages of text, it can be seen immediately that Campbell has to cover a lot of ground in a reasonably short compass. For me, that is one of the weaknesses of the book, for each section is fairly skimpy in its coverage of the material, *e.g.*, under fifty pages for the whole of the Bible.

But what of the substance of the material? Coming from his particular stable in the evangelical camp nothing that Campbell writes takes one by surprise. He makes no claim to originality but wishes to popularise the Reformed views expressed by others. In part three he presses home many legitimate points on both the theological method and detail of the three Bs he opposes. His main target is their underlying existential philosophy – subjective experience as truth emphasised over against objective reality. But Campbell overemphasises his point, for if the gospel does not address us existentially it does not address us at all.

Most of the literature in Campbell's bibliography dates from the 1940s through to the 1970s. He is heavily indebted to the trilogy of Dr Harold Whitney of Australia, a doughty opponent of Barth, and quotes him prolifically. Here is where one feels in the time warp. This is a book that is at least thirty years too late. It fights battles that are past and fails to speak to the present. Should a book about sin written on the threshold of the twenty-first century say nothing to us about sin in the systems fallen humans create, or the way in which we have failed to follow God's instruction to husband the earth's resources but instead have pillaged it? Subjectively speaking, I think it should.

Campbell, on the whole, fulfils the aim he set himself, although there are points on which one might demur. My biggest question is whether or not this is an aim worth achieving at this point in time. I would advise those seeking a straightforward and timely book on the Doctrine of Sin to look elsewhere.

Jared Hay, Newbattle Parish Church

Theology of the Old Testament

Walter Brueggemann

Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 1997; 750pp., n.p.; ISBN 0-8006-3087-4

During recent decades, students of Old Testament theology have been indebted to Walter Brueggemann for some substantial books and for many a stimulating article on Old Testament themes. His treatment of the psalms has been particularly illuminating. Now we have a full-scale Old Testament Theology from him, every page of which is characteristically stimulating and provocative.

Without doubt this is an Old Testament Theology with a difference. The author abandons completely the older traditional approach, in which Old Testament themes are arranged in some system tending to be over-influenced by the motifs and structures of Systematic Theology. He is also critical of attempts to find an over-arching Old Testament theme after the fashion of Eichrodt or to place special theological emphasis on the acts of God, the approach favoured by Von Rad and Ernest Wright. He structures his book by using the metaphor of testimony in a court of law. He analyses Israel's testimony to its God, Yahweh, whose relations with this nation are unlike those to be found in any other religious literature.

In concentrating on Israel's testimony, he places his emphasis more on the word than the deeds of God. This stress on written verbal testimony will of course appeal to evangelical readers and yet they may well be uneasy about his tendency to regard questions of history as of little consequence. There is an important issue here.

He refuses to reconcile elements in the Old Testament that appear to be in tension and is provocatively critical of some traditional Christian concepts, especially in relation to the omnipotence of God. Prayer may really change God's mind. Yahweh is a God who is open to his people and open to the future. In this respect Brueggemann reminds the reader of Jürgen Moltmann. Israel is often seen to be trusting Yahweh and yet at other times the nation or individuals complain about his apparent inconsistency. Brueggemann shows passionate commitment to justice and he highlights this feature whenever he encounters it in the OT.

It cannot be easily used as a reference volume. The great Old Testament topics are all here, but they are often seen in a completely new light and always within the context of a total argument. The book has to be read through and the author has ensured that the interested reader will do this by the simple expedient of omitting a subject index. Neither has he provided an author index, but his work is replete with footnotes in which his theme

is related to many other disciplines, especially linguistic philosophy and the social sciences.

The book is well written and eminently readable. You will not be able to miss the fact that the author, with many years of OT study and teaching behind him, still finds the OT fascinating and exciting. Whether we agree with his thesis or not, this ought to challenge us all.

Geoffrey Grogan, Glasgow

The Anglican Evangelical Crisis

Melvin Tinker

Christian Focus Publications, Fearn, 1995; 222pp., n.p.; ISBN 1 85792 183 6

This is the second symposium which the former chaplain of the University of Keele, now vicar of St John's Newland, Hull, has produced. As in *Restoring the Vision*, Melvin Tinker has marshalled some of the leading conservative evangelical thinkers, this time confined to the Church of England, to reassert the primacy of Scripture within the church, arguing for correct interpretation and application to all ecclesiastical affairs. The essays do not escape the challenge of interpreting Scripture, but nonetheless they are meaty, well constructed and provocative of response, challenging Evangelicals in particular but also the church at large to consider whether their activities have warrant from the word of God.

The opening essay from David Holloway, vicar of Jesmond, Newcastle, a well-known spokesman for the conservative evangelical cause, argues that history and the canons establish the Bible as holding supreme authority in the Church of England, despite the attitudes of many members of the Synod. Its doctrine must remain credal, and the mission of the Church of England is to 'reform', 'influence', 'convince' and 'invite' the unevangelised. In doing so it must revoke many of its present-day stances and activities, including ecclesiastical centralisation, attitudes to homosexuality, and the ordination of women. The importance of Scripture as God's truth for the world, which offers the only solution to human slavery to sin and consequently liability to God's wrath, is powerfully presented by Mark Thompson, one-time lecturer at Moore Theological College in Sydney. Gerald Bray argues that *sola Scriptura* has given way to an inadequate '*sola exegesis*' and calls for a necessary restoration of systematic theology. Os Guinness in a provocative essay, 'The Word in the age of the Image', expresses his conviction that audio-visual presentation is no substitute for the spoken word.

Tinker himself marks out the trend of evangelical thinking at the moment and admonishes those who suggest that the kingdom of God is of this world and can be advanced by socio-political reform instead of by rebirth exclusively. He emphasises the importance of biblical doctrine which cannot be replaced by mere experiential religion. In a second essay he proposes a way forward toward an evangelical view of the church. Douglas Spanner, a retired professor of biophysics, makes a powerful argument against the ordination of women. It is not a question of women being liberated from an inferior status. Women are not inferior to men, but the two differ from each other and have different functions in both creation and the church.

J. I. Packer opens up the contemporary views of the 'comprehensiveness' of the Church of England, which leave it with a hotch-potch of ideas without consistent coherence. The Church must be true to its confession. John Woodhouse, a rector in Sydney, presents the case for lay presidency at the Lord's Supper, arguing that there is no theological reason against it. Nor can the Church of England be held to be bound to exclusively clerical administrators for ever. There are also essays by David Field on homosexuality, Rachel Tingle on evangelical social action and Peter Adam on preaching and pastoral ministry, all of them experts in their fields. The symposium is brought to a close by 'Observations from a Friend', Don Carson, with a critique of the papers and a comparison with a symposium from another group of Evangelicals who lay closer to being mainstream.

Peter Cook, Alston, Cumbria

The Nature of the Atonement

John McLeod Campbell

Eerdmans / Handsel Press, Michigan / Edinburgh, 1996; x+294pp., n.p.; ISBN 0 8028 4239 9 and 1 87 1828 07 4

This reissue of McLeod Campbell's famous book on the atonement will once again open up the theological debate which led, in 1831, to McLeod Campbell being deposed from the ministry of the Church of Scotland. This judgement of the General Assembly was based on the conviction that Campbell was preaching heresy, namely a universal atonement and that assurance was of the essence of saving faith.

One of the most helpful introductory sections in the book is a page written by the Revd Jock Stein, on the basis of information provided by Dr David Wright, outlining the various editions of this volume, together with reprints, resets, details of introductions, footnotes *etc.* It is very useful.

The only substantial difference between this volume and previous editions is an introduction by James B. Torrance (and some additional footnotes). This introduction is called a 'new introduction' which is something of a misnomer. Certainly it has never appeared before bound together with an edition of McLeod Campbell, but those who have read Torrance's published article(s) will find nothing new here. It is simply a rehearsal of some very old material. It also contains yet again the same tired series of undocumented allegations against federal theology (God had to be 'conditioned into being gracious'; confusion between 'covenant and contract'; radical dichotomy between the sphere of nature and the scheme of grace'; justice as the essential attribute of God while love is arbitrary *etc. etc.*). Despite the fact that these have been nailed to the wall time and time again in articles and books, Torrance continues to produce them as if they were demonstrably true and universally accepted.

Whether or not you agree with McLeod Campbell's book, it is certainly a most significant volume and would necessarily be included in any list of 'classic' works on the atonement. Having now read it three or four times one has to say that it does not become easier! The style is turgid and convoluted and it takes considerable time to absorb. Jock Stein has even found it necessary to 'break up some of the dense paragraphs to make them more readable'. It does repay careful study, however, if only to be brought face to face with many of the key elements in any doctrine of the atonement by a godly man whose primary concern was that his parishioners should understand the gospel. This pastoral concern stands out and is to be commended even if, like this reviewer, you remain unpersuaded by Campbell's core thesis.

That core thesis is that one's understanding of the nature of the atonement will determine one's view of its extent. On this basis, McLeod Campbell argues against the doctrine of limited atonement in favour of a universal atonement and seeks to demonstrate that only on the basis of such an atonement is assurance possible.

Interestingly, it is to Martin Luther that McLeod Campbell turns for inspiration. After a general chapter in which he explores some of the issues relating to the doctrine of sin and the need for atonement. Campbell turns in the second chapter to consider Luther's work. It is interesting surely that someone who stands in the Reformed tradition should opt to use Luther rather than Calvin as the model for this doctrine, albeit noting a few weaknesses in Luther's treatment of the subject. Indeed, there is no chapter on Calvin at all because Campbell goes straight from Luther into an examination of John Owen and Jonathan Edwards whom he regards as the key representatives of the Calvinist school of theology.

McLeod Campbell, in the chapters which follow, goes into great detail on such matters as imputation, the penal nature of the atonement, the question of Christ's pain and suffering, and the whole matter of substitution and representation.

His chapters on the intercession of Christ as an element in the atonement (chapter ix) and his chapter on how the actual course of Christ's life sheds light on the subject (chapter x) are particularly significant in understanding his theology. It is no coincidence that many of the issues he raises here have been taken up by more recent scholars, during the resurgence of interest in his theology.

Every theological student ought to read this book but the student should also read John Owen's *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ* which McLeod Campbell himself recognises as the principal Reformed statement of the doctrine of the atonement.

A.T.B. McGowan, Highland Theology College, Dingwall

The Holy Spirit

Sinclair Ferguson
Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, 1996; 288pp., £14.99; ISBN 0 85111 895 X

The *Contours of Christian Theology* series, edited by Gerald Bray, is shaping up very well to be a useful theological collection in the evangelical tradition. Sinclair Ferguson's study on the Holy Spirit continues the tradition of uncompromising evangelicalism expressed in thoughtful, self-critical evangelical scholarship. Its fine qualities do not surprise those of us who know the author.

The first section discusses the doctrine of the Spirit in the Old Testament. The book does not slap new ideas on the reader at this stage but is a sound, comprehensive review of the issues. The New Testament material seems overdependent on Reformed writers and somewhat dated work at that. Although rightly celebrated, J. G. Machen's work on the Virgin Birth, written in 1930, surely needs supplementing. On the other hand, the author's treatment of the temptation of Jesus is especially helpful.

The author, however, has saved the best sections for later and there are many tasty morsels to relish. The whole book breathes a sane, mature, practical spirituality. But the author is also quite prepared to depart from standard 'reformed' quirks if he sees fit. Hence, he turns away from Louis Berkhof's somewhat wooden handling of regeneration and endorses a sense in which the Word *can* be the 'instrumental cause of regeneration, while the Spirit is the efficient cause'. Bold and well supported!

The section on the role of law in Christian life and thought is excellent and goes to the heart of a controversy in both church circles and scholarship. I should have liked it to go beyond the relation of the law to the Spirit into the allied question of the law and freedom, but I am probably just greedy. There is also a beautifully balanced account of the meaning of the 'seal of the Spirit'. Do not miss a first-class study on John Calvin and his teaching on the Holy Spirit, with a timely reminder that Calvin was primarily a theologian of the Spirit.

When he enters the dread arena of controversy on the baptism and gifts of the Spirit Ferguson moves with confidence and humility. This is the best case for a more conservative approach to the modern charismatic phenomenon that I have read for a long, long time. It is free of the usual sloganeering, negativity and doctrinal stiffness that often mars work from a reformed background. On its strong side, his account provides some formidable arguments that challenge the Leviathan of charismatic renewal, but also blends with its more eirenic writers. His treatment of 'tongues' is clear and highly competent, though perhaps incomplete. Ferguson is not afraid to bite the bullet on the key issue: *continuationism* v. *cessationism*. A more spirited rearguard action for 'cessationism' you will needs journey far to find. Many arguments now thought finished by the relentless wave of charismatic theology show themselves to be far from settled with finality.

But by the same token, they are not settled in favour of the reformed position by this book either – though it gives supporters of the 'charismatic' case a lot to think about. The fact is that there are few total cessationists or total continuationists about – fortunately. No charismatic Christians that I know are busily adding newly-minted letters to the New Testament canon. So that is one 'charism' gone. Equally I know no 'reformed' Christians who oppose intercession and petition. They presumably believe that God intervenes. Thank God for miracles. Once the slogans are removed even someone as confidently conservative as Ferguson is closer to an allegedly charismatic approach than first thought.

All in all this is a very good buy. One feature mars the book. It is a pity that a book claiming to avoid 'the extremes of academic style' should use off-putting language so often. We get the words 'desideratum' and 'desideration' in the first two pages (what has he got against 'desirable'?), as well as adumbrate (why not simply 'anticipate' or 'outline'?). 'Hypostatisation', 'pericope' and 'hermeneutical' pop up without explanation. Worst of all, we meet many Latin expressions, often enough untranslated even if they are familiar to the theologian (*ex nihilo, de novo*). They add nothing to the, usually excellent, point being made and give an

impression of bookishness. Theology has to fight every inch of the way for readers today. It *is* possible to democratise without dumbing down and in the case of a book like this it is really worthwhile, because the church needs readable, biblically rooted books of this quality.

Roy Kearsley, South Wales Baptist College, Cardiff

Missiological Education for the 21st Century: The Book, the Circle, and the Sandals: Essays in Honor of Paul E. Pierson

Edited by J. Dudley Woodberry, Charles Van Engen and Edgar J. Elliston
Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY, 1996; 335pp., $15.00; ISBN 1 57075 089 0

This *Festschrift* brings together contributions from no less than 21 notable missiologists in honour of a former Dean of Fuller Theological Seminary's School of World Mission. In the Foreword, R. J. Mouw sets the scene with an emphasis on the need for academic reflection on mission as a support for the urgent missiological task of the church. C. Van Engen's Preface gives a valuable history of mission studies and their relation to theological study in the West before we come to the Introduction by J. Dudley Woodberry which sets out a conceptual framework based on the pattern of a mosque in an attempt to give the volume some cohesion. The subtitle, 'The Book, the Circle, and the Sandals' is used to express this and is linked to 'theory, reflection and experience' in educational processes and to 'word, world and church' in terms of the content in which missionaries should ideally exhibit competence. These links are not always clearly delineated in the text and there is a change from the Islamic model to an eschatological one in the Conclusion by Woodberry, where he highlights the tensions involved in missiological education. The 17 chapters are grouped under four Contexts – Historical, Ecumenical, Regional and Missiological. Then follow four chapters headed 'Future'. A chapter devoted to Paul Pierson himself precedes the Conclusion, and a very helpful Bibliography is appended.

Four chapters on historical considerations of missiological education and research by A. F. Walls, G. H. Anderson, P. G. Hiebert and K. Mulholland are fascinating, bringing us past history and present challenge. The next section on ecumenical contexts provides insights from four viewpoints. A Pentecostal charismatic one from L. Grant McClung, Jr is rather defensive but direct. An Ecumenical-Protestant one from J. D. Gort raises the question of how Christianity is to relate to other faiths

(theology of religions), while the Roman Catholic M. Motte is challenging on spirituality, and M. J. Oleska suggests the contribution which Eastern Orthodox theology brings to evangelical mission. Four chapters on regional aspects then follow. T. Tienou shows that preparation for work in modern Africa is not to be confused with training in charity work and suggests the kind of training now required. From Latin America Samuel Escobar distinguishes between the training of missionaries and missiologists in a convincing way. For Asia Ken Gnanakan emphasises the need for the 'formation' of the 'total' missiologist, while W. R. Shenk considers the training of missiologists for Western culture and reconsiders the Great Commission and the contextualization of training. The chapters on missiological context open up the value of behavioural studies (D. Whitemen), the fact of urbanisation (R. S. Greenway), a particular need to develop local Bible translators (P. C. Stine), specific training for working in Jewish contexts (S. Dauermann), with a thought-provoking article on various paradigms arising from the work of David Bosch, and a plea for the recognition of the importance of lay people by Ralph Winter. This leads on to the section on the Future. Woodberry starts this with a more detailed use of his Islamic conceptual pattern in an attempt to describe the chair in Islamic Studies. Then V. Sogaard suggests a system of decentralised partnerships for effective missiological education as a counterbalance to the individualistic trends of the West. This is followed by a detailed argument from C. Van Engen on the need for balance between specialization and integration, using relationships between the Institute of Church Growth and the School of World Mission at Fuller as historical background. Finally E. Elliston notices the need for diversity in training and identifies five distinct types of missiologists. D. Gilliland then gives a glowing appraisal of Paul Pierson. The volume is a mine of information and a wellspring of stimulation. Christian leaders and students would do well to read it. It is not easy with its diversity of content and styles but certainly worth the effort.

Ralph W. Martin, Hokkaido, Japan

Walking in the Ways of the Lord: The Ethical Authority of the Old Testament

Christopher J. H. Wright

Apollos, Leicester, 1995; 319pp., £15.99; ISBN 0 85111 444 X

This book is a valuable collection of previously published essays by the author relating to the application of the Old Testament to ethical issues,

with some editing to remove the most blatant areas of duplication. Given this, the book represents a surprisingly comprehensive treatment of the field, with historical overviews, consideration of methodology, and worked examples of a range of ethical issues.

One chapter provides an historical survey of the ways the church has understood the ethical authority of the Old Testament from the early church to the modern day, with another reviewing modern evangelical approaches.

A number of chapters address the issue of method. Broadly, Wright follows the widely used approach of seeking ethical principles (Wright calls them 'objectives') behind the laws and institutions of ancient Israel, and then applying these principles to current ethical issues. He wishes to avoid drawing such principles from any law or institution in isolation, preferring to construct a picture of how these worked together in Israel, so that Israel as a whole becomes a 'paradigm' or model that can be used to inform ethical decisions. There is some inconsistency whether this profile of Israel is the ideal one that would have arisen if the nation had truly lived in conformity with the laws and structures prescribed in the Old Testament, or the actual one reflecting Israel's rebellious nature.

Part of Wright's approach is to examine ethical issues in the light of each of the creation, the fall, God's redemptive activities and the new creation. This gives a healthy breadth of data upon which to construct ethical judgements, and avoids the dangers of making such judgements based upon individual verses or passages. He also constructs a framework for understanding ethics according to the Old Testament's own agenda. In this he sees the key importance in the Old Testament of earth / land and of humanity / Israel as well as of God himself. This classification proves useful, although it seems in part an artificial imposition on the text rather than arising naturally from it.

The author sees the purpose and destiny of Israel (from Gen. 12:2-3 onwards) to be the vehicle for blessing to the whole world of nations, and that Israel's contribution to this purpose would be through their ethical distinctiveness (drawn especially from a study of Ex. 19:3-6). The resulting cross-cultural concern is an ever present and helpful distinctive of Wright's approach, and the ethical function of Israel for the sake of the nations suggests to him that Israel is a paradigm of ethical relevance to society as well as to the church. It may be, however, that the challenge to other nations arising from Israel's ethical distinctives was to seek Yahweh rather than to reproduce their ethical distinctives in their own laws. If this is so, the application of Israel as a paradigm to secular societies may not be so clearly appropriate.

The last five chapters address five issues: land, Jubilee year, relations to the state, human rights, and the struggle against corruption, dishonesty and injustice. These provide case studies of Wright's methods, although, wisely, he applies his methods flexibly according to the nature of the available data. The ethical issues addressed are those concerning the social, economic and political realms, which are issues which the Old Testament directly addresses. It would have been useful to have explored the degree to which Wright's methods could be applied to issues such as abortion, euthanasia or IVF which the Old Testament does not directly address.

The author writes in a clear, non-technical, but well-informed manner approaching his subject in a sane and relevant manner. This is a readable, stimulating and useful book. I recommend it warmly as priority reading to any who wish to understand and apply the Old Testament in a mature and appropriate way to the problems of the modern world.

Edward D. Herbert, International Christian College, Glasgow

Liberation and Orthodoxy: the Promise and Failures of Interconfessional Dialogue

Yacob Tesfai

Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY, 1996; 196pp., n.p.; ISBN 1 57075 088 2

In the preface to this book the author informs readers that 'it attempts to deal with the question of the relationship between the interconfessional dialogues and the Third World theologies and churches'. It immediately becomes clear that the word 'Orthodox' in the title is being used in a sense different from that usually taken for granted by readers of this journal. It does *not* refer either to the churches of the East, or to theologies concerned with doctrinal purity of a fundamentalist kind. The reference is rather to theological dialogues between denominations *within* the World Council of Churches; the author subjects these to critical analysis in the light of a concern for human liberation which is, he suggests, the central concern of non-Western churches.

There are two problems with this volume, one minor, the other substantive. The author assumes that his readers will be familiar with ecumenical jargon; different bodies within the World Council are referred to by their initials and while I could cope with WCC, constant reference to F&O, CWC's, LWF and even EATWOT had me turning repeatedly to the long list of abbreviations at the start of the book. More important than this stylistic blemish, the central thesis of the book involves a radical challenge to the entire Western theological tradition. The charge made here is that the search for visible unity on the basis of doctrinal agreement is

fundamentally misconceived and irrelevant to the central concerns of the churches of the poor in the Southern hemisphere. Evangelicals can hardly be comfortable with such a root-and-branch attack on confessional theology.

Despite this there are a number of very positive features in Tesfai's work. First, it is enlightening and informative in regard to the history of the ecumenical theological dialogues. Second, the book draws attention to the historical significance of the growth of Christianity in the non-Western world. Tesfai graphically illustrates the far-reaching changes which are occurring 'in the texture of the Christian Church in the contemporary world'. He argues that for the first time in its history, the Christian faith is becoming a 'non-western religion' and the majority of believers are found 'within the ranks of the poor'. Third, despite my reservations expressed above, the book is helpful in the way in which it brings into clear focus the issue how theology is to be done at the turn of the twenty-first century. Tesfai's questions are addressed to the ecumenical movement and Evangelicals are barely mentioned in this study, yet the fundamental issues discussed in this volume cannot be excluded from Evangelicals' theological agenda. We are likely to disagree with Tesfai's answers but it would be obscurantism of the worst possible kind to imagine that the questions have no relevance for us.

David Smith, The Whitefield Institute, Oxford

Why do Christians Find it Hard to Grieve?

Geoff Walters
Paternoster Press, Carlisle, 1997; 203pp., £12.99; ISBN 0 85364 787 9

'Good theology is, or should be, the soil in which good pastoral practice grows', writes Geoff Walters as he concludes his first-class treatment of grief and death. In his introduction, he explains how his theological concern arises within the context of pastoral ministry, where he has noted that Christian faith often leads to the added burden of denial and guilt rather than comfort and hope. This led him to write a Ph.D. thesis, which is here adapted especially for those in Christian pastoral care or anyone interested in relating theology to contemporary experience.

Walters begins by exploring grief in various Old and New Testament characters. With remarkable sensitivity and imagination, he brings to life Abraham, David, Jesus and others at the times when they faced the death of someone close and grieved freely. Part two looks at the lives and words of Plato and Augustine, to whose advocacy of immortality Walters attributes a considerable effect on subsequent confusion and the suppression of grief over the centuries. He claims that pagan philosophy

rather than biblical theology influenced the patristic writers and Augustine, by elevating the spirit/soul over the body, so that the afterlife was seen as triumphing over death and minimising it. Part three examines the concepts of immortality and resurrection, using three orientations towards death: death-accepting, death-denying and death-transcending. Walters examines the growth of the biblical doctrine of resurrection which he considers to be death-transcending, because it does not deny the reality of death as a loss, but gives hope in grief. Immortality, on the other hand, constitutes a denial of death, and may be detected through modern interest in reincarnation, spiritualism and near-death experiences, but also among many Christians through the emphasis on healing and the feeling that a funeral service must be a 'celebration' where genuine sadness is 'unspiritual'. Part four presents the contemporary psychological understanding of grief with its various phases, its healthy and unhealthy aspects, and some practical implications of this in helping the bereaved. The final part looks at popular (often autobiographical) Christian literature of today, including Billy Graham and C. S. Lewis, and assesses their understanding of immortality and resurrection, before concluding by answering the question set in the title of the book. The Notes give very full biographical details for information and further study.

This book is based on scholarly and extensive research, drawing together theology, psychology, church history and serious insight into biblical texts. However, it is certainly not difficult to follow: this reviewer was so gripped by its pastoral concern and the vivid portrayal of human beings, whether Jacob, the Thessalonians or Wolterstorff, that it was read in a day. Written with great insight and simplicity, Walters frequently summarises his points to ensure maximum clarity and to leave no doubt as to his conclusions. One point which some might consider a problem is that no mention is made of the after-life for those who are not Christians; heaven, annihilation and hell are never mentioned as factors which might affect the hope of grieving Christians. Notwithstanding, this is one of the most accessible and interesting, heart-warming and practical theological books this reviewer has read in a long time.

Fiona Barnard, St Andrews

But This I Know

George Austin

Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1996; 198pp., £7.99; ISBN 0 340 64210 6

From the pen of the controversial Archdeacon of York, well known as a broadcaster, and writer in several national newspapers, comes a kind of

popular, meditative, systematic theology written from a broadly traditional-catholic point of view. It reflects the depths of Austin's convictions and pastoral concern. The idea of the book came from a preaching week at the York diocesan retreat house, and was inspired by the hymn 'I cannot tell... but this I know'. The meditations follow the story of salvation through Jesus Christ in the Old and New Testaments. At their heart are the themes of faith, hope and love, coming glory and creation, creator and sin, God in Christ, God's call, faith and grace, judgement and love, and, in a very practical vein, death and life, cursing and cleansing, trials and temptations. The book is written in a popular style with study groups in mind, and as one may expect from the Archdeacon, it is not afraid to grasp nettles.

Peter Cook, Alston, Cumbria

God in the Wasteland: The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams

David F. Wells

IVP, Leicester, 1994; 278pp., £12.99; ISBN 0 85110 655 2

This book, a companion volume to the author's earlier *No Place for Truth* is about the pernicious influence of modernity on the evangelical mind. Modernisation (fuelled by capitalism, technology, urbanisation and telecommunications) has a far-from-subtle impact on the way we think and behave. Forces of modernisation create a vortex into which we are irresistibly drawn, and this vortex Wells calls 'modernity'.

Modernity marginalises God and elevates self. Indeed, 'fascination with the self is the calling card modernity leaves behind'. The result is an overemphasis on the immanence of God, with too little being said about his transcendence. Eventually theology is the loser, for 'the evangelical world has abandoned theology and is now running on the high octane fuel of modernity'.

What does the future hold for Evangelicalism? In answering this question, the author favours an analytical, rather than a conjectural approach. Students in seven representative evangelical seminaries were given questionnaires. Their responses provided the raw data for fifty-seven tables which are given as an appendix. A whole chapter of the book is devoted to discussion of the issues raised. The questions were wide ranging and covered background information on the students, perceptions of the future, views on evangelical theology in America, ethnicity, the meaning of life and much more. With fifty-seven varieties on the bill of fare, there is something for every palate.

Modernity is the target Wells has in his sights; it is modernity that has us by the throat. But have we not been led to understand that it is post-modernity that is tightening its grip on us? He scarcely uses that word for the main part of the book. Can one person's modernity be another's post-modernity? Is this a post-modern world or not?

This question lies unresolved until his last chapter in which he openly questions whether our present world is truly post-modern. 'We are living', he declares, 'not after the demise of modernity but at the peak of its ascendancy.' These insights could have perhaps been encountered more helpfully near the start of the book.

The author's case is well presented and cogently argued. Copious footnotes are provided. Not only does he write well, but many of his comments are quite memorable. A stimulating book.

Alex McIntosh, Falkirk

Calvin and the Calvinists

Paul Helm

Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1982, reprint 1998; 84pp., £6.95; ISBN 0 85151 750 1

The book under consideration is a timely reprint of an expanded article by the author, 'Calvin, Calvinism and the Logic of Doctrinal Development' which appeared in the *Scottish Journal of Theology* in April 1981. The author's intention in this small book is to provide a popular and readable response to R. T. Kendall's *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1979). Kendall's monograph is a slight condensation of his 1976 D.Phil. dissertation (Regents Park, Oxford), which was originally entitled 'The Nature of Saving Faith from William Perkins (d. 1602) to the Westminster Assembly (1643-9)'.

Central to Kendall's thesis is that archetypal Puritans such as William Perkins and William Ames, and even the whole assembly of Westminster divines, have been misinterpreted if understood as orthodox Calvinist theologians. He claims that they did not in fact derive their theology from the teachings of John Calvin, but rather from his successor in Geneva who pioneered a fundamental shift in his theology *viz.*, Theodore Beza. According to Kendall, Calvin did not teach limited atonement, but rather general or universal atonement. Further, he maintains that Calvin made a crucial distinction between Christ's death and his intercession. The mediatorial works of Christ, according to his reading of Calvin, are bifurcated in scope and efficacy. Beza, by abandoning Calvin's 'system', supposedly paves the way to Arminianism for voluntaristic Puritans riding

on a psychologized morphology of preparationist conversionism. As a result, the Puritan heritage of Calvinistic theology became 'virtually Arminian in many respects' (p. 6). Indeed, Kendall says that a 'crypto-Arminian doctrine of faith... pervades Westminster theology' (Kendall, 209; cited in Helm, 6).

Professor Helm concentrates his replication on two key considerations: (1) Did R. T. Kendall interpret Calvin fairly and accurately; and (2) Is Kendall correct in his assessment of Puritanism? The fist question is answered in chapters two 'John Calvin's Position' and three 'The Death and Intercession of Christ'. In them Helm contextually examines Calvin's writings for evidence of Kendall's 'novel view'. Such confirmation is 'totally absent'. Kendall's ponderous citations are even shown to work to the disadvantage of his own claims. Ultimately Kendall's 'reinterpretation' of Calvin is proven to be 'without foundation'. Chapters four and five add an evaluation of Calvin and the Puritans on conversion, preparationism, and the *Westminster Confession* on salvation by works. In these chapters Helm exposes Kendall's failure to correctly comprehend fundamental differentiations within preparationism, the place of the will in conversion, and faith as a divine gift in Calvin *and* the Puritans.

Throughout the whole, Professor Helm responsibly unfolds a continuity of theology from Calvin, through Westminster while simultaneously exposing the illegitimacy of Kendall's reinterpretations. An excellent summary of five propositions corresponding to each of the five brief chapters concludes the discussion (p. 81).

Kendall's approach, however, is far from novel. W. H. Chalker, Holmes Rolston III, Brian G. Armstrong and Basil Hall all have recycled Perry Miller's dated contention of 'crypto-Arminian' Puritanism. Yet despite the overwhelming evidence provided by scholarship proving otherwise, this distorted and erroneous position continues to circulate. Agreeably, then, the reviewer echoes Richard A. Muller's sentiments that, 'One can only hope that the majority of those who have been subjected to Kendall's work will look to Helm's essay for a sound corrective.'

John J. Bombaro, Clementon, New Jersey

Light of Truth and Fire of Love. A Theology of the Holy Spirit

Gary D. Badcock

Eerdmans, Cambridge, 1997; 303pp., £12.99; ISBN 0 8028 4288 7

Surely, one of the most exciting and important aspects of Christian thinking in the late twentieth century has been the renaissance in attention

being given to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Admittedly, this interest covers a wide spectrum of issues. However, it is a long-awaited development within western theological circles. Therefore, it is not surprising that a number of books are appearing on the subject, Badcock's being one of the weightier ones.

In *Light of Truth and Fire of Love* Badcock addresses two fundamental aspects concerning our understanding of the Holy Spirit. First, the identity of the Spirit: in an age when Christians are increasingly confused about addressing the Spirit as 'he', or 'it', this is surely an important task. Secondly, Badcock rightly addresses an important caveat in contemporary western Christian living, namely, 'an incapacity to see the work of the Spirit where it exists and, in particular, an inability or an unwillingness to integrate that work of the Spirit into the basic structures of our theological thought'.

The author identifies two major areas for development. First, the Spirit's relation to Jesus Christ: for many there is little meaningful understanding of how Jesus Christ relates to the Spirit. After all, was not Jesus the Son of God? If he was divine, he did not really need the Spirit. God can, surely, do anything: he does not need the Spirit. Secondly, Badcock addresses the wider issue of the Trinity, locating the Spirit's place within the divine relations. By engaging with the major thinkers of the twentieth century light is thrown on this, the more difficult of theological issues.

The structure of the book is straightforward. The reader is taken from a biblical perspective of the Spirit through an historical account of the development of the doctrine, along with its problems, through to contemporary experience. The relation of the Spirit with Jesus is, strangely, kept to the end, but this does serve as a lead into two chapters on the Spirit and the Trinity before ending on a chapter that focuses the reader's attention on the Spirit as the Light of Truth and the Fire of Love.

It has to be said that this is not an easy read for anyone without some basic theological grammar. Latinisms are not translated and one is led into engagement with some of the great and profound thinkers of the day. In addition, practical connections are left to the part of the reader which is a pity given that Badcock highlights three key consequences of an inadequate pneumatology. However, given the academic tone and level of the book it may not have been in the author's mind to unpack the first consequence he highlights, namely, the divorce of the spiritual life from one's theological systems.

Badcock, however, does lead his reader into deep water in a clear and helpful way so that the book offers profound and challenging insights to those who read it.

We have been waiting a few years for an explicitly textbook update to Heron's *The Holy Spirit* and this is it. Put bluntly, if you do not buy this book, your theological library will be lacking.

Graham McFarlane, London Bible College

What Christians *Really* Believe and Why

Stanley J. Grenz
Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky, 1998; 159pp., $12; ISBN 0 664 25732 1

Recognising that Christianity is not particularly well understood and that there are signs in our secular age of a yearning for something to believe in, Stan Grenz has written this outline of basic Christian teaching in a more unusual format. His intention is to attract interest and readership by dealing with doctrine from the standpoint of answering life's basic questions: why believe at all? who am I and why am I here? are we alone in the universe? which God? who is Jesus and what did he do? what am I searching for and how do I find it? where is the universe... where am I... going? These are questions, he claims, 'each of us must come to grips with' some time. In taking these questions in turn, chapter by chapter, he unfolds as he goes the main tenets of the Christian faith.

He writes well and this is a worthy enterprise, to re-present solid Christian teaching from the standpoint of the searcher's perceived itches. However, while it is clear, good teaching, and while it is on more neutral territory with the seeker than many other doctrinal / apologetic works, I have my reservations. One, the identifying of the key questions is not entirely done by starting from general, prevalent questions in peoples' minds. People who are seeking in this new age / spirituality era may well ask whether we are alone in the universe, or which God, but will they ask who is Jesus and what did he do? Not many in my experience consider this a burning question. It is in here because we need to get round to it and we believe that people need to be brought round to it, not because it is in others' minds. Secondly the format of the book: you will have to be fairly interested or committed to plough through even these shortish chapters of uninterrupted text (apart from the end notes in each chapter). Not only should we be thinking hard about the writing of material like this, but also how it is published. People are used to much different presentation than

this. It is a shame that the publishers have not shown the same creative energy as the author in an attempt to put gospel material to a wider group.

The material in the book however is good stuff and could have a useful role in building up Christians who are seeking to make sense of their faith in this 'anything goes' world.

Gordon R. Palmer, Slateford Longstone Parish Church, Edinburgh

Faith Thinking. The Dynamics of Christian Theology

Trevor Hart

SPCK, London, 1995; 236pp., £15.99; ISBN 0 281 04870 3

Everyone interested in the status of Christian theology in the Church and the academy should read this book. The debate that the author enters continues as vigorously as ever. The UK's leading weekly on Higher Education recently ran a vehement debate on the question: does one need to believe in God to teach theology? Trevor Hart raises the stakes even higher. Does one need *faith* to do Christian theology? His uncompromising answer is that theology is 'faith thinking', of the book's title (borrowed from a saying of P. T. Forsyth).

The book's main thrust is that theology springs from a faith with passion and security, but also one of coherence and correspondence to reality. This means sketching 'an intellectual contour of reality as it appears from within the stance of a living and active faith in Christ'. The robustness of Hart's work emerges from unashamed embracing of a faith-commitment point of view on reality. Why is this alright in our hostile post-Enlightenment environment? Because that is what *all* disciples and perspectives are doing. It is impossible to seek an integrated view of reality without such a faith-commitment of some kind.

From this point on the author seeks to steer a path more fruitful than fossilised fundamentalism, dogmatic scepticism, or resigned pluralism. In fact he drives a convoy of horses and carts through all three. It is a dangerous illusion put around by secularists and 'liberals' that there is some sort of neutral standpoint from which to judge the various commitments. The author is especially anxious to remove the tyrannical, Cartesian standard of absolute mathematical certainty from tests of truth. This kind of certainty is available in nothing in this world, but neither is it needed for the getting-on with life.

The clearing-away process releases Hart to look candidly not so much at the status of the Bible as at its nature. The dynamic, ever-renewing nature of the biblical tradition presents one obstacle to dogmatic knowledge. The highly-personal and individual perception of its texts poses a further

obstacle. The author concludes a multi-plurality of perceptions with a strong element of continuity and contact between perceptions. But is the individuality of perceptions as acute as he makes out? Does he believe it himself? The retrieval of meaning from the texts, he says, is far more risky than the phrase 'what the Bible clearly teaches' allows (p. 137). But then, to buttress a point, he himself rests on the words 'as 2 Timothy 3.15-16 makes utterly clear' (p. 160). This only illustrates that we can get just too pessimistic about human minds sharing a universe of discourse. It shows that the scriptural texts, like other texts (such as the book *Faith Thinking*) are not always the mystery we are led to believe.

Much absorbing and crucial discussion follows with wise comment on the nature of the biblical narrative, the place of tradition, apologetics and reformation. Excellent stuff! However, questions remain, for instance about the justification of theology in the academy, of the range of faith-commitments which may be deemed viable (and why) and the place of Christian theology in a culture where Christianity has declined in numbers and influence. The style is full of unstuffy contemporary communication. I hope that no-one will be put off pressing on into a lively absorbing read by the more pedestrian style of the brief introduction. For this is a book that deserves a wide readership and a continuing influence.

Roy Kearsley, South Wales Baptist College, Cardiff

Spirituality and Theology: Essays in Honour of Diogenes Allen

Edited by Eric. O. Springstead

Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky, 1998; 147pp., $17; ISBN 0 664 25741 0

Spirituality and Theology is an international, ecumenical and interdisciplinary *Festschrift* of ten essays in honour of Diogenes Allen (Stuart Professor of Philosophy, Princeton Theological Seminary) by a group of philosophers and theologians who have been shaped by and fundamentally share Allen's vision of the nature and tasks of Christian theology. Allen, who was influenced heavily by Oxford theologian Austin Farrer, adopts a version of the Augustinian-Anselmian *fides quarens intellectum* view of faith and reason that eschews the unwarranted scientific and epistemological imperatives of Enlightenment thought and their influence on theology, yet asserts the reasonableness of Christian faith and theology to the intellect that is spiritually attuned. The reasonableness of Christianity lies in its ability to meet human spiritual needs; its truth is demonstrated (not proved) by its maximal explanatory

power over the range of human experience. The kind of 'postmodern' theological reflection Allen's approach engenders is characterised by a dedication to defending Christianity as true on its own grounds, while realising its relevance to culture at large. Christian theology is an activity deeply entrenched in the spiritual engagements of Christian communities as the endemic religious needs of its members are met. *Spirituality and Theology* explores the thesis that Christian practice and spirituality is vital to understanding and performing the tasks of Christian theology. The essays do not so much explore Allen's work explicitly as they are variations on Allen's central themes.

The book is divided into two sections. Part one, 'Spirituality and the Nature of Christian theology', includes (among others) essays by Stanley Hauerwas (Duke University), David B. Burrell (University of Notre Dame), and Brian Hebblethwaite (Queen's College, Cambridge), and serves as a good introduction to the meta-theological issues which surround the orientation to Christian faith and reason taken by Allen and these scholars. One of the highlights of *Spirituality and Theology* is Burrell's wonderfully lucid and penetrating essay in this section, 'Friends in Conversation: The Language and Practice of Faith', in which he argues that human epistemic positions require of us a fallibilist epistemology with a philosophical and theological method that reflects a dynamic, inter-personal conversation grounded in a web of ethical commitments. To the credit of the editor, this section also includes Hebblethwaite's essay which is critical of Allen's general orientation away from natural theology, and finds particular fault in Allen's interpretation of the thought of Austin Farrer.

Part two, 'Spirituality Within Christian Theology', concentrates on the type of theology envisaged by Allen, and includes essays by Elena Malits (Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame), Daniel L. Migliore (Princeton Theological seminary), and Gerhard Sauter (University of Bonn). The essays in this section examine the nature of theological reflection in which spirituality is constituent of theological activity. The notable chapter in this section is Migliore's essay, 'Freedom to Pray: Karl Barth's Theology of Prayer'. Migliore provides a helpful and careful analysis of Barth's central teachings regarding the nature of and need for prayer as the fundamental activity in theological activity.

Spirituality and Theology is relatively short, not overly technical, and is generally well end-noted, with notes appearing at the end of each essay. Some of the contributions lack academic rigour, but it will be helpful to students and professionals interested in philosophical theology and the interface of faith and reason, particularly in the light of postmodernity.

Myron B. Penner, New College, Edinburgh University

Introduction to Biblical Studies

Steve Moyise
Cassell, London, 1998; 113pp., £9.99; ISBN 0 304 70091 6

This brief volume is the first in a series of texts (edited by the author) designed for students beginning a course in biblical studies.

The first chapter asks the question, What is the Bible for if it is 'the word of God?' After briefly discussing some of the options, Moyise concludes that the Bible 'reveals God' in the sense that 'these (very) human words are somehow able to mediate God's presence' (p. 6). There follows a brief personal account of the author's experience of 'Jesus calling me' through reading Luke's gospel, which appears to lie at the foundation of his theological convictions. He makes these convictions plain when he writes, 'I have come to believe that inspiration ("God-breathed") is more to do with what God does with the text than what it supposedly guarantees' (p. 8). Though it is refreshing to hear a biblical scholar speak of the life-changing effect of the text of Scripture, Moyise's view of inspiration leaves too many loose ends. These become even more prominent as the book progresses.

The following chapters examine significant methods of interpreting the biblical texts. Chapter 2 deals with historical criticism, with particular reference to the sources behind the biblical texts, while chapter 3 looks at redaction criticism. Chapters 4 and 5 deal with more recent approaches to reading the biblical texts and the effects of texts on their readers. The brief sixth chapter discusses the transmission and translation of the biblical text, and chapter 7 brings the book to a close with a discussion of biblical studies in a 'postmodern' context. Moyise frequently provides helpful examples from the biblical texts to illustrate what he writes.

Moyise is clearly sensitive to the ways in which the Bible has been used oppressively. This is particularly evident in the course of his discussion on feminist readings where he displays admirable determination not to abuse the biblical text. It is interesting to read, however, that 'Whatever the function of such biblical stories or statements in the past, if they promote or otherwise authorize the subjugation of women, they cannot be God's will' (p. 77). This statement, I believe, is the result of Moyise's view of inspiration. I think that he has misunderstood the difference between submission of one equal to another (as the Son submitted himself to the Father) and the abusive 'subjugation' that concerns him, but be that as it may, he believes that he is at liberty to declare what is the will of God on the basis of an authority outside of the biblical text to which the biblical text must then submit.

The 'Further Reading' guides at the end of each chapter are both up to date and, generally, useful to a new student. On a number of occasions, Moyise indicates reading materials that come from an evangelical perspective.

On the whole, this book is brief enough to be accessible for new students, it is written in an engaging style, and it is an accurate and contemporary guide to important approaches to biblical studies. I can commend it, but with a measure of caution, and would suggest that the novice evangelical student read it as all theological literature should be read – thoughtfully, critically, in conversation with other perspectives and subject to the evidence of the biblical text.

Alistair I. Wilson, Highland Theological College, Dingwall

Paul and the Parousia: An Exegetical and Theological Investigation

J. Plevnik

Hendrickson, Peabody, Massachusetts, 1997; 351pp., £19.99; ISBN 1 56563 180 3

This book is a thorough reworking of a doctoral dissertation written in 1971 under the directorship of Rudolph Schnackenburg. It is aimed at the academic world, and is intended to challenge those who, following Bultmann, wish to remove the idea of parousia altogether or reinterpret it. Plevnik also expresses the hope that it will be of some 'personal value' to the reader and preacher, and wishes to 'expose the spiritual riches and theological significance of the parousia for Christian existence'.

The book is divided into two parts: the first deals with the 'fundamental concepts and imagery in Paul's presentation of the parousia' and provides exegesis of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:23-28, 50-55 and Philippians 3:20-21. The second part deals with theological issues connected with the parousia.

Two chapters examine the background of the concepts, terms and imagery which Paul uses when he speaks of the Lord's coming. Plevnik concludes that the terms are Jewish in origin, rather than Hellenistic. Chapters 3 to 7 contain exegesis of the relevant Pauline passages. Inconsistencies and changes of emphasis in Paul's thinking on the parousia are to be explained by the apostle's particular concerns at the time of writing.

The second part of the book ('Theological Investigation') contains a thematic consideration of topics such as 'hope', the church, judgement and living with Christ for ever. Plevnik contends that the parousia should be

seen as the completion of Easter, and argues against the notion that there was a development of Paul's thought with regard to the nearness of the parousia.

Plevnik also aims to provide a critical analysis of the philosophical principles that guided Bultmann's investigation. Are they, he asks, adequate for the eschatological assertions made in the New Testament? Plevnik's eagerness to reassert the concrete nature of Paul's parousia hope leads him into an examination of modern hermeneutical method. Unfortunately, his treatment of this important subject is rather cursory, and merely whets the appetite. Had this been more fully investigated, his attempt to 'recast the apocalyptic language of Paul into more contemporary idiom without jettisoning the reality of the parousia' might have been stronger than it is.

Throughout the book, there is a disappointing failure to engage with more modern authors. The chapter on the parousia and judgement, for example, would have benefited from engagement with authors such as E. P. Sanders and Gundry Volf. Despite this, however, this book will be of personal value for the reader and preacher. Plevnik fulfils his aim of encouraging the church and facilitating an understanding of the hope that she has in Christ. His exploration of the relationship between the parousia and Easter is particularly useful. The book is a good resource for students of the eschatological passages in Paul, the chapters of exegesis being thorough and clear. The book is well presented and contains indexes of modern authors and ancient sources.

Marion L. S. Carson, International Christian College, Glasgow

Holiness

J. C. Ryle, abridged by Robert Backhouse
Coronet Books, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1996; 254pp., £6.99; ISBN 0 340 65632 8

This book – a collection of miscellaneous biblical texts relating to practical Christianity – was first published in 1877 as an antidote to the distinctive teaching of Keswick, and particularly the view of sin and sanctification promoted by the revivalism of the day. It was republished in 1952 with a preface by D. M. Lloyd-Jones at a time when he, Raymond Johnston, J. I. Packer and others were seeking to promote a more biblical theology (as they saw it) than was then generally favoured in IVF circles and in Evangelicalism as a whole. Bishop Pat Harris, who writes the foreword to this abridged edition, hopes that it will have an impact on the current weak church situation by promoting concern for biblical exposition

and doctrine practically applied. As with most abridgements readers of the original will not always share the judgement of the abridger. To this reader it seems inappropriate, given Ryle's concern to ground practice in doctrine, that his detailed strictures on the theological system which he believed was bringing the hearers of many evangelical preachers 'to miserable ends', and his exposition of the antidote to this, have been omitted. But this eminently readable book still contains much food for thought and should promote its original purpose.

Hugh M. Cartwright, Free Presbyterian Church, Edinburgh

Many Voices, One God: Being Faithful in a Pluralistic World

Edited by Walter Brueggemann and George Stroup
Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, 1998; 202pp., $25; ISBN 0 664 25757 7

This volume of essays is published to honour Shirley Guthrie Jr, a teacher of theology at Columba Seminary for the past 40 years. The 13 contributions cover biblical studies, historical, theological and pastoral perspectives, all written in relation to the theme indicated in the title. The other common aspect of all these essays is that they are written within the Reformed tradition, so that there are frequent references to Calvin, Jonathan Edwards and Karl Barth.

A number of writers note the terminology now commonly used in regard to the discussion of religious pluralism: exclusivism, which stresses the uniqueness of Christ, inclusivism, which moves in the opposite direction and sees all roads leading to God, and pluralism, which is seen here as a mediating position involving openness to other faiths without compromising their particularity. It can be said that almost all the contributors to this book belong in the third category in that, while wishing to recognise God at work beyond Christendom, they clearly seek to be faithful to the unique message of the Bible.

Walter Brueggemann provocatively argues that the roots of religious pluralism can be traced back into the Old Testament in that other nations besides Israel knew the liberating activity of God in their histories. This claim is based on a single text (Amos 9:7) and although Brueggemann expounds this with typical brilliance it is hard to avoid the conclusion that one verse is being made to support an interpretative structure greater than it can possibly sustain. There is a fascinating discussion of 'Paul and Multiculturism' by Charles B. Coussar, while Donald McKim (a name known to evangelicals) helpfully discusses pluralism in relation to the

classical Reformed tradition. The outstanding chapter in the book though is by Douglas John Hall under the title 'Confessing Christ in a religiously Plural Context'. This is a quite brilliant statement in which an attempt is made to move beyond all the categories mentioned earlier. Hall argues convincingly that a religiously pluralistic context is the normal situation for Christian faith and he suggests what it might mean to engage in faithful mission in such circumstances. There is a great deal in this book that is stimulating, but Hall's chapter is outstanding and probably worth the purchase price on its own,

David Smith, Whitefield Institute, Oxford

Augustine. His Thought in Context

T. Kermit Scott
Paulist Press, Mahwah, NJ, 1995; 253pp., $14.95; ISBN 0 8091 3566 3

T. Kermit Scott is a Professor of Philosophy with a long interest in the work of Augustine. It takes such a philosopher to represent the thought of the great master in a way that does not intimidate the ordinary reader with historical minutiae and lashings of Latin. Exposition of the theologian's thought is done lucidly and usually with well-chosen quotations. It is not surprising for a philosopher to come to the conclusion that Augustine does not succeed in holding together coherently the great theologian's core beliefs in God's absolute power and perfect goodness. There is no harder thesis in theology, and the problem is not confined, as the author sometimes seems to think, to 'Augustinians'. However in reaching this not very innovative conclusion, Scott presents a very illuminating background (the *Context* of the title) to Augustine's intellectual pilgrimage and the impressive, though surprising, reception of his ideas ancient and modern.

The section on history and social conditions is full of provocative and fruitful strands, setting out a much starker account of the growth of the Christian community than is usually heard. Perhaps too much is made of the slow conquest by the Christian 'ideology' in rural areas. Scott admits that rural outlooks tend to change more slowly. The claim that Christian numbers were low should be read against the number of them martyred or driven into various forms of exile and secrecy. Statistical study here ceases to be an exact discipline.

The main historical claim of the author is that Augustine moved from the 'original myth' about God, derived from the Old Testament, through Manichaean and Plotinian myths to the 'imperial myth'. This imperial myth sprang from the victory of the Christian God in the courts of the

emperor and the resulting popular embrace of the faith. Because of it, Augustine put his faith in an ideology of God as omnipotent, requiring complete submission, surrender and faith. Along with lurking Plotinian leanings, Augustine, unawares, therefore gave support to the social order of the time with its inequalities and imperial domination. This fatal move received further stiffening from the emphasis upon the future life and the highly individualistic understanding of the human constitution. It is also to blame for the untenable doctrine of predestination.

I have given a highly compressed summary of the case. It has merits and demerits. It does seem to agree with other criticisms of Augustine for a view of God that reflects exaggerated individual autonomy, particularly in his treatment of the Trinity. The claim that Augustine's approach, and Augustinianism, tend towards support of *status quo*, also merits attention. However, it would be incorrect to think that Augustine was the first to stress the absolute omnipotence of God. Tertullian and others did this without the encouragements of the Constantinian revolution, and the view that God created everything from nothing was common amongst Christian writers long before Augustine. The author probably attributes too easily an unseemly triumphalism to Augustine, who, as Scott himself observes, took a very sceptical view of the pomp and splendour of empire.

The main contribution of the book is in its intellectual biography of, and background to, the great bishop and in its sympathetic, but discriminating, account of the reception and enduring magnetism of his thought. These alone make it worth the read.

Roy Kearsley, South Wales Baptist College, Cardiff

One Bible, Many Voices, Different Approaches to Biblical Studies

Susan E. Gillingham
SPCK, London, 1998; 280pp., £15.99; ISBN 0 281 04886 X

In the words of the author, 'The purpose and audience for this particular book is [*sic*] upper-sixth-formers, first- and second-year undergraduates, and adult students coming later in life to read theology' (p. xv). Also included in the intended readership are those 'for whom biblical studies is a relatively new discipline' (*ibid*). The Bible is approached from the viewpoint of an academic discipline and the assumptions of those from confessional backgrounds are specifically excluded.

Part one of the book describes the disparate nature and forms of the biblical texts and seeks to trace how the texts evolved to their present form. Part two describes the variety of ways of reading biblical texts and

urges an integration of methods of reading the text so as to achieve a balanced reading. The author's favoured method of interpretation is what she calls 'the integrated literary approach', which she describes but does not define. The book concludes with an extended illustration of the author's preferred method of reading from the Psalter and from Psalm 8 in particular.

This is a useful book, with much background information about the Bible, its forms and supposed course of development and interpretation. The writer's style is lucid and free of jargon. The book has 40 helpful tables and figures and several good indexes. The first seven chapters (that is, all of Part one and all but the last two chapters of Part two) are a good introduction to biblical studies.

The author's thesis is that we need 'a pluralistic reading' (p. 5) of the Bible and 'a pluralistic understanding of the nature of biblical studies' (p. 4) because the Bible is 'a pluralistic text' (p. 3). The plea for such a reading comes from the author's intention to accommodate her work and findings to a post-modern understanding of the world and to avoid what she calls 'the ideology of control' (p. 246) when it comes to interpretation. Even so, she states that 'we should be as critical of pluralism *per se* as we should be critical of any exclusivist approach which assumes that it alone has the key control' (p. 247).

I am left with two observations about the author's thesis on pluralism. Two ideas are encompassed by what Gillingham means by pluralism. The first, as the subtitle to the book indicates, is the recognition of the diversity, complexity and variety both within the Bible itself (even particular books of the Bible) and of appropriate methods of interpretation. The second is the variety of approaches which there can be in reading a biblical text. Both ideas are unexceptional.

But Gillingham leaves us there – and offers no method of selecting interpretations so as to make sense of the text. By offering an uncritical accumulation of different readings of Psalm 8, as she does in Ch. 9, Gillingham leaves the reader wiser as to what the text *might* mean, but no wiser as to how to make an educated and critical choice or appraisal of what the text *does* mean. Her basic premise is 'the fact [*sic*] that the texts will always [*sic*] be something of a mystery' (p. 247). I for one was left bewildered as to what Gillingham thought Psalm 8 meant (I *am* interested in her view) and how she might persuade me of her view. Rather than offer nothing on her view of the meaning of the text, she should help her readers critically to appraise the variety of possible meanings of that text, so as to resist 'the ideology of control' which she rightly rejects. In the end, the plurality she offers – and invites us even to reject as an 'exclusivist

approach' – is the plurality of the supposed legitimacy of a variety of (sometimes competing or contradictory) values or views. To my mind, this is not so much a 'mystery' as cacophony.

Anthony Bash, University of Hull

Deuteronomy

Christopher Wright
Hendrickson, Peabody, Massachusetts, 1996; 350pp., £7.99; ISBN 0 85364 725 9

About to begin writing study notes on Deuteronomy, I began reading this commentary with high expectations. I was not disappointed. I can heartily endorse Gordon McConville's verdict: 'In Chris Wright, Deuteronomy has found an exponent who has shown its power and relevance to the modern world.' What is distinctive about this commentary? Again, Gordon McConville is right on the mark: 'His vigour of style and argument makes it more than mere commentary, but a work of theology itself.' Christopher Wright is the Principal of All Nations Christian College, Ware. The name of the College alerts us to the direction in which his exposition of Deuteronomy leads us. From the heart of Jewish religion, here is a Word from the Lord for all nations. Dr Wright spent five years teaching in the Union Biblical Seminary in India. In this commentary his missionary concern shines through again and again. He challenges the reader to think about Deuteronomy in terms of its significance for all nations in today's world. In his 'Introduction', he attunes the reader to this line of thinking by including a section entitled, 'Missiological Significance', to which he devotes more pages than to the rest of the 'Introduction'. This section on 'Missiological Significance' is like a starter. It whets the appetite for more. As well as a subject index and Scripture index, this book contains a long list of books and articles for further reading. This commentary is part of the New International Biblical Commentary: Old Testament Series, edited by Robert L. Hubbard Jr and Robert K. Johnston. While this particular contribution may have its own distinctiveness, it can hardly fail to stimulate interest in the whole series. If the rest of the series comes close to reaching the standard achieved by Wright, it will prove very valuable to those who share its goal of linking 'probing reflective interpretation of the text to loyal biblical devotion and warm Christian affection' (Foreword by the editors). Scottish readers may be interested to note that Iain Provan, late of New College, Edinburgh has contributed the volume on 1 and 2 Kings.

Charles M. Cameron, Castlemilk West, Glasgow

Hidden Sayings of Jesus

William Morrice
SPCK, London, 1997; 247pp., £14.99; ISBN 1 56563 289 3

As its subtitle explains, this book is an investigation of 'words attributed to Jesus outside the four gospels'. William Morrice gathers together a fairly comprehensive collection of sayings attributed to Jesus from a variety of sources – Pauline letters, Acts, gospel manuscripts, papyrus, the Nag Hammadi codices (with special attention to the Gospel of Thomas), apocryphal gospels, early Christian writers and Muslim writings. He translates each saying himself, prints it out in full, and evaluates its authenticity. This is measured on a scale of A-D, with those sayings least likely to be authentic being given a D and those most likely to be authentic receiving an A (for anyone used to the textual apparatus of the UBS text this is an easy scheme to get used to). Morrice clearly sets out his criteria for authenticity in Chapter 3, giving a history of research in the area and suitably noting its subjectivity.

The book as a whole is written for a general readership and begins with a useful survey of how the New Testament canon came into being. Morrice is to be congratulated on his ability to turn what could have been a difficult, jargon-ridden discussion into something which is clear, concise and eminently readable. Throughout, the material is divided into short sections and the tone is kept light (for example, the Nag Hammadi library is generally referred to as a 'load of old books'!). Yet scholarly integrity is never sacrificed and the endnotes are full of recent debate and further information.

A large section of the book is devoted to sayings from the Gospel of Thomas. This work, Morrice assures us, is not a gnostic gospel as is often supposed, but is a thoroughly orthodox product of Syrian Christianity, perhaps going back to an independent and early tradition. Several of the parables in particular are found to be similar to those in the synoptics and, as they are often free from later allegory, may well reflect earlier versions. It might have been useful if Morrice had provided us with a short chapter outlining recent debates on the relationships between the Gospel of Thomas, the synoptics and gnosticism at this point. Though many scholars would agree with his views, far from all would be convinced, preferring to see the Gospel as a late harmony composed for the needs of a gnostic community.

The survey shows that outside the New Testament relatively little of value survives, only a handful of sayings. The most important gain is with the Gospel of Thomas, which, if Morrice is correct, provides independent

versions of twelve well-known parables and three possible new ones. Morrice stresses that the picture of Jesus which emerges from these new sayings is broadly in line with the picture of him in other New Testament writings (though this is not particularly surprising since similarity with known sayings was one of the tests for authenticity). What Morrice's book does show is the unique value of the canonical gospels and forces us to reassess the value of the Gospel of Thomas as a source for genuine sayings of Jesus.

Helen K. Bond, New College, Edinburgh

Christ Triumphant: Biblical Perspectives on His Church and Kingdom

Raymond O. Zorn

Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1997; xvi+244pp., £12.95; ISBN 0 85151 696 3

In this rather untypical Banner book Zorn concludes that the Westminster Confession's identification of the visible church as 'the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ' is 'too narrow to do justice to the scope of New Testament teaching'. This updating of his *Church and Kingdom* (1962) aims at clarifying what he sees as the distinctiveness and relationship of church and kingdom and the scope of their activity. Although one may not accept his conclusions the work, in spite of an occasionally heavy style, provokes thought on a variety of related subjects. Material is presented in a scholarly manner, with regard for biblical authority and practical usefulness, on the relation between Israel and the New Testament church and between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of God, on the church's conflict with the powers of darkness, and on the church in relation to the individual, family, state including – inevitably? – 'another look at theonomy' and society. Sections deal with the eschatology of church and kingdom and the ultimate victory of Christ and there are brief treatments of subjects such as 'common grace' and church discipline. Sidelights are thrown on many biblical passages. The author acknowledges having 'warmed himself at the fires of various schools of thought'. The most influential of these are Dutch or American, associated particularly with A. Kuyper, H. N. Ridderbos and G. Vos. There is little evidence of interaction with Scottish theology. Such interaction would have been particularly useful in discussing the millennium and church/state relations, where Scottish history and theology make significant contributions, as indeed they do to ecclesiology in general.

Hugh M. Cartwright, Free Presbyterian Church, Edinburgh

Scripture in the Theologies of W. Pannenberg and D. G. Bloesch

Frank Hasel

Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main, 1996; 337pp., £36.00; ISSN 0721 3409/ISBN 3 631 49264 2 / US ISBN 0 8204 2968 6

There are really three themes here: Scripture, Pannenberg and Bloesch. The early part of the book is concerned with the history of the doctrine of scripture since the Reformation. This section would be of interest to the student of historical theology who may not be particularly interested in either Pannenberg or Bloesch. The remainder of the book – a Ph.D. thesis – is concerned with an exposition and evaluation of the teachings of Pannenberg and Bloesch regarding scripture. This is an interesting study. It is chiefly concerned with 'whether the role of Scripture is to be determined ultimately "from below" or "from above"'. By focusing on 'two contemporary, living theologians', Hasel takes the reader into detailed discussion of current attempts to determine the role of scripture in theology. This is not a book for those who like light reading. If I had not been fairly well acquainted with the writings of Pannenberg and Bloesch, I think I would have been completely out of my depth rather than simply struggling at a number of points. The extent of Hasel's reading is most impressive. On many pages, the footnotes take up more space than the main text. Reading the footnotes together with the main text makes for disjointed reading, but I would encourage readers not to gloss over the footnotes. That is where they will find some of the most interesting material. At the end of the book, there is a 'Selected Bibliography', which runs from pages 263 to 337!

Charles M. Cameron, Castlemilk West, Glasgow

The Concept of Equity in Calvin's Ethics

Guenther H. Haas

Paternoster Press, Carlisle, 1997; xi+205pp., £19.99; ISBN 0 85364 842 5

In recent years there has been increased interest in Calvin's ethics to which Guenther Haas usefully contributes by studying the topic through the lens of Calvin's concept of equity. This is a scholarly volume which is nonetheless both readable and edifying being accessible to all with a basic knowledge of Calvin and the Reformation.

The first part explores the historical background to Calvin, examining the development of the concept of equity from Aristotle to Aquinas and in Calvin's contemporaries, humanists and reformers. These chapters clarify the different ways in which equity was understood.

The second part examines the concept in Calvin's ethics. Chapter 4, the central chapter of the book, relates equity to love and justice. 'Calvin views equity as the interpretative rule of love to effect justice in human life' (p. 63). Equity can only be practised by those who have curbed self-love by self-denial and who have love of God and neighbour in their hearts. This chapter sets out the fundamental principles which are applied in the specific areas examined in the remaining chapters.

Chapter 5 relates equity to law, both natural law and the moral law of scripture. Calvin viewed equity as the basic principle of natural law. Chapter 6 shows how Calvin emphasises the unity of Old and New Testaments. Chapter 7 examines in turn the commandments of the second table. The author shows that Calvin uses equity/natural law as a principle by which to criticise the commandments of the Pentateuch. He evaluates divine legislation by the standard of (natural) equity and finds it to fall short. In so doing he places the blame not on God's law but on the sinful obstinacy of the Jews. Chapter 8 applies the theme to church and state. Finally, chapter 9 shows how Calvin applied the principle of equity to the issue of usury, thus transcending a rigid biblical literalism and taking into account the social and economic realities of the day.

The author is not uncritical of the material that he is expounding and helpfully points to tensions in the thought of Augustine and of Calvin. Equity is certainly a fruitful theme in Calvin's ethics. One might even call it a theme of central importance, but the author does not (in my view) justify his claim that it is '*the* theme of central importance in Calvin's social ethic' (p. 2; my emphasis). The summary at the end of Chapter 6 is significant, where he acknowledges that equity is not mentioned in Calvin's account of the three principles for interpreting the Decalogue, but nonetheless claims that 'equity is the principal guide in interpreting the Second Table of the law' (p. 90). It surely cannot be argued that equity is a more important or more central theme or guiding principle than love.

The book is well set out with useful summaries at the end of each chapter. There is a succinct conclusion which summarises the book and points to two issues for further research. The eighteen-page bibliography is helpfully subdivided. There is an index of persons and another of words and phrases. But the layout contains one major blemish. Instead of footnotes there are endnotes, without even the assistance of stating at the top of each page of notes which pages or chapter of text are being covered. This puts

the reader to the continual inconvenience of having to keep the text open at two places. What possible justification can there be for this in the age of computers? Surely no reader who is frightened merely by the existence of footnotes is going to read a book like this. Any serious reader will at least sometimes wish to consult footnotes and will be put to unnecessary inconvenience – a blatant transgression of Calvin's principle of equity, fundamental to which is that one should do to others as one would have them do to you (p. 63).

Tony Lane, London Bible College

The Spirit of Buddhism

David Burnett

Monarch and ANCC, Crowborough, 1996; 288pp., £9.99; ISBN 1 85424 298 9

The achievement of this book is that complex belief, diverse practice and 25 centuries of unfamiliar history are brought together in a highly readable and informative manner. This does not mean that the difficult issues are left out. There is, for example, a short but helpful section on Nagarjuna, the second-century Indian scholar. Recognising relative and absolute truth Nagarjuna taught that the foundation of both is sunyata, or the emptiness of everything. The writer illustrates Nagarjuna's use of logic: x is y, x is non-y, x is both y and non-y and x is neither y nor non-y.

David Burnett is Director of Studies at All Nations Christian College. He is author of a considerable number of books, including *Clash of Worlds*, *Unearthly Powers* and *The Spirit of Hinduism.* His approach is non-polemic; there is no attempt to promote Christianity at the expense of Buddhism. Some readers may prefer a more comparative approach, focusing on guidelines for faith-sharing and redemptive analogies. Dr Burnett sets out his aim at the beginning – 'to give a study of the Buddhist tradition from a Christian tradition'. He justifies his approach as follows: 'Only as Christians understand the fascination of this unique religion will they be able to communicate meaningfully with those of the Buddhist tradition.'

Starting with the Indian context into which Gautama (the Buddha) was born, Burnett traces the enlightenment process and the middle path that the Buddha taught. He explains the four noble truths and associated beliefs, *e.g.* karma, re-incarnation, dependent origination, nirvana and the eightfold path. There is a helpful chapter on the Buddhist approach to meditation. 'The Buddhist tradition aims at detachment from the world of experiences, while the Christian seeks attachment to God. A central feature of Christian meditation is that the bible is regarded as the special revelation of God who

created all things.' Burnett explains how the Buddhist monastic community developed and looks at some rules that regulate monastic life. The councils and controversies in early Buddhism are clearly explained.

I think that there are two main strengths to this book. First, Tibetan Buddhism is well treated, its history is traced and there is a good introduction to tantric practice. This is particularly useful for readers living in Scotland where Tibetan Buddhism is particularly high profile. Secondly, the spread and development of the main school of Buddhism are set out to give us the overall picture from the early councils until the present day in the UK. Along the way we gain helpful insights into Pure Land, Zen, Nichiren, as well as the new movements of Soka Gakkai and Friends of the Western Buddhist Order.

This book will provide useful reading for religious education teachers and students. It will also prove helpful for those who wish to dialogue with both Buddhists (currently 23 different associations in Scotland) and the increasing number of Westerners interested in non-Christian spirituality.

Rory McKenzie, International Christian College, Glasgow

The Last Things: Hope for This World and the Next

Herman Bavinck

Baker Book House, Grand Rapids / Paternoster Press, Carlisle, 1996; 205pp., £12.99; ISBN 0 85364 761 5

The name of Herman Bavinck became well known to me during my Ph.D. studies in the writings of G. C. Berkouwer. Again and again in his *Studies in Dogmatics*, Berkouwer quotes from the works of Bavinck. Berkouwer also makes frequent reference to Bavinck in his book, *A Half Century of Theology*. Berkouwer (1903-1996), like Bavinck (1854-1921), served as Professor of Systematic Theology at the Free University of Amsterdam. The newly-formed Dutch Reformed Translation Society's first project is the definitive translation of Herman Bavinck's complete four-volume *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek* (Reformed Dogmatics). This volume on eschatology is the first instalment of that project. The reasoning behind the selection of *The Last Things* may need some explanation. In his 'Editor's Introduction', John Bolt writes, 'Apocalyptic fever grows as we approach the year 2000 *anno domini*. One longs for a sane, biblical voice to guide the Christian church through the shoals of eschatological confusion'. Readers interested in reading more of Bavinck should look out for *The Doctrine of God* (Banner of Truth, 1977). Anyone interested in seeing how

Berkouwer built on Bavinck's theology of the last things should refer to his book, *The Return of Christ* (Eerdmans, 1972).

Since the first edition of Bavinck's *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek* dates back to 1895, there may be a tendency to dismiss him as a name from the distant past. His influence on Berkouwer – listed by P. E. Hughes among the *Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology* (Eerdmans, 1996) – indicates something of the stature of this man whom William Hendriksen described as 'one of the greatest Reformed theologians'.

Charles M. Cameron, Castlemilk West, Glasgow

Evangelicalism in Britain 1935-1995: a Personal Sketch

Oliver Barclay

IVP, Leicester, 1997; 159pp., £8.99; ISBN 0 85111 189 0

It is important to note the sub-title to this volume, for this indicates both its value and its limitations. It is not intended to be a dispassionate account of the evangelical movement during the period in question but the personal reflections of somebody who was deeply involved in so much that he records. Dr Oliver Barclay's qualifications for being taken seriously could hardly be bettered. The UCCF (formerly IVF) is a movement of key significance for British Evangelicalism and he was very closely involved in its work almost from the beginning of the period he describes, and its General Secretary 1964-80 so that he was not only aware of what was happening but a major participant himself. Since then, he has kept abreast of developments within the evangelical movement, most notably through his editorship of IVP's series, 'When Christians Disagree'.

He distinguishes between Conservative and Liberal Evangelicals. His sympathies are with the position of the former, which he also calls 'classical evangelicalism', and he charts its remarkable growth over this sixty-year period. He also shows that Liberal Evangelicalism, which he regards as an unstable position, having experienced a period of decline, is now somewhat resurgent. Many movements such as Keswick, the Evangelical Alliance, the British Evangelical Council and Moral Rearmament appear in his pages and he seeks to show their relationships and indicate their significance. Often he assesses both the strengths and weaknesses of particular movements and emphases.

It is not surprising that he highlights particularly the IVF/UCCF itself, Tyndale House, the Billy Graham Crusades and the changing scene of theological education. The personal names in the index are almost a 'Who's Who' of British Evangelicalism during the period he surveys, with frequent mention of people like Martyn Lloyd-Jones, John Stott, Douglas

Johnson, J. I. Packer and John Wenham. Among Scots, there is surprisingly little on F. F. Bruce, but William Still is seen to have had a ministry of 'enormous importance'.

Dr Barclay lays much stress on scripture. In a particularly significant paragraph towards the end of the book, he says, 'There are two main streams emerging in the evangelical community, and this division may prove more fundamental in its long-term effects than any other. It runs right across denominational division and any special-interest and party groupings. It is between those who make the Bible effectively, and not only theoretically, the mainstay of their ministry, and those who do not.' He says that the former will produce strong realistic Christians while the latter 'are almost certain to produce vulnerable Christians or painfully dependent people, who dare not move out from the particular congregation where they have been supported unless they can go somewhere else where they will be equally propped up'. He is clearly disturbed by some contemporary trends and your reviewer is certain that many of the points he makes need to be taken very seriously.

Both Rutherford House and SETS receive honourable mention, as does this *Bulletin*.

Geoffrey W. Grogan, Glasgow

The Lambeth Articles

V. C. Miller
Latimer House, Oxford, 1994; 94pp., £3.50; ISBN 0 946397 415

This Latimer House monograph contains Latimer House Studies 44-45. It would do well to have a clearer extended title than 'Doctrinal Development and Conflict in 16th Century England'. The nine Lambeth Articles were concerned specifically with the doctrine of predestination and were altogether Anglican formularies. They were intended to clarify the doctrine as it is presented in Article 17 of the Thirty Nine Articles.

Predestination, hardly mentioned today in Anglican circles, was taken very seriously in the sixteenth century by Anglican divines as well as puritans, which V. C. Miller sets out to demonstrate in this study. Miller contends that Archbishop Whitgift and his advisors, who drew up the Articles in 1595, were seeking to promulgate a much more Lutheran concept of the doctrine than the tight and rigidly logical doctrine of Calvin and the Calvinists. The real importance of these Articles was to be the influence they were to have on the theology of Richard Hooker, which was to be at the very heart of Anglican thought. The Articles themselves in turn never became official, since Queen Elizabeth I did not like them, and

as head of the Church, rejected them. They were incorporated into Archbishop Ussher's Irish Articles of 1615, but replaced in 1635 by the Thirty Nine Articles.

Hooker and his precursors respected Calvin, but not as ardently as some of his puritan followers. Despite the disputes between Whitgift, and later Hooker on the one side, and the Calvinists including the Cambridge puritans on the other, Miller argues that there was far more common ground between them than has readily been accepted. The chief differences concerned predestination and the church, and whether predestination meant double predestination. The Anglicans sought to accommodate the doctrines of predestination and election in the concept of a national church, which by its very nature was broad in its membership, while the Cambridge Calvinists saw the doctrine as pointing towards a purist definition of the church.

On the extent of predestination Miller devotes her final and more lengthy chapter to Richard Hooker and the Lambeth Articles. Calvin held at least an implicit doctrine of double predestination, which was presented more explicitly by the Calvinist theologians Perkins, Zanchius and Beza. Hooker wanted to avoid double predestination implicitly, and explicitly to rest content with a 'tip of the iceberg' doctrine of predestination. The deep mysteries of predestination were not to be pursued. He sought to develop a doctrine of God who is beneficent and gracious, not of one who created mankind in order to predestine the greater part of it to hell.

Miller makes rather bold assumptions that the reader will be familiar with the characters to whom she refers. A dictionary of church history to hand will be useful.

Peter Cook, Alston, Cumbria

What Are They Saying about Scripture and Ethics?

William S. Spohn

Paulist Press, Mahwah, NJ, 1995; 142pp., $8.95; ISBN 0 8091 3609 0

In this second edition of a book originally published in 1984, Spohn provides a helpful, readable and updated introduction to a field where the sheer variety of approaches has bewildered many a newcomer and introductory surveys have sometimes become expositions of yet another approach. He soon identifies as key questions: what is the nature of the text, what is the ground for appealing to it and how may it be applied to the contemporary issue? Aiming to trace how Christian ethics have followed the wider shift in attention towards the contemporary significance of a text, the bulk of his book concentrates on the third question. Four

main chapters explore and comment on approaches which treat Scripture respectively as the command of God, as a reminder of our true humanity, as a call to liberation and as a call to discipleship.

Referring to selected leading proponents, Spohn exposes both the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. Thus the place of moral reasoning becomes a recurrent question for the 'command of God' model, as does the place of distinctively Christian input for that of 'moral reminder'. Is the liberation perspective self-limiting and lacking in further moral or religious content? Discipleship is seen as a form of apprenticeship through which the master's wisdom and example are but gradually absorbed into the life of the disciple, although the community dimension admits a place for rules and principles. At this point, Spohn seems to draw a needlessly stark contrast between the community and the private interpreter.

Considering the ethical potential and limits of the common Christian story in relation to the discipleship model provides Spohn with the springboard for a fifth main chapter in which he sets out his own approach, that of scripture as establishing the basis for responding love. Exploring this undoubtedly central biblical theme, morality for Christians is neither applying an abstract principle nor a question of simple imitation but the imaginative extension of the story to our new situations. So the story of Jesus – treated paradigmatically rather than iconically – illuminates which features of our situation are significant, how we are to act (even when precisely what we are to do is unclear) and what we are to become as people. Such an approach focuses on the agent rather than the act, it can inform the emerging stress on character and value, it establishes spirituality as the bridge between theory and action and it encourages us to face the radical imperatives of scripture squarely rather than just to make abstractions from them.

Spohn's examples and interests naturally reflect his own perspective and inevitably there are occasions where the demarcation between approaches seems to blur. But, given a generally objective stance and the underlying assumption that the alternative approaches are complementary, the result is an introduction which is more satisfying than many. A desire to treat scripture seriously only enhances this. That his own approach receives twice as much space as most of the others may come close to the 'yet another approach' trap mentioned above. Perhaps it did not need such a comparatively lengthy treatment and the more casual reader may well find parts of it tortuous, but, given the biblical importance and the integrative potential of his theme, allowances are surely in order. Spohn's style also allows the reader to come to his own conclusions, to bounce his own ideas, hence this little book may not only serve as an introduction to the

field but also stimulate the newcomer's further thinking or perhaps help the bewildered to organise theirs.

Frank Waddleton, Glasgow

The Christ of the Bible and the Church's Faith

Geoffrey Grogan
Christian Focus Publications, Fearn, 1998; 297pp., £9.95; ISBN 1 87592 662 5

Geoffrey Grogan, Principal Emeritus of International Christian College, Glasgow, has produced a fine volume on New Testament Christology with an interesting twist. The odd-numbered chapters in the book discuss theologically who Jesus was and is as one would expect in such a volume, covering matters such as the biblical evidence from both the New Testament and the Old, Christ in his humiliation, Christ in his exaltation, the deity of Christ. The even-numbered chapters, however, address issues more apologetical in character. Grogan helpfully discusses fundamental questions relating to history, theology, biblical interpretation, ethics, creeds, and the uniqueness of Christ in a world of religious pluralism.

In every chapter, Grogan demonstrates at once a grasp of the key issues, knowledge of a broad range of important literature and a firm commitment to a biblical perspective on the subject. The final chapter faces the reader with the personal implications of faith in this Christ, thus demonstrating the pastoral concern that lies at the heart of the author.

This is a wide-ranging book which will inform the believer, answer the enquirer, and challenge the faithless sceptic. Given that many of the topics covered have had whole volumes devoted to them, it will surprise no-one that theological students will need to supplement this book with other more narrowly-focused studies. However, Christians looking for a readable resource to inform their thinking or to give to friends or colleagues who are prepared to think seriously about Jesus need look no further than this volume. It is warmly commended.

Alistair I. Wilson, Highland Theological College, Dingwall

BOOK REVIEWS