REVIEWS

We Speak Because We Have First Been Spoken: A Grammar of the Preaching Life. By Michael Pasquarello III. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009. ISBN 978-0-8028-2917-7. viii + 158 pp. £11.99.

In this intense little book, Professor Pasquarello continues the polemic against the cultural captivity of contemporary preaching and the retrieval of the homiletical wisdom of the *communio sanctorum* that he began in *Sacred Rhetoric: Preaching as a Theological and Pastoral Practice* (2005) and *Christian Preaching: A Trinitarian Theology of Proclamation* (2006). Here the focus shifts from foundations and saints to Pastor Bloggs himself as the one who is called to be 'a living sermon' (Augustine).

Contesting the hegemony of the managerial paradigm of relevance and effectiveness, skills and technique, the author argues that the crux of preaching is the disciplined formation of the character of the preacher himself. Eschewing all dualisms, he relentlessly insists on the integration of the intellectual and the affective, the doctrinal and the moral, the personal and the ecclesial, the contemplative and the practical as the comprehensive 'grammar' of the preacher's life and work.

Pasquarello is a Methodist who yet, like John Wesley himself, has a catholic sensibility and vision. Ireneaus, Augustine, and Thomas Aquinas, the star witness in the case, join the conversation from the early and medieval church, while Bonhoeffer, Rowan Williams, and Stanley Hauerwas are prominent among modern interlocutors. Ellen Charry, cited in critique of what she calls the 'recipe approach' to homiletics, really struck a chord with this reviewer, who remembers with utter dismay the recent re-branding of our synod Education Officer as... the 'Training' Officer! As if ministerial formation and Christian discipleship were a matter of following the instructions.

So is Pasquarello tapping into the currents of 'spirituality' with which the world is awash? On the contrary, he likewise detects a technology of ego-engineering in this fashionable therapeutic, in contrast to the kenotic rigours involved in classical Christian approaches to sanctification, including the reordering of desires and the praxis of cruciformity. And sanctification takes time, a scarce commodity in the postmodern gym of inner fitness where speed is of the essence.

The author's pivotal point is that preaching is the practice of wisdom. As 'the just man justices' (Hopkins), so (I would put it) 'the preacher prudences'. *Prudentia*, 'good sense' (Jane Austen), street savvy, patiently, prayerfully, painfully acquired and issuing in truthful speech with performative intent—this is the heart of the book's pedagogy.

Yet if there is something lacking in the thesis, it is perhaps Pastor Bloggs himself, whose life will always be more or less conflicted, whose vocation is an affliction, and whose sermons will never be better than near-misses. Of course Pasquarello is aware that the finest preacher is an earthen vessel, but I would like to have seen some honest recognition of the cracks in the clay, say of some of his paragons—Thomas' grotesque gluttony, for example, or Wesley's muddled sexuality—precisely in order to avert any facile identification of *holiness* with *wholeness*. Otherwise, moreover, there is the danger that the author's preacher becomes rather like John Milbank's church: he bears little resemblance to anyone we actually know.

Finally, an editorial quibble: the book, despite its emphasis on word-care, suffers from repetition, and a patchwork quality of over-quotation. Short as it is, it could be more concise.

Of course it is a book reviewer's job to red-pen the odd 'could do better'. But all things considered, Pasquarello could not have done much better in this timely critical and constructive contribution to a homiletics that is not purpose-driven but Spirit-led.

Kim Fabricius, Bethel United Reformed Church, Swansea/ Swansea University

As It Is Written: Studying Paul's Use of Scripture. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Christopher D. Stanley. (Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series 50). Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008. ISBN 1589833597. xi + 376 pp. £23.99.

The present monograph represents the first fruits of the Society of Biblical Literature's Paul and Scripture Seminar. In broad terms, it provides insight into the current state of research on Paul's use of Scripture. More specifically, the book's thirteen essays address questions pertaining to the nature, form, function, and effect of Paul's interaction with the Hebrew scriptures. The book's diverse content will likely make its usefulness vary, but both specialists and non-specialists can benefit. Although the stated goal of the monograph is 'to "push the envelope" in the study of Paul's use of Scripture' (p. 8), its greatest asset may be its ability to introduce the reader to an increasingly vast and variegated field of study.

The four major sections of the work are preceded by a succinct introduction on 'Paul and Scripture: Charting the Course' by Christopher Stanley, which outlines the historical progression of the Seminar and announces the intent of the following sections.

The four essays in Part 2 ('Paul's Engagement with Scripture') deal with methodological questions. Taken together they form a critical in-

troduction to the ways in which Paul engages Scripture, with material on quotations (Steve Moyise), allusions or echoes (Stanley Porter), scriptural language and ideas (Roy Ciampa), and biblical narratives (Steven DiMattei). The precise definition of the field's particular vocabulary and the authors' interaction with primary and secondary literature make this section an informative and helpful analysis of the nature and form of Paul's use of Scripture. DiMattei's reassessment of Pauline typology in particular provides a unique portrait of the contrast between Paul's scriptural hermeneutic and the typological exegesis characteristic of certain portions of later Christianity.

Part 3 ('Paul and His Audiences') features three essays: Stanley Porter, 'Paul and His Bible: His Education and Access to the Scriptures of Israel'; Christopher Stanley, 'Paul's "Use" of Scripture: Why the Audience Matters'; Bruce Fisk, 'Synagogue Influence and Scriptural Knowledge among the Christians of Rome'. These focus on different dimensions of education and literacy in the first century C.E., introducing broader sociological and cultural questions. Porter's material on oral and book cultures, for example, furnishes readers with a concise summation of several aspects of media criticism and their impact on Paul's frequent use of Scripture.

Part 4 ('Paul's Intertextual Background(s)') contains two case studies on Romans, Douglas Campbell's 'The Meaning of δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ in Romans: An Intertextual Suggestion'; and Neil Elliot's '"Blasphemed among the Nations": Pursuing an Anti-Imperial "Intertextuality" in Romans'. Both explore the way in which intertextual associations may shape the course of Paul's rhetoric. In terms of the collection as a whole, the importance of these essays is not derived primarily from their specific arguments, but from their ability to highlight the complexity involved in determining whether a particular textual tradition influenced Paul's discourse (cf. p. 11).

The three essays that form Part 5 ('"Paul and Scripture" through Other Eyes') stem from divergent hermeneutical perspectives, serving to broaden the discussion beyond traditional Pauline interpretation. They approach the book's topic through the lenses of deconstruction (Mark Given), postcolonial hermeneutics (Jeremy Punt), and feminist criticism (Kathy Ehrensperger). The section achieves its goal of providing external insight to the topic, though certain conclusions, such as Given's dichotomy between Scripture and the Spirit, may ultimately prove unconvincing.

Especially on account of the increasing interest in Paul's use of Scripture, this collection likely will be necessary reading for any who wish to stay current with Pauline scholarship as well as for those who desire to do justice to this aspect of Paul's rhetoric.

Jeffrey W. Aernie, King's College, University of Aberdeen

The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament. By Andreas J. Köstenberger, L. Scott Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009. ISBN 978-0-8054-4365-7. xxii + 954 pp. £54.99.

Weighing in at nearly 1,000 pages, this hefty but attractively formatted volume aims to be a comprehensive text book that maintains the conservative tradition of the standard works by Donald Guthrie and by Donald Carson and Douglas Moo with (in the first edition) Leon Morris. Rather pedantically each chapter begins with an attempt to identify what will be the matters of basic, intermediate, and advanced knowledge that readers should expect to acquire at these different levels of study and closes with quiz questions for self-testing (but these are not graded). The fairly solid bibliographies do not indicate which works are less and which are more technical. Sidebars take up special topics and there are 'Something to Think About' sections to help students relate what they are studying to their own personal spiritual growth.

Other distinctives include a lengthy opening chapter on the nature and scope of Scripture which includes a simple introduction to the history of the New Testament canon that helpfully assesses recent study of the problem and a short discussion of the text. The exposition of inspiration and inerrancy follows conventional conservative lines. There is also a summary chapter of basic material on political and religious background.

The treatment of the separate Gospels is preceded by a chapter on 'Jesus and the Relationship between the Gospels'. It is focused on contemporary Jesus-research and offers a useful critical survey of leading figures and methods. The Synoptic Problem is solved in terms of literary dependence and specifically of Markan priority, but the question of Q is left hanging. The oral transmission of the material is treated too briefly to be of much help to students, particularly those exposed to radical questioning of the historicity of the Gospels. The individual Gospels are treated in canonical order, thus avoiding an interpretation of Matthew as building on a Markan foundation (even though Mark was written earlier). Questions of dating are answered on the basis of an early date (before Paul's death) for Acts. A major part of the treatment of each Gospel is a simple summary of the contents whose function is not clear. The characterizations of their theological messages are much more helpful, though it is surprising that more is not made of the role of Jesus as teacher in Matthew.

The tricky questions relating to the historicity of John are mentioned but not really tackled. To say 'John frequently transposed elements of the Gospel tradition into a different key' (p. 325) is not helpful if the metaphor is not clearly explained. One example is that 'parables are replaced

by extended discourses on the symbolism of Jesus' signs', another is that Kingdom of God teaching in the Synoptics corresponds to eternal life in John: but does this mean that John rewrote what Jesus had said, so that the teaching in John is not word-for-word what Jesus said, or does it mean that John had access to different eye-witness accounts of separate streams of teaching that are as historically reliable as the Synoptic accounts? Or what? This crucial question demands a clearer answer than we are given.

On Acts the authors stand firmly in the tradition of Ramsay, Bruce, Hemer, and Witherington, but are in danger of leaving students with the impression that there are no serious questions remaining concerning Luke's historical and theological accuracy; this is probably an oversimplification of the situation. The treatment of the Pauline letters (all thirteen of them) affirms their integrity and authenticity. Galatians comes first chronologically. The authors learn from the so-called 'new perspective' but retain a critical stance towards some of its manifestations. A closing chapter briefly discusses unity and diversity in the New Testament, but the emphasis is on the former and the diversity within the unity scarcely appears.

The book is a mine of up-to-date information from which any student can profit. Whether the aim of a book to be helpful at all of the three levels envisaged is practicable, I am not sure; the material contained is a mix of the elementary and the advanced, but it is probably the advanced students who will find it most profitable.

I. Howard Marshall, King's College, University of Aberdeen

Biblical Theology: Introducing the Conversation. By Leo G. Perdue, Robert Morgan, and Benjamin D. Sommer. The Library of Biblical Theology; Nashville: Abingdon, 2009 (UK: Alban Books). ISBN 978-0-687-34100-9. 337 pp. £13.99.

In the opening essay, 'Dialogical Biblical Theology: A Jewish Approach to Reading Scripture Theologically', Sommer asserts that 'dialogical biblical theology' refuses to 'limit itself to large, hard-cover two-volume works' or to 'a crosscut of the whole of scripture' (p. 50). Rather, it tends to focus on discrete texts or particular issues. It commits itself to a close reading of the biblical text (for 'close reading' understand 'creative deconstruction') in interaction with: for Jewish scholars, (1) the large post-biblical rabbinic, medieval, and other traditions, and (2) contemporary concerns and issues; or, for Christian scholars, (1) subsequent Christian tradition and (2) contemporary concerns and issues.

> If dialogue between biblical and postbiblical figures is the most productive model for biblical theology, then the participants on the biblical side need not be limited to the canonizers or the redactors. On the contrary: the goal of this venture is to foster discussion among ancient, medieval, and modern voices, and for this reason too much attention to the voice of the redactor or canonizer would squelch other voices who deserve a place at the table. . . . For example, Jewish biblical theologians would think about appropriating, accepting, or rejecting biblical teachings in light of the ways rabbinic traditions have appropriated, accepted, and rejected the Bible over the past two millennia. (pp. 50–51)

This dialogical approach, Sommer contends, is 'unambiguously confessional' in the sense that it evaluates biblical texts out of the matrix of the confession of particular communities (Jewish or Christian). The hermeneutic Sommer describes 'will allow biblical criticism to become a constructive part of theological discourse' (p. 53).

In the first of his two essays, Perdue traces the course of Old Testament theology since Barth's *Romans*. The lesson to be learned from this survey, as Perdue sees it, is that we have arrived 'at the end of one dominant age of theological interpretation and at the beginning of another' (p. 134). The grand Old Testament theologies of, say, von Rad and Eichrodt have largely teetered and collapsed under the uncertainties of our age, an age characterized by 'military capitalism' (the expression is Brueggemann's), especially the Religious Right. The self-assured method of unpacking meaning was historical criticism, but in the postmodern world we are confronted by pluralism of faith and of interpretive communities. The old Eurocentric theologies by (largely) white males no longer hold sway. In short, the hero of Perdue's recital is Brueggemann and those who are aligned with him.

Morgan's 'New Testament Theology in the Twentieth Century' is (as might be expected) a thoroughly competent survey—though why some New Testament theologians are labeled 'conservative' while their counterparts are never labeled 'liberal' but are left nicely unlabeled, I can only guess. Morgan ends up with a few paragraphs recognizing the broader range of interests that have engaged New Testament theologians during the past three decades.

> As societies become pluralist, a New Testament theology unconstrained by church authority is likely to follow, for better or worse. The main lines of twentieth-century New Testament theology have been critical and historical, whether linked with theologies of the word or of history. The new diversity of methods and interests toward the end of the century have complicated the picture but have not undermined the basic tasks of biblical studies. These re-

> main linguistic, literary, and historical, and they continue to raise theological questions. The future shape of New Testament theology will depend on the tasks it is designed to fulfill. . . . If it is still to play a decisive role in determining the identity of religious communities or communions, then textual determinacy will remain indispensable, and the classical forms of New Testament theology will provide essential guidelines (pp. 207-208).

Finally, Perdue ends the collection with a highly selective hermeneutical sketch that drives from 'classical' approaches (under which both Albertz and Bultmann fall, for the OT and the NT respectively) to literary approaches, theologies of liberation (including postcolonial, feminist, womanist, and other interpretations), and 'other forms of liberation theology'.

The three essays by Sommer or Perdue are not heading in the same direction as Morgan's essay. The latter rightly recognizes the growing diversity of the field of New Testament theology, but still holds to the indispensability of 'textual determinacy'. The former are constantly and rather triumphantly driving toward postmodern and trendy ends, transparently skeptical about what Morgan calls 'the classical forms of New Testament theology'. So the book, quite frankly, does not hang together.

Despite its subtitle, it does not introduce 'the conversation'. Rather, one quarter of it manages that feat in its survey of New Testament theology (though that quarter is a bit upmarket for an 'introduction'), and three quarters of it is a slightly manipulative appeal to one trendy edge of the discipline. Detrimentally for an introduction, the book manages to avoid sustained discussion of the relationships between the Old and New Testaments (surely necessary if there is any hope for what is often called *eine ganze biblische Theologie*), of the possible relationships between history and theology in general and between the historical Jesus and the New Testament texts in particular and of the place (or otherwise) of salvation history (and what that expression has variously been understood to mean in the history of the discipline). In short, the book is not an introduction, so the subtitle is misleading, and it is only derivatively biblical theology, as opposed to Old Testament theology and New Testament theology, so the main title is misleading.

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Christ's Victory over Evil: Biblical Theology and Pastoral Ministry. Edited by Peter G. Bolt. Nottingham: Apollos, 2009. ISBN 978-1-84474-379-7. 260 pp. £14.99.

This collection is the result of a meeting held at Moore College School of Theology in Sydney on 'the relationship between Christians and the forces of evil'. Its stated aim is to listen to 'the present clamour drawing attention to the demonic, in order to hear the whisper of the gospel message more clearly, and to explore the power it promises—even in the face of the demonic'. The 'present clamour' comes from cross-cultural experiences and the growth of certain strands of charismatic evangelicalism.

As the subtitle suggests, the essays fall into two categories: biblical theology, and pastoral practice. Those concentrating on the Bible are of a conservative Reformed view. Peter Bolt's overview of the biblical sources rightly objects to a systematised demonology and insists on the centrality of christology. Mark Thompson conducts his exegesis of Colossians 2:13-15 through the lens of a traditional justification by faith hermeneutic, and Willis Salier writes of Jesus' complete mastery over evil in John's gospel. On 1 John, Matthew Jensen emphasises the glorification of the incarnate Christ, while Constantine Campbell writes on the intersection between union with Christ and the powers. The essays are competent enough, but the Scriptures and secondary sources dealt with are 'safe' theologically. It is especially noticeable that narratives in the Synoptics, Acts, and Old Testament which speak of the powers are not tackled at all. This is regrettable, since it is often precisely this material from which many, including the 'expansives' (shorthand for those influenced by the likes of Derek Prince and John Wimber), draw support for their emphasis on healing and deliverance. There is, on the whole, not enough engagement with different hermeneutical stances, and, as a result, the conclusions are predictable.

The essays dealing with pastoral practice are more stimulating, opening valuable avenues for theological investigation and practical hermeneutics. Tony Payne gives a helpful historical overview of ideas from Wesley through to Pentecostalism, outlining the development of 'expansive demonology', with its claims that demonic influences can prevent Christians from living victoriously. From a missiological perspective, Greg Anderson and Jonathan Lilley recognise the strong belief in supernatural beings among many aboriginal Australian Christians, and suggest that an emphasis on confidence in the face of the powers could be a way forward for evangelism. Donald West on prayer in the light of Christ's victory is straightforward and again, hardly original stuff. A final essay by Peter Bolt and Donald West on pastoral practice rightly warns against overemphasis on the demonic and no emphasis at all, advocating a middle way.

Commendably, the book avoids polemics. However, there is still a tendency to didacticism, which compromises its ability to relate to those whose worldviews are less rationalist than the writers' own. It is not enough simply to say what is wrong with the views of others. We cannot dismiss the fact that 'expansive demonology' is attractive to many, an attraction which (surprisingly) is evidenced by Tony Payne, who finds appealing the idea that the spirit of Jezebel may be at the root of feminism. Comments like this need to be explored. Nor can we ignore the experiences of Christians from cultures uninfluenced by the European Enlightenment for whom the demonic world is part of their cultural background. I hope that the voices of the missiologists and pastoral practitioners, which are rather muted here, will be given the hearing they deserve, and their views mined for the hermeneutical possibilities which are, at present, largely hidden.

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The Theological Epistemology of Augustine's De Trinitate. By Luigi Gioia. Oxford Theological Monographs; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. ISBN 978-0-19-955346-4. xvi + 330 pp. £65.00.

Luigi Gioia's study of St Augustine's *De Trinitate* is a long hard look at one of the major influences on Western thought, a text that shaped the landscape for many generations of theologians to follow. Augustine says he wrote *De Trinitate* so that Christians would 'perceive the essence of truth'. For him this truth is knowable only through the economic action of the Trinity. His aim is not simply to teach that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but to establish that, as Gioia describes it, 'without Christ's soteriological and epistemological mediation, in the Holy Spirit, no knowledge of God, no union with God, no exposition of the Trinitarian mystery is conceivable' (p. 33). Hence, Augustine's *De Trinitate* is not merely a trinitarian theology, but equally a trinitarian epistemology.

In the first chapter, Gioia claims that recognition of this trinitarian epistemology illumines the coherence of a work that, with its argumentative complexity and numerous 'digressions', has often confused its readers and led them to find it hopelessly disjointed. Accordingly, in chapter 2, Gioia casts doubt upon such interpretations and points to the recent work of Rowan Williams and Lewis Ayres, which identify a certain christology at the centre of *De Trinitate*, as exemplary and foundational to his own work.

Because Gioia contends Augustine's is a trinitarian epistemology, he must successfully defend Augustine from accusations of pursuing an 'onto-theological' account of the Trinity. The litigating question may be

posed like this: Does the *De Trinitate* ever try to 'prove' the Trinity exists? Why this is a problem for some modern theologians (e.g. Barth) is ultimately related to concerns with modernity itself: any 'proof' of the Trinity, drawn on the basis of nature, is no less the exercise of an autonomous (and therefore Christ-less) reason. Unfazed by Barth's criticisms of Augustine, he spends a good part of his book showing why Augustine does not fall victim to the same 'epistemological dead-end' Barth condemned in modernity

The briefest of distillations will have to do: for Augustine, reconciliation and revelation make an inseparable pair. 'Enquiry into the way God has revealed himself through reconciling us to himself is only retrospective' (p. 188). Believers only know God as Trinity because they first believed. Yet before they can believe they must be purified, they must be reconciled through the *humilitas* of God, Christ the Incarnate Word of God. This ordering of revelation, faith and knowledge means that Augustine's answer to the question, How do we love through believing what we do not see?, is that 'we are known, reminded, converted, reconciled, enlightened by God and thus granted the form of knowledge of God belonging to our present condition, that is faith' (p. 188). The original action belongs entirely to God, that is, to the Father's action in Christ. Gioia thus shows Augustine is at one with Barth in fashioning a thoroughly revelational epistemology.

On this strictly revelational basis, too, Gioia argues there is no place for philosophizing about God the Father without mediation in Christ through the Holy Spirit. The human will is never neutral; sin always prevents it from true wisdom and from loving the highest eternal good. Which is why Christ has come to reveal the Father to us: by loving the Son, the Holy Spirit (which is love for Augustine) 'constitutes us believers in Christ, i.e. he creates in us that faith which works through love (*fides per dilectionem*), through which we adhere to Christ' (p. 115).

Gioia concludes that the 'primacy of love' is what Augustine's *De Trinitate* is all about. 'Love comes first' means not only must we love God in order to know him, but that God, who is love, has known and loved us first. *De Trinitate*, then, is not an apologetic work that appeals to natural knowledge. It is rather for those who already love he whom they do not see, its purpose is to show Christians that they *do* see him, on account of already being reconciled in Christ through the Holy Spirit.

One may question whether Gioia's 'Barthian' defence remains sensitive to Augustine's own concerns in the treatise. For example, Gioia argues that Augustine restricts the use of ontological categories to rhetorical and polemical purposes (e.g. to attack the Arian heresy). Rhetorical he certainly was, yet Augustine did not have modern autonomous reason

as a concern. Maybe at times he was less Barthian than Gioia makes him appear. Does natural theology have any 'non-polemical' foothold or interest in the *De Trinitate*, in favour or against Gioia's strictly revelational emphasis?

In the end, Gioia's study contains contributions beyond Augustine scholarship. The depth of analysis will enable Christian epistemologists to recognize *De Trinitate* as an essential resource for today. Indeed, this book arrives at an important moment in academic conversation: Today the notion of a *religious* epistemology is not only intellectually defensible (thanks to the work of Alston, Plantinga, Wolterstorff, *etc.*), but is in a rigorous way also theologically informed. Now open to theological considerations, contemporary epistemology is ripe for a return to the once standard work of Augustine, and Gioia's book is indispensable to those who seek such a recovery.

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Christ and Creation: Christology as the Key to Interpreting the Theology of Creation in the Works of Henri de Lubac. By Noel O'Sullivan. Religions and Discourse, 40; Bern: Peter Lang, 2008. ISBN 978-3-03911-379-8. 490 pp. £52.00.

When in 1938 the French Catholic theologian, Henri de Lubac (1896-1991) published *Catholicisme: Les Aspects soxiaux du dogme*, he laid the groundwork for many of his future publications and, in so doing, also for the theological renewal in the Catholic Church since the Second Vatican Council (1962-65). The recent spate of publications on the Jesuit theologian is of interest, therefore, not only to scholars specializing in de Lubac's thought but to all who want to understand the changes that have occurred in Catholicism. Neal O'Sullivan's *Christ and Creation* should thus be of broad interest. Written as a dissertation under Vincent Holzer at the Institut Catholique in Paris, the book presents an in-depth study of Henri de Lubac's understanding of creation, repeatedly returning to de Lubac's 1938 publication.

Arguing that christology is the key to interpreting de Lubac's doctrine of creation, O'Sullivan demonstrates that this christological approach is dynamic in character: the supernatural end of human beings, created in the image of God, is entry into the trinitarian life of God and so to have their humanness, as the likeness of God, restored and completed. According to O'Sullivan, de Lubac regards the mystery of Christ—and, in particular, of the cross—as central to this process. The cross, explains O'Sullivan, 'is the key to understanding the anthropology and the theology of creation in the works of Henri de Lubac' (p. 383). O'Sullivan does

acknowledge that de Lubac never saw his way clear to write a christology and that his early work suffered of a certain christological 'impoverishment' (p. 278). The author is nonetheless able to show that for de Lubac, Christ brought about a radical newness, which implied that eschatological renewal would far surpass a mere restoration of the paradisiacal origins of creation.

After a general introduction, O'Sullivan begins his study with a presentation of the overall context and of the underlying approach of de Lubac's theology. This is followed by a chapter on the doctrine of creation, in which the author admirably outlines de Lubac's appropriation of the patristic distinction between image and likeness. In the third chapter, the author deals with the controversial issue of de Lubac's reworking of the nature-supernatural relationship. Drawing in part on an unpublished article of de Lubac ('Sur la liberté du Christ'), O'Sullivan next discusses the transcendent newness highlighted by de Lubac, a newness that involves a divine 'Act of Love', which is better characterized as a transformation of humanity from within than as a redemptive satisfaction for sin (p. 346). Chapter 5 deals with Christ as the revelation of the Trinity. Here, de Lubac appears as a mystical theologian who at the same time recognized the centrality of the church. O'Sullivan also highlights here the significance of the Cross and of the doctrine of the Trinity for de Lubac's theology. In his final chapter, O'Sullivan discusses de Lubac's understanding of the church as sacrament—a notion influential in later Catholic theology. In the process, the author also outlines de Lubac's appropriation of Irenaeus's notion of recapitulation. For de Lubac, it is the church that enables humanity to enter into the trinitarian life and so to achieve the supernatural end of divine likeness.

O'Sullivan's study does have its weaknesses. Expositions on other theologians' thought (Rahner, Barth, Moltmann, Congar, Balthasar, Sesboüé) do not contribute to the book's value. Nor do exegetical expositions on the distinction between 'image' and 'likeness' or on the significance of the use of the aorist in the Lord's Prayer. The extensive background discussions on issues like the various quests for the historical Jesus and on postmodernity contribute little to our understanding of de Lubac's thought. The discussion is a bit slow-moving, and some trimming would have made the central argument stand out more clearly. In a few places, explanations remain somewhat inadequate. For example, de Lubac's interpretation of St Augustine's distinction between *adiutorium sine qua non* and *adiutorium quo* does not become entirely clear. Although the author mentions Balthasar's disagreement with Moltmann on the suffering of God, he fails to mention von Balthasar's own quite creative reworking of the doctrine of analogy with regard to the suffering of Christ. And the author seems to

suppose that for de Lubac the natural desire for God could not be in vain, something the French theologian was actually at pains to deny, precisely to be able to retain the gratuity of grace.

I am also less than convinced by O'Sullivan's critique of de Lubac's notion of 'paradox'. The author argues that de Lubac's reworking of the nature–supernatural relationship would have been more convincing if christology (rather than 'paradox') had been at its centre. It seems to me that de Lubac would have responded by insisting that the incarnation itself was the greatest paradox. After all, the mystery of the incarnation does not rationally explain how it is possible for God to create us with a natural desire for the beatific vision without owing us the fulfilment of this desire.

All the same, O'Sullivan's careful reading of de Lubac contributes to our understanding of the French theologian. The author rightly emphasizes that for de Lubac, it is christology that provides the key to the doctrine of creation (including anthropology). This christological starting-point implies that nature is not self-sufficient or radically autonomous, as was often implied in the approach of Catholic neo-scholasticism. By reintegrating nature and the supernatural by means of the doctrine of Christ, de Lubac greatly contributed to the twentieth-century renewal of Catholic theology and, by implication, to the possibilities for ecumenical dialogue with Protestants. O'Sullivan's fine study is an important reminder of this theologically and ecumenically crucial development within Catholic theology.

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The Holy Spirit: Classic and Contemporary Readings. Edited by Eugene F. Rogers, Jr. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. ISBN 978-1-4051-3624-2. xvi + 360 pp. £20.99.

This collection of essays on the Holy Spirit serves as a follow-up to editor's previous volume, *After the Spirit: A Constructive Pneumatology from Resources outside the Modern West* (Eerdmans, 2005). Indeed, Rogers explains, this book 'argues by display what that one argued by exposition' (p. 2). Consequently, readers should not expect this volume to reflect dispassionately the diversity of views on the Holy Spirit expressed throughout church history. Rather, Rogers' selections are hand-picked to bolster his thesis that a pneumatology of 'incorporation', wherein the Spirit 'introduces [human beings] into God as participants' (p. 3), is preferable to those theologies which allegedly overshadow the Spirit with an all-encompassing christology.

That said, Rogers nevertheless has collated a fascinating collection of material, ranging from the relatively obscure writings of Ephrem the Syrian and Isaac of Nineveh, to more well-known treatments such as those by Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, and Jürgen Moltmann. The bulk of the chapters are arranged linguistically, touching on certain Syriac, early Greek, Latin, German, Russian, and Romanian writings. Also included is a chapter of so-called 'Mystical Resources', which contains portions from the writings of Symeon the New Theologian, St John of the Cross, and Adrienn von Speyr, among others.

The scarlet thread identifying the volume's *raison d'être*, however, can be seen in the first and concluding sections, 'Late Twentieth-Century Questions' and 'Late-Twentieth Century Applications'. Therein, Rogers includes essays which variously criticize the overbearing christocentrism of modern theology (Robert Jenson), as well as those which advocate pneumatologies which can better inform concrete Christian practices such as prayer (Sarah Coakley) and biblical interpretation (Stephen Fowl). Throughout all the essays, the message is clear: a more robust doctrine of the Spirit not only puts the contemporary church in closer connection with her parents, but also energizes her reading of Scripture, worship, and ultimately her sanctification.

With helpful chapter introductions, manageable chapter lengths, and even full-colour images of relevant ecclesial art, this volume clearly lends itself to classroom use. While admittedly edited with an agenda, Rogers' book no doubt offers an illuminating slice of Christian thought on the Spirit which may re-ignite readers' imagination on this topic.

Justin Stratis, King's College, University of Aberdeen

The Future of Love: Essays in Political Theology. By John Milbank. London: SCM, 2009. ISBN 978-0-334-04326-3. 382 pp. £25.00.

'Hugo—*hélas*!' Gide declared, in identifying the greatest nineteenth-century poet. 'Milbank—*hélas*!' we might exclaim, in welcoming another collection of essays from this dominating figure in British religious philosophy. How incomparably dull we should be without him! Yet since *Theology and Social Theory* first established his reputation, the constant flow of Milbank essays has excited as much anxiety among admirers, who want to see a more focused, considered development of Milbankian ideas, as among the critics in whom the showmanship of 'radical orthodoxy' induces a frozen fury. *The Future of Love* is the third collection of these to have appeared. Written over the course of a quarter-century, its contents have a more heterogeneous character than their predecessors. Where *The Word Made Strange* had a set of metaphysical questions at its heart, and

Being Reconciled a set of theological and moral questions, *The Future of Love* presents itself as a contribution to 'political theology'.

That term is not given a precise accounting anywhere in these pieces, which range fairly wide. Two groups of three essays, however, focus on fundamental politico-theological questions. The first group is concerned with Christian socialism, and among these 'The Body by Love Possessed' is an important programmatic piece. A second group is concerned with aspects of liberalism and the market economy, and of these 'Liberality versus Liberalism' will, I think, deserve the careful attention of Milbank's interpreters.

Need a political theologian actually understand what is going on in politics? Milbank treats us freely to his own political judgments, and I have to confess I find many of them implausible. Inclined to see all history metaphysically in terms of vast intellectual currents, he lacks the parochial instinct to put himself inside the minds and motivations of trivial political actors. If, as a great scholar famously said of a great philosopher, 'Plotinus did not know he was a Neoplatonist', how would such a commonplace political manager as Margaret Thatcher know that she was a neoliberal? Or the younger George Bush understand himself as part of a 'gleeful' plot 'to reinscribe state sovereignty'? It is as though Milbank could not credit the implications of his own modernity-narrative. If 'modernity' as a concept is to mean anything, it must surely mean that not *they*, the politicians, but *we*, the chattering masses, think the thoughts that invoke the curses of crassness and cruelty upon our age.

This is not the volume I would recommend to those who want to understand why Milbank is of importance for theology. That must be *Being Reconciled*. But for those already following his unfolding thought these essays add new dimensions to the Milbank they already know. Some of the most interesting ones explore his allegiance to the nineteenth century Anglican tradition, in a manner that is essentially liberal and only loosely Catholic. The brief round of applause for Benedict XVI with which the collection ends is less revealing, in the end, than the articles on Coleridge, Matthew Arnold, Newman and the Christian socialists, all of which point to the spiritual wells from which Milbank has drawn his idiosyncratic but indubitably Anglican disposition. His more splenetic theological prejudices, too, which he has always delighted to display in public, have a nineteenth-century liberal flavour. (Evangelical readers, be warned!) In including three essays in response to others' critical essays, he has taken a risk, since listening to one half of a telephone conversation is not always very easy or very productive. But these responses offer self-interpretative moments of undoubted interest, especially a slightly testy series of observations on the misplaced charge of intolerance and fideism, and a reply to

Rowan Williams about his understanding of the church, both of which display a more liberal-Protestant face than we are used to seeing.

If Milbank has learned from his favourite, Chesterton, not to be ashamed of his own prejudices, he has certainly not followed the master's advice on another matter. In a fine passage of *The Dumb Ox*, Chesterton explains how Aquinas is a better philosopher than Nietzsche because he took the trouble to purge his thought of metaphor and to write plainly. Given how much Milbank's thought revolves around the themes of beauty, art, and the poetic work of thought, it is strange that he should constantly express himself in prose that is ill-formed, congested, and inexpressive, giving the appearance of being simply spilled onto the page. 'One should exhibit and offer a ruin', he tells us, justifying the incomplete character of his thought. As those who live in Scotland have reason to know, ruins may be beautiful; Milbank's, most of the time, are not. Yet from time to time a phrase sticks out, like a tower on a hill against the sky, perfectly capturing the tension between heaven and earth. For the sake of those momentary glimpses, so dramatic and inspiring, his readers will continue to think the long and uncomfortable journeys worthwhile.

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Politics and the Order of Love: An Augustinian Ethic of Democratic Citizenship. By Eric Gregory. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. ISBN 978-0-225-30751-0. xv + 417 pp. £31.00.

This is the first major work from Eric Gregory, a significant new figure in Christian ethics. It is eminently worth a read. Gregory seeks to develop a 'vision of citizenship open to social transformation by attending to virtue' (p. 9). He builds his case by neatly presenting the debate concerning modern liberalism as a struggle over Augustine's legacy. In opposition to Augustinian realists, who suggest that politics is simply a tool for restraining sin and to Augustinian proceduralists, who present a denuded vision of justice as bare fairness, Gregory defends what he calls 'Augustinian civic liberalism,' a political theory that offers an account of civic virtue centering on love.

Gregory argues that civic liberalism can encompass the best of realism and proceduralism because, for Augustine, love is internally related both to sin and to justice. Sin is a 'species' of love, thus love and sin exist on a continuum that allows each to 'constrain' the other in political ethics. That love always borders on sin should limit perfectionism that can lead to paternalism; that sin is simply defective love suggests the propriety of an ethic that seeks to train in virtue, constraining purely negative forms of liberalism. In much the same way, there is a kind of 'hypostatic

union' between love and justice: these virtues are neither to be confused nor separated, and neither is complete without the other. For Gregory, then, realists and proceduralists present truncated ethical accounts because they attend only to one half of a dialectical relation, treating sin and justice apart from love. An ethic of love corrects this imbalance, providing a thicker account of social obligation that is more conducive to human flourishing than the minimalist concern for the 'creation of a space where we do not kill each other' (p. 9).

Gregory spends much of his book showing why an ethic of love is not antithetical to liberalism. He devotes a chapter each to two common worries about love in social ethics, and it is largely in responding to these that his own position emerges. The first concerns the perceived 'irrationality' of love and its propensity to break down the intersubjective 'distance' required for politics. Gregory argues that this criticism is based on a failure to perceive that affections have a 'rationality' of their own; love, he argues, 'admits a cognitive and volitional structure' (pp. 248-55). To deny this is to arbitrarily privilege reason as most basic to the self and allow it alone to shape how we experience and engage with the world.

The second criticism, which has long been leveled at Augustine's theology, is that Christianity demands so total a love for God that the neighbour is reduced to an object of use in the believer's ascent to God. Gregory proposes that this criticism fails to take into account Augustine's theology of creation and his Christology. It is in his use of these strands of Augustine's thought that Gregory's book is perhaps most original and significant. For Augustine, all that is created is good and has its value 'secured' in Christ. Thus, all that is, merits love, and the question is not *what* we should love but *how*. Rather than inquiring into the order and relation between different objects of love, Gregory argues that, because of the goodness of creation, attention ought to fall on the disposition of the lover, the character, motivations, and virtues of citizens. He proposes that a good lover ought to love objects 'in God,' a mode of love that 'protects' the neighbour from 'the self's prideful distortion that the neighbour exists only in terms of one's own ends' (p. 42). We may love objects 'in God' because, in becoming the neighbour of humanity, Christ brings it about that God is 'all in all'. Thus, 'to love God is to love the whole of creation existing in God,' and God is loved 'in loving God's world' (p. 323). For Gregory, then, Christ establishes a 'coincident relation between love of God and love of neighbour that provides an integrated motivational ideal for human action' that can lead to a more just society (p. 45).

In addition to offering an important new perspective in political theology, the lucidity with which Gregory treats an extraordinary range of material makes this book a valuable introduction to contemporary po-

litical ethics. Yet it might be fair to wonder whether attention to contemporary questions is so controlling that important aspects of Augustine's thought are lost. Gregory is clear that his interest is in 'what Augustine has become' and not in 'what he was' (p. 77). The question is whether Augustine's theology of love comes through this transition intact. It is curious, for instance, that Gregory scarcely mentions the Holy Spirit, who figures so prominently in Augustine's theology of love.

This leads to two problems. First, where Augustine presents the Holy Spirit as bringing a new, radically interruptive love that breaks the habits of humanity's sinful will (*Conf.* 13.7.8), Gregory suggests that there is a 'fundamental continuity' between all loves, 'whether or not they are distinguished as "natural" or "supernatural"' (p. 22). This rejection of a qualitative difference between sinful and reformed love means that Gregory can appease liberal sensibilities by saying that Augustinians 'cannot expect liberals to "confess Christ is Lord" in order to become good lovers' (p. 256). But Augustine's theology would be hard pressed to accommodate this concession.

Second, where Augustine appears to reconcile the two halves of the dual love command by suggesting that Christians love their neighbours with the self-giving love of God, enabled by the Holy Spirit, (*De Trin.* 8.12; 15.31), Gregory, as we have seen, attempts to unite love of God and love of neighbour christologically. Yet the critic's fear that neighbour love gets lost in love of God may be justified, for Gregory appears at times to suggest that the neighbour is loved as an instance of the eternal presence of Christ in the world.

It may be, then, that Gregory finds himself in difficulty as a result of requiring christology to bear parts of the conceptual load that Augustine supports pneumatologically. Yet this is a question that cannot be treated here and that should not discourage any from reading and evaluating Gregory's work.

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Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation. By James K. A. Smith. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009. ISBN 978-0-8010-3577-7. 238 pp. £12.99.

In the first of three proposed volumes, Smith considers the relation among Christian education, worldview, and anthropology. Worried that the world more pervasively and effectively forms Christians than the church, he attempts to rejuvenate the church's formation of its members by developing its anthropology and reforming its pedagogy. The problem is that the church has subscribed to a flawed anthropology which has led it to fo-

cus on the intellect and see formation as indoctrination. Here, the church prioritizes the sermon as the pastor attempts to impart a Christian worldview or biblical data to his congregation under the assumption that right knowledge will produce right desire and action. Smith dissents from this approach due to his acceptance of new insights in philosophical anthropology and social theory. Humans are fundamentally lovers. Their desires are oriented through the rituals that comprise the culture and society in which one moves and lives and has being. The church, therefore, must form its people not merely through lectures on doctrine but primarily and preeminently through liturgy. Thus, Smith's proposal calls for a recovery of liturgy as the mode of Christian education and formation. Throughout the book, Smith treats his readers to fascinating exegeses of culture and insightful reflections upon its formative influence.

Smith begins by taking a look at how people are formed by everyday culture. He shows that an average shopping mall is no mere modern convenience, but a contemporary cathedral, a place of worship in which humanity's loves are at once ordered and satiated. The mall, it turns out, is a place of ritual and liturgy.

Smith's ability to reveal the subtle but deep ways in which culture forms us demonstrates his contention that liturgical action is the main instrument by which one's identity and loves are formed. Humans are liturgical animals. In other words, humans are primarily formed from the body *in* rather than from the head *down*. Smith appeals to St Augustine and defends an anthropology that sees the affections as central. To say that humans are affective is not to deny the rational and noetic aspects of human personhood, but to subordinate them to the heart. People are defined by what they love, and what inscribes desire on the heart of a person, says Smith, is his habits and dispositions, his liturgical embodiment in the world.

With this anthropology in place, Smith suggests that the church's traditional commitment to worldview formation should be modified to account for what Charles Taylor calls the 'the social imaginary'. The social imaginary is the cultural mentality and system of values and goals which engender and make sense of the social, political, and cultural patterns, practices, and stories. Smith accordingly argues for a liturgical understanding of worldview formation where ecclesial practices and liturgies are the means by which an alternative, Christian social imaginary is developed. Liturgical habituation into the rhythms of the kingdom is crucial for a Christian understanding of the world.

Smith masterfully examines cultural liturgies and shows how they form us. He rightfully implores the church to recover liturgical formation and, along the way, introduces several key components, not least of

which are his affective anthropology and his appropriation of the social imaginary.

The shortcoming of this volume is Smith's ignorance of *doctrine* and its effect, his preference for contemporary philosophy. Consequently, he does not conceive formation in theological terms, but follows the canons of contemporary social and anthropological theory. Furthermore, in the Reformed tradition in which Smith stands, there are deep wells of affective anthropologies, christologically oriented heart-formation, and pneumatologically robust accounts of Christian formation. But Smith does not drink from these fountains and so oddly relies more on voices outside the very tradition he thinks bears the Christian social imaginary.

While Smith may account for these lacunae in future volumes, the lack of doctrinal reasoning leaves this volume ironically secular; Smith offers an account of *human* formation, not yet a specifically *Christian* account. He thus fails to see a difference between the way culture forms and the way God forms. Had he been more attentive to doctrine, Smith might have realized that christology and pneumatology give rise to the language of regeneration and sanctification, which is a very different happening than simple human growth, formation, or moral self-realization. While Smith does attempt to integrate Christ and the Spirit, neither play substantial roles, in either a material or formal sense, in his work.

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Living Gently in a Violent World: The Prophetic Witness of Weakness. By Stanley Hauerwas and Jean Vanier. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008. ISBN 978-0-8308-3452-5. 117 pp. £9.99.

A product of a 2006 conference organized by the Centre of Spirituality, Health and Disability at the University of Aberdeen, this book marks the first occasion on which Stanley Hauerwas, renowned theologian and Christian ethicist, and Jean Vanier, founder of the worldwide L'Arche communities, have worked in direct partnership. In this book they, in their respective and unique styles, call the church to take seriously its role in demonstrating to the world that a different way of living has been made possible, one characterized by gentleness, peacemaking and faithfulness. They do so by directing our attention to the ministry of L'Arche (http://www.larche.org.uk/), an organization oriented by Christian principles intent on caring for and befriending people with disabilities.

In addressing issues of theology and disability, Hauerwas and Vanier challenge the reader to see the world through the eyes of those who have been placed at the margins of society. As John Swinton writes in the introduction, they make it clear that 'it is not the world of disability that is

strange, but the world "outside," which we dare to call normal. It turns out that the world of disability is the place that God chooses to inhabit'.

The beauty of L'Arche, as Vanier describes it, is that it provides us with a unique opportunity to experience the kind of love that we find Jesus bringing in the Gospels where the poor, the disabled (blind, lame, disturbed), the outcast, the peasant masses, the sinners are elevated and objects of his attention and care. While the 'normal' world is actively trying to make the existence of the 'least of these' redundant, L'Arche sees the world through God's eyes and so finds God's love in friendship with those whom the world finds odd and marginalizes. As Vanier puts it, 'if you become a friend of somebody who is excluded, you are doing a work of unity. You are bringing people together. You are doing God's work.'

L'Arche provides us with the means for developing and maintaining these meaningful and unifying friendships, Hauerwas explains, by teaching us the importance of slowing down. In his words, 'L'Arche embodies the patience that is absolutely crucial if we are to learn to be faithful people in our world'. While he implores the reader to listen to the weakest members of society, one cannot help but wonder whether, according to the main theme of the book, those on the margins actually are the weakest members of society. It seems as though those who are more in tune with the love of God and the necessity of meaningful friendships over frantic activity might in fact have a leg up on the rest us, and therefore be an instance of what Jesus meant when he spoke of the last being first. This is why L'Arche is so important, both for the world and for the church: it is a place that teaches us to learn this hope in a world that can only see the 'weakness' of disability as a 'problem' to be solved and corrected. By 'living gently', by practicing patient friendship with those with whom Christ identified, we will learn the love of Christ and discover the truths of creation and redemption, that *all* human life is a gift from God and *all* are welcome in his Kingdom.

Short in pages but rich in content, *Living Gently in a Violent World* is a very important book for the church, particularly in a time when a meaningful response to theological and ethical issues surrounding personhood is in high demand. If the church is indeed meant to demonstrate to the world that a different way of living has been made possible through Christ, then faithful disciples have no choice but to be engaged in the practices of friendship and peace. We do live in a broken world that becomes more fractured day-by-day, and Hauerwas and Vanier call our attention to the challenge L'Arche puts to us, a challenge to slow down and behold in friendships with the weak the true life Jesus offers, a life of weakness, humility and trust, not power, upward mobility, and self-sufficiency.

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Money, Greed, and God: Why Capitalism Is the Solution and Not the Problem. By Jay W. Richards. New York: HarperOne, 2009. ISBN 978-0-06-137561-3. 255 pp. £15.60.

Jay Richards, an evangelical political apologist, defends capitalism against eight myths he believes socialist propagandists and religious elites spin in order to mislead unsuspecting, pious innocents. His purpose is to liberate those innocent dupes by giving them the truth—capitalism is always the solution, never the problem. These eight myths constitute the eight chapters of his book. They are as follows: 1. Anti-capitalists set forth an impossible ideal against which capitalism is measured. 2. They emphasize good intentions, such as a 'living wage', which social scientists know cannot establish an efficient economic order without attention to unintended consequences. In other words, directly intending the good can do more harm than following the laws of the free market. 3. They set forth a zero-sum economy. 4. They disparage wealth by teaching that it comes at someone else's expense. 5. They teach that capitalism works through greed. 6. They trumpet Christianity's traditional usury prohibition as evidence that making money on money is immoral. 7. They teach that capitalism creates an ugly world, confusing aesthetic judgments with economic arguments. 8. They teach that capitalism has a voracious appetite that will use up all the world's resources. Richards wants to explode these 'myths', freeing us from the 'they'.

Who exactly 'they' are is not clear. He provides anecdotes from past professors he had in college and takes occasional swipes at Jim Wallis, Ron Sider, Tony Campolo, Rod Dreher, and Wendell Berry. But we do not get any sustained attention as to who the left-wing socialist conspirators are spinning these foolish myths. In fact, this is a populist work that does not take into account most of the serious work done in Christian theology on economics. It trots out old canards like the usury prohibition assumed a zero-sum game, even though few today seriously studying the church's traditional teaching on monetary exchange accept such silliness was primarily behind the usury prohibition. The ancients were not so foolish as to think every exchange was zero-sum. It was secular economists, especially the Austrians, who taught that in order to exemplify how ridiculous they found the Christian scholastics and fathers to be. But it was a caricature then as it is now.

Richards needs these caricatures of capitalism's critics to make his arguments. He consistently makes six 'arguments,' which are more rhetorical assertions than anything else. First, capitalism may not be the best system, but all the alternatives are worse. Here, he is guilty of a version of the first myth he identified—he compares extremes; our alternatives are

Pol Pot or capitalism. Second, critics of capitalism are ignorant and don't understand it. It is the only system that can alleviate poverty. Third, a cost-benefit analysis of every moral or theological principle must be done. In other words, Richards cannot think outside utilitarianism. Every action or thing can be given a number, a value, and compared to another. No two actions or things are incommensurable. Fourth, capitalism is primarily about ideas; they are what generate wealth. Fifth, the moral critiques of capitalism fail to account for unintended consequences. (It always strikes me as odd that defenders of the stoic rationality of the free market claim to know how *unintended* consequences will work to increase utility. Evidently they are not 'unintended' to the truly enlightened!) Finally, the opposing side is part of an elite, envious, resentful class who keep the truth from the masses. Nearly every chapter in Richards' book blasts away with one of these arguments. What you will not find, even though the book was published in 2009, is any discussion of credit default swaps or how unregulated banking industries might actually be a problem. This is a book intended to assuage Christians who might find something like the Great Recession to be a sign not all is well with capitalism.

Richards' tone deafness to any possibility that capitalism might have the slightest problem with it is stunning. You wonder what inequities he would not countenance. He defends the reality that the market will pay coffee pickers 10 cents a day for picking coffee while Starbucks charges $4.28 for a double latte (p. 40). Likewise, he justifies the fact that the top 500 CEO's made an average of $13.5 million in 2005 while a minimum wage worker made $10,700 (p. 67). If any of that seems intuitively wrong or sinful, do not worry. Once you understand how markets work, you will see that such inequities are necessary for efficiency. And, of course, any redistribution of wealth would be counter-productive. Why is this? It is because labour must be seen as only a commodity if capitalism is to work properly. And, of course, it will need the force of law to insure it is only construed as such.

Richards' liberal utilitarianism shows itself again in his description of what labour is. He writes, 'To a business, employee wages are costs... . A wage is a price on a commodity—labor'. It must not be understood as anything more than that. If it is, the system will not work. For this reason, we must not have any minimum wage let alone a just wage (p. 38). This is classic liberalism, pure utilitarianism. It also directly and defiantly contradicts Catholic social teaching since Leo XIII, if not Thomas Aquinas. Other telling rejections of traditional Christian teaching can be readily found in Richards' defence of capitalism. It is at least a heterodox work.

Like many others who argue in this vein, Richards sets forth China as a shining example of what free markets can do. He contrasts China with

socialist African countries and argues it is the former's free markets combined with the rule of law that 'continue a steady glide up and to the right as their economies grow freer' (p. 92). At some point Christian apologists like Richards must explain why China can allow McDonalds and Starbucks on every corner but continue its crackdown on house churches. I would think that a Christian apologist like St Paul would not allow the latter to go unmentioned in favour of extolling the former. Richards' book leads me to think that he finds Wallis and Sider more dangerous to Christianity than the Chinese government. Can that be right (pun intended)?

Perhaps capitalism is not always the answer if you ask a question other than the utilitarian one that dominates Richards' argument. If the question is, how do we value efficiency above everything else, then Richards' 'argument' works. But that may be because the answer is already contained in the question. If any other question gets raised, the argument falters. One should not read his book armed only with that question, it might lead to being taken in by the 'argument'. Instead, readers should have in their minds questions prompted by Christian moral theology: How does my use of money exegete God's name? How might it fit God's intentions for creation? How will it bear witness to God's eschatological rule? How can I use money to love my neighbour? When the Christian theological vision is allowed its hermeneutical priority, the moral texture of our world suddenly appears differently than it does from the perspective of liberal utilitarianism out of which Richards works.

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The New Shape of World Christianity. By Mark Noll. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0-8308-2847-0. 212 pp. £15.60.

Christianity is in the midst of dramatic and unprecedented changes. The demographic shift from a Western and Northern hemisphere centered Christianity to an Eastern and Western hemisphere centered Christianity has irrevocably changed the face of Christianity. As Philip Jenkins inquires, however, 'What . . . do most Americans know about the distribution of Christians worldwide? I suspect that most see Christianity very much as it was a century ago—a predominantly European and North American faith' ('The Next Christianity', *The Atlantic* (October 2002)). It is welcome, therefore, that the reality of the changing face of Christianity is announced by one of America's foremost church historians in his latest book.

Mark Noll addresses the question: 'What has been, is and should be the relationship between Christian development in North America and Christian development in the rest of the world' (p. 11)? While missiolo-

gists and theologians explore the future implications of these changes, Noll chooses to explore various historical factors that led to them. 'The book's major argument is that Christianity in its American form has indeed become very important for the world' (p. 11). That is, American Christianity has given the possibility of cultural adaptation for world Christianity to follow.

Towards that end, Noll examines three different possible analyses of the impact of American Christianity on global Christianity: (1) the power of American Christianity manipulates global Christianity, (2) American Christianity influences global Christianity which voluntarily chooses to adopt aspects of American Christianity, and (3) there is a shared historical experience that leads to a parallel development between global and American Christianity (see pp. 67-68). Noll offers the combination of position two and three as the reasons for the similarities between global Christianity and American Christianity. He seems to reject intentional American manipulation and moves towards indirect influence and historical parallelism as an explanation.

Using examples such as the growth of the church in South Korea and the revivals in East Africa, Noll asserts that the impact of American Christianity on these regions of the world should focus on the ability of the indigenous cultures to adapt the gospel. 'The new shape of world Christianity offers a mosaic of many, many varieties of local belief and practice... . In many places it is possible to find traces—or more—of American influence. But the multiplicity goes far beyond what any one influence can explain, except the adaptability of the Christian faith itself' (p. 27). Noll's analysis of the adaptive power of the gospel, despite what may be perceived as American cultural baggage, reveals the positive influence of American Christianity in the development of global Christianity.

While Noll effectively connects cultural relevancy and adaptation gleaned in the context of American Christianity to global Christianity, he leaves some questions unanswered about the dynamic relationship between the two streams. For example, Noll speaks about the role of power, but ultimately seems to diminish the impact of American Christianity's power upon global Christianity. In discussing the impact of American missionaries, he gives the example of the declining number of missionaries and the declining influence of American missionaries. The book doesn't seem to address, however, that even if the number of missionaries may have declined, ultimately, the transmission of American Christian culture no longer relies upon the American missionary. The proliferation of literature, television, internet, and other forms of mass media (i.e., the globalization of American culture) means that American Christianity's cultural impact continues without explicitly missionary activity. An

American mega-church pastor or televangelist's influence are felt in all corners of the globe, because they have a media, print, and even a political ministry that directly shapes Christianity in other regions of the world.

This, however, does not take away from the main thrust of Noll's message. The strongest aspect of the book is the call for indigenous movements to take on greater responsibility for the formation of their own Christian expression. If indeed, part of the power of the gospel is cultural adaptability, then that power exercised by the indigenous population, without interference, can continue to foster the growth of global Christianity.

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Global Dictionary of Theology. Edited by William A. Dyrness and Veli-Matti Kärkäinen. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2008. ISBN 978-0-8308-2454-0. 996 pp. £29.99.

Educators and pastors find no shortage of theological dictionaries, so why publish a *'Global' Dictionary of Theology* (*GDT*)? According to the editors, the twenty-first century church is in the midst of a global 're-formation' that necessitates a corresponding shift in the understanding and practice of theology (p. ix). Christianity must be understood not only as a world religion but as a 'world Christianity'. Theology, then, must acknowledge the authority of Scripture and the Christian tradition, but it must also affirm rather than mute Christian difference 'multiperspectivalism'). The type of theology sought by the editors is one uniquely 'global' but only inasmuch as it is authentically '"local" in the sense of being reflective of particular locations' (p. xi). The goal is not a universal theology—one able to speak to all peoples in all times—but one that brings together, listens carefully to, and puts into dialogue voices from different contexts. This impacts the shape and emphases of the volume.

For example, *GDT* defines theology as 'that which reflects the faith and practice of Christian groups around the world' experienced in actual faith communities, churches in other words (p. xiii). So, the entries are on themes, country and area studies, movements, and traditions rather than individuals. Also, larger entries like 'Trinity', 'Systematic Theology', and 'Atonement' are multi-authored with contributors from different geographical locals. Tensions and differences of viewpoint are retained to allow for 'the diversity and richness of theological reflection from various locations' (p. xiii). The 'Capitalism' entry is a telling example in which the editors' goal of dialogue and difference runs on the surface. A Latin American theologian is paired with one from California, and their divergence of opinion is readily apparent.

The editors also sought contributors able to speak *from* unique, contextual perspectives rather than simply *about* those perspectives. Entries on African background theologies in Latin America, Asian Theology, Pacific Island Theology, Caribbean Theology, and South African Theology are representative examples. Each is written by able scholars who embody these perspectives rather than simply refer to them. This isn't true for every entry (e.g. 'Buddhism'), but overall the effect is achieved.

GDT also intends all entries to keep an eye on global concerns. W. D. Persaud's piece on Lutheran theology and James K. A. Smith's treatment of Radical Orthodoxy (RO) are fine examples. Each explicates their topic while putting it in its global context. For example, Smith indicates RO's surprising resonances with the 'ontological assumptions implicit in traditional or "primal" religions in the non-Western world, particularly in Africa'; both share a common commitment to a 'sacred' versus 'secular' understanding of the material world (p. 727). The entry on Reformed theology was an unfortunate exception. Considering it was written by a North Korean scholar it could have offered intriguing insight into the popularity and influence of the Reformed tradition there.

GDT recommends itself strongly on at least three levels. First, educators will find diverse perspectives on topics commonly addressed in classes on Christian doctrine, the Bible, and World Religions. It would further serve excellently as a resource for students researching and writing on a wide range of topics. Second, a great many churches in the West have some distance to go before they fully grasp the dramatic shifts in contemporary Christianity in the developing world. *GDT* would be a highly accessible resource for pastors desiring to teach and preach with an eye to the perspective of 'world Christianity'. Finally, *GDT* offers researchers some of the most recent contributions of first rate scholars from across the world on topics with a unique 'global' approach.

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Globalization and the Mission of the Church. By Neil J. Ormerod and Shane Clifton. Ecclesiological Investigations; London: T&T Clark, 2009. ISBN 978-0-567-26183-0. x + 217 pp. £65.00.

Globalization and the Mission of the Church brings together a pair of chaps who, on the face of it, may seem strange partners indeed. Neil Ormerod, a Roman Catholic professor of theology, and Shane Clifton, academic dean and lecturer in theology at Alphacrucis, an Australian Pentecostal college, tackle the complex problems posed to the church by increased globalization. They argue that the church in mission is uniquely equipped to handle these problems.

Ormerod and Clifton begin by exploring the multifaceted notion of globalization. They argue with scholars like Giddens and Lonergan that globalization is a reality that penetrates the personal, cultural, structural, and religious spheres of life. To capture the totality of globalization's effect, Ormerod and Clifton use Robert Doran's 'scale of values' as a guide for their analysis. They look first at globalization's effect on 'vital values': food, shelter, health, etc. Here Ormerod and Clifton emphasize the church's ability to confront increased poverty, for instance, by identifying with the poor, following Christ's example. Regarding 'social values', Ormerod and Clifton highlight globalization's impact on the family, the economy, and world governance.

The church's commitment to the preservation of the family, fair economic practice, and just governance, they argue, uniquely equips the church in mission to address these issues. Ormerod and Clifton also argue the church is able to offer the world cultural healing and redemption and confront abuses in 'cultural values' affected by corrupt neo-liberal economic policies, human rights violations, and poor environmental care. Ormerod and Clifton explore the resources Christianity may have to sustain a truly global virtue ethic, that is, a commitment to action with an 'internal good' which inhabits a 'mean' between transcendence and immanence. As examples they cite the virtues of sustainability, attentiveness, and hope. Finally, Ormerod and Clifton address 'religious values', those 'meanings and symbols that give rise to and sustain religious institutions' (p. 171). They argue that the gospel enables the church's openness in interdenominational ecumenism and interreligious dialogue bringing unity to a divided world. Furthermore, the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love can mediate between science and faith, or counteract the despair often found in the globalized contact, or generate the action that reveals the love of God.

Globalization and the Mission of the Church is a useful introduction to the nature of globalization and the church's opportunities for response. Those who are yet to engage this topic will find here a condensed and broad introduction to the issues facing the world. Ormerod and Clifton's use of the 'scale of values' as an organizing principle is a helpful way for the church to think about its work in the world and potential contexts for mission.

However, the work is somewhat cluttered and fundamentally 'thin', trying to do too much. This may simply be due to the nature of globalization, but the analysis needed more focus. The work's imprecision often leads to dissonance in the argument, one example being the repeated reference to the 'ecological crisis' facing the world. A robust theology of creation and its relation to environmental issues (which they note but do

not explore) would have grounded a call for ecological responsibility regardless. But in light of recent scandals regarding the legitimacy of climate change data, Ormerod and Clifton's argument may seem alarmist and out of touch in the eyes of the larger public. Given that environmental responsibility is important for theological reasons regardless of data, the church's potential contribution lies precisely in its ability to transcend scientific and political uncertainties. The partnership of Catholic with Pentecostal too is a disappointment. There is no attempt to integrate their perspectives and the Roman Catholic perspective dominates the discussion with the Pentecostal's quite literally bringing up the rear. Ultimately, clergy and lay persons will find a helpful introduction to some complex problems, but suggestions for specific engagement will have to come from elsewhere.

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Mission in the 21st Century: Exploring the Five Marks of Global Mission. Edited by Andrew Walls and Cathy Porter. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2008. ISBN 0-232-52720-2. xvi + 219 pp. £14.95.

Mission in the 21st Century was designed, in part, as 'a helpful resource for Lambeth 2008'. The forward is by Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, and, according to my reckoning, seven of eighteen contributors, and one of the editors, are from the Anglican Communion. The general tone of the book seems to me to be more in tune with the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON), Jerusalem 2008, than Lambeth 2008. Indeed, two contributors, Emmanuel Egbunu, Bishop of Lokoja in the Church of Nigeria, and D. Zac Niringiye, Suffragan Bishop of Kampala, declined to attend Lambeth and were present in Jerusalem. Nonetheless, taken over all, this group of contributors reflect a wide ecclesiastical and national diversity, giving the book a value and appeal that far transcends the Anglican context.

The book has two sections. The first expounds the five marks of mission adopted by the Synod of the Church of England in 1998: 1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom; 2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers; 3. To respond to human need by loving service; 4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society; 5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth. Although, as editor Cathy Ross reminds us, there are other important facets of mission, these five 'form a good working basis for a holistic approach...'.

Two articles discus each principle: one deals with theoretical issues, the other with praxis. I particularly enjoyed Gnanakan and Niringiye on proclaiming the kingdom; Emmanuel Egbunu on Christian nurture in

the face of the credibility gap between the phenomenal growth in Christianity in the developing world and the lack of evidence of positive changes in society; and Bev Haddad's spirited call to South African Christians to channel the energy used in the struggle against apartheid into tackling the current HIV/AIDS crisis. A very thoughtful case for safeguarding the integrity of the creation, as the present context of all human existence and activity, including the other four marks of mission, is set out by Calvin B. de Witt and Dave Bookless.

The second section is an eclectic collection of seven short chapters. Kwame Bediako, in the African context, provocatively asks, 'Whose Religion is Christianity?' Jehu J. Haniciles considers the missiological significance of migration. Lamin Sanneh explores 'The Islamic Frontline in a Post-Christian West'. Issues of biblical hermeneutics are discussed by Moonjan Lee in 'Reading the Bible in a Non-Western Church: An Asian Dimension'. A Japanese perspective on worship as mission is provided by Ken Miyamoto, and Gerald J. Pillay investigates 'Education as Mission'. Finally, Andrew Walls' incisive afterward surveys 'Christian Mission in a Five-hundred-year Context'.

Walls' analysis of post-Christian Scotland rings true, but his Scottish readers may well be shocked by his solution. Although Scotland is the 'country that once sent missionaries across the world' and, astonishingly, still celebrates two of the most famous on its bank notes (Mary Slessor and David Livingstone), it is now, according to Walls, 'too late for revival; the need is basic, primary evangelisation, cross-cultural evangelisation such as the missionaries once sought to carry out in other continents'. Ironically, as a Methodist would know, it is precisely when the Gospel is preached as Walls suggests, as it was in eighteenth century England by George Whitfield and John Wesley, that the most profound revivals may occur. In addition, it is a humbling but thrilling thought that today, when mission is from anywhere to anywhere, such an evangelistic challenge may be taken up by missionaries from the two-thirds-world.

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The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910. By Brian Stanley. Studies in the History of Christian Missions; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009. ISBN 978-0-8028-6360-7. xxii + 352 pp. £24.99.

This volume could hardly be more timely. Brian Stanley's comprehensive study of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, which began on 14 June 1910, has arrived exactly on cue for the conferences planned to mark the centenary of this event during 2010. The cover picture shows the conference in session in the Assembly Hall of what was then the United

Free Church of Scotland on the Mound in Edinburgh, and depicts a sea of white, mostly male, faces, with observers, mostly female, seated in the gallery. This photographic record serves to illustrate both the significance of this event within the history of Western missions, while also signaling the ambiguities and problems which the author proceeds to explore with scholarly rigour, great insight and genuine sympathy.

Brian Stanley sets the Edinburgh Conference within its historical context, showing how it reflected its time while also anticipating some of the massive changes soon to take place. He describes the planning of the event, highlighting the role of key players like J. H. Oldham and John R. Mott, and provides us with a fascinating description of the conduct of the sessions themselves. This includes the contributions of the handful of non-Western Christians present (nineteen 'at the most'), encapsulated in the famous cry of the Indian Bishop, V. S. Azariah: 'You have given your bodies to be burned. We also ask for *love*. Give us FRIENDS!'

In reading the more than 350 pages of this definitive study of Edinburgh 1910, one is constantly discovering new and surprising information. For example, Stanley points out that despite the significance this event has been seen to have within ecumenical Christian history, it was, in fact, 'decidedly Protestant' and represented only one segment of the world church. Nonetheless, the single contribution from a Roman Catholic source came from the remarkable Bishop Geremia Bonomelli who wrote a long letter of greeting to the assembled delegates. This same Bonomelli, Stanley informs us, was a close friend of a young priest named Angelo Roncalli, to whom he suggested that the time was ripe for 'a great ecumenical council'. Roncalli was later to become Pope John XXIII and the architect of the Second Vatican Council in 1962-65!

This brief review cannot begin to convey the comprehensive nature of Stanley's work, or the richness of his text. It will become the definitive study of this event and its great merit is that, while providing us with a masterly historical record of the conference, it also prompts searching questions with regard to the future of mission in the twenty first century. Despite all the preparation which preceded this Edinburgh 1910 and the enormous concentration of experience, wisdom and theological acumen present among the delegates, what is striking is how many things they got wrong. The optimism which pervaded the event proved short-lived and evaporated within a matter of a few years; the neglect of Africa and the failure to see its significance for Christian advance has been shown by history to have been the result of a huge blind spot in understanding the significance of primal religions; and the concentration on high levels of education and training overlooked the dynamic power of the Spirit and the significance of humble witnesses to Christ who were able to find

bridges between the Gospel and new cultural worlds. None of this should cause us to devalue planning and strategy in mission, but Stanley observes at the conclusion of this magnificent book that it was an 'Anglo-Catholic outsider' at Edinburgh who asked what proved to be a key question of the gathered fathers: 'Are there no demoniacs now from whom the man of God by the finger of God should cast out the devil? That is the question I ask.' This lone voice proved to be, as Brian Stanley says, the most 'accurate anticipation of the remarkable course that world Christianity was very soon about to take'. And perhaps it remains the voice that Western Christianity needs to hear today.

David Smith, International Christian College, Glasgow

The Promise of Baptism: An Introduction to Baptism in Scripture and the Reformed Tradition. By James V. Brownson. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007. xiii + 223 pp. £9.99.

In this book James Brownson elucidates some of the difficult issues surrounding the doctrine of baptism, and aims to 'provide a "road map" through some of the more common problems and questions' (p. xi). The author, a Professor of New Testament at Western Theological Seminary (Reformed Church of America), is well-equipped to do so, being firmly acquainted not only with the scriptural material on baptism, but also with the Reformed tradition. To describe this book as a 'road map', however, is misleading: a road map offers an overview of an area but does not in itself recommend one particular destination. In theology, there is 'no view from nowhere'; from the start, Brownson indicates both his denominational affiliation and his intention to advocate its Calvinist position.

The book is divided into six sections. The first considers some basic issues in the area of baptismal theology, providing working definitions of what it is to be a Christian and a member of the church, and what a sacrament is and does. In the second, the author focuses on baptism itself, unpacking its relationship to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, to the imagery of cleansing, and to the reception of the Holy Spirit. This unpacking continues through the third section, where the implications of baptism are worked out in relation to faith and salvation. The fourth and fifth sections respectively make and defend the case for infant baptism against those who believe in believer baptism. In the final section, the author turns to some pastoral decisions around the sacrament of baptism, among other things considering (and ultimately rejecting) the validity of the practices of confirmation, rebaptism, and dedication.

Just as there is 'no theology from nowhere', however, so too there is 'no review from nowhere', and it would be remiss not to comment on certain

theological aspects of the book. First, Brownson is a staunch defender of what he describes as the 'sacrament' view of baptism rather than the 'ordinance' view. The latter, as the author knows, is not inimical to the work of Reformed theologians such as Zwingli, Schleiermacher, and Barth, to name three, and also in broad swathes of the evangelical tradition more generally. It is disappointing, therefore, that this 'ordinance' view is caricatured in places. In one simplistic table, Brownson describes the 'ordinance' view as being about our promise to God rather than God's promise to us; as focusing primarily on our action in response to God's grace rather than on what God does to extend grace to us in particular; and as about God's past offer of grace calling us to present obedience rather than God's present grace calling us to future obedience (p. 25). The author does seem conscious of oversimplification, on one occasion observing that 'many advocates of an ordinance theology are more carefully nuanced' (p. 38). However, given that this quotation directly precedes his claim that, in the perceptions of 'many' who hold the 'ordinance' view, 'one does not need the church for any of the essentials of Christian faith and life' (p. 38), it is clear that the argument is not always particularly balanced.

Second, Brownson is a staunch defender of infant baptism. Yet disappointingly, his presentation of alternative positions in this (aporetic) argument is perhaps less than fair, both materially and rhetorically. Materially, Brownson posits another unfortunate dichotomy, this time between those who see the church as 'a voluntary association of like-minded individuals' (p. 20) and those who see the church as 'defined at its core by God's *calling*' (p. 20). Whether these are a *priori* mutually exclusive is debatable. Moreover, Brownson seems arbitrarily to correlate these two construals of the church directly with those who are against infant baptism and those who are for it (p. 154). Rhetorically, corresponding problems emerge which denigrate the 'believer baptist' view. For example, Brownson states on one page that 'Proponents of believer baptism ... believe that there is no scriptural basis for [X]' (p. 125), but two pages later acknowledges, in contrast, 'Of course, some proponents of believer baptism accept [X]' (p. 127). The very need for rhetorical phrases such as 'Of course, I know of no believer baptists who hold such a position' (p. 146) suggests a rather unbalanced argument.

In terms of its purpose, the book succeeds. It offers a 'road map' to baptism, its role in Scripture and the Reformed tradition, and its inherent theological complexities, and consistently advances one particular doctrinal position. The chapters are concise enough not to deter a novice, yet detailed enough to resource meaningful discussion, and the study aids at the end of each chapter are helpful. However, theologically—and indeed pastorally—one might have wished for a more balanced and more sen-

sitive view of alternative positions. The Reformed tradition is perhaps a little broader, and hopefully a little more generous, than this book may appear to indicate.

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The Next Evangelicalism: Freeing the Church from Western Cultural Captivity. By Soong-Chan Rah. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0-8308-3360-3. 229 pp. £9.99.

In June 2006, Lark News, a website offering satirical news reports about religious matters, had the headquarters of the mainline Presbyterian denomination in the United States announcing a bold new program called 'The Minus Five Campaign' (http://bit.ly/minus5). The program's goal was to lose only five percent of the denomination's membership in the next decade, rather than the ten per cent losses experienced in previous decades. The account quoted one fictional pastor from Pittsburgh who greeted the announcement with enthusiasm: 'This is the rallying cry we've been needing', he said. 'It's heartening to people at the local level to know we're determined not to shrink as rapidly.'

That is bittersweet humour for those of us who care deeply about the Christian cause in Europe, the British Isles, and North America. But the fact that underlies the joke will not surprise us, at least if we have been paying attention to Philip Jenkins and others arguing that the center of gravity in global Christianity has been shifting from the Northern to the Southern Hemisphere. Congregations in Asia, Africa and Latin America are flourishing, while churches in North America, Europe, and Britain are experiencing significant decline.

The title of Soong-Chan Rah's important book, *The Next Evangelicalism*, was obviously chosen to signal an extension of the discussion that Jenkins launched in his 2002 study, *The Next Christendom*. Rah makes the important point that while the numbers of Christians in most major North American denominations are indeed shrinking, this does not mean that there are no numerical increases. The reality is that 'American Christianity may actually be growing, but in unexpected and surprising ways'; while 'the white churches are in decline, the immigrant, ethnic and multiethnic churches are flourishing' (p. 12). For example, there were approximately 200 churches in Boston in 1970; three decades later there were 412. What accounts for the growth in numbers of people attending church in that city, he observes, is the increase of Christians representing new immigrant groups. As a case in point, Haitian believers in Boston began planting churches in the late 1960s, and today there are at least fifty Haitian-American congregations. What all of this means, Rah argues, is

that it is not so much that American society is being 'de-Christianized' as it is that American Christianity is being 'de-Europeanized'.

Rah opens his book with examples of this sort as a reality check for the North American evangelical establishment. Both the leadership and the cultural-theological agenda of evangelicalism are dominated by patterns that are out of step with the grass roots realities. If evangelicalism is to flourish, it must be liberated from its 'cultural captivity' in order to embrace an understanding of the Gospel that is sensitive to multicultural and multiracial realities.

Some of what Rah covers in making his overall case is familiar ground, at least to those who have being paying attention to what has long been standard fare in the pages of *Sojourners* magazine (and even *Christianity Today* in recent years) regarding consumerism, racial justice, concern for the marginalized, and the like. But even here there is some bracing stuff: an account, for example, of Vacation Bible School materials featuring an Asian 'Rickshaw Rally' theme that sets forth blatant caricatures of Asian cultures. Similarly, while Rah rehearses some of the trenchant critiques that have be lodged in the past against 'church growth' theory, he updates and expands much of this by addressing what he sees as the cultural biases, not only of some of the 'megachurches', but also of the more recent 'emerging church' phenomenon.

There is considerable theological wisdom in this book. Much of the wisdom is expressed in the form of some important nuancing of points that often get overstated or oversimplified by other writers. In condemning the 'individualism' that he sees pervading white evangelicalism, for example, Rah insists that we must not issue that condemnation without at the same time recognizing the importance of 'individuation', a process by which a person comes to differentiate himself or herself from the group (family, people, culture) in a way that provides the psychic basis necessary for realizing the importance of 'the individual expressions of faith and the need for individual salvation' (p. 31).

There is also fascinating material here for understanding the importance of contextualization. While Rah is uniquely situated to address cultural-theological topics from an Asian-American context, he offers many compelling insights from, among others, Latino, African-American, and Native-American perspectives.

While much of this book addresses the North American evangelical context, it has much to say to folks in the UK and on the European continent. Rah's illustrations about growing immigrant churches in cities like Boston and Los Angeles have their parallels in Amsterdam and London. More importantly, the 'cultural captivity' of evangelicalism which he challenges in these pages is more than a North American phenomenon.

The peoples to whom our spiritual forebears sent missionaries have now become our Christian neighbors. More than that, they are missionaries who have been sent to us, bearing messages that can revitalize our own commitment to the Gospel. Rah's book is a gift to those of us who are willing to hear those messages.

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In the Aftermath: Provocations and Laments. By David Bentley Hart. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009. ISBN 978-0-8028-4573-3. xiii + 204 pp. £12.99.

If you have already read David Bentley Hart, then you shouldn't need any encouragement to seek out *In the Aftermath*. If you have not read him, then I assure you that you should. The very fact that this collection of twenty-one essays was assembled—well over half of which consists of glorified book reviews—is a remarkable testament to the value of Hart's writing in whatever form one can get one's hands on it, and on whatever topic. I, for one, am not aware of any other theologian of whose work the same is true.

This does not mean I agree with everything Hart writes; I do not. I am trained as an analytic philosopher, I have little time for genealogies of philosophies or cultural trends, and I happily accept some of the views that Hart ridicules most vehemently. It is thus unlikely that I would be a member of his admirers. But thankfully, one need not agree with Hart to enjoy or be taught by him. Indeed, it is precisely in those moments that I take issue with one of his contentions that his thought is most beneficial to me: This volume contains more genuinely *Christian* insights into the modern world than just about any book of which I am aware, and when one is confronted with the thought of someone who so consistently sees things from the grand, inimitable vantage point of the Gospel, one cannot help but consider whether one has gone off the path.

At least in this respect—and probably in others—I think that it is helpful to regard Hart as the Chesterton of our time. When Hart makes the wild claim that the only alternative to Christianity is nihilism, berates naïve Calvinists, takes Daniel Dennett to task, or simply discusses a bit of travel writing, what one cannot help but note is that even his most inflammatory comments are unapologetically offered. But what one might miss—largely because it is easy to confuse Hart's bluntness for arrogance—is that his remarks flow from the assumption that God's creative, redemptive and restorative activities provide the best foundation for interpretations of, and comments on, the relevant topics. Consider, for example, the

opening of a marvelous essay on the dangers that Christians face when they uncritically appropriate arguments from the just war tradition:

> An Antiochene Orthodox priest of my acquaintance—not long liberated from bondage to the ECUSA—recently told me, with every appearance of sincerity, that he had converted to the Eastern Orthodox Church because he was a pacifist. For a moment, I was uncertain as to whether he was attempting to baffle me with some cunningly constructed paradox. I would have found it a no more impenetrable *non sequitur* had he announced that he had joined the local Elks' lodge because of his passion for beautiful young women, or that he enjoyed reading Calvin for the witticisms. But it soon became clear that he had meant his remark not only in earnest, but without any sense at all of its absurdity... (p. 148).

Harsh (albeit hilarious) words to be sure. But they are warranted because, as Hart goes on to show, his acquaintance's foible is representative of a deep and pervasive ignorance in the church: We are not entitled to assert, *simpliciter*, that war is unjust; we as often as not fail to see that our reasoning about war is not tied to the appropriate theological moorings; we do not notice that theorizing about war from the perspective the Christian community is *not* congruous with the secularized arguments that sometimes pass for Christian reflection. And this is what makes Hart so valuable. Although there may be no chasm between the world and the church in the minds of humankind, there is surely one in reality, and we ought to be thankful for those who will not let us forget it.

In the Aftermath is a treasure of a book. It is a pleasure and a challenge to read, and for those reasons I cannot recommend it highly enough.

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BOOK REVIEWS