

Book Reviews

John Howard SMITH. *The Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion: A History of Sandemanianism in the Eighteenth Century*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008. 246 pp. \$70.00 (\$24.95 paper).

Smith, Assistant Professor of History at Texas A&M University-Commerce, in his first published volume offers the first book-length study of Sandemanianism, though a number of articles have appeared in the last century (5). It is even limited primarily to the eighteenth century, but Smith does allude to remnants of the religion down to the 1890s in America, 1906 in Canada, and 2000 in the United Kingdom, when its last ruling elder told a student of Sandemanianism that it was “finished” (175, 179, 208-209, n. 4). Smith is specializing in the intellectual as well as social implications of religion on politics during colonial and revolutionary American history. This is his first book.

This volume begins with John Glas (1695–1773), the founder of Sandemanianism, contesting his suspension as a minister in the Church of Scotland before the Synod of Dundee. He believed in congregational autonomy under elders and ministers and preached that a state religion was a corruption of apostolic example; church and state should be kept separate. His refusal to change his doctrinal position led to the loss of his license and his departure from the established Kirk. Setting the stage with this controversy, Smith then deals with the backdrops of the Scottish Reformation and the political developments under the Stuarts after they ascended the English throne, before returning to Glas’s personal life and ministerial career. Subsequent chapters focus on the doctrines and liturgy taught by Glas; his son-in-law, Robert Sandeman (1718–1771), who became the most effective proponent of Glas’s view that faith is simply received as God works on the mind through scripture (39-42); the spread of the movement to America by Sandeman, whose name became more associated with it than that of its founder; the impact of the American Revolution on the movement; and the reasons for the denomination’s failure, including remaining loyal to George III but most importantly refusing fellowship with other religions while regularly withdrawing it from members who disagreed with its tenets (165-168).

Glas became an Independent following his departure from Presbyterianism, and Smith claims that a case can be made for his being considered the leader of “the first secession” from the Church of Scotland. His preaching certainly persuaded others to leave the hierarchy of the state church, while both his and Sandeman’s writings helped to shape the doctrines of Independents such as Scotch Baptists and the Haldane brothers. Above all, though, Smith emphatically maintains that Thomas and Alexander Campbell were the most effective in fur-

thering the ideas of Glas and Sandeman. He lists wearing only the name Christian, observing the kiss of charity, and washing feet as particular links from the Sandemanians to the Disciples of Christ (155, 157-158, 180). The first can clearly be asserted, but though Thomas and Alexander Campbell were associated briefly with a few Baptist congregations that practiced the holy kiss in worship services, they personally opposed it, and they only accepted foot-washing as a private expression of humility that was seldom warranted in Europe or America. Alexander Campbell was accused of being “substantially” Sandemanian, which Smith records (156), but Campbell described Sandeman as one who was “as keen, as sharp, as censorious, as acrimonious as Juvenal,” which Smith does not include in his analysis.

In conclusion, Smith has written a much needed, thoroughly researched work on a little known eighteenth-century sect and its religious role during the War for Independence. He finally gives Sandemanianism its rightful place in history. Several points are repeated numerous times, though, possibly just for emphasis or because more editing was needed. In one case, half a paragraph appears twice in the same chapter verbatim (165, 173). Furthermore, Thomas Campbell is first introduced as John (6); the University of Edinburgh is mentioned as the school Alexander Campbell attended in Scotland instead of Glasgow (157); and only one secondary source is referenced for the Stone-Campbell Movement, Richard M. Tristano, *The Origins of the Restoration Movement: An Intellectual History* (Atlanta: Glenmary Research Center, 1988). In spite of these problems, this book is significant enough to be highly recommended for all historians of the eighteenth century, secular or religious, as well as university students. It probably would not be especially beneficial for seminary students and church leaders.

JERRY L. GAW
Professor of History
Lipscomb University

Finis Jay CALDWELL, Jr. *Dr. David Caldwell: An 18th Century Flame for Christ, 1725–1824.* Kennett, MO: Finis Jay Caldwell, Jr. (self-published), 2008. 279 pp. \$34.95.

This volume is the culmination of over twenty years of interest and research into the life of this mostly forgotten teacher of Barton W. Stone. About twenty years ago, the author learned he was a descendant of Dr. David Caldwell. When he inquired about his ancestor’s identity, he was told that Caldwell “was the mentor and spiritual teacher of Barton W. Stone, the Great Reformer” (vii). This started his research into the life of David Caldwell.

The book’s initial chapter, “Behind the Scenes,” explores the early life of Caldwell, who was the firstborn child of Andrew and Martha Caldwell on March

22, 1725, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. In his twenties, Caldwell decided to become a Presbyterian minister and enrolled at William Tennant's Log College at Neshhaminy, Pennsylvania. While at the Log College, Caldwell studied Greek, Hebrew, and Latin, as well as the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Bible. Caldwell went to study at the College of New Jersey (now Princeton), and graduated in 1761 with a Bachelor's Degree. He returned to his alma mater a year later, to teach Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic and Arabic, and possibly Sanskrit and Akkadian. For this, the college awarded him with the Master of Arts degree. In 1765, Caldwell became the pastor of the Buffalo and Alamance Presbyterian churches in North Carolina. In 1767–1768, he opened his own Academy while in North Carolina.

The second and third chapters of this study look at Caldwell's influence upon Barton W. Stone and the "Christian" movement in America. The second chapter, "Encounters and Influences between the Mentor and a Favorite Pupil" explores the association between Stone and Caldwell, the basic ideas associated with New Light Presbyterianism, and the maturation of Stone up to 1801. This chapter relies heavily upon Stone's autobiography, *The Biography of Elder Barton W. Stone*, though the author keeps his reference notes to a minimum for reader friendliness. The third chapter, "Minor Influences on Caldwell-Stone and Stone-Campbell Relationships," deals with Caldwell's relationship to the Christian movements associated with James O'Kelly, Rice Haggard, Abner Smith, and Elias Jones.

Chapter four, "Two Separate Paths," traces the divergent paths of Caldwell and Stone, while also tying in the association between Caldwell and James McGready. Caldwell's activities during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 are also examined as the author leads to the demise of Caldwell at age 99 in 1824. The author's fifth through eighth chapters look at the common background between the Campbells and Caldwell, the Stone-Campbell movement's efforts toward unity, and a comparison of Stone, the Campbells, and David and Rachael Caldwell. The book's concluding chapter deals with the historical significance of the life of David Caldwell and his Log College.

Three appendices accompany the text of this book. The first two are sermons by Caldwell: "The Doctrine of Universal Salvation Unscriptural, Psalm 1:5" and "The Character and Doom of the Sluggard." These are of great interest to the reader who seeks to understand Caldwell more thoroughly. The third appendix is "Pastor David Caldwell, D.D., Message by Joseph M. Morehead," from 1907.

The greatest strength of this volume is the author's use of many period sources from scattered locations. Sadly, this leads to its greatest weakness because so few of these sources remain extant. Because so many of the records were destroyed, less than half of the volume actually deals with the life and work of David Caldwell. The remainder of the volume deals with various aspects of the Stone-Campbell Movement's history. A page of errata has also been included with this study, but not all the errata were caught. While flawed, this book can be

used as a supplement for courses on the history of the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement. Readers will find this volume valuable for its thorough examination of Barton W. Stone's formative years. This book should also be recognized as a significant resource work for the libraries of colleges and universities affiliated with the Stone-Campbell Movement.

JAMES S. O'BRIEN
Cincinnati, Ohio

Glenn S. SUNSHINE. *Why You Think the Way You Do: The Story of Western Worldviews from Rome to Home.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009. 240 pp. \$14.99.

Sunshine argues that to understand a culture, you have to understand its worldview (16). He defines worldview as “the framework you use to interpret the world and your place in it” (13). Since all of us have a worldview, it is quite helpful to understand why we have this or that particular worldview and why the Western worldview is so different from other worldviews. Throughout the book, Sunshine seeks to explain the development of the Western worldview from the Roman Empire to the early 21st century by tracking changes that affected worldview (16). Doing so helps us to understand some of modern Western culture's values and how they came to be. Of course, tracing the development of the Western worldview is simultaneously a tracing of the effect of Christianity on the development of the Western worldview, which is the focus of this book.

Sunshine begins with the worldview of ancient Rome, a mixed bag of pagan religions that emphasized nature worship and appeasement of the gods combined with a Neoplatonic philosophy that led to such beliefs as the superiority of some people (emperors, senators, etc.) over others (common people) and a sexually indulgent yet anti-natal society. Next is the rise of Christianity and its transformation on the pagan world, marked by the Christian emphases on the *imago dei* and the personal, immanent God. Christians were the ones who opposed slavery, abortion, infanticide, and gender inequality, attitudes that would not have come from the worldview of the Roman Empire. Beginning with the Edict of Milan in 313, Sunshine also traces the interplay of church and state, with all of the ugly misapplications of Scripture and abuses of power. Next comes the medieval worldview, in which the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, changes in legal procedures, and the rise of Platonic humanism and Scholasticism are described.

Two more chapters explain medieval economics, politics, and the beginning of the breakdown of the medieval worldview. The Italian Renaissance, the Protestant Reformation, the discovery of the Americas, and the resurgence of Pyrrhonical skepticism mark the major events which brought the Western worldview from the medieval period to the new metaphysics and epistemologies informed by discoveries by Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Descartes, Pascal, and Newton. Sunshine

then traces the application of the changing worldview on economic theory, theology (from Confessionalization to deism to skepticism), and the Glorious Revolution, the American Revolution, and the French Revolution.

From these revolutions, Sunshine then maps out major events in the development of the scientific method, Darwinism, and the ethics derived from them. These changes in epistemology (with the emphasis shifting from certainty to probability) led to deconstructionism and postmodern philosophy. Sunshine ends his work with a chapter called “Trajectories,” in which he argues that the worldview of Western society today is actually returning to the ancient Roman worldview of eco-religion, anti-natalism, sexual liberality, and the enthronement of tolerance and inclusivism as the highest of virtues.

Sunshine’s goal is ambitious, and in the end it will leave both history scholars and worldview scholars feeling let down by a surface treatment of the underlying ideas that shaped history. Covering 2000 years of worldview evolution in less than 250 pages (and that with very few endnotes!) is a very difficult task, but the reader who is looking for a worldview-based introduction to Western civilization and church history will enjoy it very much. It is quite readable and uncluttered by footnotes or ubiquitous citations. Although the author accomplishes what the title suggests, the reader must keep in mind that this is more of a “highlights of history” than a comprehensive treatment.

Though readable and interesting, Sunshine at times ventures off track, moving from narration to criticism of certain aspects of modernity (Darwinism, 166-169) while leaving other aspects untouched. The criticisms are witty and on-target, but would be better in the final chapter instead of the main body. Nevertheless, this book would be an excellent unconventional-but-still-relevant church history undergraduate textbook, with outstanding discussion fodder packed into the *Trajectories* chapter.

ADAM GRAUNKE
Waterloo, Iowa

Harvey COX. *The Future of Faith*. New York: HarperOne, 2009. 245 pp. \$24.99.

In a world of angry fundamentalisms, the committed religious faithful may sometimes feel like apologizing for their faith. The religions we encounter, including our own, are changing even as they stubbornly refuse to go away. Consumer surveys show the “spiritual but not religious” option as increasingly selected. In this bewildering polyphony, people are often disillusioned with institutions that seek their own aggrandizement or even survival. Guided by his own experience of world Christianity, Harvey Cox tells a hopeful story to exactly this world that is emerging from the diverse stories of early Christians and from contemporary Christians around the globe. In Cox’s current volume, what is emerging need not be feared, for the Spirit still moves.

The author of *The Secular City*, Cox recently retired from Harvard Divinity School (where I was one of his students). The current volume fittingly caps Cox's long vocation of teaching and theological reflection. Concerns from his earlier books—Jesus and the Bible, secularity, people's religion, interfaith dialogue, fundamentalism, liberation theology, and ethics—are woven into a hopeful brief for the future.

Having identified many developing trends in Christianity, Cox now finds Christianity on the verge of an epochal transition. Cox notes that during its first three hundred years, the "Age of Faith," Christian faith lived as trust in Jesus and his message of the Kingdom of God. From the fourth through the twentieth centuries, that faith moved to an "Age of Belief" with its commitment to correct belief in doctrine enabled by hierarchies, creeds, and an institutional church bonded to the State. Cox now describes the advent of a third age, the "Age of Spirit," where the dogma of belief and much of its supporting apparatus breaks down as spirituality triumphs over religion. Refreshingly Cox frequently returns to the Bible, not to restore a nonexistent pristine biblical Christianity but so that Spirit can open up new faithful possibilities for a full life in this world through it.

Yet, questions still arise as to how Cox's renewal will take flesh. How should Christians exercise power—political, economic and ecclesiastical? He realizes that democracy's relationship in consumer cultures to a "spirited" faith is a complex one as he ponders worldwide Pentecostal faiths going about developing a public theology which engages market economies with a faith centered in conversion and holiness.

Second, even though he finds fundamentalism to be out of step with this new age of Spirit, his belief in its demise may reflect more optimism than is warranted. Islam's currents may be more complicated and enduring than he allows, as may be the Christian fundamentalist subculture. While pointing to glimmers of hope concerning the demise of all fundamentalisms, he has not made a compelling case that the beast is doomed.

Finally, this faith will need to build new communities and institutions, since the development of institutions is probably not limited to the joining of hierarchies, dogma, and Caesar. Does Cox's emphasis on spirituality over religion sufficiently attend to the need for concrete Christian confession and practice to build community?

Cox believes that Christianity "understood as a system of beliefs guarded and transmitted through a privileged religious institution by a clerical class is dying" only to be succeeded by a faith focused in confidence in Jesus and following the way of the Kingdom (196). Hints of this future appear among Pentecostals, Latin American Christian base communities, the emerging church, and in specific communities like the Community of St. Effidio. Perhaps this unprivileged faith is what Bonhoeffer saw dimly as he wrote from a Nazi prison about Christianity's future.

The future could easily bewilder us, but, like earlier disciples of Jesus, let us find our confidence in trusting in the kingdom that Jesus brings—in that spirit is the future of faith. Thankfully Harvey Cox helps us find the beginning of a way toward that faith by looking afresh to the story of our faith and the experience of Spirit in our own world.

JESS O. HALE, JR.
Senior Legislative Attorney
Johnson Bible College

Thomas Jay OORD. *Creation Made Free: Open Theology Engaging Science.*
Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2009. 272 pp. \$31.00.

“Open theism may now have reached a ‘post apologetic’ phase of its development, and Open theists can turn their attention from their critics’ subsiding complaints to the welcome task of mining the constructive potential of their ideas” (197–198). Richard Rice is correct that it is time for Open theism to fully enter the realm of constructive theology. This volume is one of the first offerings in this new phase of Open theism.

The volume is the result of two seminars. The first, held in 2007 at Eastern Nazarene College, was a gathering of Open theologians who “met to explore the possible relationship between leading theories in science and Open theology” (6). At the second seminar, held in 2008 at Azusa Pacific University, scholars met to present their research. This book consists of thirteen of the twenty papers presented along with introductions by editor, Thomas Oord. The book is divided into four sections: (1) Creation, Cosmology, and an Open God; (2) Evolution and the Open God; (3) God’s Knowledge and Scientific Theory; and (4) Open God and Open Humanity.

Space does not allow for a review of each offering, so I will limit my comments to just a few of the essays I found to be most interesting. In part one Thomas Oord and Anna Case-Winters present more process-influenced essays. Oord argues for an “essential kenosis” theory, in his essay “An Open Theology Doctrine of Creation and Solution to the Problem of Evil,” which he says, “solves the theoretical aspect of the problem of evil and affirms God’s noncoercive creative activity at the beginning (and throughout the history) of our universe” (31). Building on the maxim that “God is love,” Oord challenges the traditional *creatio ex nihilo* offering instead a *creatio ex chaosmos*. Under this model of creation God is essentially limited (kenosis) in a number of ways, all of which preserve God’s loving nature. God is limited to creating out of chaos (41-45); God must create eternally (45-49); and God is necessarily (by God’s own nature) unable to coerce or act unilaterally upon creation (49-52). Case-Winters, building upon sacramental theology, offers a new proposal for panentheistic conceptions of God’s presence within the creation in her essay “Rethinking Divine Presence and Activity in World

Process.” Case-Winters argues that just as God is present in the sacraments and in Jesus Christ, God is in all things. This means that the “incarnation is not the exception but the sign of what is really the case about God’s relation to the world. Incarnation is an instance of transparency to ultimate reality” (71).

In part two Gregory Boyd, in his essay “Evolution as Cosmic Warfare,” challenges the notion of “natural” evil suggesting instead, “God wasn’t the only agent involved in the evolutionary process: Satan and other malevolent cosmic powers have also been involved” (127). Thus, what we often define as “natural” evil is actually the work of supernatural (evil) forces. While many evangelical Christians reject the idea that the world has evolved, Boyd, building upon apocalyptic hermeneutics and a somewhat literal reading of the creation narratives, seems to accept the evolutionary theory. However, he rejects the idea, held by many Christians, that evolution can be harmonized with a benevolent creator. Boyd sees the history of the world’s evolution as “a sort of warfare between the life-affirming creativity of an all-good God, on the one hand, and the ongoing corrupting influence of malevolent cosmic forces, on the other” (127).

In part three authors Alan Rhoda and Alan Padgett explore ways in which to understand God’s knowledge of a world with an open future. While Rhoda delves into the analogy of God as “game player,” it is Padgett’s essay that is most interesting given the larger context of the book. In his essay, “Does Heisenberg Uncertainty Apply to God?” Padgett seeks to make the case that “God is omniscient and has genuine but not absolutely certain foreknowledge of future contingent events” (177). Because God knows the world in ways far more intimate than the scientist, God has a practical, although not mathematical, certainty of future events. Padgett argues that it is theoretically possible for that which God foreknows not to actually happen, but “for creatures and for the Creator, what is foreknown must actually take place in order for the past belief to count as foreknowledge” (185). While God’s foreknowledge is not mathematically certain, it is certain enough that we can say that God does not risk (189).

The final part of the book consists of essays in the area of social science. Richard Rice, for example, unpacks the science of forgiveness and its affect on us all, after which he explores forgiveness and Open theism. Rice reasons that forgiveness “presupposes both the reality and enduring influence of pain and loss, *and* the possibility of responding to these negative powers creatively and resourcefully” (214). Thus, if the future were not open, forgiveness would not be genuinely possible. A God who forgives seems to necessitate the God of Open theism for “The very idea of forgiveness involves change, response, and transformation of attitude and ultimately relationship. Forgiveness . . . brings about change in the forgiver and the one forgiven” (214-215).

The strength of this volume is its eclectic nature. The writings are not limited to any one Open perspective. The authors range from those with process sensibilities to a more Reformed approach, all while remaining Open. The science

issues were also diverse with subjects including evolution, cosmology, and the human sciences. There is even an essay on Open theism and Islamic theology. While readers may not be in agreement with each of the authors, every essay is engaging or challenging.

Like all compilation works there are essays that are stronger than others. And while each article is interesting, not every essay deals with Open theism *and* science. While this is a personal preference, I would have liked the section on Open theism and evolution to have been more extensive. Open theism seems especially equipped to bridge some gaps between scientific notions of human descent and Christian theology. This book, nonetheless, has whetted my appetite for future books exploring the relationship between Open theism and science. For those who have any interest in theology or science, this book is a required read.

WM. CURTIS HOLTZEN

Associate Professor of Philosophy & Theology
Hope International University

Paul COPAN and William Lane CRAIG, eds. *Contending with Christianity's Critics: Answering New Atheists and Other Objectors*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009. 304 pp. \$19.99.

This volume is the second of a two-book series from B&H that deals with contemporary Christian apologetic issues. As a follow-up to *Passionate Conviction* (2007), this work contains a collection of eighteen presentations, each from different contributors to the Evangelical Philosophical Society's annual meetings. The volume is organized into three parts with six chapters connected to each of the parts' themes. Part One, "The Existence of God," addresses challenges from popular New Atheists such as Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens. Part Two concerns itself with "The Jesus of History," and includes presentations that tackle the critical writings of Robert Funk and the Jesus Seminar on the resurrection of Jesus, as well as Rudolf Bultmann's and Bart Ehrman's textual criticism of the NT. Finally, Part Three focuses on "The Coherence of Christian Doctrine," with chapters ranging from a defense of penal substitution to a refutation of open theism.

An obvious strength of this volume is in its contents and contributors. Considering the impressive array of popular topics, high-profile critics, and presenters like William Lane Craig, Robert Stein, Ben Witherington III, Daniel Wallace, and Michael Wilkins, *Contending* immediately catches the eye of even those who may be only partially aware of some of the current debates. We find this played out in Part One when the most popular of atheists are confronted. Though at times the reading in this section can be difficult (as in chapter two with the discussion of such things as oscillating universes and quantum mechanics), it is written clearly enough so one not familiar with some of the more highbrow scientific, mathematic, and philosophical arguments for and against God as Creator will still be able to understand.

Part Two is packed with what is probably the most popular of critical/apologetic issues; that of the historical Jesus and the reliability of the NT text. In chapter ten, after analyzing popular extrabiblical texts often used by critical historical Jesus researchers against the reliability of the Gospels, Craig Evans rightly observes that these scholars formulate their Jesus on documents that are, as opposed to the Gospels, “badly distorted” and “late and of dubious historical value” (146). In chapter eleven, Daniel Wallace obliterates Bart Ehrman’s provocative and intellectually dishonest conclusions in his famous *Misquoting Jesus* (Harper, 2005). One can hope the laymen that have been led to doubt by Ehrman would read Wallace’s devastating and valuable rebuttal.

One particular critique of this work involves Part Three, where there seems to be a major textual oversight in how Porter defends penal substitution (chapter 16). While his moral plausible and actuality argument in favor of the doctrine do well to further the appropriateness of the case, it befuddled me why, in accurately arguing that letting sin go unpunished would devalue God’s justice and righteousness, he never brings the reader to Rom 3:21-26. It is perhaps the most explicit text describing God’s righteousness and justice being upheld via the propitiation of Christ, yet it is missing in his argument.

That being said, Part Three still has much to offer (including chapter 16, minus the oversight). Paul Copan lays out a clear and biblically strong argument for the Trinity (chapter 14), and David Hunt does well in showing the dubious exegesis and philosophical conclusions of open theism (chapter 18). However, Stewart Goetz’s chapter on hell (chapter 17) was a frustrating chapter. While he accurately portrays libertarian free will as *not* being intrinsically valuable (264), he still seems to base his entire argument for hell on the existence of that basically valueless libertarian free will.

Even so, this volume is as a high-quality resource for credible information pertaining to popular-level contemporary Christian apologetic subjects. This book will appeal to undergraduates who are trying to find clear arguments in the midst of the barrage of various secular and theological viewpoints coming from all sides of media and culture. It will also be relevant to the graduate-level student where apologetics is the focus, as well as to the professor looking for a supplemental text in an apologetics course. I do also want to encourage laity to pick up this book as a helpful and readable resource for the strength of faith. The high-powered intellectual offensive from the pages of *Contending* is admired, and with that I can unashamedly recommend this challenging and informative work.

JR (KIETH) SHEETS

Harding University Graduate School of Religion

Stephen FALLER. *Reality TV: Theology in the Video Era.* St. Louis: Chalice, 2009. 128 pp. \$16.99.

In this brief and accessible volume, Faller provides a much-needed resource for churches about theological reflection on popular culture. Early chapters begin by analyzing the most popular reality television shows from 2008 to 2009 and drawing out their prominent themes in relationship to theology. The book's latter chapters address with more depth the ecclesial implications of his analyses, and a reflexive critique of the medium of television itself.

One example from reality television is Faller's analysis of the popular show *Survivor*. He draws out the themes of "Alliances and Relationship," "Challenges and Competition," and "The Tribe and Community." He then reflects theologically on these themes and assists readers in developing the elementary tools of cultural criticism in a theological context.

At the end of each chapter, Faller provides a short summary and two sets of questions, one for groups and another for individuals. These learning tools complement the book's strengths for solitary readers as well as leaders wishing to use it in a small group context. From both a teaching and learning perspective, the book is helpful because it avoids jargon at all costs. Ministers will find the book easily usable in their sermons and lessons. They will also feel comfortable giving this book to their volunteer ministry leaders who may not have theological training.

Though the book's strengths far outweigh its minimal weaknesses, I have two critiques; one is easily remedied and the other enduring (unless a second edition comes out). First, Faller fails to provide even a short bibliography of resources for ministers and leaders wishing to engage cultural criticism and theology at a deeper level. This can be remedied, though, because the author invites correspondence with readers by providing his email address in the preface of the book. Second, because of the ever-changing nature of television shows this book has the potential to be outdated in a matter of a few years. My recommendation: use this book sooner rather than later.

I recommend using Faller's book in church contexts for introducing the elementary forms of cultural criticism from a theologically grounded perspective. Those who teach in colleges or seminaries may find, however, that they will want a more technical text for use in their classrooms.

HERBERT MILLER
Ph.D. Student in Theology
University of Dayton

Michael J. GILMOUR. *Gods and Guitars: Seeking the Sacred in Post-1960s Popular Music.* Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009. 200 pp. \$19.95.

Michael J. Gilmour, associate professor at Providence College in Manitoba, Canada, and editor of *Call Me the Seeker: Listening to Religion in Popular Music*

(New York: Continuum, 2005), narrows his focus to a subjective sample of rock music as he looks at the use of religious language and imagery from the late 1960s to 2009. This book should be easily accessible to undergraduate students studying religion and popular culture and to pastors who are seeking a matrix for helping people think more carefully about popular music.

Before launching into five tracks (chapters), Gilmour acknowledges the range of definitions of “popular music,” the ambiguity present in the use of sacred texts, and five questions and objections to such a study. He attempts to answer how changes in attitudes toward religion find expression in popular music and why sacred texts continue to play a prominent role in secular music. Salman Rushdie’s and Harold Bloom’s works provide some inspiration for the quest. In rock music’s lyrics, Gilmour finds escapism, resistance to authority, the articulation of religious convictions, the promotion of social justice, and the depiction of love and sexuality as forms of redemption.

The first track notes how songwriters express resistance through theodicy, parodies of religion, rejection of God, and criticism of faith communities. Extended analyses of albums by Kanye West and Arcade Fire illustrate his conclusions. The second track considers “the use of religion in songs about nonreligious topics” (70) as it examines comfort and compassion in songs that narrate tragedy and express fears, loss, or injustice. Gilmour includes extended discussions of works by John Lennon, Paul Simon, Bob Dylan, Meat Loaf, and Robbie Robertson while focusing on the cathartic role of rock music and on the role of sexuality and love as solace and salvation (especially post-death reunions and angels). He then turns to U2’s use of Jeremiah to address social injustice, specifically regarding Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar. He notes the lack of systematic thinking about spirituality in popular music.

In the third track, Gilmour focuses on how hard rock and heavy metal music use religious language to celebrate sexuality, individuality, freedom, defiance of cultural norms, and the macabre. He identifies the extensive use of John’s apocalyptic Revelation in U2’s and Iron Maiden’s works, the Song of Solomon in Alicia Key’s opus, and Mary Magdalene’s presence in Joni Mitchell’s songs while contrasting the female composers’ focus on “gender inequities and the marginal status of women” (100) to the symbolic use of women in a male-dominated field. Before presenting extended discussions of Ozzy Osbourne, Meat Loaf, Alice Cooper, and Velvet Revolver, Gilmour connects Freud’s theory of *unheimlich* and the class structure in the UK to heavy metal and horror-influenced music as an outlet for aggression and frustration. Readers who are interested in popular music and the sociology of religion may benefit more by consulting Tex Sample, *White Soul* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), who studied country music.

Especially valuable is track four’s study of rock music’s use of sacred texts that are outside of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Gilmour primarily focuses on George Harrison’s Hindu spirituality and Yusuf Islam’s (aka Cat Stevens) Muslim

faith. Both songwriters articulate their faiths rather than manipulate religious language to other ends.

The final track touches on a broad array of topics, such as mystical experiences by musicians, psychedelic music, drug-induced disruptions, and poetic necessity (rhyme schemes). It also offers a summarizing diagram and many cautions about assuming the deliberate use of sacred texts and images.

Woven into the literary analyses are descriptions and interpretations of album covers as well as props, choreography, and sound effects at concert events and in music videos. Despite the unfortunate lack of album and song titles in the index, this book, with its informative notes and strong bibliography, is recommended for academic and large public libraries.

CYNTHIA PRIEM

Senior Pastor

Trinity United Church of Christ

Mount Vernon, Indiana

Mark A. NOLL. *The New Shape of World Christianity: How American Experience Reflects Global Faith.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009. 212 pp. \$25.00.

The need for a new history of world Christianity is particularly acute as the religion has grown so dramatically in parts of Asia and Africa and has lost some of its cultural influence in places where it once held sway. Noll, eminent historian of North American evangelicalism, articulates this need in what he calls an interim report aimed at evangelicals. Noll does not attempt to supply a new history of world Christianity. Instead, he explores what American Christianity means to the world and what others can learn from it. Using missionary statistics, local reactions to missionaries, and analysis of evangelical periodicals, Noll argues that American Christianity has had an important but mainly indirect influence on world Christianity, where it serves as both a positive and negative model: positive in its emphasis on the Bible, conversion, and volunteerism and negative in its hubris.

Noll divides his narrative into three parts of three to four chapters each. In the first section he describes recent changes in world Christianity and makes comparisons to the dissemination of Christianity in nineteenth-century American history. Thanks to the translation of Scripture into many local dialects and evangelical tools like the *Jesus Film*, Noll explains, Christianity has flourished in places like China, Africa, Brazil, India, and the Philippines. Yet, with this boon come challenges as Christianity is expressed in surprising ways, and new questions about the spirit world, communal salvation, and what parts of the Bible to emphasize are raised. Noll's description of the reshaping of world Christianity is so dramatic that his hypothetical speculation that a Chinese Constantine may arise from within the ranks of the Communist Party does not seem too farfetched.

In the second section Noll investigates American Christianity's role in shaping world Christianity. Many American Christians and enemies of American imperialism assume American control of world Christianity. Americans, after all, made up two-thirds of all missionaries in the 1970s. Noll's counting of missionaries, however, reveals an increased number of non-western missionaries and suggests that Christianity's spread does not depend on the west. Noll argues that American influence has been indirect, serving mainly as a model for Christian development elsewhere. Conversion and volunteerism require certain freedoms taken for granted in the United States. International Christians have learned how to utilize technology for evangelism, the benefits of capitalism, and church-state separation, and how Christianity and culture interact through America's patterns.

In his last few chapters Noll explores lessons to be learned through case studies of American and world Christianity interactions. Through an analysis of American Evangelical periodicals over the twentieth century, Noll demonstrates an increased interest in issues impacting international Christianity. In his last case studies, Noll describes the development of Christianity in Korea, which has been surprisingly similar to the American experience, and West African revivals which have depended less on western missionaries than is often assumed.

Noll accomplishes what he set out to achieve while providing some encouragement and challenge to his audience. Scholars interested in world Christianity should look elsewhere for a thorough treatment; for American Christian history, they will be more satisfied with other works by Noll. However, ministers, missionaries, and general readers will find much to ponder in this book. They will be uplifted to see how Christianity is flourishing worldwide, but challenged to see the various ways it is expressed in different cultures. Noll challenges American Evangelicals by reminding them that Christianity is not dependent on them. Readers from the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement will find it especially interesting that Noll suggests Restorationists' willingness to discard tradition prepared them to adopt Christianity to various cultural settings. Herein is another implicit challenge: when one considers how American the Stone-Campbell Movement has been, it is uncertain how Restoration Christians will accept the new shape of world Christianity.

MATT MCCOOK
Associate Professor of History
Oklahoma Christian University

Stanley HAUERWAS. *A Cross-Shattered Church: Reclaiming the Theological Heart of Preaching.* Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2009. 160 pp. \$17.99.

In this work, Stanley Hauerwas moves away from the confines of the academic volume or essay, where we have previously found him, and toward the pulpit. Disheartened by contemporary theology, Hauerwas has "come to the recog-

dition that one of the most satisfying contexts for doing the work of theology is in sermons. . . . I am convinced that the recovery of the sermon as the context for theological reflection is crucial if Christians are to negotiate the world in which we find ourselves” (12).

Hauerwas begins with an introduction that orients readers to the kind of theological work he envisions. In particular, Hauerwas proposes a definition of preaching that approximates his theological brand: “I try to use sermons to develop imaginative skills to help us see the world as judged and redeemed by Christ. . . . Sermons, therefore should help us locate our lives, especially the incoherence of our lives, in God’s story” (16). As a result, Hauerwas distinguishes his corresponding homiletic method, as it were, as argumentative. He believes that sermons are hard work on the part of preachers and hearers alike, because they are intended to persuade.

The bulk of the book is composed of seventeen sermons that reframe traditional theological topics. Whether the sermons were occasioned by special days or regular gatherings for worship, those familiar with Hauerwas will not be surprised by his approach. Even a lengthy list cannot represent the entirety of the theological terms he treats: belief, praise, witness, trinity, Christology, crucifixion, sacrifice, wisdom, death, baptism, marriage, ordination, eucharist, and virtue.

Hauerwas concludes with an appendix composed of three parts: (1) a reflection on his recently published commentary on Matthew; (2) a treatise on what it means to preach repentance during a time of war, and (3) a primer on his own theological method.

Hauerwas validates a belief held by many preachers: theological reflection capable of sustaining the life of the church (and the world) still comes through preaching. Regardless of where one stands regarding Hauerwas’s theological views, this homiletical impulse is worthy of attention. Inasmuch as Hauerwas critiques contemporary theology for abandoning preaching, the converse has become true for many North American pulpits. Increasingly, preachers neglect difficult theological work in the pulpit. Hauerwas’s sermons reflect earnest attempts to “do theology” in sermons. The introduction and the final section of the appendix are also to be commended as insightful and informative, especially for those unacquainted with Hauerwas.

For all its strengths, however, Hauerwas’s sermons leave something to be desired. They are mostly preached inside or within a stone’s throw of the walls of Duke Chapel – all to (presumably) white, middle to upper class, highly educated people with a tolerance for citations of Augustine, Aquinas, John Howard Yoder, and a miscellany of European and Euro-American theologians. Even as a doctoral student in homiletics who appreciates these theologians, I doubt these sermons would gain a hearing in many congregations, let alone congregations in the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement not usually persuaded by those sources.

Even so, this volume presents the kind of preaching Hauerwas wishes for the church. For a college or seminary class focused on the relationship between

preaching and theology, it would make an excellent text for three purposes: (1) an encouragement to approach preaching as rigorous theological work, (2) a simple introduction to the theology of Stanley Hauerwas, and (3) a representative postliberal homiletic without digging into the work of Charles L. Campbell, one of Hauerwas's students. It would also be a beneficial devotional read, as Hauerwas continually tries to persuade those who would listen of the church's role in the world.

RICHARD W. VOELZ

PhD candidate in Homiletics and Liturgics

Vanderbilt University

Edwards, J. KENT. *Deep Preaching: Creating Sermons That Go Beyond the Superficial.* Nashville: B & H, 2009. 201 pp. \$19.99.

In this volume, Kent invites his readers to ponder the modern challenge of preaching a sermon with depth. Because of his conviction, Edwards states in his introduction that his purpose for this book is “to rethink preaching—to help preachers learn how to preach the powerful Word in ways that will powerfully change those who hear it” (2).

In chapter 1 Edwards discusses that preachers throughout time have had challenges to face, but modern preachers face specific challenges that their predecessors did not. In this chapter Edwards discusses four challenges that a modern preacher has to face: information, media, truth, and expectation. In Chapters 2 and 3, Edwards focuses on the reasons for preaching. Edwards states in chapter 2, “The first step to become a deep preacher is to place preaching as your top pastoral priority”(12). From this statement Edwards discusses this mentality in more detail through the rest of chapter 2 and through chapter 3. In chapter 4 Edwards focuses on the importance of a preacher's relationship with God. He notes, “The words of every sermon that is preached come from the heart of a preacher. The temperature of the preacher's heart will determine the temperature of their messages”(44). Chapter 5 looks closely at the purpose and anatomy of the “Big Idea” of a passage. Edwards believes ideas shape the world we live in. He then shares that an idea has four elements: natural unit, a topic, a subject, and a complement; which he contends a preacher needs to bring together in order to preach with depth.

In Chapter 6 Edwards discusses the practice of taking the “big idea” and going deeper with it by spending time in solitude, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide you. Edwards says, “You are not smart enough to preach a deep sermon. No one is. We need the Holy Spirit to help us” (89). In chapter 7 Edwards discusses in detail the spiritual practices of prayer, meditation, and fasting in order to preach deeply. He notes that it is all the more important for modern preachers to practice these disciplines in order to combat the busyness lifestyle of

preachers today. In chapters 8–9 Edwards focuses on the ground work in preparing deep sermons; he calls this “Closet Work.” In these two chapters he breaks down five questions with key phrases: 1) Look Backward, 2) Look Upward, 3) Look Inward, 4) Look Outward, and 5) Look Forward. In the final chapter Edwards discusses how to bring the “Big Idea,” spiritual practices, and the “Closet Work” all together to form both a deep sermon and a deep preacher.

Overall, Edward’s work offers a refreshing view of sermon preparation without reinventing the wheel. His does a great job of understanding the position of modern preachers and thus offering a relevant mixture of conviction, academic study, and spiritual disciplines in order to exhort his readers to pursue not only sermons with depth but a lifestyle that goes deep rather than wide. Something seemed to be missing during his discussion on spiritual disciplines, in that, he does not offer his experience in using the disciplines. His method of the “Closet Work” is broken down nicely and easy to follow. Additionally, the appendices offer a solid reference for further study in regard to the “Closet Work” questions. Although he offers a valid argument for expository preaching over topical preaching, his view of strictly preaching by the books of the Bible seems to be one-sided. In conclusion, this volume would be an excellent resource for a preacher’s study, especially in reminding them of their call to preach God’s Word. Also, this book would be good for seminary preaching students to open their eyes to an approach to preparing a sermon by preparing one’s heart first and foremost.

CHRISTOPHER ENSLEY
M.A. Student in New Testament
Johnson Bible College

C. Jeff WOODS. *On the Move: Adding Strength, Speed, and Balance to Your Congregation*. St. Louis: Chalice, 2009. 183 pp. \$19.99

Some books have titles that fail to reflect their actual content. This is the case for this volume by Woods. The title suggests fresh strategies for ministry when instead this is really just another book about basic church leadership principles. In its ten chapters, Woods walks through these principles such as identity, vision, mission, and results just like hundreds of other church leadership books have done. And that’s the problem with this book: it neither challenges any of the principles that have been offered in the past, nor does it offer anything fresh. If there are already good books written on basic church leadership principles (and there are), then why write another?

There are a few additional problems with this book as well. First, while Woods uses a lot of illustrations, few of them derive from personal experience. The author discusses how movies and TV shows portray leadership principles, but does not tell us how these principles actually worked when he tried to implement them in a church setting. Second, Woods seems to be unaware of how newer

church leadership theories such as Thom Rainer's *Simple Church* are challenging the traditional complex model that he is promoting. Again, this is because Woods neither builds the case for why we should believe what he says, nor acknowledges competing theories. Finally, the book seems to be written at a level that is between audiences. Those who are new to leadership strategies will be confused while those who frequently draw from the leadership resource well will be bored.

All that aside, this volume contains a few useful tools. Woods starts off each chapter with a "pretest," where he offers a quick quiz that in some way asks readers how they are living out the principle of the chapter right now. He then offers both questions and a more in-depth measurement tool at the end of each chapter that help to implement the subject matter. Even if the rest of the book is not used, a lot of church leadership teams would benefit greatly if they were to ask themselves these questions on a regular basis.

This volume is part of the Columbia Partnership Leadership Series initiative by Chalice Press. It seems that they were more concerned with rounding out their series than they were with adding something fresh to the conversation. I'm sure that young leaders who were to study this book in either a classroom or a congregational setting could learn from it. However, much better resources are available.

DUSTIN FULTON
Preaching Minister
Jefferson Street Christian Church
Lincoln, Illinois

Yosef GARFINKEL and Saar GANOR, eds. *Khirbet Qeiyafa*, Vol. 1, *Excavation Report 2007–2008*. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2009. 304 pp. \$72.00.

The six-acre site of Khirbet Qeiyafa, surrounded by massive fortifications and located on a hill north of the Elah Valley, dates to the late-11th–early-10th centuries BC and is thus the only known fortified city in Judah from the time of King David. The publication of the first volume of the excavation report, therefore, will surely be greeted with strong interest. The report is organized into four parts. "Part 1: Introduction" contains four chapters that place Khirbet Qeiyafa in its context (3-18), outline the aims and methodology of the expedition (19-24), discuss the location and setting of the site and the history of its research (25-46), and consider the role of the Elah Valley in biblical history, along with the identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa itself (47-66). The site of Khirbet Qeiyafa is identified as a Judean site for a number of reasons, including its location, the historical sources, its settlement pattern, the character of the fortifications, the orientation of the entrance to the city (facing Jerusalem), cooking and eating habits at the site, the material culture, and the evidence of writing and personal names (14-

15). Significantly, an examination of Khirbet Qeiyafa indicates “that the transition from Iron Age I to Iron Age II took place at the very end of the eleventh century BCE, thereby providing clear evidence against the low chronology dating” (14). Garfinkel and Ganor examine several aspects of the low chronology paradigm in light of the discoveries at Khirbet Qeiyafa (14-15).

“Part 2: The Excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa” consists of one chapter that chronicles the excavation of the site (69-116). The excavation uncovered a 13-foot-wide casemate wall stretching more than 2,200 feet. The wall required more than 200,000 tons of boulders, some of which weighed up to 5 tons. The wall is significant in itself, in that it represents a complex, highly organized society. The wall contained two four-chambered gates, also built of massive stones. Based on its location and architecture, the excavators suggest that the site may be identified with Sha‘araim. (1 Sam 17:52), which means “two gates.”

“Part 3: The Finds” contains eleven chapters that present the various artifacts discovered on the site. The first eight chapters deal with the early Iron Age IIA pottery (119-149), the Ashdod Ware I (151-160), the petrographic analysis of the Iron Age pottery (161-173), the stone and metal artifacts (175-194), a standing stone near the western city gate (195-200), the faunal assemblage (201-208), finds dating to the Hellenistic period (209-230), and coins (231-241). The last three chapters deal with a very important ostrakon that was discovered in 2008 near the city gate. Hagai Misgav, Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor introduce the ostrakon, its chronology, script, and text (57). Using typology for dating arrowheads from the Levant set out by F.M. Cross, “An Inscribed Arrowhead of the Eleventh Century BCE in the Bible Lands Museum in Jerusalem” (*Eretz-Israel* 23 1992: 21*-26*), they observe that the Qeiyafa inscription “seems to match the date of the earliest arrowhead, which Cross dates to the twelfth century BCE” (254). If this date is correct, it makes the Qeiyafa inscription the earliest Hebrew inscription known. While the authors include much more detail, the authors’ general conclusions about the inscription are as follows: Line 1 appears to contain the words “Do not do,” and Line 2 seems to read “and do not judge.” Line 3 also appears to contain a negative imperative that may read, “do not . . . Baal,” although בעל could simply be a component of a personal name. Line 4 contains about 17 letters, but the only words that can be clearly reconstructed are “avenge” and “inherit.” Line 5 also contains a number of damaged letters, making reconstruction difficult. The first word appears to be “captain,” while the last may be מרתה, which can either be an instrument of torture or a workman’s tool. The text appears to have continuity of thought, though its meaning is not clear. The appearance of the words “Do not do,” “judge,” “Baal,” “avenge” and “inherit” may suggest that it has to do with the realm of ethics and justice. Ada Yardeni provides “Further Observations on the Ostrakon” (259-260), with additional possibilities for reconstructing the text of the inscription. The written text on the ostrakon was poorly preserved, and Greg Bearman and William A.

Christens-Barry were invited to use imaging techniques in an effort to reveal parts of the inscription that may not be visible to the naked eye. Their chapter, “Imaging the Ostrakon” (261-270), includes a number of photographs that will provide readers with better views of the text that can be used to study the inscription more closely.

“Part 4: Detailed Account of the Field Observations” consists of one chapter that examines the stratigraphy of the various areas that were excavated in the 2007 and 2008 seasons, as well as an Appendix concerning the loci of the same time frame.

The site of Khirbet Qeiyafa is of tremendous importance for the minimalist-maximalist debate. Minimalist scholars have argued that Jerusalem during the time of David was nothing more than a typical highland village and that the portrayal of Israel during the time of David and Solomon as having become a state-level society were simply retrojections from the seventh century BC, as established by I. Finkelstein and N. A. Silberman, *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Sacred Texts* (New York: The Free Press, 2001, 142-145). Arguments such as this one have been based, in part, on the lack of evidence for dense occupation, topographical units with fortification walls, sites that would constitute a “central place,” and other such material data that would suggest a state-level society. The site of Khirbet Qeiyafa brings new data to this debate. The construction of the site around 1000 BC corresponds with the time of David, who came to the throne about 1010 BC, and provides evidence of monumental, state-level construction. Khirbet Qeiyafa was clearly a well-planned, fortified city, and not a rural settlement. Its inscription may suggest judicial concerns and may even imply a judicial system of some kind. Khirbet Qeiyafa and its inscription will no doubt be the subject of further study and debate by scholars working in a variety of fields, and those working in OT and/or Near Eastern archaeology will want to be familiar with this important new volume.

RALPH K. HAWKINS
Sack School of Bible and Ministry
Kentucky Christian University

Richard B. HAYS, Stefan ALKIER, and Leroy A. HUIZENGA, eds.
Reading the Bible Intertextually. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009.
334 pp. \$49.95.

Intertextuality is a phenomenon that has become pervasive in biblical studies. Despite the numerous studies that attempt to read biblical texts intertextually, one struggles to derive a shared understanding of the phenomenon from the scholarly literature. As Richard Hays points out in the Foreword to the English Edition of this volume: “The term intertextuality is used in such diverse and imprecise ways that it becomes difficult to know what is meant by it and whether

it points to anything like a method that can be applied reliably to the analysis of texts to facilitate coherent critical conversation” (xi).

The volume publishes papers given at a conference entitled “Die Bibel im Dialog der Schriften” held in 2004 at Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. The conference brought together scholars from a variety of disciplines as conversation partners to explore intertextuality and the Bible. The editors explain the theme of the conference in the Foreword to the German Edition: “The Bible is a book of books that consists not only of two parts but also of a number of writings that point to limitless connections among each other within the framework of the present boundaries of the canon as well as to other Christian and non-Christian writings outside the canon” (vii-viii). The fourteen essays published in the book are divided into four parts that reflect the theme of the conference.

In Part I (Introduction), two essays discuss the place of intertextual readings of biblical books with respect to other approaches to reading these texts: Stefan Alkier, “Intertextuality and the Semiotics of Biblical Texts”; Steve Moyise, “Intertextuality and Historical Approaches to the Use of Scripture in the New Testament.”

Part II (Intertextual Interpretation of Biblical Texts) contains six essays that illustrate a variety of intertextual readings of biblical (primarily New Testament) texts: Michael Schneider, “How Does God Act? Intertextual Readings of 1 Corinthians 10”; Eckart Reinmuth, “Allegorical Reading and Intertextuality: Narrative Abbreviations of the Adam Story in Paul (Romans 1:18-28)”; Leroy Andrew Huizenga, “The Matthean Jesus and the Isaac of the Early Jewish Encyclopedia”; Florian Wilk, “Paul as User, Interpreter, and Reader of the Book of Isaiah”; Richard B. Hays, “The Liberation of Israel in Luke-Acts: Intertextual Narration as Countercultural Practice”; and Marianne Grohmann, “Psalm 113 and the Song of Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1-10): A Paradigm for Intertextual Reading?”

Part III (Intertextual Interpretation outside the Boundaries of the Canon) contains essays that expand the intertextual readings beyond the Christian canon and outside the field of biblical exegesis. George Aichele (“Canon as Intertext: Restraint or Liberation?”) explores the role of canon in reading biblical texts intertextually. Peter von Möllendorff (“Christian Apocalypses and Their Mimetic Potential in Pagan Education: A Contribution Concerning Lucian’s *True History*”) and Thomas A. Schmitz, (“Nonnus and His Tradition”) read canonical texts intertextually with non-canonical texts. Magdolna Orosz (“Literary Reading(s) of the Bible: Aspects of a Semiotic Conception of Intertextuality and Intertextual Analysis of Texts”) provides an intertextual reading of elements in a twentieth-century short story with elements in New Testament texts. The final essay in this part addresses the issue of reading intertextually for the purposes of doing practical theology: Hans-Günter Heimbrock, “Reading the Bible in the Context of ‘Thick Description’: Reflections of a Practical Theologian on a Phenomenological Concept of Contextuality.”

Finally, Part IV (Semiotics, Intertextuality, and New NT Studies) contains a single essay by Stefan Alkier: “New Testament Studies on the Basis of Categorical Semiotics.” In this essay, Alkier argues that intertextual readings of Scripture are appropriate for the goals of Protestant (particularly Lutheran) theology.

The essays published in this volume do a nice job of illustrating a broad spectrum along which biblical texts can be read intertextually. Readers will no doubt be uncomfortable with some of the intertextual readings offered along that spectrum. As one example, not everyone will find the intertextual connections made by Magdolna Orosz between the name Cleophus in Arthur Schnitzler’s short story “The Green Tie” and the NT compelling. However, each essay is helpful in highlighting issues raised by the concept of intertextuality and allowing us to decide which intertextual readings are useful and which are not.

The volume contains a scripture index and an index of subjects and authors. For English-speaking readers, it would have been helpful to include a list of contributors that provided more information about their disciplines and where they work. A bibliography of sources cited would have increased the value of the book for those interested in pursuing additional reading in the subject.

The volume will be an important addition to seminary libraries and provide thoughtful reading for anyone interested in biblical interpretation.

RICHARD A. WRIGHT
Associate Professor of Bible
Oklahoma Christian University

AnneMarie LUIJENDIJK. *Greetings in the Lord: Early Christians and the Oxyrhynchus Papyri*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008. 294 pp. \$25.

This volume is Luijendijk’s revised and expanded Th.D. dissertation from Harvard Divinity School, appearing as volume 60 in the Harvard Theological Studies series. She focuses upon early Christians as they appear in the documentary papyri from Oxyrhynchus, thus providing a much-needed balance to the tremendous amount of scholarly attention paid to Christian literary texts from that site.

A particular strength of Luijendijk’s study is its methodological approach. Instead of attempting full discussions of broader social and historical realities at Oxyrhynchus, Luijendijk anchors the discussion in the documentary papyri themselves and focuses upon their contributions of new information to those larger discussions. Here the reader is not disappointed. As one example, Luijendijk observes not only the curious complete absence of the *nomen sacrum* for Jesus Christ in Oxyrhynchus letters, but that a largely unknown *nomen sacrum* for “Emmanuel” (occurring as εμλ or εμλ with supralinear strokes) occurs in P.Oxy. 8.1162 and 56.3857 (both pre-Constantinian) (62-67). These are the only two

occurrences of this *nomen sacrum* in the written record, and are particularly interesting since the fifth- or sixth-century manuscript of the Gospel of Matthew found at Oxyrhynchus does not use it where the word occurs in Matthew 1.23 (66, n.28). As a second example, Luijendijk offers the first full treatment of the earliest known bishop at Oxyrhynchus, Sotas (125-151). As a third example, one may cite her section on Oxyrhynchus Christians under persecution. Luijendijk's treatment of the Oxyrhynchus *libelii* demonstrates that the bureaucratic arm of Rome reached deep into the Egyptian countryside during the Decian Persecution (157-174). Perhaps more interestingly, though, her discussion of a letter from a Christian man to his wife during the Diocletianic Persecution (P.Oxy. 31.2601) demonstrates that the choice between Rome and the church could, on the ground, exist in shades of ambiguity for some Christians, contrary to the stark realities reflected in hagiographical literature (216-226). This man, a certain Copres, asserts his Christian identity in his letter with *nomina sacra* and the rare isopsephism ϠΘ (99=amen), despite the fact that the letter describes his avoidance of offering sacrifice via granting power of attorney to a pagan friend who then sacrificed for him, a practice some Christian leaders decried (223).

With regards to weaknesses among her impressive study, some readers will undoubtedly question whether two parchment scraps are enough evidence to conclude that Oxyrhynchus had a scriptorium (150-151), although Luijendijk's discussion does strengthen the possibility. Luijendijk is perhaps more open to criticism in her treatment of the illiterate lector Aurelius Ammonius (197-204), who appears in P.Oxy. 33.2673 and has caused no shortage of ink to spill. Scholars have debated whether the statement that he “does not know letters” means he was completely illiterate or simply could not write Greek, either of which is curious for a church *reader*. Invoking James Scott's theories on hidden transcripts and the arts of resistance, Luijendijk proposes that Ammonius simply pretended not to be able to write in order to avoid signing the document, which is a declaration of confiscation of church property. Although an interesting proposal on a thoroughly debated issue, this theory needs substantially more argumentation than Luijendijk is able to give it in order to be convincing.

This volume contributes significantly to our knowledge of Oxyrhynchus and the Christians who dwelled there. Its usefulness to a lay reader would be extremely limited. It is, after all, a doctoral dissertation on documentary papyri, and as such her footnotes are copious (regularly taking up four-fifths of the page) and the discussion weaves between German, Italian, and French discussions of Greek, Latin, and occasionally Coptic, primary texts. For scholars, however, this book will be the standard treatment on the subject for years to come and is a must-read for those in the areas of early Christian book culture, Christian Egypt in Late Antiquity, and the Oxyrhynchus papyri.

CHRIS KEITH

Assistant Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins
Lincoln Christian University

Raymond WESTBROOK and Bruce WELLS. *Everyday Law in Biblical Israel: An Introduction*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2009. 156 pp. \$24.95.

This volume is an introductory textbook on the legal relationships and practices as experienced by people in daily life in ancient Israel. The authors explore the rules and social mores that actually governed the social, political, economic, and personal aspects of life for Israelites. That is, as the title indicates, the focus is “everyday law” rather than the religious and theological aspects of biblical law.

Chapter 1 overviews the sources, and their limitations, for discerning daily legal practices. The Hebrew Bible’s law codes, precedents, juridical parables, and legal narratives serve as major sources. Other sources include postbiblical Jewish commentaries, the oral law as preserved in the Talmud, the Septuagint, other ancient versions, and ancient Near Eastern law codes, legal contracts, and other documents.

Chapter 2 discusses the practice of litigation in ancient Israel from the Patriarchal Period to the Persian Period. The remainder of the chapter describes judicial procedures for both private and public matters and the various types of evidence used in legal proceedings.

The next four chapters each focus on a specific area of law as practiced in Israel: status and family (chapter 3); crimes and derelicts (chapter 4); property and inheritance (chapter 5); contracts (chapter 6). Each chapter explores several subcategories under the larger headings and usually situates the Israelite legal practices within the larger ancient Near Eastern context.

The conclusion summarizes the book’s approach, and then briefly explores two questions: (1) “What is the relationship between the biblical law codes and the narratives into which they have been placed?” (2) “What is the relationship between the law codes themselves?” The authors explore the questions some but never really answer them.

Much commends in this book. The writing is generally popular-level, which is fitting for an introductory textbook, and the book covers a lot of ground in a relatively short space. At the end of each chapter are helpful review questions and lists for further reading. There is also a brief glossary of legal terms. The biblical legal materials and practices are appropriately contextualized within their larger cultural setting, which may help limit overly broad claims by some of the uniqueness of Israel’s legal practices over against neighboring nations. Finally, the authors appropriately recognize the limits of working with and behind the sources and, thus, acknowledge the provisional nature of many of their conclusions.

However, a few matters detract from an otherwise helpful work. In some cases, the discussions largely summarize biblical texts on a topic but without much depth of analysis beyond stating the obvious. A few statements need further explanation lest they leave a false impression, for example, the simple assertion that *torah* means “law” (9). The authors occasionally include transliterations

of Hebrew or other foreign words that serve no real purpose in their discussion. Finally, the book lacks a Scripture index.

This book would serve well as a supplemental text in undergraduate or graduate courses on biblical law, biblical backgrounds, or in textual courses on Exodus-Deuteronomy. Since this is an introductory textbook, there is probably little new information here for scholars, though, for reference purposes, they might appreciate the topical arrangement of legal materials and the “Further Reading” lists.

PHILLIP G. CAMP
Associate Professor of Bible
Lipscomb University

Peter J. LEITHART. *Deep Exegesis: The Mystery of Reading Scripture.* Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009. 241 pp. \$29.95.

In this volume, the author has dived deep and stayed long, perhaps too long in some of his treatments. His aims in this book are twofold. First to advocate a hermeneutic of the letter, by which he means treating the words of the Bible not as a “husk” to be removed and discarded but as a vital dimension of the communication intended by the authors. His second aim is truly a noble undertaking and that is to read the Scriptures as a disciple of Jesus. By this he means following in the steps of Jesus, Paul, and others who wrote the Bible, in reading the Bible as they read it and understood it. The central text the author uses both to illustrate and to explicate his goals is the story of the man who was born blind whom Jesus heals in John 9. To this text he returns many times throughout the book.

Heirs of the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement will surely appreciate the deep seriousness with which the author treats Scripture and also the expansive background knowledge of music, art, literature, philosophy, and theology, which the author brings to his task. The preacher who thoughtfully reads this book will have his or her own methods of interpretation of Scripture significantly enriched.

The author makes a single point in a number of ways throughout his book. It is a very important understanding of the text that is often missed by preachers and interpreters of the word: the message and the medium of the word go together. When the message is detached from the medium, the message is muted and diminished. It is for this reason the author encourages devoted attention to the “husk.” The text, the author says, is a husk.

But the text is also more than a husk. This leads the author to describe texts in a number of other ways. Texts are events. In this chapter the author deals with how the meanings of text changes over time and brings into play a typological interpretation of Scripture. Typological reading of the texts is the reading of them in the light of later texts and events. We come to the Bible as readers already

formed by the Bible and, as believers, read it in the light of the event of Jesus. So an event that meant one thing in the OT may mean something quite different in the event of our reading the text or in the event of the public interpretation of the text. The author tries to say that significance changes and not meaning, but it is difficult to separate the two.

Words are players. In this chapter the author makes the important point that the words of the Bible are more like poetry than a scientific manual. Words in the Bible are players, and like poetry they surprise us in unexpected ways. Poetic meanings have evocative power that moves beyond their literalness, and they surprise us with the new thing they have to say.

The text the author says is a joke. Only those on the inside or who know not just the words but also the background get the joke. Texts are jokes because they depend on information outside the text for their meaning. Augustine's "I believe in order to know" is at work. Interpretation is not simply a scientific enterprise. True understanding requires the commitment of faith in the interpreter. Only certain people will be good interpreters of Scripture.

Texts are also music. Here the author reminds us that texts have multiple structures like music. He sees this in John 9 and calls it a "polyphonic composition, a cantata to rival Bach's." In the last chapter he reminds us that texts are about Christ. But the Christ who is the subject of Scripture is the *totus Christus*. That is to say Scripture is about Jesus who is head of the body, the church and Lord over all things. Therefore the author says Scripture speaks about everything. John 9 is a text about everything, just like every other Scripture.

There is much in this book that commends itself to the committed interpreter of Scripture. It is true to its description. It is "deep exegesis" and the one who would profit most will be the person who will patiently mine its depths for insights that can be gained.

MERRITT WATSON

Minister

Bethany Christian Church

Arapahoe, North Carolina

Richard A. HORSLEY. *Covenant Economics: A Biblical Vision of Justice for All.* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2009. 216 pp. \$24.95.

Horsley offers an accessible distillation of decades of paradigm-shifting research, arguing that egalitarian economic justice is a central theme in the Bible, beginning with the Mosaic covenantal laws (concentrated in the Decalogue), and continuing through the prophets to the Jesus movement.

To understand Israelite origins one must understand the economy of ancient Egypt. The Pharaohs (ancient CEOs) commanded a minority elite that controlled the labor of the masses. Religion was used to ensure obedience. Much of

the population was driven to poverty through exploitation and usurpation of ancestral lands.

In response, Israel's covenantal laws emerged. The Decalogue was an ancient Bill of Rights, protecting the weakest citizens from exploitation. Early Israel was antimonarchical with local economies. Families supported one another in interconnected networks. Land belonged to Yahweh, not to a monarch, but families had inalienable rights to it. Interest on loans was outlawed, debt forgiveness was practiced, and justice was equality at subsistence.

Threat of invasion led Israelites to accept a militarized monarchy. Covenant principles were abandoned, the population again forced to submit to a hierarchical economy. Yahweh's covenant with David was presented glowingly, but actually rivaled the Mosaic covenant. Prophets pronounced judgment on the system. The most ominous change occurred when the temple regime became the vassal of Persia and Rome.

Under the Roman economy, families were decimated by tributes, tithes, taxes, high interest loans, and foreclosures. Jesus comes as prophet of covenant renewal, catalyzing a revival of covenant principles such as mutual support, debt forgiveness, and equality at subsistence. His message is essentially, though not thoroughly, economic. Horsley traces these threads throughout Mark, Matthew, and Paul. Christianity attracted especially the impoverished. Churches were political organizations with an international economy that rivaled Rome's.

Horsley bookends the biblical investigation with an introduction and conclusion on the relationship between religion and economics in the United States from inception to present and issues a call for the renewal of biblical economic principles as resistance to corporate tyranny in late capitalism.

The book has some problems. Horsley's description of ancient Egypt is jaundiced and without nuance. His rosy image of Israelite origins is dubious, based on an uncritical acceptance of the "anarchy" portrayed in Judges. He champions Gottwald's "peasant revolt" theory of origins, mentioning none of the other models. Although he indicates that the exodus narratives are mythic, he regularly refers to them as the source of Israel's covenantal principles. Discussion of the parallels between the exodus and Jeroboam's revolt against the Solomonic kingdom would have supported Horsley's thesis, but its absence only leaves readers confused as to the exodus's significance.

Horsley strains to fit Jesus' message entirely within the framework of covenant renewal, arguing that the "enemies" of Matt 5:43 are not foreigners but neighbors. His argument depends upon a selective review of the material and is unpersuasive. Horsley attempts to evade apocalyptic elements of Jesus' teaching, arguing that the kingdom of God was egalitarian with no hierarchical structure, no divine intervention other than the message of mutuality, and no interest in eternal life. Horsley admits that Paul's economic vision hinged upon belief in an imminent divine intervention, but never discusses the significance of the fact that this never eventuated.

Finally, his application of covenant principles to modern society could have used more shrift. Horsley's definition of "economic rights" is controversial and would have been more effective if more time had been spent connecting it to covenant principles themselves.

Despite these problems, Horsley's overall argument is persuasive, and is a much-needed corrective to the over-spiritualized hermeneutics that predominate in our churches. Discussion questions at the end of each chapter are provided. Students, pastors, and Christian communities alike will benefit greatly from engagement with this provocative and insightful book.

THOM STARK

M.A. Student in Religious Studies

Emmanuel School of Religion

G.K. BEALE. *The Erosion of Inerrancy in Evangelicalism: Responding to New Challenges to Biblical Authority.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008. 300 pp. \$20.00.

In this volume, Beale, professor of NT at Wheaton Graduate School, responds to recent challenges to the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture, especially challenges arising from within evangelicalism itself. Such debates are not new to evangelicalism, a movement that has devoted much time and energy over the years in defending this fundamental doctrine and thereby preserving its boundaries. The latest installment of the debate revolves around Peter Enns and his book, *Inspiration and Incarnation: Evangelicals and the Problem of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005). Since its publication, it has sparked written debates in the pages of various journals, particularly *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, *Themelios*, and *Westminster Theological Journal*. The controversy within Enns' own institution (Westminster Theological Seminary) eventually led to his release from his teaching post. The reason for his dismissal was the perceived opposition between his view and that of the Westminster Confession of Faith, to which all Westminster Seminary professors must subscribe.

Beale's volume—intended for the interested lay reader, seminary student, and scholar—is concerned primarily with the challenge that Enns's view poses for biblical inerrancy in evangelicalism. The first four chapters are revised reprints of articles that Beale published in journals as responses to Enns's book or as rejoinders to Enns's own responses (11). Since Enns's book dealt primarily with the OT, Beale's response in these four chapters also handles the challenges that the OT (and its NT use) brings to the doctrine of inerrancy. In chapter 5, Beale moves on from Enns to discuss a specific issue, namely, the authorship of Isaiah. Beale contends that, based on the references in the NT, anything less than the traditional ascription of Isaiah is "inconsistent with the inspiration of Scripture" (123, 158-159). Chapters 6 and 7 conclude the main text of the book with an

attempt to reconcile the cosmology presented in the OT with modern scientific cosmology. Again offering material presented previously elsewhere, Beale's main point is that the OT cosmology is a theological description of the visible universe as a cosmic temple that God inhabits, but should not be interpreted as a literal, and thus inaccurate, description of the way the cosmos actually is.

After a brief conclusion, the book includes additional hermeneutical reflections in the form of three appendices and one addendum. Perhaps the most important appendix is the reprinting of the complete Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy (1978), along with a succinct historical preface. This statement, which is widely available elsewhere, is important in this context because it still functions as evangelicalism's standard definition of inerrancy, and it well represents Beale's own view (267). Just as Westminster Seminary declared a certain view defended by Enns to be outside its Reformed confessional standards, Beale is making the case that the same view also falls outside the standards of evangelicalism, the Chicago Statement. For example, the Chicago Statement's famous claim that Scripture's inerrancy extends to "the fields of history and science" (272, article 12) explains Beale's concern to harmonize biblical and modern cosmology in chapters 6 and 7.

The arguments presented in the book are typical of the evangelical discussion. Regardless of one's stance on these issues, the main drawback to the volume is its provenance. Composed of responses to another author's book and journal rejoinders, this volume is one half of the discussion, a conversation that at times can appear petty. An inordinate amount of ink, for example, is spent on the perceived audience of Enns's book and who understood whom correctly, and so on—perhaps necessary, but tiring evils in this genre.

The doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture has been vital to American evangelicalism, and it has traditionally been a point of contact between evangelicals and the conservative churches of the Stone-Campbell movement. The relationship between myth and history, which is at the heart of Enns's book and Beale's responses, is no small matter for any church that seeks a theologically responsible doctrine of Scripture. This book serves as one window into the evangelical discussion, but should by no means be read apart from the other contributing voices.

KEITH D. STANGLIN
Assistant Professor of Historical Theology
Harding University

Nathan MacDONALD. *What Did the Ancient Israelites Eat?* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008. 156 pp. \$16.00.

Different cultures have different diets. Americans eat differently than Japanese. People in Uganda eat differently than traditional Eskimos. Encountering such differences is an interesting aspect of culture that one can experience in traveling

around the world. But what was the ancient Israelite diet like? What was distinctive about their diet? That is the question raised by Nathan MacDonald in this fascinating and well-documented little book, *What Did the Ancient Israelites Eat?*

This seemingly simple question turns out to be difficult to answer. The Israelites did not leave us any recipes. MacDonald attempts an answer from the sources that do exist: the Bible and archaeology as well as Josephus and the Talmud. MacDonald believes that enough snippets of data can be gleaned from these diverse sources to attempt to reconstruct some details about Israel's dietary habits.

MacDonald concludes that Israel followed the basic Mediterranean diet based on the triad of bread, wine, and olive oil (Hos 2:8). This diet has a reputation today for producing a relatively low incidence of heart disease and cancer. Flour for bread came from either wheat or barley grain. The latter is more tolerant of the arid conditions that plague parts of Palestine, but its grain was considered inferior in quality to wheat. That is why Josephus remarks that the rich ate wheat while the poor ate barley. Only wheat was used for grain offerings on the altar since God deserves the best. Grain could also be eaten raw or roasted.

Judging from bones in archaeological sites, meat came primarily from domesticated animals: sheep, goats, cattle, and (though contrary to the law) pigs. Hunting played a minor role, providing some wild deer, gazelle, as well as doves, pigeons, geese, duck, and quail. There is extensive archeological evidence for the consumption of fish, some imported from Egypt. Fish could be smoked or dried for preservation and transport.

Vegetables were eaten, but were considered inferior to meat. MacDonald suggests vegetables were eaten primarily by the poor who would forage when lacking other foods or the rich who could afford dedicated gardens. Pulses (lentils, beans, peas) and fruits (dates, figs, pomegranates, grapes not made into wine, nuts like almond and pistachio) contributed significantly to the caloric intake.

How well did the Israelites eat? Given the paucity of our knowledge, we cannot really say. The fact that most villages in the Israelite highlands had a mixed farming strategy minimized their risk since a failure of one food source did not automatically mean starvation. Attempts to be more specific are full of methodological problems that make conclusions dubious.

Exactly what mix of foods an Israelite would eat depended on which part of the country the person lived in. The coastal plain would have more cereal growing while the highlands would have more grape and wine production. Those living in a particular region could be expected to eat a higher percentage of the local produce. Palestine is known for a rainy season followed by a dry season from the end of May to September or October, so cultivation, harvesting, and eating had to work around that pattern.

MacDonald has produced a scholarly yet readable account of what the ancient Israelites ate. He is judicious and cautious in his use of evidence. Someone looking for an ancient Israelite cookbook will be disappointed, for such a thing is not

possible given the limited evidence available. But this book does gather up much of what can be known about the ancient Israelite diet.

JOE M. SPRINKLE
Professor of Old Testament
Crossroads College

J. Robert VANNOY, ed. Philip W. COMFORT. *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, 1-2 Samuel*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2009. 464 pp. \$34.99.

This commentary, a volume in the Cornerstone Biblical Commentary Series, is an extension of the New Living Translation. Bringing an evangelical perspective to bear on the text, Vannoy brings to this work his extensive years of study. It is refreshing to catch his reverence and appreciation for the word of God.

Vannoy states that he will address some of the theological themes and historical patterns found in Samuel and how they fit into the larger canonical context along with its significance to the future work and person of Christ (10). Much of Vannoy's attention is focused on the theological themes which are: 1) divine sovereignty, 2) the rise of kingship, and 3) the reversal of fortunes. This work clearly centers on how the books of Samuel illustrate the nature of God through his interaction with the Samuel characters. The story of David and the Ziklag attack (1 Samuel 30) is one example where Vannoy illustrates the future person of Christ through the messianic character of David. David is merciful and protective of the poor and needy and sees no one as insignificant (256).

The books of Samuel are riddled with textual difficulties and provide a challenge for any commentator. Vannoy does not shy away from these difficult passages, such as God giving the evil spirit to Saul or the seeming contradiction of Samuel stating that God tempted David to take a census of Israel (2 Sam 24:1) where the Chronicler states that Satan did the tempting (1 Chr 21:1). Vannoy seeks a resolution that does not compromise the divine authority of the text but rather finds a solution that seeks a harmony between them. He suggests that Samuel comes from the perspective of God's "general providential governance" since God is in control of all while the Chronicler takes the position of God allowing Satan to influence the immediate situation (428).

The commentary is organized around passages of Scripture that cite the New Living Translation. Following the Scripture is a section called "Notes." Here Vannoy may give a more literal translation of the Hebrew and even include a remark from the Septuagint or the Dead Sea Scrolls. He may also include notes on the literary structure of the passage in this section. This is very useful since the translation itself is not as literal as some versions. These notes are at times technical and only those familiar with the Greek and Hebrew language will benefit from them. Next is the main body of the commentary where the passage is discussed and analyzed. This is fairly straight forward and not overly technical.

Endnotes conclude each section that may include further comments and insights from other commentators on the passage. For instance, Vannoy includes in this section several different views of scholars on the “evil spirit” that the Lord gave to Saul, very helpful.

This work is not enhanced with the bells and whistles of maps, pictures, side bars or lesson application suggestions as seen in such works as Tony Cartledge, *1 & 2 Samuel* (Smyth & Helwys, 2001). This is an admirable work as it has appeal to a wide range of readers. The NLT is designed to smooth out some of the awkward idiomatic phrases, while Vannoy’s notes and commentary fill in the scholarly gap explaining the Hebrew words so the original meaning is not lost in translation.

SARA FUDGE

Professor of Biblical Languages and History
Cincinnati Christian University

Craig G. BARTHOLOMEW. *Ecclesiastes*. Baker Commentary on the Old Testament *Wisdom and Psalms* series. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009. 448 pp. \$39.99.

According to Qohelet’s explanation of life found in the book of Ecclesiastes, very little can actually be “explained.” Life is an enigma, a sacred mystery—and so has been the interpretation of this unique portion of Scripture. To undertake writing a commentary on this book is bound to produce a genuine challenge (requiring Solomon’s wisdom?), since to do it justice one must take into account the numerous issues that Ecclesiastes presents and with which interpreters over the years have wrestled. Bartholomew’s assessment of Ecclesiastes in the first paragraph of his preface is one that reflects his own struggles with the contents: the book “is like an octopus—just when you think you have all the tentacles pinned down, you notice one still waving around” (13)!

The introductory section grapples with a number of the “tentacles” that have been “waving around” for some time, such as authorship and date. As Bartholomew observes, few scholars today defend Solomonic authorship (46). At the same time, it is difficult to speak with any certainty on the matter of authorship. Various linguistically based arguments have been employed to buttress one position or another; Bartholomew’s position is that “the language of the book is not a certain barometer of date” and, regarding authorship, that we “simply cannot be sure who wrote the book” (53-54). He is most comfortable with a post-exilic setting: it “seems to have been written for third-century Israelites who lived in a period when Yahweh’s promises seemed to have come to nothing and there was little empirical evidence of his purposes and promises” (94).

Genre is another complex issue within Ecclesiastes; here too there exists no “scholarly consensus.” Bartholomew is very much aware of the methodological issue involved in using comparative studies in an attempt to “label” Ecclesiastes.

“Comparative genre can be helpful in a general way,” he observes, “but priority has to be given to the individuality of the text in the form we receive it” (70). One wonders whether Solomonic authorship, though it generates its own issues, lends itself to a reading of Ecclesiastes that respects an “individuality” that makes the OT materials the unique writings that they are, a point well stated throughout John N. Oswalt, *The Bible among the Myths* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009). Indeed, the contents seem to highlight an individual’s struggle rather than a nation’s, as Bartholomew suggests.

Introductory issues aside, Bartholomew’s commentary is outstanding in a number of areas and very creatively written. It is a scholar’s commentary in that it includes very thorough textual notes and demonstrates a more than competent understanding of the linguistic peculiarities that characterize the Hebrew text. It is a preacher’s commentary in that it includes a “theological implications” section at the conclusion of each section of the study, which could also be headed “contemporary relevance.” Here Bartholomew demonstrates a superb familiarity with theological literature that embraces both ancient and contemporary sources. He is also sensitive to how much the issues raised in Ecclesiastes have surfaced in contemporary thinking.

In addition Bartholomew is keenly sensitive to the need for reading Ecclesiastes within the larger context of Scripture, particularly the other wisdom literature (84-93), and to the importance of allowing the light of the New Testament to dispel the shadows that remained in Qohelet’s understanding of life: “It will take Jesus’s conquering of death in his resurrection and ascension to resolve the mystery of death that Qohelet pursues so relentlessly” (358). Bartholomew’s concluding challenge to consider the communication of Ecclesiastes in today’s world through preaching is a refreshing note on which to end a terrific undertaking to dissect a most fascinating “octopus.” I highly recommend this commentary.

DOUGLAS REDFORD
Professor of Old Testament
Cincinnati Christian University

Leslie C. ALLEN. *Jeremiah. OTL.* Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 2008. 546 pp. \$59.95.

With the decision not to reprint Robert Carroll’s commentary on Jeremiah, the final hole in the Old Testament Library series has been plugged with a new commentary by Leslie Allen. Under new editorship with the passing of Brevard Childs, the series hopes to retain its status as one of the premiere OT commentary series, this one with the added benefit of supplemental volumes in Old Testament Theology and Introduction.

Allen’s commentary lays heavy emphasis on analyzing the forms used and reshaped in the book of Jeremiah for rhetorical purposes. His introduction is

especially helpful, particularly when he discusses the difficult question surrounding the original text of Jeremiah. Commentaries of the highest level on Jeremiah must spend a lot of space establishing the text that is to be interpreted. While nothing of major doctrinal importance is at stake, the meaning of many individual texts is. The difficulty comes when the nonexpert is confronted with the necessarily subjective judgments of the specific commentator in reconstructing the text to be interpreted. Commentaries which attempt to bypass the issue by interpreting the Masoretic text as it stands should be required to come with warning labels or titles such as, “A commentary on the Masoretic text of Jeremiah, not necessarily the original text.” Allen helpfully compares the two forms of Jeremiah (MT and LXX) to the Gospel of Mark with its various later endings (7). But the issue is far more complex in the case of Jeremiah and not limited to the ending. Qumran attests both the proto-Masoretic text (2QJer; 4QJer^{a,c}) and the proto-LXX (4QJer^{b,d}) texts (7). There are, Allen claims, two, not one, “*veritates hebraicae*” (7). As a result Allen has a series of running notes on the two forms of Jeremiah. In his translation Allen uses italics to indicate what he regards to be Masoretic text expansions.

Allen provides what one would expect from a commentary in this major series—a fresh translation, careful textual notes, a wide ranging interaction with the best of Jeremiah scholarship in English, French and German, helpful textual comments on the Hebrew and Greek texts as well as thorough discussion of form and structure, an up-to-date bibliography, and engagement with the theology of Jeremiah in light of biblical theology.

Two examples of the latter are: 1) the editorial summaries in Jeremiah which Allen helpfully identifies which “provide a key for understanding much of the book as theodicy” (15)—meaning, justifying God’s decision to send the nation into exile as a judgment for their capitulation to idolatry and the social practices which accompanied it. 2) Allen helpfully highlights how grace wins in the end, (17): “mention should be made of the purposeful trajectory of overriding grace that stretches over the book like a rainbow, already entrenched in the LXX and enhanced in the MT.”

As is well known, the book of Jeremiah is notorious for the complexity of its arrangement. The significant differences between the Greek and Hebrew in this regard demonstrate that such complexity comes from its earliest days. Allen compares Jeremiah to “an old English country house, originally built and then added to in the Regency period, augmented with Victorian wings, and generally refurbished throughout the Edwardian years” (11). The unit 33:14-26 is postexilic, according to Allen. Generally the MT “pushed the positive material into the lime-light” (14).

As a result of this complexity the contemporary reader who is not a Jeremiah expert welcomes frequent references to the forest while feeling lost in the trees. Here Allen disappoints. The lack of such repetition is helpful for those, like this

reviewer, who read the book from cover to cover and desire an escape from tedium. For most, however, who use the commentary to understand a specific text, such repetition is sometimes lacking. While Allen's volume is not alone in this regard, in some places (chs. 30–34) more explanation of how the specific pericope fits into the larger context would, I suspect, be welcome.

The sometimes-confusing arrangement of Allen's commentary is perhaps appropriate for the prophetic book with the most confusing structure by some margin. As a result, it is important to keep the table of contents open to understand how the pericope one is reading about fits into Allen's understanding of the overall structure of Jeremiah.

Allen has written a very helpful commentary, which will undoubtedly become a standard resource for scholars and other interpreters of Jeremiah. Its usefulness for preachers will depend upon their diligence.

PAUL J. KISSLING

Vice President of Academic Affairs

Dallas Christian College

Carl R. HOLLADAY. *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ.* Nashville: Abingdon, 2005. 609 pp. \$54.00.

Those of the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement should be proud that one of our own has authored what will prove to be one of the most significant NT texts of the first quarter of this new century. As courses in critical introduction to OT and NT are staples of seminary education Holladay, Professor of NT at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, has produced a volume that stands to be widely used in coming years, particularly in mainline Protestant institutions.

Most critical introductions to the testaments represent massive quantities of labor, and Holladay's text is no exception, consisting of over six hundred pages of small and compact font in paper form (the Standard Edition), plus an Expanded CD-Rom Version containing the Standard Edition plus numerous expansions of the discussion, more extensive and annotated bibliographies, expanded endnotes, additional diagrams and illustrations, and "two appendices containing ancient canonical lists and patristic testimony relating to the gospels" (4).

Many readers will find in this book/CD-Rom format both blessing and bane. On the positive side, the CD-Rom is easy to navigate and allows the Standard Edition to be reasonably sized. Negatively, however, using a CD-Rom in tandem with the book is time-consuming and lacks the portability of a paper text.

As one would expect, chapters are to all twenty-seven books of the NT, but additional chapters treat "The New Testament as Theological Writings" (ch. 1), "The Shape of the Canon" (ch. 2), "Relating the Gospels to Each Other" (ch. 3), "From Jesus to the Gospels" (ch. 4), "From the Gospels to Jesus" (ch. 5), "Read-

ing the Pauline Letters” (ch. 11), and “The Christian Scriptures: Witnesses to Christ and the Church’s Faith” (ch. 28). At the end of each chapter stands a bibliography. The Standard Edition concludes with a general index, with a more comprehensive index appearing in the Expanded CD-Rom Version.

When compared to almost all critical introductions of the NT produced in the twentieth century and appearing in English, the most distinctive feature of Holladay’s text is also its strongest feature: its attention to the *theological message* of the NT books. Furthermore, this attention to the NT’s theological witness to Jesus Christ is deemed critical because the NT is part of the church’s canon of Holy Scripture. Thus, as Holladay, explains, “two foci—theology and church—figured centrally” in the conception of his project (*xī*). The importance of the NT as canon is underscored by chapters addressing this subject both at the beginning (ch. 2) and the end (ch. 28) of the volume, even if a bit of repetition results. The relatively recent and salutary emphasis on reception history also makes itself strongly felt in Holladay’s treatment.

Numerous seminarians will be happy to spend more time reading about Paul’s theological message in 2 Corinthians than, say, its integrity. Moreover, Holladay’s diction is clear and eloquent, and his exposition of the content of the NT books with rare exceptions (his interpretation of the young man at the empty tomb in Mark 16 [122]) is justifiable and mainstream. Three particularly excellent expositions of Pauline theology appear in his discussion of 1 Corinthians 1–4 (310–313), Galatians 3:1–5:12 (336–339), and the overall argument of Romans (351–360).

Holladay is emphatic about the role of the NT as canon for the church. In fact, he affirms that it was “[u]nder the influence and guidance of God’s Spirit” that “the church produced the NT” (592). With reference to the NT writings he claims that “the church acknowledges their *intrinsic authority* as normative witnesses through which it hears the word of God” (592). Such clear affirmations of the divine origin of the canon and its authoritative function in the life of the church are to be welcomed, though perhaps Holladay’s penchant for speaking of the canon as a “resource” as opposed to “source” runs against the grain (13–24). On the other hand, it is not clear how Holladay would integrate these statements concerning the canon with his belief that the NT not only contains a variety of theological perspectives but also theological convictions that a thoughtful Christian must reject. For example, in illustrating Matthew’s efforts in Matt 27:25 to buttress Christian identity Holladay adds: “But Matthew’s rhetoric gets the better of him when he places the blame for Jesus’ death on ‘the people as a whole,’ who cry out, ‘His blood be on us and on our children’” (150).

Two questions arise. First, can the historical-critical method really establish that Matthew is blaming the death of Jesus on all Jews and their descendants? Secondly, even if such be granted, in a *canonical* interpretation of Matthew would the meaning intended by the human author have the final say? It is true that in

some NT texts “the Jews” are charged with the death of Jesus (e.g., the Gospel of John generally and 1 Thess 2:14-16), but who constitutes “the Jews” is not expressly stated. There is certainly no other NT text that imputes guilt for Jesus’ death to future generations of Jews. On the other hand, Paul and the Fourth Evangelist, to name two, agree that *all* humans are guilty of sins that would have entailed their damnation apart from Jesus. Moreover, in the justly celebrated Rom 11:26 Paul foresees the eventual salvation of “all Israel.” Thus a canonical interpretation of Matt 27:25 would acknowledge that though the Jewish crowd was willing for their posterity to take responsibility for Jesus’ crucifixion (since they believed their demand just), there is no reason to believe that God was; on the contrary, he desires, for Jesus’ sake, to forgive each person for the sins that she has committed. Just as early Christians, in light of the Christ event, discovered new, christological meanings in various OT texts, should not *NT texts* be interpreted in light of and in a manner consistent with the revelation of Christ mediated to us by the entire NT canon? Thus various “problematic” biblical texts would not have to be bracketed and swept under the rug but rather could be preached and taught.

Holladay’s great concentration on the theological message of the NT leaves relatively little room (especially in the Standard Edition) for extensive discussion of some of those matters traditionally appearing in NT critical introductions, e.g., authorship, date, place of composition, integrity. A comparison will be instructive. While D.A. Carson and D.J. Moo (*An Introduction to the New Testament*, 2d ed., Zondervan, 2005) spend twenty-five pages discussing the authorship of the Gospel of John, Holladay’s Standard Edition devotes two (although other sections in his chapter have some bearing on authorship). Thus, Holladay’s text (especially the Standard Edition) will not be the introduction of choice when one is looking for extensive treatment of certain issues.

Especially helpful for teachers and students alike are the fifteen maps and twenty-two diagrams sprinkled throughout the text. These contribute greatly to the comprehension of the written discussion. Providing an aesthetic dimension as well as illuminating the NT’s reception history are the twenty-five images, most of which show woodcuts of biblical themes produced by famous printmakers during the Reformation era.

Anyone making use of Holladay’s text should bear in mind several developments in Gospel studies about which he says little or nothing. With Holladay’s maintenance of the scholarly tradition that the canonical gospels initially circulated anonymously and only later were given titles (70-71) one should compare M. Hengel’s cogent argument (*Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ*, Trinity, 2000) that the titles are original, present at least as soon as the Gospels began to circulate among churches. One should also be aware that there are several notable advocates (Mark Goodacre comes to mind) of a theory of synoptic relationship sometimes labeled as “Mark without Q.” According to this theory

Mark was written first, then used by Matthew, whose Gospel along with Mark's was employed by Luke. Finally, Holladay gives very little attention to the issue of the genre of the Gospels, maintaining simply that "Mark is often credited with originating the gospel genre, which was to have a productive, multifaceted legacy" (68). On this question, one should consult the significant study by Richard A. Burridge, *What Are the Gospels?* (Eerdmans, 2004), whose conclusion that the Gospels are examples of the Greco-Roman *Bios* contradicts the long-standing notion that the Gospel authors had little interest in the earthly Jesus. Finally, Richard Bauckham (editor of *The Gospels for All Christians*, Eerdmans, 1998) has offered considerations that should make us pause before advocating the standard view, as Holladay seems to do (135-137, 140), that each Gospel heavily reflects the concerns and theology of the local church or churches to which it was originally addressed.

Without a doubt, Holladay has produced a work that represents a great boon to the study of the NT by Christians who believe that the triune God in his providence has given us this unique and normative witness to himself. Even with a few shortcomings it will help an untold number of seminarians and pastors to understand and grapple with the theological message about Christ found in the NT. It is certainly one of the best titles of its kind in existence in the English-speaking world. One can only thank Holladay for his commitment to Christian education and his untiring toil in bringing forth this book.

BARRY BLACKBURN
 Professor of New Testament
 Atlanta Christian College

William D. MOUNCE. *Basics of Biblical Greek: Grammar*, 3rd ed. Zondervan, 2009. 419 pp. \$49.99; and **William D. MOUNCE.** *Basics of Biblical Greek: Workbook*, 3rd ed. Zondervan, 2009. 223 pp. \$22.99.

Mounce, President of Biblical Training and the Vice President of Educational Development at BibleGateway.com is also well known for various study aids for students who are learning Greek, such as flashcards, laminated charts, and his website, www.teknia.com, which has aids for both students and professors.

The textbook is divided into five parts, followed by several appendices. Part I is called the Introduction, and contains a brief history of the language, methods of learning Greek, the alphabet, pronunciation, punctuation, and syllabification. Part II covers nouns. Part III covers the indicative verbs. Part IV covers participles. Part V covers nonindicative verbs, the $-\mu$ class verbs, conditional sentences and odds and ends. A postscript to Part V indicates the path of further learning after finishing this textbook. The Appendix contains several appendices which provide several lists, charts, and diagrams useful for the first-year Greek student. This volume contains an index of grammar terms in English and a lexicon

of Greek words. Since this volume does not contain a bibliography, the reader will have to peruse the footnotes for the occasional reference to other sources. The Workbook contains the same five basic divisions, but adds a sixth division. This is the alternate exercise track for students who wish to learn nouns and verbs alternatively rather than finishing the section on nouns before starting the section on verbs.

The most easily noticed changes to the third edition are related to visual appeal, including a larger overall size, increased use of color, a better layout of the material and the use of helpful tips set apart throughout. Many changes were made to the text content as well. Each section now has a section overview to let the reader know what lies ahead. Parts II and III have two section overviews each, and Parts IV and V have one section overview. In Part V, the two chapters on μ class verbs have been expanded and are now redivided into three chapters. Conditional clauses have also been removed from the Appendix and added to chapter 35. Exegesis sections have been added at the end of most of the chapters. These exegesis sections introduce second-year material relevant to the material in that chapter. Some of the footnote material from the previous editions is now in the chapter text. Some of the material in the Appendix is shortened, especially in the section on case endings and noun charts. A new exegetical insight from Verlyn Verbrugge regarding the μ class verbs is placed at the beginning of the new chapter (332). The exegetical insight for chapter 34 by E. Margaret Howe in the second edition was replaced with one by Rick D. Bennett Jr. (318) for the third edition. Bennett focuses on the centrality of the Cross, while Howe had discussed the inceptive imperfect. In the Appendix, the order of appearance for the imperative and infinitive was reversed from that in the second edition, (358-359) but later on, it is kept in the same order as the second edition (365-366). The second edition had them both in the same order in the Appendix. Neither edition keeps them in the same order as they appear topically within the chapters.

This volume is written with younger students and laymen in mind. This volume could be used as a textbook for a first-year Greek class at any educational level, or for a self-learner, who is outside of a class structure as well. The web-based helps further enhance this volume as a textbook for the self-learner. Both the addition of marginal areas for notes, and the cartoon professor providing tips to the reader assist in creating appeal for this work among the younger readers. This gives this volume a more contemporary “textbook” appearance. The color scheme, pictures and material layout enhance the visual appeal of this volume. The size change of the main textbook to $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ helps the typical student when the textbook is being packed along with the Workbook and other notebooks the student may be carrying. The inclusion of exegetical insights serves to highlight some of the rewards for studying biblical Greek, as well as to open the minds of the readers toward further research of the text. Various simplifications and clarifications throughout this volume also make the third edition easier for the stu-

dent to use while learning Greek. It is hoped that the other volumes in this series will adopt the format changes that this volume promotes.

JAMES E. SEDLACEK

Adjunct Professor of New Testament Greek
God's Bible School and College

Lynn H. COHICK. *Women in the World of the Earliest Christians: Illuminating Ancient Ways of Life.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009. 352 pp. \$26.99.

In her own words Cohick's goal is to "imagine the project as a bull's-eye target" where "the largest circle is the Greco-Roman world," and "the outermost target area." Then, "the middle circle is Early Judaism," and this "spans the Hellenistic and early Roman periods (fourth century BC to first century AD)." Finally, "the smallest circle, the bull's-eye, is the earliest Christian community," but "only by fully appreciating the historical realities within both larger circles can the bull's-eye be accurately outlined"(24). To that end, Cohick devotes a chapter to each of nine pertinent topics: Women as Daughters, Marriage and Matron Ideals, Wives and the Realities of Marriage, Motherhood, Religious Activities of Gentile Women and God-Fearers, Religious Activities and Informal Power of Jewish and Christian Women, Women's Work, Slaves and Prostitutes, and Benefactors and the Institution of Patronage.

These chapters are prefaced by an informative introduction, enhanced with 28 relevant illustrations, and supported by a 181-entry bibliography of works from 1907–2008 (75% from 1990 forward). The Index of Scripture and Other Ancient Writings notes references from 13 OT books; 18 NT books/letters; 3 OT Apocryphal and 1 OT Pseudepigraphical works; 14 Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Texts; 11 works of Philo and 3 of Josephus; 24 sources from Mishnah, Talmud, and Related Literature; 1 reference from Shepherd of Hermas; and 102 works from 53 Classical Authors! An Index of Subjects, helps the reader locate the primary subjects discussed.

The main strength of this book is Cohick's responsible, painstaking work with the material evidence, bringing her educated, informed, and controlled insights to bear on the (another strength) breadth of material covered. However, meticulous connecting the dots of the layers of ancient women's lives required revisiting various material, so that I often felt I was going in circles, causing me frequent rereading. Yet, occasional statements were made without proximate supporting examples (discussing a passage from 2 Maccabees where deep theological truth is spoken by a woman under persecution, which served to shame Antiochus IV). Cohick states: "A common literary motif among authors in the ancient world was to shame their opponents by having them bested by a woman"(143). A couple of examples would have been appreciated.

Readers likely to take issue with this book will not necessarily be from any particular denomination or group, Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement included, but rather from those unwilling to examine closely held stereotypes drawn from less in-depth work or deficient resources. In fact Cohick's examination brought into question, several "facts" I was taught during my years as a student.

As a very recent and in-depth work on an underinformed topic, this book certainly "illuminates ancient ways of life" and deserves a place in any venue where understanding Scripture in light of its cultural context is required—classroom, library, study, or reference shelf.

STEPHANIE L. JOHNSON
Epping, New Hampshire

Thomas R. SCHREINER. *Magnifying God in Christ: A Summary of New Testament Theology.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009. 272 pp. \$24.99.

This work is the concise version of Schreiner's *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008). Readers are advised to consult the main text for full treatment of the subject matter.

The question of a center has dominated modern NT scholarship and given experts in the field diversity of methodological approaches to studying the Text of the NT and interpreting the recorded thought of NT writers. Consequently, when one analyzes the given-textual narratives one will arguably discover both "partial and fragmentary witnesses" (15). Nonetheless, in the midst of the diversity of perspectives embedded in the various books of the NT corpus, Schreiner's thesis argues for a theocentric vision of NT theology, which has progressively unfolded in an eschatological framework of the "the already-not yet" salvation history (ch. 1). Accordingly, the overarching theme of the NT is God magnifying himself in Jesus Christ by means of the Holy Spirit. The end of NT theology is God and his active role in bringing glory to himself through the integrated work of the Father, Son, and Spirit. These twofold purposes are one, and shape considerably both the content and message of the NT's writings (chs. 2–8).

Schreiner's orientation to NT theology is creatively thematic; in taking this direction he radically departs from the canonical-corpus approach of I. Howard Marshall (*New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel*, InterVarsity, 2004), Frank Thielman (*Theology of the New Testament: A Canonical and Synthetic Approach*, Zondervan, 2005), and, most recently, Ben Witherington III (*The Indelible Image: The Theological and Ethical World of the New Testament, Vol. 1: The Individual Witnesses*, InterVarsity, 2009, and *The Indelible Image: The Theological and Ethical Thought World of the New Testament, Vol. 2: The Collective Witness*, InterVarsity, 2010). In his effort to establish his work in biblical theology, Schreiner distinguishes both the individual and collective voice of the text or its author, as each theme is studied inductively and synoptically. This phenome-

non is substantially vindicated when the author states: “We understand each of the pieces in the NT by our understanding of the whole . . .” (14). Schreiner manages to achieve this goal with creative and rigorous exegesis.

While Schreiner affirms the centrality of God in Christ as the grounding theme of the NT witness, he insists that the person of Jesus Christ is the central character of NT writings, an important subject he investigates with care, clarity, and thoroughness (chs. 3–7). It is from this vantage point that Schreiner examines various christological titles, deduces the Christology of the NT as a whole, and concludes that the NT writers were concerned chiefly about the identity of Jesus Christ and what he has accomplished for the people of God (60, 77). Accordingly, Jesus Christ is “the new Moses and God’s final prophet, and yet he is more than a prophet since he exercises an unrivaled authority. Indeed, Jesus is the Messiah, the promised son of David” (76). It’s good to note that Schreiner does not think that Luke deeply reflects “on the ontological dimensions of Christology,” yet he states that this does not suggest a low Lukan Christology (83).

Next, Schreiner investigates the saving work of God and Christ in the Pauline corpus, a critical topic that has recently generated considerable debates among NT scholars, particularly from the pen of those whose work can be classified as Old Perspective or New Perspective on Paul. It is good to note that talking about God’s salvific action is inevitably to articulate the nature and scope of salvation and how individuals are saved—these include the understanding of major themes of foreknowledge, election, calling, the law, Israel and Gentiles, justification, and righteousness—and how Paul in particular deals with these critical concerns. With the publication of E.P. Sander’s *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Fortress, 1978), subsequent multiple publications by N.T. Wright [*Paul: In Fresh Perspective* (Fortress, 2009) and *Justification: God’s Plan and Paul’s Vision* (IVP Academic, 2009)] and James D.G. Dunn [*Romans*, Word Biblical Commentary; Vols. 38A & 38B (Waco, TX: Word, 1988), and *The New Perspective on Paul* (Cascade, 2007)], the questions of justification and righteousness have renewed scholarly interest (cf. excellent analyses by Michael F. Bird, *The Saving Righteousness of God: Studies on Paul, Justification and the New Perspective*, Paternoster, 2007; and Douglas A. Campbell’s groundbreaking and controversial, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul*, Eerdmans, 2009) in Pauline studies and its cognate disciplines. Toward this goal, Schreiner demonstrates considerable familiarity with the literature and engages the major players (Wrede, Schweitzer, Dunn, and Wright) in the field. Unapologetically, he maintains the old verdict of the Reformers that “righteousness and justification in Paul should be understood as forensic” (100), a position he supports with careful exegesis of both OT and NT texts where these theoretical concepts appear. Those who are familiar with Schreiner’s previous work on Paul and the Law (*The Law and Its Fulfillment: A Pauline Theology of Law*, Baker, 1998), and his commentary on Romans (*Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, Baker, 1998) will easily make this observation.

Keeping up with the trinitarian perspective in salvation history, Schreiner succinctly surveys the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit (ch. 8) and contends that the Spirit is given as the signature and the sign that the new age has begun, that the new creation has become a reality in the present (131, 156). But, it is the saving work of Christ through the Spirit that destroys sin and its consequences which hold man in bondage (ch. 9)—with the ultimate goal of God in Christ to making and preserving a people for himself, the “people of the promise,” the nonethnic Israel (ch. 12). In this line of thought, Schreiner could propose that “faith” and “obedience” are expected from human beings in response to what God has done in Christ; they are necessary elements indicating a new life in Christ and the membership in the people of God (ch. 10). In this vein also Schreiner insists that the law in salvation history (ch. 11) in general and the NT in particular continues and discontinues in a striking way, that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the law, and his death and resurrection attest to this truth (215-216).

Because the people of God are now defined solely in their relationship with Jesus the Messiah, the true Israel is a nonethnic entity and is those who have successfully confessed Jesus as Christ, Savior, and Lord. It is for the people of the promise that the new creation will become a reality when Jesus Christ comes to consummate his kingly rule (ch. 13), and equally, those who have resisted his gospel will be punished for their wickedness.

Schreiner’s thesis of God’s “self-honoring” and “self-magnifying” has also been established in his previous works (*Romans*, Baker, 1998, and *Paul, Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology*, IVP Academic, 2006). Contestably, it follows that the love of God for and toward his creation is peripheral to his glory. The application and rearticulation of the Edwardsean-Piperian theological discourse into the reading of the NT overshadows Schreiner’s christological reason, and other equally and critically important themes in the Bible. A narcissistic God does not successfully support the biblical vision of the God who loves, nor does it substantially satisfy John’s theology of glory by means of the humiliated cross of Christ.

This is a major work in NT scholarship. Schreiner’s ability to explain things and point out important issues in the Text are to be commended. His meticulous engagement with Scripture and recent NT scholarship is a model of good and rigorous scholarship; this performance only certifies that he has profoundly meditated on the text and the related issues. The “Pastoral Reflection” which is located at the end of each chapter is useful for ministerial implications and applications of the treated subject. I highly recommend this volume to students of the Bible and to those interested in Christian scholarship and ministry.

CELUCIEN L. JOSEPH
Adjunct Professor of French
Tarrant County College

Roger E. OLSON. *How to Be Evangelical without Being Conservative.*
Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008. 202 pp. \$16.99.

Olson packs a lot of punch into this small book. He has put together a very engaging and relevant text which enables the reader to process many issues the church needs to address. The book also has a unique way of exposing common misconceptions surrounding Christians as a whole, as well as explaining why Christians tend towards certain behaviors.

At the outset, Olson talks about shifting evangelical labels. He mentions three categories (evangelical, conservative, fundamentalist) that have been used to describe American Christianity (14). Olson maintains that fundamentalists were once known as an “evangelical fringe” group with a “maximal conservatism” who often condemned other Christians (15-16). Eventually, however, fundamentalist leader Jerry Falwell, and the Moral Majority, hijacked the evangelical label. The result was that Americans began to think of conservative Christians (evangelicals) as “being narrow, rigid, militant, and angry” people (17). Furthermore, the media has led people to believe that being evangelical “means having a knee-jerk reaction against any and every cause considered progressive or liberal” (17). Understanding Olson on this topic is essential as he then moves on to explain the premise behind the book title.

Olson says his purpose “is to explain how a person can be evangelical and not conservative, let alone fundamentalist” (18). He says it is “not too late to salvage” the term “evangelical,” but that it “is simply unnecessary (if not wrong) to identify that with being conservative” (18). In fact, Olson says that “authentic evangelicalism is not even necessarily conservative” (19).

“Evangelical” is defined throughout the book as a way of life (200). Anyone is evangelical who displays five characteristics: biblicism (belief in the supreme authority of Scripture for faith and life), conversionism (belief that authentic Christianity always includes a radical conversion to Jesus Christ), crucicentrism (piety, devotional life, and worship centered around the cross of Jesus Christ), activism (concern for and involvement in social transformation through evangelism and social action), and respect for the Great Tradition of Christian doctrine.

Being conservative is described by Olson as defending the past and the status quo (20). He adds that conservative thinking is “that habit of the heart that reacts against anything nontraditional and tends toward an idolatry of some perceived past ‘golden age’ when church and society were good and not yet corrupted by forces of secularity and liberal thinking” (25). By contrast, being evangelical “means being radically open to the gospel in all its implications, including challenges to our comfort zones and vested interest in upholding the status quo and reiterating the past” (21). Olson adds that being evangelical “includes placing the cross of Jesus Christ over and above all our precious thinking and being ready and willing to think again” (21).

Olson tackles twelve topics in the book. The first six are: orthodoxy (tradi-

tion can always be challenged by truth), moralism (the church needs to promote morality without rigid and judgmental moralism), nationalism (a form of idolatry that must be tempered), truth without certainty (one can have inward assurance), literalism (nobody takes the whole Bible literally), and being religionless without secularism (not being bound by traditions and instead being relevant in our culture). The last six are: transforming culture without domination (Christians must reform themselves, not the government), redistributing wealth without socialism (the church must help the poor and oppressed), relativizing without rejecting theology (holding biblical doctrines while at the same time being open to new ideas which promote truth), updating without trivializing worship (form doesn't trivialize worship, routine does), accepting without affirming flawed people, and practicing equality without sacrificing difference (interdependence is key).

Since many Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement churches are conservative in the way that Olson defines conservatism, many may not give this book a fair reading. And that is a shame, because Olson's reflection will surely be helpful to those who give him an audience. This is an excellent book which could easily be used as a primer for further discussion in college classrooms.

T. SCOTT WOMBLE

Professor of Biblical Studies
Saint Louis Christian College

Michael F. BIRD. *Are You the One Who Is to Come? The Historical Jesus and the Messianic Question.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009. 167 pp. \$22.99.

In this bold study, Bird, an industrious up-and-coming scholar from down under, engages an enduring question in modern historical Jesus studies. Namely, does the confession that Jesus is the Christ have pre-Easter origins? This question is well worn and riddled with historical difficulties since Jesus does not explicitly use the title Messiah for himself. Even so, Bird masterfully navigates the labyrinth of primary and secondary sources to prove "that Jesus of Nazareth did claim, in action and speech, to be the Messiah of Israel" (29).

The study is surprisingly concise given the breadth of content Bird evaluates. In chapter 1, Bird reviews the history of scholarship on the messianic question. Bird begins with Julius Wellhausen and works his way up to E.P. Sanders, showing the number of distinguished NT scholars who deny that the historical Jesus thought of himself as the Messiah. Bird's interlocutors become clear in this section, especially Joseph Fitzmyer, whose recent book, *The One Who Is to Come* (Eerdmans, 2007), inspired Bird's project (11). Bird agrees with Fitzmyer that Jesus did not use the title "Messiah" for himself but sets out in a different direction to show "that Jesus saw himself in messianic categories, as enacting a messianic role or a messianic vocation as part of his aim to renew and restore Israel through his various activities" (29). In other words, for Bird, Jesus' Messiahship

is evoked by symbolic actions rather than by titles—a theme that Bird seeks to prove throughout this project. Readers familiar with N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Fortress, 1997) will recognize significant overlap in method and language.

In chapter 2, Bird traces the origins of messianism through the OT, Second Temple Judaism, and Rabbinic Literature. Bird acknowledges the “paucity and diversity” of messianic expectations in Jewish literature yet discerns the developmental process of messianism from the Davidic kingship of the pre-exilic era, all the way to the militant messianism of the Hasmonean and Herodian dynasties. By the end of the chapter, Bird ably demonstrates how Israel’s messianic expectations create the *Sitz im Leben* for Jesus of Nazareth. The chapter is particularly helpful for students who need an introduction to the primary sources and the interpretive issues related to messianism.

In Chapter 3, Bird critiques objections that Jesus was a messianic claimant. Some of the objections are well known; for example, Bird critiques William Wrede’s “messianic secret” and Nils Dahl’s theory that Jesus’ Messiahship stems from the *titulus* on the cross. Bird finds these hypotheses wanting and, consequently, proposes that these scholars are wrongly fixated on Jesus’ lack of explicit messianic claims. This sets the stage for chapters 4–5, where Bird takes on the ambitious goal of showing how “Jesus’ career was ‘performatively messianic’ as opposed to being messianic in the titular sense” (78). In chapter 4, Bird evaluates “performatively messianic” features in the Gospels such as Jesus’ evocation of the Danielic Son of Man, the anointed one of Isaiah, the proclamation of the Kingdom of God, allusions to David and Solomon, and, finally, the “I have come” sayings. While none of these motifs explicitly corroborate Jesus’ pre-Easter messiahship, they do paint a profoundly messianic portrait through “a story told in action, word, and symbol” (115).

Chapter 5 continues Bird’s exegetical tour through the Gospels. The chapter is introduced by Bird’s aim to provide a close study of Jesus’ final days in Jerusalem (118), yet the chapter begins with Mark’s account of Peter’s confession at Caesarea Philippi (Mark 8) and closes with an interesting discussion on the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the title “Christians” for Jesus’ followers. Nevertheless, these topics remain relevant for the discussion, and Bird fulfills his original aim by analyzing the messianic features of the anointing at Bethany, the Triumphal Entry, and Jesus’ Trial. This chapter is probably the most important chapter in the book and closes with a discussion on how the nascent Christian community venerated a crucified Messiah. Bird’s project ends with a chapter reflecting on the theological significance of identifying Jesus as the Christ. As Bird sees it, if Jesus is the Messiah, then Jesus is: (1) the eschatological fulfillment of the Jewish Scriptures, (2) the link that creates continuity between the story of Israel and the church, and (3) the supreme mediator between God and man through the *munus triplex Christi* in the form of prophet, priest, and king (161-167).

The size and accessibility of Bird's project makes it *the* point of departure for students interested in Jesus' messianic self-understanding. Bird articulates in 167 pages what other historical Jesus scholars do in 500 pages. Scholars, too, will benefit from Bird's close reading of the primary sources and grasp of the secondary literature. Bird includes extensive footnotes and separate bibliographies for primary and secondary sources, which prove very helpful for eager readers. The greatest benefit of Bird's project, however, is that Bird moves beyond the strait-jacket of only asking historical questions and dares to make theological conclusions. Some scholars will likely accuse Bird of an *a priori* conservative or dogmatic hermeneutic, but the proof is in the pudding: Bird's close reading of the relevant material and compelling arguments provide a strong case that Jesus thought of himself as the Messiah of Israel.

DREW J. STRAIT

PhD. Student

University of Pretoria

Mark Allan POWELL, ed. *Methods for Matthew. Methods in Biblical Interpretation.* Cambridge University Press, 2009. 261 pp. \$24.99.

This useful volume showcases six methods of biblical interpretation that apply to the Gospel of Matthew. The authors of the six chapters all follow a template imposed by the series: first, a description of the method in question, then an application of the method to an assigned scripture passage. In the Matthew volume, three of the chapters contain analyses of Matt 27:57–28:15 (Jesus' burial and resurrection), and three analyze Matt 8:5–13 (the centurion's servant). The book also includes a glossary of terms used in Gospel studies, an annotated bibliography, and subject and scripture indexes.

Donald A. Hagner and Stephen E. Young describe the historical-critical method in terms familiar to anyone who practices it. In addition, they spend a page or two defending the method from those who consider it "inimical to the Christian faith" (18), concluding that "practicing the HCM from within the church, and without adhering to Enlightenment presuppositions, can lead to results that are positive for faith" (19). Their solid analysis of the Matthew 27–28 passage contains no surprises.

Powell himself writes the chapter on literary approaches to Matthew, connecting the general literary theory of the past few decades with its application to Gospel studies. Throughout the chapter he explains the terminology and methods of literary approaches in an accessible way. His exposition of Matt 27:57–28:15 shows the power of a literary method to explicate themes within the text.

In his chapter Craig A. Evans describes the sources and methods used to reconstruct the historical Jesus, identifying six criteria that can establish the historical credibility of a pericope. After analyzing the centurion's servant account in

Matt 8:5-13, Evans concludes that this “authentic event in the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth . . . was not simply preserved as a static, unaltered recounting of something that took place; it was preserved in three creative, interpretive presentations” (153).

Bruce J. Malina’s chapter on social-scientific approaches to the Gospel describes those approaches in detail, defining terms and showing the connection between social theory and biblical study. Malina’s treatment of Matt 8:5-13 suffers from his insistence that the centurion was a Jew, a claim that does little to bolster his otherwise helpful analysis. The chapters on feminist approaches (Elaine M. Wainwright) and postcolonial criticism (Fernando F. Segovia) provide good insight into those “optics” (Segovia’s term) for those who can read through the jargon.

The series aims at “seminarians, graduate students, scholars, and interested clergy” (x). This volume hits the mark, and it should help that audience for years to come.

CARL B. BRIDGES
Professor of New Testament
Johnson Bible College

Holly J. CAREY. *Jesus’ Cry from the Cross: Towards a First-Century Understanding of the Intertextual Relationship between Psalm 22 and the Narrative of Mark’s Gospel.* Library of New Testament Studies, n. 398. London: T&T Clark, 2009. 221 pp. \$130.00.

This volume is an adaptation of Holly J. Carey’s PhD thesis at the University of Edinburgh. Her primary argument is that Mark’s implied reader(s) would have read Jesus’ citation of Ps 22:1 (“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”) at Mark 15:34 contextually rather than atomistically. That is, Mark’s Gospel presents Jesus’ citation of Ps 22:1 in light of a larger program that insists on Jesus’ deliverance by God, as indicated in the broader context of the Psalm, *not* God’s abandonment of Jesus, as possibly indicated by Ps 22:1 (and Jesus’ citation of it) in isolation.

Carey’s first chapter is a history of research that amply demonstrates the need for a thorough consideration of the interpretation of Ps 22:1 in Mark 15:34 and introduces her own approach. Most important, her argument consists of several strands of evidence that independently support her overall thesis. After a chapter that addresses her methodological approach to intertextuality (ch. 2), she gets to those strands of evidence. Chapter three argues that Jesus’ predictions of his passion *and resurrection* would have prepared readers for a positive ending beyond the crucifixion, and thus the type of vindication that appears in the latter half of Psalm 22. Chapter four demonstrates that Mark often cites Scripture contextually, increasing the possibility that his usage of Ps 22:1 is a contextual citation. Chapter five argues that there was a Righteous Sufferer motif by the first centu-

ry CE and that this, along with the usage of incipits and the liturgical usage of the Psalms, raises the possibility that Mark appeals to Ps 22:1 as part of a broader Righteous Sufferer interpretive strategy that his readers would have recognized. Chapter six builds upon chapter five by demonstrating Mark's clear usage of the Righteous Sufferer motif for Jesus throughout his narrative. Chapter seven turns to the allusions to Psalm 22 in Mark's passion and resurrection narrative, demonstrating that Mark does not reference solely Ps 22:1 but rather references other sections of the Psalm as well. To end her discussion, Carey provides a summary of conclusions (ch. 8) and tests her hypothesis by noting Matthew's and Luke's adoption of Mark's interpretive strategy in their Gospels, as the first "tangible readers" of Mark (ch. 9).

For most readers, Carey's chapter seven would suffice for her argument. One senses, however, that her target audience is not most scholars but rather those who take a minimalist approach to Mark's citation of Ps 22:1, arguing that, since Jesus quotes only Ps 22:1 on the cross, that verse (and that verse alone) serves as the foundation for the interpretation of Mark 15:34. Cumulatively, the various strands of evidence that Carey connects demonstrate in an overwhelming fashion that she is not only correct, but that those who argue against her must produce a better interpretation of the Markan narrative as a whole, and in light of its historical context. Also notable is her convincing argument that scholars should refer to Mark's "passion and resurrection narrative" instead of the common term "passion narrative," insofar as Jesus' predictions of his passion in Mark always include his resurrection.

As with all studies, Carey is, at times, open to criticism, notably her highly debatable and unqualified claims that John's Gospel is considered a second-century text and shows no relationship to Mark's Gospel (176). Additionally, the study as a whole is needlessly repetitive on a number of occasions. For example, almost an entire paragraph from p. 65 appears verbatim again on p. 167.

In summary, Carey provides an excellent and convincing reading of Mark 15:34 in light of Mark's Gospels in its entirety. It is highly recommended to scholars and upper-level students of the Gospel of Mark.

CHRIS KEITH

Assistant Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins
Lincoln Christian University

R.A. HORSLEY, J.A. DRAPER, and J.M. FOLEY. *Performing the Gospel: Orality, Memory and Mark.* Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006. 239 pp. \$21.00; and **Whitney SHINER.** *Proclaiming the Gospel: First-Century Performance of Mark.* New York: Trinity, 2003. 214 pp. \$18.00.

Within the last decade, the field of Markan research has experienced a surge of interest in the oral shape of the Gospel. Two outstanding books in this area are

Performing the Gospel, which is a compilation of intriguing essays produced by a variety of interpreters, and *Proclaiming the Gospel*. This review of both volumes will note several of the significant contributions that each of these path-blazing texts offer. It will begin, however, by acknowledging several junctures where these volumes overlap and, subsequently, by focusing on their distinctive qualities.

As the titles reveal, one point of intersection between these two works is performance. Interestingly, in the work edited by Horsley, Draper, and Foley, the essay which is most focused on performance in Mark belongs to Shiner. His piece, "Memory Technology and the Composition of Mark" draws upon his *Proclaiming the Gospel* (115-116) in which he offers an ancient framework for Mark based on the architectural structure of the Parthenon's pediment and frieze (*Memory*, 156-162). Based on a composition and memory technique espoused by Cicero, Shiner's theory contends that if Mark is indeed ordered this way, then it is "well suited for flexibility or performance" (*Proclaiming*, 115).

Another connecting point is orality. In large part, this is the thread that ties together the collection of essays. In fact, each of the ten articles discusses orality at some length, though the last three pay particular attention to it in conjunction with Mark. Vernon Robbins's offering is quite fascinating as it focuses on how citations from the Hebrew Scriptures in Mark reveal "the many interfaces of orality and literature in the Gospel tradition" (139). In Shiner's *Proclaiming*, orality may also be viewed as the tie that binds the chapters together. With incredible depth and precision, Shiner not only provides a basic background of orality in antiquity, he reviews different types of oral performance and examines a superfluity of characteristics concerning oral devices (emotion, delivery, memorization, gesture, movement, audience, applause lines, etc.).

A third meeting point of these tomes is memory/memorization. Here, both books make outstanding contributions to the field. Another facet of memory besides structure (mentioned earlier), then, as Shiner notes, has to do with the compositional dynamism of Mark: "The Gospel of Mark developed through repeated oral performance. . . . Through a process of trial and error, he (Mark) could develop a narrative that evoked the emotions he wanted his audience to feel. It is much easier to produce a narrative like the Gospel of Mark if one has twenty or thirty performances in which to test out different approaches" (121). Not only does this notion of literary fluidity contribute to orality studies, it may also prove to be a helpful perspective when thinking about text-critical and Historical Jesus matters.

In addition, the brief history of memory research, the comparative case studies and the literary and cultural analyses in *Performing* are invaluable. The works of Jan Assman and John M. Foley in this compendium reveal just how much promise there is in marrying memory research to biblical studies. While there are certainly more points of crossover between the two books under review, some attention should be given to their obvious differences.

One of the more apparent differences between *Performing* and *Proclaiming* is that *Performing* gives more attention to theory. Indeed, the case studies given by Jonathan A. Draper, John M. Foley, and Richard A. Horsley all use rather modern parallels to drive home their points. Such studies are absent from Shiner's volume. Also *Performing* heavily emphasizes how cultural memory shapes community. In addition, *Performing* touches on a wide range of topics such as Altered States of Consciousness (56), Gender in Rabbinic Oral Culture (21), language theory (72) and text transmission (73). Even though this work covers a wide array of subjects, it nonetheless maintains coherence and focus. Unfortunately, on the back of the book's jacket, the claim is made to offer a "dramatically new picture of Mark's Gospel." However, such an assertion would seem truer of Shiner's book.

Chapter two, which provides analyses of public/private reading, storytelling, novels, dramas, pantomime, poetry, epic, chants, worship and setting is also very informative. Having already mentioned other foci of the book above (emotion, delivery), in the final chapter, somewhat of the climax of the tome, Shiner puts the proverbial nail in the coffin, making it undeniable for Markan scholars to move forward in their research without acknowledging the oral/aural and performative aspects of the second Gospel.

As a performer of Mark himself, Shiner shows how his research has influenced his own dramatizing of the story. For example, in dealing with Mark 15:34, Jesus' cry of dereliction from the cross, Shiner says, "I have one line to express the suffering of Jesus. I muster up every ounce of pain I have felt in my life and cry in a loud voice, 'Eloi! Eloi! Lema sabachthani?' Then I get to repeat it in English: 'My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?' It is very cathartic for me, though it may be disconcerting for the audience. The mockery is transformed by doing it in character . . . I overdo it a little and make the mocking sound like third-graders on the playground, with lots of 'Naaah naah na naaah naah!' in my tone of voice" (182). In doing this, Shiner's *Proclaiming* becomes a handbook in and of itself.

I commend both volumes as vital reading for all those who study Mark, students, laypersons and professors alike.

T. MICHAEL W. HALCOMB
 Ph.D. Student in New Testament
 Asbury Theological Seminary

Dawn O. WILHELM. *Preaching the Gospel of Mark: Proclaiming the Power of God.* Louisville, KY: WJK, 2008. 300 pp. \$22.00; and **Mary HEALY.** *The Gospel of Mark.* CCSS. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008. 349 pp. \$20.00.

These two commentaries on Mark's Gospel will prove to be useful resources for students and pastors. The first of these is Dawn O. Wilhelm's *Preaching the*

Gospel of Mark and the second is Mary Healy's *The Gospel of Mark*. In this review, I shall offer a brief overview of each work's features, offering some affirmations and critiques along the way, while also stressing some of the unique factors and contributions of each work. Celebrating the fact that both of these commentaries are penned by women, adding to the voices of Bonnie B. Thurston, Adela Y. Collins, Amy-Jill Levine, Susan Miller, Morna B. Hooker, Beverly R. Gaventa, Joan L. Mitchell, and others, one quality that these two works share is that they are both firmly rooted in their respective theological traditions. Wilhelm writes from an Anabaptist perspective while Healy stands within the Catholic tradition.

In setting the two tomes side-by-side, it is more than clear that each author's faith tradition affects their hermeneutical and homiletical moves. Whereas Wilhelm is incredibly attuned to social, economic, and political aspects of the text, Healy concentrates on liturgical and very general life principles. For example, in addressing Mk 5:24-34, the story of the woman who had been bleeding for twelve years, both commentators offer very different ideas when it comes to the sermon. Wilhelm sees here an inroad to address "poverty and the public health care crisis" (99). Jesus' actions, she says, "do not outline a clear and simple care plan for ours or any nation, but they do suggest several points to consider as we debate the availability of adequate health care for all people" (99).

Unlike Wilhelm, Healy sees here a "model for approaching Jesus" (107). She says, "The difference between the crowds and the woman prompts the question: How often do we merely bump up against Jesus—for instance, when we receive him in the Eucharist? Do we half-consciously jostle against him amid all the other preoccupations of the day, or do we come to him determined to touch him personally . . ." (107). In general, most of Wilhelm's scriptural outworkings touch the nerve of important social matters while Healy's tend to spiritualize and theologize them. Depending upon one's social location as a pastor/preacher, one commentary may be more beneficial than the other. If one wishes, however, to strike a balance between the social and spiritual, together these commentaries prove to be great resources.

Each weighing in at around 350 pages, the two volumes share some distinct features in terms of layout. Wilhelm begins her analysis of each pericope with a brief introduction, which is followed by a section titled "Exploring the Text" where she offers background information and works through the exegetical process. She concludes with a segment titled "Preaching and Teaching the Word," which is where she offers homiletical advice. Wilhelm's creative moves in these portions of the commentary are enough to make the book worth owning! Indeed, of all the Markan preaching resources within the last century, hers ranks at the top.

In terms of format, throughout the book Wilhelm highlights words which she sees as fundamental for understanding Mark. These appear in a glossary at the end of the commentary. Unfortunately, there are a few terms such as "eschato-

logical” or “Teachers of the Law” which should but actually do not show up in the glossary. One critique of this commentary, which may be a rather weak judgment, is that she relies too heavily on a few exegetes, instead of drawing broadly from a wide range of scholarly works. Wilhelm draws on Ched Myers, Joel Marcus and Ben Witherington so much that I might classify her work by coining a new category: Socio-Evangelyptic.

Taking a different approach, Healy’s work is supplemented with very helpful photos, sidebars and notes. Her work, aimed at those training for pastoral ministry (12), explains differences in modern translations at the foot of respective pages, contains a list of relevant OT and NT cross-references at the head of each pericope, has catechetical helps, RCL and Reflection & Application sections, and contains all throughout, Biblical Background and Living Tradition sidebars. Healy’s work is incredibly accessible and very user-friendly. Unlike many works, Healy’s layout assists in keeping readers interested and engaged.

The major drawback to Healy’s work is that it is so grounded in tradition that it often fails to acknowledge scholarly advances among Markan exegetes. For example, Healy’s maximalist approach simply takes for granted that historically, Mark was both the interpreter of Peter and companion of Paul, that the text was written in Rome and that Papias’ statements need no defense (17-26). A helpful corrective to many of these assumptions may be found in Clifton C. Black’s, *Mark as Apostolic Interpreter*.

As one who has read hundreds of books and articles on Mark, I can, in good conscience, highly recommend both of these works—diverse as they may be—to students and preachers. Whereas Wilhelm’s work is more cutting-edge in terms of homiletics, Healy’s contains many excellent features to keep the reader actively connected. Each work is unique and neither contains sloppy scholarship. Having said these things, at the end of the day, one must decide whether or not the fact that both works, on the exegetical level, operate out of their own faith traditions is a shortcoming (e.g., a tendency towards eisegesis) or strength (e.g., an example of how tradition interacts with and enriches interpretation).

T. MICHAEL W. HALCOMB
 Ph.D. Student in New Testament
 Asbury Theological Seminary

Graham TWELFTREE. *People of the Spirit: Exploring Luke’s View of the Church.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009. 217 pp. \$24.99.

Twelftree, distinguished professor NT, Regent University in Virginia, has done a great service for students, scholars, and pastors by taking on the herculean task of providing a fresh investigation into Luke’s view of the church in this recent book. For those who have ever dreamed of discussing ecclesiology over a cup of coffee with the author of Luke-Acts, this is your opportunity; the project is bold

and broad in scope, setting out to “hear afresh Luke’s message in relation to the Church in the twenty-first century” (xi).

The study is meticulously organized into 14 chapters, each of which contains multiple sub-sections. In the first chapter, Twelftree provides a helpful introduction to Lukan studies and situates his project within the cultural and geographical shift the church is currently facing—namely postmodernism and the rapid expansion of Christianity in the global south. In response to this cultural shift, he aims to redress Luke’s unique voice in contemporary conversation, noting that Luke’s voice is often muffled due to the accessibility of Paul’s more prescriptive letters and because reading Luke’s miracle-ridden narrative is “not to the taste of these more enlightened times” (5).

Chapters 2–13 contain the heart of this study which thematically engages a veritable smorgasbord of topics related to the church. Pastors will find these chapters highly relevant. They address topics such as: Luke’s view of the Holy Spirit, tongues and baptism (ch. 7); Luke’s view of money and women (ch. 8); Luke’s view of the Lord’s Supper and worship (ch. 9); Luke’s view of the role of Scripture and experience in knowing God (chs. 10 and 11); Luke’s understanding of the early church as catholic, protestant, or charismatic (ch. 12); and Luke’s view of evangelism and social justice (ch. 13). The only topic that Twelftree overlooks is Luke’s view of the imperial cult, or, better yet, Luke’s view of the church’s relation to the state.

One of the advantages of Twelftree’s approach is that he consistently takes into account the theology of both Luke *and* Acts. This is particularly noticeable in the first two chapters where he argues that the church’s origins are not found at Pentecost but in the appointment of the twelve apostles (Luke 6:13). Moreover, in chapter 3 he argues that Jesus’ ministry of healing and teaching in Luke’s Gospel serves as the model for the church’s mission in Acts. By taking seriously the unity of Luke-Acts, Twelftree avoids the temptation to assume that everything Luke has to say about the church occurs post-Pentecost.

Some of the book’s conclusions are provocative. For example, in chapter 12 Twelftree argues that Luke would find contemporary Christians’ preoccupation with Scripture “puzzling” (212). Rather than receive guidance from Scripture, he argues that Luke’s ideal church is a people of the Spirit (hence the title of the book) who are guided by “dreams, visions and also prophets who predict the future, teach, encourage and influence” (212-213). While guidance from the Spirit was certainly a central concern for Luke, based on Luke’s familiarity with (and use of) the Septuagint, more likely Luke saw spiritual experiences and Scripture as two interrelated and equally valuable resources for receiving guidance from God.

Chapter 13 is one of the most fascinating chapters of the book, presenting a discussion on Luke’s view of mission. Twelftree argues that throughout Luke’s narrative “the care of the disadvantaged is directed solely to believers, ignoring the plight of a materially needy world” (197). This conclusion is sure to ruffle

some feathers since Luke is often used to corroborate the notion of social justice within the aims of Jesus and the church. Nevertheless, Twelftree is probably correct in recognizing that Luke would give pride of place to the quality and provision of the Christian community. Still, given Luke's emphasis on the gentile mission, it is difficult to imagine that Luke would oppose efforts to help those outside the church as a vehicle of Christian mission.

One of the strengths of the book is also its weakness. To make the book more accessible, Twelftree uses footnotes exclusively for primary sources and relegates all secondary sources to a well-done thematic bibliography. While this approach forces the reader to mine deeper into the text of Luke-Acts—to hear Luke's voice—it inevitably fails to properly expose readers, especially those who are unfamiliar with scholarship on Luke-Acts, to the secondary sources that clearly influence some of the volume's exegesis. Even so, he achieves his goal of “hearing Luke's voice afresh,” and eager readers can consult the thematic bibliography. This book is a must-read for students, pastors and scholars interested in re-envisioning the church in light of Luke's view of the church and is especially suitable for the undergraduate and graduate classrooms.

DREW J. STRAIT
Ph.D. Student
University of Pretoria

Seyoon KIM. *Christ and Caesar: The Gospel and the Roman Empire in the Writings of Paul and Luke.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008. 228 pp. \$24.00.

The author sets out to answer the question: “Did Paul and other preachers of the gospel in the first century AD formulate their message in conscious reaction to the imperial cult and ideology of Rome?” (xiv) An affirmative answer is almost axiomatic for many NT interpreters in this postcolonial age. Now comes a different response in this highly sensible and eminently reasoned book.

Neither Paul nor Luke, Kim recognizes, has a fundamentally positive view of the Roman Empire; it, like all other temporal kingdoms of the world (Luke 4:5-6), is heading for destruction and will give way to the imminent kingdom of God. At the same time, he thinks that both Paul and Luke exhibit a relative appreciation of empire as an unwitting accomplice to the successful mission of the church. “Only because the order, peace, and stability of the world is a precondition for a rapid missionary movement, which they seek with their eschatological vision, do they appreciate *pax Romana* and does Paul even advise Christians to comply with imperial administration” (189). The Roman Empire may be diabolical and stand under God's apocalyptic judgment, but it may well be the best (certainly not the worst) that the world's systems have to offer. In Kim's judgment, Paul and Luke stand somewhere between the pro-imperial perspective of 1 Clement and the anti-imperial sentiments of the author of Revelation.

The first half of the book focuses on Paul and treats key passages in his writings that support an anti-Rome stance in the minds of many political interpreters. Kim rejects Karl Donfried's contention that the Christian dead at Thessalonica were victims of Roman persecution (1 Thess 4:13-18), the result of Paul's political preaching against the *pax et securitas* of the empire (1 Thess 5:3). He further thinks that the apocalyptic passivity discernible throughout the first Thessalonian letter offers little evidence to support Helmut Koester's view that Paul is summoning the Thessalonian believers to implement the "day of the Lord" as an eschatological alternative to the false imperial ideology of Rome (1 Thess 5:1-11). Kim denies N.T. Wright's view of Phil 2:6-11 and 3:20-21 as anti-Roman polemic and sees no basis in the text for a veiled ("coded") criticism of the Roman Empire while also rejecting Wright's understanding of Jesus' political Messiahship in Romans based on the Davidic *inclusio* that structures the letter (Rom 1:3-5; 15:12). In contrast to Richard Horsley, "the rulers of this age" (1 Cor 2:6-8) and "every ruler and every authority and power" (1 Cor 15:24-28) are not the Roman leaders complicit in Jesus' execution but more sinister supra-human powers holding humanity in bondage, leading Kim to conclude: "Paul did not regard the Roman imperial politics as the sole reality of evil, not even as the greatest manifestation of it; rather, he thought more fundamentally about the human predicaments—sin and death" (23).

Kim studies the way in which anti-imperial interpreters of Paul arrive at their particular conclusions, chiefly, by interpreting the imperial titles of Jesus ("Lord," "Savior," "son of God") in light of Paul's (supposedly) negative view of Rome. The result of this superficial confluence is that "they impose anti-imperial meanings onto these terms and string those passages up, sometimes extrapolating the meaning of one passage to another, in order to claim that Paul preached the gospel in deliberate antithesis to the imperial ideology and cult" (32). To Kim, "This looks like a new application of the old-fashioned proof-text method that dogmatists employed to construct doctrines, and dispensationalists used to construct elaborate eschatological scenarios" (32).

A number of factors noted by Kim make an anti-imperial reading of Paul unlikely: the lack of any specific mention of the imperial cult in Paul's letters (even in contexts of pagan idolatry); Paul's numerous releases from prison; Paul's appeal to Caesar and cautious optimism for acquittal; and the spread of the gospel among members of Caesar's own household. Also, there is Paul's explicit and decidedly pro-Roman statements in Rom 13:1-7, a text upon which any anti-imperial reading of Paul is bound to suffer shipwreck. Above all, Paul's expectation of an imminent end to history and his self-perceived role as God's special envoy of the end times meant that Paul was not out to reform society or subvert the empire. Kim says, "He just concentrated on winning believers in Christ and forming alternative communities in preparation for the eschatological consummation" (52-53).

The second half of the book focuses on Luke, and here the anti-imperial

interpretation fares no better. While Luke offers both explicit and implicit Christ-Caesar contrasts throughout his two-volume work, the deliverance that Jesus offers is ultimately from Satanic, not imperial, oppression. To the charge that the Jesus movement was anti-imperial (Acts 17:6-7), Roman officials and surrogates consistently recognize the politically innocuous nature of Jesus and his movement (Luke 23:13-25; Acts 24:22-27; 25:18,25; 26:30-32). Roman centurions, the backbone of the Roman army, unanimously appear in the Lukan writings as positive characters, with not the slightest hint that they should abandon their military career (Luke 7:1-10; 23:47; Acts 10:1-2; 22:26; 27:3,43-44). Roman officials regularly respond to the preaching of the gospel (Acts 13:7,12; 16:29-34; 17:34; 26:28), including Theophilus, a real or imagined member of the Roman nobility (Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1). The Jesus proclaimed by Luke is certainly “Lord of all” (Acts 10:36) and heir to the throne of David (Luke 1:67-79; Acts 2:29-36; 13:22-23,32-34), yet Jesus’ throne does not displace Caesar’s temporal kingdom. Rather, the politically liberating effects of the gospel must await the restoration of Israel at the time of renewal and restoration of all things (Acts 1:6-8; 3:19-21).

This last point highlights Luke’s convergence with Paul. Since Luke, like Paul, believes that the end of history is near (here Kim sides with Jacob Jervell against Conzelmann), this imminent expectation means that Luke manifests little motivation for changing the political status quo. Hence, Luke’s hero (Paul) is not only repeatedly exonerated of any political crime but is actually protected by the empire while actually *claiming* to be a Roman citizen. Such a beneficent picture of Roman officials leads Kim to accept Philip Esler’s view that “Luke seeks to reassure Roman soldiers and administrators in the church that their allegiance to the empire and Christian faith are quite compatible, and thus helps legitimate their faith” (173). Luke is also a political realist, who realizes that his little tiny community is no match for the might and power of Rome (Rev 13:3-4). Rome will fall in due course; in the meantime, the church must take advantage of the positive effects of the *pax Romana* to spread the urgent eschatological message.

Neither Paul nor Luke was writing in a time envisaged by the seer of Revelation when Christians faced the daunting prospects of refusing to participate in the imperial cult. For Kim, had Paul and Luke faced a similar demand, they may well have sided with Revelation’s decidedly more negative stance. As it turns out, the NT is a diverse library that gives us *both* Romans 13 and Revelation 13 and hence more than one view of the relationship of Christianity and empire. As the Monty Python film *The Life of Brian* reminded us, there can actually be *benefits* to empire. Such a view, however, would come as disturbing news to some segments of the American church, which makes Kim’s book required reading for anyone tempted to read the NT from a one-dimensional political perspective.

DAVID LERTIS MATSON
 Professor of Biblical Studies
 Hope International University

Gordon D. FEE. *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians*, NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009. 366 pp. \$44.00.

This commentary replaces the previous version by Leon Morris in the NICNT series. In the preface Fee observes that the two letters have long endured a certain “Cinderella” status amongst the letters of Paul, and have only recently “come to the ball,” though the second letter still retains a somewhat subordinate standing. It is Fee’s desire to redress this situation. Thus, the writing of this commentary was a “labor of love.”

Fee takes deliberate steps to grant the second letter status in concord with the first. Most notably, he employs the distinctive approach of writing separate introductions to the two letters, in contrast with most other commentaries that address both letters in a single introduction. While the standard, single introduction method is more than adequate, Fee’s choice is commendable as an attempt to shake up the status quo. The ultimate effectiveness of this approach is yet to be determined. However, it is refreshing to see this kind of outside-the-box thinking. Sadly, the benefit of this creativity is greatly diminished by the brevity of the introductions. Combined, they are a mere twelve pages in length. A quick survey of recent commentaries of comparable size revealed significant disparity in this regard. The NIGTC and Pillar volumes, to name two, each have introductions of over sixty pages. The result of this decision is that much material goes unaddressed or is merely given superficial treatment. For example, regarding the issue of the authorship, Fee refers the reader to previous commentaries. He believes he is justified in this course because introductions are primarily read by “scholars and teachers, not the pastors or students who are the primary audience for this series of commentaries.” On this point I must, with utmost respect, disagree. The generalization is questionable and does not take into account readers who do not have access to earlier commentaries on Thessalonians.

While he may have chosen to keep his introduction lean, the commentary proper is meaty, reflecting the thoroughness and attention to detail one would expect from Fee. The format follows that of the NICNT series in general. Each new section begins with a general overview, followed by a detailed, verse-by-verse analysis. Fee recognizes the artificiality of chapter and verse divisions and how such divisions can create a perception of breaks in the letter where they do not in fact exist. Thus, in spite of the format of the commentary, he remains conscious of the flow of Paul’s presentation, recognizing that the apostle does not always use clean breaks but often employs transitions in such a way that discourse boundaries are not easily identifiable.

Fee’s familiarity with the Greek language, as well as his vast reservoir of knowledge regarding the history, culture, and literature of first-century Greco-Roman society play an ongoing role in his exegesis. His assertions and conclusions are well informed and clearly articulated. Whether one agrees or disagrees, it cannot be debated that Fee thoroughly backs up his conclusions. It is in this

that the strength of the commentary is plainly seen. The student, teacher, or preacher will find the text vividly illuminated.

For good or for bad (I would argue for bad) modern readers of the letters to the Thessalonians are primarily, if not exclusively, interested in what they have to say regarding eschatology. Such readers typically seek to harmonize what the letters have to say on this matter with other NT sources (primarily the Revelation of John). Conversely, Fee appeals to the OT and Intertestamental literature to inform the reader's understanding of the text. He points out that much of the eschatological speculation revolving around these passages is "quite unrelated to Paul's own interests." Often this results in interpreters drawing either too much or too little out of the text. In contrast to most popular-level interpretations (of which Fee is gently but firmly critical), the exegesis of these passages is based on a recognition that Paul was responding to specific concerns on the part of the Thessalonian Christians and that he was seeking to bring them encouragement and comfort in light of these worries. I find Fee's nonsensational, sober treatment of the text refreshing and far more convincing. Whatever his personal position may be regarding an eschatological system, it is not obvious in his exegesis. Preachers and teachers will do well to allow his judgments and insights to inform their teaching on the end times.

Though disappointed with Fee's brevity in handling the introductory material, I am very pleased with the commentary as a whole. It is a highly valuable resource that will inform and enlighten those who consult it. While scholarly in approach, Fee clearly has in mind the preacher or teacher who will be looking not only for information but application as well. Student and preacher both will find much that is useful. Those who purchase this commentary will receive a substantial return on their investment.

RONALD D. PETERS
Professor of New Testament
Great Lakes Christian College

Richard BAUCKHAM, Daniel R. DRIVER, Trevor A. HART, and Nathan MACDONALD, eds. *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*. Eerdmans, 2009. 456 pp. \$36.00.

This work is one of two volumes by the same editors, composed of essays and addresses presented in 2006 at a St. Andrews Conference on Scripture and Theology, held at St. Andrews University, Scotland. This collection represents the contributions of 27 keynote theologians and Hebrews experts which formed the centerpiece of that conference.

The periodic St. Andrews conferences engage leading scholars from the respective disciplines of biblical studies and systematic theology—disciplines that have tended to polarize from one another—in an interdisciplinary conversation

around a biblical text. The ultimate goal is that the ensuing fruitful dialogue will nourish the life of the church. This volume represents diverse voices from various disciplines focused on the text of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The collection of articles is not random nor the respective essays insular. Students of the NT in general and Hebrews in particular will recognize familiar names among the contributors, including Harold Attridge, Richard Hays, Morna Hooker, I. Howard Marshall, and Ben Witherington. The dialogue from the conference frequently surfaces, as authors of the respective essays—in subsequent reflection on the proceedings—respond directly to comments, questions, and critiques raised by other colleagues and their essays.

Editor Nathan MacDonald introduces the collection and provides a brief summary of each author's contribution and its place in the overall discussion. The respective essays address one of seven areas of enquiry related to Hebrews: Christology, Cosmology, Supersessionism, Soteriology, Hebrews and the Modern World, Hebrews' Theology of Scripture, and the Call to Faith in Hebrews.

Four essays address the Christology of Hebrews, one with a stronger focus on the divinity of Jesus Christ (Richard Bauckham) and one focusing more on the humanity of the Son (Bruce McCormack). John Webster's "Theological Reflections on the Exordium" offers a careful, critical analysis of the opening verses of the Hebrews epistle, challenging both modern and ancient interpretations of this familiar text. Harold Attridge's article, "God in Hebrews," underscores the epistle's understanding of God as "Father" as the necessary backdrop for interpreting the epistle's understanding of Christ as "Son."

The two-tiered cosmology of Hebrews is the focus of the next three essays, the first of which may come as a surprise to the reader who is expecting only theological or exegetical reflections. Scientist John Polkinghorne reflects on the chasm between the platonic cosmology of Hebrews and the assumptions of modern science and suggests that the two seemingly irreconcilable perspectives may actually complement each other. Edward Adams challenges the assumption of platonic influence on cosmology in Hebrews, arguing instead that the Septuagint OT provides a more immediate framework. Terry Wright's essay looks at the role of the Son, who according to the exordium of Hebrews, "sustains all things by his powerful Word." His christological interpretation of Hebrews' cosmology supports, as does Adams's essay, a positive view of creation.

A troubling feature of Hebrews for modern interpreters, particularly in the wake of the holocaust, is the supersessionism of Christianity over its predecessor, allegedly espoused by the epistle. Five essays challenge as anachronistic any assumption of a complete Christian/Jewish split in Hebrews' *sitz im Leben*, arguing instead that this tension can be explained on the basis of sectarianism within the Jewish community of that time. For Richard Hays, this is a reversal of earlier supersessionist conclusions, and his proposal of a 'new covenantalism' in Hebrews invites reflection and refinement in responses by Oskar Skarsaune and Mark

Nanos. Morna Hooker underscores with Hays that the supersessionism of the epistle is limited to the sacrificial cult and occurs within the context of Jewish Christian believers. Nehemiah Polen sharpens the focus, suggesting that the author of Hebrews has identified a weakness in and a corrective to the theology of the priestly writer (P), who tends to glorify the endless repetition of sacrifice and to highlight the positive significance of the weakness of the priestly caste.

Stephen Holmes and I. Howard Marshall, in their respective essays, address Hebrews' theology of salvation. Holmes's essay employs Hemingway's *Death in the Afternoon* as a construct by which to examine the significance of sacrifice in Hebrews. He focuses on the soteriological context of Hebrews in relation to the current sufferings of the original recipients of the letter. Marshall, for his part, conducts a thorough exegetical analysis of the epistle's soteriology, comparing and contrasting the teaching on salvation with that of other NT epistles and locating a number of distinctive elements in Hebrews.

Douglas Farrow explores the significance of the Melchizedek motif and Christ as "priest-king" in Hebrews, questioning whether "Jesus our Melchizedek" occupies any meaningful place in the modern (post-Troeltsch), egalitarian world and offering a clue to the answer in the context of the Eucharist. Edison Kalengyo approaches the subject of Hebrews and the modern world from the much different perspective of traditional north African religion and the role of sacrifice in Ganda society. Focusing on the sacrifice of Christ in Hebrews 9–10, Kalengyo explores a "theology of inculturation," whereby aspects of the Ganda sacrifice may be incorporated into the eucharistic celebration.

The role of Scripture in Hebrews is taken up by Ken Schenck and Daniel J. Treier. Schenck examines the diverse modes of scriptural reference and usage in Hebrews and identifies a fundamental eschatological hermeneutic at work, driving the author's use and interpretation of Scripture. Treier applies the tool of "speech-act theory" to highlight the concrete, experiential emphasis that Scripture as "word of God" holds for the hearers and readers of Hebrews. The "spiritual-ethical motion" of the biblical text necessitates our investigation of how the "biblical word becomes contemporary divine address."

The final, and largest, section of the volume addresses the Call to Faith in Hebrews and presents itself as the climax of the theological discussion. The seven essays focus on themes and characters arising from Hebrews 11–12, including Abel as an exemplar of faith (Walter Moberly), Abraham's faith (Markus Bockmuehl), Moses' faith (Nathan MacDonald), and Rahab's faith, with a fresh new twist on the meaning of "outside the camp" (Carl Mosser). Loveday Alexander takes up the nameless prophets and martyrs of Hebrews 11 with an eye towards rethinking the concept of martyrdom in the 21st century. Marian Kamell compares the understanding of faith in Hebrews and the Epistle of James, highlighting significant commonalities that are often overlooked by NT scholars. Fittingly, the volume ends—as did the conference—on a note of worship, the

final essay being the sermon delivered by Ben Witherington III in a worship service for the conference participants. Witherington's text is Hebrews 12, and his sermon, entitled "The Conquest of Faith and the Climax of History," admonishes theologians and nontheologians alike to "embrace this faith in God's promises" to "live as the church expectant" and to "fix our eyes on Jesus and follow his model of trust in God."

This volume on the theology of Hebrews is an excellent resource for both the seminary classroom and the pastor's study. Nontheologians and lay persons will also find much of the material accessible and engaging, as topics intersect with themes in science, literature, philosophy and the arts. As with any genuine dialogue, the volume undoubtedly raises more questions than it does provide answers. Indeed it was the aim of the conference to spark a dialogue that would continue long beyond the closing session, and the publication of these essays ensures that this dialogue can continue to bear fruit for years to come.

DENNIS R. LINDSAY

Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty
Northwest Christian University

H.W. BATEMAN, ed. *Four Views on the Warning Passages in Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007. 480 pp. \$18.00.

Structured according to the well-known point-counterpoint format, this volume clocks in at nearly five hundred pages and boasts essays and responses from four internationally respected Hebrews scholars. Presented at the fifty-sixth annual ETS meeting, these papers, written by participants of the Hebrews Study Group, examine the five hotly debated warning passages in Hebrews: 2:1-4; 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:12; 10:19-39 and 12:14-29. In addition to a very lengthy introduction by Herbert W. Bateman IV and a short conclusion by George H. Guthrie, the lion's share of this volume belongs to the following four essayists/respondents: Grant R. Osborne (Classical Arminian View), Buist M. Fanning (Classical Reformed View), Gareth Lee Cockerill (Wesleyan Arminian View), and Randall C. Gleason (Moderate Reformed View).

As any student or researcher of Hebrews knows, there has always been tension among exegetes and theologians when it comes to this piece of sacred literature. Questions concerning authorship, audience, purpose, salvation, sanctification, and eternal security only begin to scratch the surface of the deep reservoir of such tensions. Still, despite the long list of hotbed issues, a diverse group of thinkers has come together in this book, wisely finding common ground to use as their starting point. Their shared presuppositions seem to be threefold: 1) the Bible is inerrant in the original autographs, 2) God is Trinity, 3) the addressees of Hebrews are true Christians.

This review will provide an overview highlighting several pros and cons of this

work. Mostly, this group of essays and responses desires to address the age-old debate of whether or not those who “fall away” in Hebrews refers to Christians being eternally separated from God. As one might expect, the Arminians answer in the affirmative while the Reformed proponents offer a negative answer.

Even in the face of disagreements surrounding methodology and conclusions, one of the major pros of this volume is that it models respect and ecumenism among evangelicals. At the beginning of his essay, Fanning offers a quote from William Klein, which captures the spirit of this book as a whole: “As love covers a multitude of sins, it ought also to cover all our inadequacies of interpretation due to our preunderstandings, and the other failings we are prone as we do our interpretive work” (174). Additionally, this work is exemplary in how it shows flaws in different exegetical approaches but also underscores what careful exegesis looks like. Just as well, it shows that theological dialogue is most civil when believers of different stripes use shared views as their conversational launching pad.

Despite all of the great things this book has to offer, due to the nature of its being an essay-response type of volume, the material oftentimes becomes very repetitive. Also, the extra-long introduction seemed out of place and perhaps even unnecessary. It might have been better to replace Bateman’s intro, which draws heavily on the work of Scot McKnight, with an opening section by McKnight himself! Another issue one might take with this work is that, at times, it becomes pedantic and quite technical. For the new student, lay leader, or beginning pastor, this book may be too much to wade through.

I recommend this book to students of Hebrews, denominational leaders, researchers, and professors alike. The exegesis contained within these 500 pages is not only exemplary but also high-caliber, in-depth and eye-opening.

T. MICHAEL W. HALCOMB
Ph.D. Student in New Testament
Asbury Theological Seminary

Karl-Wilhelm NIEBUHR and Robert W. WALL, eds. *The Catholic Epistles and Apostolic Tradition*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009. 536 pp. \$69.95.

In the last decade, the Catholic Epistles have reemerged as a focus of intensive scholarly study, signaled by numerous publications, and by having become a major topic of discussion within all three of the primary professional associations for biblical studies (SBL, CBL, SNTS). This volume is the result of a Seminar within the Society of NT Studies that met annually 2001–2006. The research of the seminar was not concentrated on the traditional issues of historical criticism—who wrote what when and why—on which there is some variety among the participants. James, for instance, is regarded by some as having been written very early and others as the latest book in the NT. The focus is rather on the impor-

tance of the Catholic Epistles as a corpus, historically and theologically, and their corporate role in the formation of the NT canon. The general hypothesis that emerged in the seminar is that in the fourth-century process that finalized the canon in its present shape, the seven-letter Catholic Epistles played an important role in representing the “pillar apostles” James, Peter, and John (Gal 2:9) as a complement to and guide to interpretation of the fourteen-letter Pauline corpus. In most of the early MSS of the NT, Acts and the Catholic Epistles follow the Gospels and precede Paul. How this canonical shape came to be and its significance for NT history and theology is the guiding principle for this set of essays.

The volume has the following sections: *Part I. Introduction*, Robert W. Wall and Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr. The co-editors describe the purpose and goals of the Seminar; *Part II. Catholic Epistles as a Collection*, Robert W. Wall, “A Unifying Theology of the Catholic Epistles,” argues for a canonical approach to hermeneutics in which the author’s intent is not the normative principle of meaning, but the “canonizing community’s intentions” (14) are taken as hermeneutical guidelines. James was placed as the frontispiece for the collection not as an opposing alternative to Paul, as in Reformation theology but to complement Paul and prevent him from being misunderstood, thus consolidating the apostolic faith on common ground; *Part III. James*. Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr, “James in the Minds of the Recipients,” Patrick J. Hartin, “James and the Jesus Tradition,” John S. Kloppenborg, “The Reception of Jesus Tradition in James,” Matthias Konradt, “The Historical Context of the Letter of James in Light of Its Traditio-Historical Relations with First Peter,” Robert W. Wall, “Acts and James,” Robert W. Wall, “The Priority of James,” John Painter, “James as the First Catholic Epistle,” David R. Nienhuis, “The Letter of James as a Canon-Conscious Pseudepigraph”; *Part IV. Petrine Epistles*, Reinhard Feldmeier, “Salvation and Anthropology in First Peter,” Lutz Doering, “First Peter as Early Christian Diaspora Letter”; *Part V. Johannine Epistles*, John Painter, “The Johannine Epistles as Catholic Epistles”; *Part VI. Jude*, Jörg Frey, “The Epistle of Jude between Judaism and Hellenism,” Scott J. Hafeman, “Salvation in Jude 5 and the Argument of 2 Peter 1:3-11”; *Part VII. Conclusion*, Ernst Baasland, “A Prolegomenon to a History of the ‘Postapostolic Era’ (Early Christianity 70–150 CE).”

All the essays in the volume are technical and detailed, with copious footnotes, references to scholarly literature, and ancient texts cited in the original languages. The volume could be a splendid resource for an advanced seminar, or supply additional reading for a seminary or graduate course. All who are interested in the history and theology of early Christianity, the formation of the NT, and canonical hermeneutics—including parish ministers—will find their horizons expanded and their historical and exegetical competence enhanced.

M. EUGENE BORING

I. Wylie and Elizabeth M. Briscoe Professor of New Testament, Emeritus
Brite Divinity School
Texas Christian University

C. Marvin PATE. *Reading Revelation: A Comparison of Four Interpretive Translations of the Apocalypse.* Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2009. 208 pp. \$29.99.

In this volume, Pate attempts to provide a side-by-side comparison of the four major interpretive approaches to the Book of Revelation, which are labeled preterist, historicist, futurist, and idealist. The author's stated intention is to provide "a work that converts the four major interpretations of that book into parallel translations, thereby highlighting both the similarities and differences characterizing those respective viewpoints" (7). In an eight-page introduction, he explains the characteristics of each approach. The bulk of the book is devoted to a five-column layout that must be turned ninety degrees to the right in order to read it. The far-left column contains the Greek text with an English interlinear. The columns to the right contain translations that reflect the views of the preterist, historicist, futurist, and idealist views in that order.

The format is similar to that of Steve Gregg's *Revelation, Four Views: A Parallel Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), which Pate cites as one of his sources. Gregg also presents the four interpretive approaches in parallel columns, but his text provides extensive interpretations and explanations of each viewpoint. Pate seems to have incorporated much of Gregg's findings in his work but in a less useful and accessible format. Strictly speaking, Pate does not show how the different viewpoints affect the translation of the book. Rather, he inserts into the translation comments that explain how a particular approach would interpret it. It is not always clear where the translation ends and the interpretation begins. Since the four approaches do not come into play in many places in Revelation, many sections of Pate's book consist simply of the same translation repeated word for word across the four columns with no additional comments.

There are other problems with the book. Throughout, the preterist view is represented as believing that everything was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, but the more common approach that is termed "preterist" tries to find how John's text relates to the social context of his day. Also, the futurist view that is represented is almost entirely that of dispensational premillennialism, although in his introduction he recognizes that historic premillennialists also adopt a futurist viewpoint. Many of the futurist interpretations that he offers would be rejected by historic premillennialists and others who accept a futurist approach.

Another odd feature of the volume is that on p. 141 some occasional "editor's notes" inexplicably begin appearing in parentheses in the text, but it is not clear who this "editor" is. These notes generally provide more information about the differences between the different preterist and futurist views. They seem to be afterthoughts inserted because someone thought that not enough information was included in the parallel translations.

This volume might be useful to someone who is unfamiliar with the different approaches because it does provide a simple summary of the four views as one

reads through Revelation. However, Gregg's prior work provides more details and better organization of this material.

GREGORY L. LINTON
Professor of New Testament
Johnson Bible College

Brian K. BLOUNT. *Revelation: A Commentary.* Louisville, KY:
Westminster John Knox, 2009. 400 pp. \$49.95.

Blount is President and Professor of New Testament at Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia. He readily admits that before he was approached by the editorial team of The New Testament Library to write this commentary, he had little previous experience with the Book of Revelation either as a pastor or as a scholar. Nevertheless, he has written a competent and useful commentary on Revelation.

This commentary is accessible to college upperclassmen, pastors, and laypersons who desire a scholarly study of the book. Blount does not lay out and critique thoroughly every possible interpretation as Greg Beale and Grant Osborne do in their commentaries. This is a mid-level commentary in the same vein as those of George Beasley-Murray, Eugene Boring, and George Caird.

He also does not interact with a great deal of current scholarship on Revelation. For example, he shows little awareness of current discussions of the rhetorical aspects of Revelation by Greg Carey, David deSilva, and Paul Duff. In general, the book is light on citations. His primary sources or conversation partners are David Aune, Greg Beale, Mitchell Reddish, and Catherine and Justo González. Consequently, this commentary is not as useful for the scholar or professor who may desire more engagement with the academy.

On introductory issues, Blount generally departs little from the mainstream consensus. Revelation was written during the reign of Domitian. It was not written by John the apostle. It belongs primarily to the genre of apocalypse. John wrote to prepare his readers for the persecution that would erupt if they practiced his policy of nonaccommodation.

Unfortunately, his introduction does not discuss the history of interpretation of Revelation and the main approaches to its meaning. Consequently, the reader is often uncertain about what Blount thinks the text means for Christians today. Perhaps he avoids discussion of significance and application because he has addressed these issues to some extent in his prior book *Can I Get a Witness? Reading Revelation through African American Culture* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2005). His approach seems to be primarily preterist. Throughout, he understands John to be attacking the Roman Empire of his day, but in light of the fact that Rome was not destroyed in John's lifetime, he needs to be clearer about why Christians should still read it today. Occasionally, he

offers an idealist application related to witnessing or nonretaliation or nonaccommodation. He also engages in feminist critiques of John's depictions of women in the book. But he refrains from stating what future relevance or fulfillment this book might have.

This lack of clarity on what the Revelation means for today is especially evident in his discussion of the controversial passage in 20:1-10. He describes the main millennial viewpoints in one brief paragraph but then dismisses the discussion as a distraction from the important point that the martyrs are rewarded. However, in his exegesis of the passage, he seems to think that John believed in a bodily resurrection of believers who would reign over remnants of the nations who are still in their physical bodies. After a thousand years, the last rebellion will occur followed by a second resurrection for the purpose of judgment. Blount does not describe the first resurrection or the millennium as metaphors for spiritual reality. He sounds like a premillennialist, but he never lays his cards on the table.

This commentary might provide a good starting point for someone beginning serious study of the Book of Revelation, but for more advanced study it would need to be supplemented with a more thorough commentary like that of Grant Osborne.

GREGORY L. LINTON
Professor of New Testament
Johnson Bible College

LIST OF BOOKS REVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE

- John Howard Smith, *The Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion: A History of Sandemanianism in the Eighteenth Century* (Jerry L. Gaw, Lipscomb University)
- Finis Jay Caldwell, Jr., *Dr. David Caldwell: An 18th Century Flame for Christ, 1725–1824* (James S. O'Brien, Cincinnati, Ohio)
- Glenn S. Sunshine, *Why You Think the Way You Do: The Story of Western Worldviews from Rome to Home* (Adam Graunke, Waterloo, Iowa)
- Harvey Cox, *The Future of Faith* (Jess O. Hale, Jr., Nashville, Tennessee)
- Thomas Jay Oord, *Creation Made Free: Open Theology Engaging Science* (Wm. Curtis Holtzen, Hope International University)
- Paul Copan and William Lane Craig, eds., *Contending with Christianity's Critics: Answering New Atheists and Other Objectors* (Jr (Kieth) Sheets, Harding University Graduate School of Religion)
- Stephen Faller, *Reality TV: Theology in the Video Era* (Herbert Miller, University of Dayton)
- Michael J. Gilmour, *Gods and Guitars: Seeking the Sacred in Post-1960s Popular Music* (Cynthia Priem, Mount Vernon, Indiana)
- Mark A. Noll, *The New Shape of World Christianity: How American Experience Reflects Global Faith* (Matt McCook, Oklahoma Christian University)
- Stanley Hauerwas, *A Cross-Shattered Church: Reclaiming the Theological Heart of Preaching* (Richard W. Voelz, Vanderbilt University)
- Edwards, J. Kent, *Deep Preaching: Creating Sermons That Go Beyond the Superficial* (Christopher Ensley, Johnson Bible College)
- C. Jeff Woods, *On the Move: Adding Strength, Speed, and Balance to Your Congregation* (Dustin Fulton, Jefferson Street Christian Church)
- Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor, eds., *Khirbet Qeiyafa*, Vol. 1, *Excavation Report 2007-2008* (Ralph K. Hawkins, Kentucky Christian University)
- Richard B. Hays, Stefan Alkier, and Leroy A. Huizenga, eds., *Reading the Bible Intertextually* (Richard A. Wright, Oklahoma Christian University)
- AnneMarie Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord: Early Christians and the Oxyrhynchus Papyrus* (Chris Keith, Lincoln Christian University)
- Raymond Westbrook and Bruce Wells, *Everyday Law in Biblical Israel: An Introduction* (Phillip G. Camp, Lipscomb University)
- Peter J. Leithart, *Deep Exegesis: The Mystery of Reading Scripture* (Merritt Watson, Bethany Christian Church)
- Richard A. Horsley, *Covenant Economics: A Biblical Vision of Justice for All* (Thom Stark, Emmanuel School of Religion)
- G.K. Beale, *The Erosion of Inerrancy in Evangelicalism: Responding to New Challenges to Biblical Authority* (Keith D. Stanglin, Harding University)
- Nathan MacDonald, *What Did the Ancient Israelites Eat?* (Joe M. Sprinkle, Crossroads College)
- J. Robert Vannoy, ed. Philip W. Comfort, *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, 1–2 Samuel* (Sara Fudge, Cincinnati Christian University)
- Craig G. Bartholomew, *Ecclesiastes* (Douglas Redford, Cincinnati Christian University)
- Leslie C. Allen, *Jeremiah* (Paul J. Kissling, Dallas Christian College)
- Carl R. Holladay, *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ* (Barry Blackburn, Atlanta Christian College)
- William D. Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek: Grammar*, and William D. Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek: Workbook* (James E. Sedlacek, God's Bible School and College)
- Lynn H. Cochick, *Women in the World of the Earliest Christians: Illuminating Ancient Ways of Life* (Stephanie L. Johnson, Epping, New Hampshire)
- Thomas R. Schreiner, *Magnifying God in Christ: A Summary of New Testament Theology* (Celucien L. Joseph, Tarrant County College)
- Roger E. Olson, *How to Be Evangelical without Being Conservative* (T. Scott Womble, Saint Louis Christian College)
- Michael F. Bird, *Are You the One Who Is to Come? The Historical Jesus and the Messianic Question* (Drew J. Strait, University of Pretoria)
- Mark Allan Powell, ed., *Methods for Matthew* (Carl B. Bridges, Johnson Bible College)
- Holly J. Carey, *Jesus' Cry from the Cross: Towards a First-Century Understanding of the Intertextual Relationship between Psalm 22 and the Narrative of Mark's Gospel* (Chris Keith, Lincoln Christian University)
- R.A. Horsley, J.A. Draper, and J.M. Foley, *Performing the Gospel: Orality, Memory and Mark*; and Whitney Shiner, *Proclaiming the Gospel: First-Century Performance of Mark* (T. Michael W. Halcomb, Asbury Theological Seminary)
- Dawn O. Wilhelm, *Preaching the Gospel of Mark: Proclaiming the Power of God*; and Mary Healy, *The Gospel of Mark* (T. Michael W. Halcomb, Asbury Theological Seminary)
- Graham Twelftree, *People of the Spirit: Exploring Luke's View of the Church* (Drew J. Strait, University of Pretoria)

- Seyoon Kim, *Christ and Caesar: The Gospel and the Roman Empire in the Writings of Paul and Luke* (David Lertis Matson, Hope International University)
- Gordon D. Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians* (Ronald D. Peters, Great Lakes Christian College)
- Richard Bauckham, Daniel R. Driver, Trevor A. Hart, and Nathan MacDonald, eds., *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology* (Dennis R. Lindsay, Northwest Christian University)
- H.W. Bateman, ed., *Four Views on the Warning Passages in Hebrews* (T. Michael W. Halcomb, Asbury Theological Seminary)
- Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr and Robert W. Wall, eds., *The Catholic Epistles and Apostolic Tradition* (M. Eugene Boring, Texas Christian University)
- C. Marvin Pate, *Reading Revelation: A Comparison of Four Interpretive Translations of the Apocalypse* (Gregory L. Linton, Johnson Bible College)
- Brian K. Blount, *Revelation: A Commentary* (Gregory L. Linton, Johnson Bible College)