

Book Reviews

Mark G. TOULOUSE, Gary HOLLOWAY, and Douglas A. FOSTER.

Renewing Christian Unity: A Concise History of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 2011. 208 pp. \$15.99.

This small volume is the third installment in this series. This follows Holloway and Foster's *Renewing God's People: A Concise History of Churches of Christ* (ACU Press, 2001, 2006) and Helsabeck, Holloway, and Foster's *Renewal for Mission: A Concise History of Christian Churches and Churches of Christ* (ACU Press, 2009). The first nine chapters overlap the information of the previous volumes, but they are not complete reprints of those volumes. Changes have been made to reflect the views held by contemporary Disciples. Many of these changes are minor rephrasing of ideas, but others are major.

The first chapter, "Disciples and History," begins with two illustrations of how people in Disciples churches react to the study of Disciples history. The rest of the chapter deals with church history from the beginning throughout the Middle Ages, the Reformation, and the Enlightenment. They show the influences of thinkers from these periods on Stone, Campbell, and others to follow.

Chapter two deals with "The Ideas of Restoration in the Early United States." Mention is made of the O'Kelly and Jones-Smith movements. Chapter three deals with Barton Stone and the movement in Kentucky. This includes "The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery" in toto. Chapter four deals with the work of the Campbells, and chapter five covers the union of the Stone and Campbell groups, while disagreeing on many points.

Chapters six and seven deal with the growth of the Stone-Campbell movement and the developing theology of the movement. Chapters eight and nine delve into the growing rift within the movement. Chapter 8 deals specifically with the Civil War and its repercussions, especially those surrounding the 1861 and 1863 resolutions made by the ACMS. Chapter 9 deals with "Issues and Editors" that led to the first major split in the movement in 1906.

Chapters 10 through 14 deal with the influences of culture, and the emergence of a new, liberal theology. The Disciples' progress toward open membership and comity on the mission field would lead to the second major fracture in what started out as a unity movement. Restructure would follow in the 1960s, and more churches would leave the Disciples. The main text concludes with a chapter on "Diversity in the Midst of Unity."

The volume concludes with a Study Guide, lesson plans for all fourteen chapters, to assist the teacher/leader in discussion. Also in the Study Guide is Thomas Campbell's "Thirteen Propositions" from *The Declaration and Address*.

This thin volume is just what its subtitle claims: a concise history of the Disciples of Christ. It is intended for use in Sunday School or other small group. Each of the fourteen chapters has a brief bibliography “For Further Reading,” plus “Questions for Study.” There is, however, no bibliography for the entire volume, and there is some overlap on titles selected for further reading. An index aids the reader to locate specific references.

Geared to the popular audience, there are no footnotes. Anyone looking for more information has from three to fourteen references for each chapter. This lack of documentation does not lend itself for use in a college or university classroom, even at an undergraduate level. This volume, like its predecessors, could be included in Restoration college and university libraries.

Also, this volume is geared mostly to Disciples who do not know this history. It can also be used by those in the other two streams of the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement.

The first nine chapters overlap the previous volumes, but some revisions have been made to reflect Disciples views versus the views of Churches of Christ (a cappella) or Christian Churches (independent). It does present more information on the roles of African-Americans and women in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This is a plus, and is many times neglected in other histories. The desire to show the role of women neglects some men. An example is this: the work of Susie Rijnhart-Moyes in Tibet is mentioned, but Albert Shelton’s work in Tibet garners no mention.

Of interest to readers from the conservative streams are the theological reasons Toulouse offers for open membership and restructure, as well as an explanation for the decline in membership in the Disciples of Christ. More conservative readers, however, may be bothered by the fact that in dealing with the diversity on the church, they include “Sexual Orientation” along with African-American Disciples and Asian-American Disciples. This section was obviously written by Toulouse and not by Holloway and Foster.

I also recommend this volume for church libraries, and for those who wish to begin dialogue with Disciples in their communities. The volume could also work well as an introduction to the complex history of the Stone-Campbell movement to those outside the three streams. Hopefully, it may whet the appetites of someone for further study.

The volume also claims to report warts and all, but some are neglected. There is no mention of Sidney Rigdon (Mormons), John Thomas (Christadelphians), and Jesse Ferguson (Universalism, Unitarianism, Spiritualism) who sprang from or intersected the movement. I recommend the volume, but with qualifications. Despite some weaknesses, it does accomplish what it sets out to do: be a concise history of the 200+ years of the Disciples of Christ.

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John FEA. *Was America Founded as a Christian Nation? A Historical Introduction.* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2011. 287 pp. \$30.00.

Fea, Professor of American History at Messiah College, provides a balanced guide to the contentious issue of whether America was founded as a Christian nation. Fea's major goal is to provide the reader not only with accurate historical information but also with a methodological framework for approaching this issue historically. He argues that an answer to the question posed in the title of the book is complex and depends on one's definitions of key terms like "Christian," "nation," and "founded." For example, is the definition of "Christian" based on orthodoxy, orthopraxy, some combination of the two, or something else entirely?

Fea's historical analysis is in three different parts, each of which can be read without the others. First, he surveys the fascinating history of how both conservative and liberal Christians have promoted the idea that the U.S. was founded as a Christian nation, spanning from 1789 to the present. This survey is one of the book's most important contributions. The second part examines the years surrounding the American Revolution to determine whether historical evidence supports claims for a Christian America. Fea finds little evidence that Revolutionaries were driven by overtly Christian values, and federal documents are not blatantly Christian. The individual state constitutions, however, did use more explicit Christian terminology. The third part surveys the specific religious beliefs of seven founders (George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Witherspoon, John Jay, and Samuel Adams). These founders differed greatly in their beliefs and practices, but Fea argues that they did all share the belief that religion was necessary to sustain order and virtue in society. What emerges is a complex picture that defies the question posed by the book's title.

Preceding these three parts are a preface and a short essay on how to think historically. The latter is an excellent primer on the historian's craft and one of the book's strengths. Here Fea introduces lay readers to guidelines for doing good history—guidelines that polemical writers on the topic often ignore. One of Fea's primary goals for the book "is to get Christians to see the danger of cherry-picking from the past as a means of promoting a political or cultural agenda in the present" (xvii). Fea promotes the practice of examining people in the past based on their own contexts.

Some readers may wish Fea had asserted a simple yes or no to the question posed in the volume's title. However, his goal is not to win the debate but to urge participants of the debate to think deeply and responsibly about Christianity's role in the founding of America. Although it is clear that Fea is opposed to Christian America advocates who cherry-pick from the past, people on both sides of the debate will be surprised by something in this book. Fea digs deep into the sources and paints a picture that fully supports neither side of the debate. In fact, he contends that the very question in the title of the book is not helpful because it does not do justice to the complexity of the past. The past's complexity precludes tidy answers to such questions.

Fea wrote this book for people who want help sorting out this issue. It is “a historical primer for students, churchgoers, and anyone who wants to make sense of the past and its relationship to Christianity” (xv). This well-written, learned, balanced treatment is one of the best works now available on the history of the Christian America idea. It will appeal to both scholars and the general public.

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Clifford WILLIAMS. *Existential Reasons for Belief in God: A Defense of Desires and Emotions for Faith.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2011. 183 pp. \$22.00.

Williams is a professor of philosophy at Trinity International University, Deerfield, Illinois. He has authored numerous books, including *The Divided Soul: A Kierkegaardian Exploration* (Wipf and Stock, 2009), *The Life of the Mind: A Christian Perspective* (Baker, 2002), and *With All That We Have Why Aren't We Satisfied?* (Wipf and Stock, 2008).

With this short volume, Williams enters the arena where reason and emotion are often considered at war with one another. Our author ably articulates how the two are friend and not foe to the Christian faith. His thesis states that “the ideal way to acquire and sustain faith is through [emotional] need and reason” (176). Such an undertaking goes against a storied tradition of rationalists who emphasize reason and emotionalists who emphasize emotion. Both view either reason or emotion as enemies of the faith.

The complex argument begins by distinguishing two kinds of human needs. Self-directed needs include the need for cosmic security, heaven, goodness, meaning, and the need to be loved and forgiven. Other-directed needs include awe, justice, fairness, and the need to love. In total, the author briefly describes thirteen desires that either lead to or sustain faith in God. All people do not experience every desire to the same degree of intensity. Nor do they need to in order for the argument to succeed.

The existential argument takes the basic form: (1) We need cosmic security, justice, mutual love, etc. (2) Faith in God satisfies these needs. (3) Therefore, we are justified in having faith in God.

This proposal is more modest than an evidentialist argument. The existential argument does not attempt to state that the aforementioned needs *demand* an explanation, namely God. It simply states one is justified in having faith in God due to faith satisfying these needs. Through repetition, this point is made abundantly clear.

Four objections receive a response over the course of ninety pages. By the end Williams suggests that his argument demonstrates “that faith in the Christian God

satisfies the thirteen existential needs better than means that do not involve faith in a Christian God” (142). For example, faith in God satisfies the need for meaning better than a weekend hobby.

Williams’ work is well written and the argument is meticulously outlined and defended. The book is persuasive and the tone is winsome. Furthermore, the subject of emotion is often neglected in academic settings. Colleges and seminaries wage war against emotional congregations and carve out a living by emphasizing the mind and reason. However, Clifford reminds us not to throw out the proverbial baby with the bath water. A faith devoid of emotion is not a mature faith.

A weakness of the volume is that although the target audience is claimed as “both professional and lay readers” (16), the writing is geared more appropriately toward the professional than the lay reader. The volume is far from a Lee Strobel volume. Professors, pastors, and seminarians will benefit from engaging in this discussion. Undergraduate students will likely struggle to follow along. This work belongs in an advanced apologetics course, not in an introductory course.

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Eric METAXAS. *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010. 624 pp. \$29.99.

As a follow up to his prize-winning bestseller, *Amazing Grace: William Wilberforce and the Heroic Campaign to End Slavery* (HarperOne, 2007), Metaxas chose German theologian and anti-Nazi martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer as the subject of his recent volume. In his exploration of the life of Bonhoeffer, Metaxas demonstrates a thorough investigation of a vast array of source materials that provide information about nearly every aspect of the noted theologian’s life. His most heavy reliance, however, is upon an earlier biography written by Bonhoeffer’s former student, friend, and fellow Nazi opponent, Eberhard Bethge. Throughout the pages of his study, Metaxas crafts a thorough study of Bonhoeffer’s life that is both a compelling read and a masterful exposé on one of the most noteworthy Christian figures of the twentieth century.

Metaxas’s carefully written narrative begins with a brief overview of the Bonhoeffer family background, noting his maternal great-grandfather’s status as a theologian of some regard and his grandfather’s service as a chaplain to Kaiser Wilhelm II. Though his immediate family infrequently attended church, Dietrich claimed he had decided to study theology by the age of thirteen. By 1927, Bonhoeffer completed his doctorate in theology at the University of Berlin, where he studied the theological liberalism of professors like Adolf von Harnack. Though inundated with the theologically liberal ideas of Friedrich Schleiermacher’s descen-

dants at the University of Berlin, Bonhoeffer found an escape from liberalism in the emerging neo-orthodoxy of Karl Barth. He and Barth soon became close friends, issuing the Barmen Declaration in 1934 as a challenge to the Nazi controlled church of Germany.

Bonhoeffer's objections to theological liberalism went with him in 1930 when he traveled to New York to serve as a teaching fellow and graduate student at Union Theological Seminary. Though less than impressed with Union, even going so far as to claim "there is not theology here," Bonhoeffer was very impressed with the Fundamentalism of an African-American church he experienced while living in New York. When a fellow student introduced him to the Abyssinian Baptist Church of Harlem, Bonhoeffer eagerly rejected the theological deadness of Harry Emerson Fosdick's Riverside Church for the enthusiastic fundamentalist preaching of Adam Clayton Powell, Sr. Throughout the remainder of his life, Bonhoeffer would treasure his experiences with the African-American Church in Harlem.

Perhaps Metaxas's most significant accomplishment with this biography is his ability to provide a highly readable narrative that combines Bonhoeffer's ministerial and theological concerns with his objections to the Nazis and his participation in a conspiracy against Hitler. In addition to identifying Bonhoeffer as one of Germany's earliest Christian opponents to the emerging Nazi party, Metaxas dutifully traces and explains the young theologian's anti-Hitler activities down to his ultimate martyrdom at the hands of the Nazis in 1945. Coupled with his resistance to Hitler, however, was a heart for ministry that has often been overlooked. In addition to serving in pastorates in Barcelona, London, and various parts of Germany (including the pastoral roles he filled during his imprisonments), Bonhoeffer helped develop the Confessing Church as an alternative to the Nazi-controlled church of Germany. Bonhoeffer also established two underground seminaries (at Zingst and Finkenwalde) to prepare his students for ministry in the Confessing Church. By looking at Bonhoeffer's rejection of the Nazis in the light of his ministerial and theological concerns, Metaxas gives the reader a more accurate insight into the thought and life of the martyred German theologian.

As an engaging and informative biography of Bonhoeffer, Metaxas's volume is highly recommended. Readers will enjoy the author's lively prose as well as numerous illustrations contained within two sections amid the pages of the book. Academics, however, will find Metaxas's format for endnotes less than helpful and may view the book's length as a hindrance to its use in the classroom. Nevertheless, Metaxas's biographical examination of the theologian-pastor who was martyred for daring to stand against Hitler is the best available accounting of the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

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David J. HESSELGRAVE and Ed STETZER, eds. *MissionShift: Global Mission Issues in the Third Millennium*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010. 432 pp. \$26.99.

This volume is a collection of twenty essays arranged in three groups: the past, present and future of mission. Stetzer reacts to the essays in each section, making him the predominant editorial voice of the volume. His clear and well-reasoned writing is immensely helpful in weaving together the disparate voices of the contributors. Hesselgrave's name takes place of primacy on the cover, and this will certainly cause it to be more noticed in book catalogs, but some readers will be disappointed to know his only contribution is a concluding chapter. It is however a substantial piece of work that satisfactorily brings together the whole volume as well as laying out Hesselgrave's own mission vision.

Seminal missiologists Charles Van Engen, Paul Hiebert, and Ralph Winter write the lead articles for each section, followed by responses from some well-known names in missiological circles: Keith E. Eitel, Enoch Wan, Darrell L. Guder, Andreas J. Kostenberger, Michael Pocock, Darrell L. Whiteman, Norman L. Geisler, Avery T. Willis Jr., Scott Moreau, Christopher R. Little, Mike Barnett, J. Mark Terry.

The essays have a scholarly tone but vary in quality and clarity. Van Engen provides a concise historical survey of the changing definitions of the word "mission" through church history that will be useful to college professors and missions ministers seeking to bring clarity to these issues. His own definition of mission is an impractical ten-line long sentence, but unpacking it may be a useful exercise for students of mission.

As always, Hiebert's writing is a model of erudition and practicality. Readers who would like a brief overview of Hiebert's views on contextualization are well advised to start with this article, his last published work before his death in 2007. Norman Geisler's critique of Hiebert is the most inflammatory part of the book. He suggests Hiebert is insufficiently committed to biblical authority and that missiologists should focus less attention on contextualization and more on apologetics. Stetzer takes Geisler to task for his "colonial" view of missions and misunderstandings of Hiebert's intent. This entire portion of the book is lively reading—a microcosm of a wider struggle between academic disciplines over the direction of mission.

Inexplicably, Ralph Winter strays from his assignment to write on the future of mission, instead devoting most of his article to an historical overview of Evangelical missionary eras and a call for Christian engagement in social service ministries. His respondents attempt to rectify this problem by offering their own views of emerging mission trends but do not tread any particularly new territory. Globalization, urbanization, postmodernity, short-term missions, and technology are among the predictable topics. In all, this third section of the book disappoints, especially as the title predisposes the reader to expect more of a future orientation than the volume provides.

In all, this volume is an enigma. Most readers will probably pick it up hoping for an insightful glimpse of new developments in global mission analyzed by top

missiologists. The book actually has much more of an historical orientation, which is useful in its own way but incongruent with the theme. Mission professors will find some articles useful for their own research. Missions ministers will likely find it not as practical as they might desire. All that having been said, the book does provide an opportunity to see how some of the brightest minds in the field interact and challenge one another, which gives the book moments of highly stimulating reading.

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Lian XI. *Redeemed by Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China.* Yale University Press, 2010. 333 pp. \$45.00.

Over the last thirty years arguably the most astonishing development in a land of astonishing developments is the spread of Christianity. And this in a land that made every effort to “wipe China clean of religion” with the triumph of Mao Zedong’s Revolution in 1949. Noticeably, the Revolution was not very successful in maintaining that goal. Xi cites then president of the US National Association of Evangelicals, Donald Argue’s 1998 statement as a reflection of that failure, noting that China is experiencing “the greatest Revival in the history of Christianity.”

Xi’s work is to date the definitive study of how the underground church developed and contributed to the phenomenal spread of Christianity in China. The title reflects the intensity of the struggle as well as the ultimate triumph. Xi chooses more often to use the term “popular Christianity” rather than the more common “underground church” because it describes more accurately the rich heritage of the Chinese peasant populace. In this regard, one of the most informative and insightful contributions of the author is the historical survey of how millennial and even apocalyptic ideas were a part of the Chinese culture from as early as the Han dynasty (ca. 200 BC to AD 200). Over the centuries Chinese culture had inculcated an often-vague yet pervasive popular eschatology with which Christian ideas could be easily melded, though often with considerable distortion. The example of the Taiping Rebellion (1851–1864) serves well. Under the leadership of Hong Xiuquan, an erstwhile convert to Christianity with messianic delusions, the Qing Dynasty was almost toppled. No wonder the Chinese government has harbored suspicion against religious revivals due to their tendency to translate the spiritual into the political, particularly in the modern era, as Xi duly demonstrates throughout his volume.

Xi’s study concentrates on the independent leaders and movements that have had the strongest impact on popular Christianity in China, such as The True Jesus Church; The Jesus Family; Wang Mindao, John Sung and the Bethel Band, and Watchman Nee’s The Little Flock. Although each has its own unique identity, they share far more commonalities than differences. Set within the last two centuries in

which China experienced perhaps the worst socioeconomic and political convulsions of any modern population, these Christian groups struggled for survival. They fought the battle of indigenous identity. Since Christianity was a foreign religion, and foreign countries were invading China, they wanted to make their Christianity distinctly Chinese. They wanted Christianity but not the foreign leadership and culture that had brought it. So part of their evangelization required an often turbulent and frustrating effort to separate the religion from its western roots.

Millennial and apocalyptic perspectives also became prominent not just because they were present in some of the missionary theologies, but also because there was an affinity with Chinese culture. The extremes of the times also excited the emphasis on the Second Coming and Judgment. Spiritual gifts of healing, visions, and prophecies also found a ready audience. Since both the eschatological and the medicinal were often arbitrated by a charismatic personality, most Christian groups and movements were as well energized and organized around a handful of leaders, such as Wei Enbo (founder of The True Jesus Church), Jing Dianying (founder of the Jesus Family), John Sung and the Bethel Band, Wang Mindao, and Watchman Nee (founder of The Little Flock). Reflecting on the Chinese eschatological and folk medicine heritage, Xi concludes, “In the end, it was the unabashed usurpers of priestly power who managed to recast mission Christianity in a millenarian mode and breathe Chinese life into it” (239).

The Three Self Patriotic Movement, which was the government’s effort to legalize Christianity under its administrative control (early 1980s), was successful in forcing out some half million of the popular church and driving it underground only to have it resurface with even greater energy. This also created an ideological wedge between the state controlled church and the independents (house churches). The independents often view the “state-church adherents” as not truly Christian. This is not an inconsiderable tension due to the fact that by many experts’ accounting there may be as many as three to four times as many independents as state-church adherents.

There, of course, remains the social and political tension between the Chinese government, which still eyes the rapidly expanding church outside its administrative confines with suspicion, and the church of the masses which seeks the freedom to assemble as simply Chinese Christians. However since freedom of assembly is a political issue, politics will have to change to some degree for the popular church to achieve this freedom. Can this be achieved by simply living and teaching the Gospel, or must there be to some degree an exertion of political pressure? Xi concludes his study with no small skepticism: “In the foreseeable future, however, chances for meaningful political reforms are slim, and the hostility between the state and the underground church is set to continue well into the twenty-first century” (247).

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Georges HOUSSNEY. *Engaging Islam*. Boulder, CO: Treeline, 2010. 207 pp. \$14.95.

Perhaps the most helpful contribution Houssney brings to the large and growing library of volumes on the intersection between Christianity and Islam is that his observations and teaching methods are based on real life experience. Having grown up in Lebanon he experienced firsthand the everyday practice and social mentality of Middle Eastern Islamic culture. Although his early personal religious experience was a mixture of Greek Orthodoxy and Maronite Catholicism, he had immanent relations with the political and religious turbulence of 1950s and '60s Lebanon. Being drawn to a Baptist mission project in his village quickly led him to a deep conversion to Christ and then to a call to evangelize Muslims. Attending the University in Beirut, he remained active in evangelizing Muslims. Because of his background and experience in working with Muslims, he was asked to write a handbook on reaching out to Muslims. This opportunity led him to articulate what he had learned from a unique life experience of engaging Islam.

Chapters 2 and 3 deal with typical Western misunderstandings of who Muslims are and the most common misleading stereotypical responses. Houssney concludes that Muslims are as varied in personality and national cultures as Westerners are and that it is important for the West to educate itself in that regard. Being informed about Muslims and Islamic culture will also alleviate the extremes of reaction now commonly expressed in fear, fury, fascination, forgetfulness, or fatigue.

Chapters 4–8 deal with developing a healthy respect for Muslims through understanding their mentality especially in regard to the basic teachings of Islam. One important concept Houssney emphasizes is that, for a Muslim, faith is much more than religious facts and practices—it is a personal, familial, and national identity. Conversion to another faith is also a betrayal of person, family, and nation. Culture and faith are most often so intertwined that they cannot be separated. Understanding this helps the Christian understand why conversion is difficult.

The author is also quite critical of those who try to emphasize the similarities between Islam and Christianity. He feels that in an effort to ease tensions the truth and power of the Gospel can be undermined by well-intentioned but ultimately misguided Christians. Although there are similarities—for example, Islam is monotheistic, Islam recognizes Jesus as a great prophet—the differences are significant. Houssney notes that Allah (the Arabic word for God) is not triune, and Jesus is not just a prophet, he is also God—a concept categorically denied in the Qur'an.

The remaining chapters are given to examples of the author's personal engagements with numerous Muslims, demonstrating both effective and less effective methods of evangelizing. Throughout the book there are frequent references to Scripture, making the Word come alive in practical application to the contemporary situation. This is spiritual warfare, not an academic debate; prayer and Word must be continually and actively involved.

Throughout the volume Houssney concedes that many Christian missions have found evangelizing Muslims to be quite difficult, but he continually returns to Jesus' call for harvesters to fields ready for harvest—noting that this includes the Islamic world. He mentions numerous incidents of Muslim conversions to Christianity to show that, though difficult, it is still fruitful. The last section is “Opportunities Abound,” referring to the new world of technology (internet, Facebook, Paltalk, Skype) that can and is being used to reach a notably difficult but nonetheless people open for evangelism.

Georges Houssney remains actively involved in the evangelization of the Muslim world and can be reached through his ministry website: horizonsinternational.org.

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Fred PARKER. *The Devil as Muse: Blake, Byron, and the Adversary.* Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2011. 219 pp. \$29.95.

Early on Parker states the task of his text: “This book explores the notion of a radical tension between the ethical and the aesthetic . . . through the idea of the Devil as Muse, whereby the creative artist is seen as diabolically inspired” (2). Having charted this course, Parker then sets off on a journey which focuses principally on the Satan characters in the works of British poets William Blake (1757–1827) and Lord Byron (1788–1824). This critical, interpretive work is anchored by reference to and conversation with four other great literary Devils—the Satan of the Bible, Milton’s Satan in *Paradise Lost*, Goethe’s Mephistopheles in *Faust*, and the figure who serves as the source of daimonic creativity in Mann’s *Doctor Faustus*.

In chapter one Parker sets up “some of the terms of this discussion” by exploring the scene in *Doctor Faustus* in which the Devil comes to Adrian Leverkühn, a composer desperate to “break through” the “self-consciousness which afflicts modern music” (3). Parker begins here in order to “consider how far” Mann’s ideas “about the artist and the Devil” can be “generalized” and “their relevance to the work of Blake and Byron” traced (19). The most significant aspect of chapter two, then, is the setting forth of what Parker calls the “secret history of the Devil.” Here Parker argues that, “the Old Testament *satan* never splits off from God altogether to become a force of unequivocal evil,” that the standard presentation of Satan as the absolute enemy of God and man is a production of the Church Fathers, and that “the secret history speaks of collusion and ambivalence, observes only limited evidence of his malice, and notes that he used to work for the divine administration, and conceivably still does” (31, 33). The connection of this secret history of the Devil to poetry, and to Blake’s statement (made originally in reference to Milton) that the true poet is of the Devil’s party, is then made explicit: “poetry feels its way

back into the processes that produced the Devil in his final, unregenerate form. . . . It is a question of *connecting* the Evil One with the ground of ambivalence from which he emerges, without privileging either origin or outcome” (33). Chapters three and four then take each of the author’s principle literary subjects, Blake and Byron, in turn, focusing on the Devil in their works and the Devil as the inspiration of their works. The fifth chapter concludes the book by returning to *Doctor Faustus* and by bringing into the discussion *The Master and Margarita* by the Russian novelist Mikhail Bulgakov.

As one who is interested in Christian ethics, I can say that Parker succeeds in creating a sense of “radical tension” concerning ethics in this volume. This is largely accomplished through the “secret history of Satan” motif which involves a significant re-reading of several Old Testament texts and finding in them evidence of a Satan who is much less an absolutely Evil One and much more an agent of the dark side of God’s will.

In considering this re-reading of the OT Satan, I do not think that Parker has overlooked “the development of doctrine”; indeed, Parker acknowledges that ideas about Satan have developed over time, for his point is that the later, received understanding of Satan has hidden from view an earlier, secret portrait. However, Parker does not seem to acknowledge in his handling of the material any idea of progressive revelation. A situation somewhat analogous to the OT portrayal of Satan is the OT portrayal of the Holy Spirit. In the OT the Holy Spirit appears to be an impersonal power from or force of God. In the NT, however, it is revealed that the Holy Spirit is a Person having the attributes of God and sharing with the Father and the Son in the work of redemption. For Christians who accept the authority of the NT to interpret the OT, this does not create a situation in which there is a “secret history” of the Holy Spirit. Instead, the NT fills out the OT portrait of the Holy Spirit and simultaneously undoes misconceptions about the Holy Spirit that were based on the earlier material. I would argue that this is the case for the scriptural biography of Satan as well.

While the “secret history” does create ethical tension in the deepest of theological waters, Parker’s main objective is to extend that tension to the question of the source of artistic creativity. Is the Devil the source of the poet’s inspiration? Parker’s answer seems to be yes, if the devil is the ambiguous character the “secret history” reveals him to be, for true poetry, or great poetry, emerges out of that space between, or beyond, good and evil and maximizes that ambivalence for its own purposes. This conclusion is tempered by Parker’s admission in the final chapter that this moral ambiguity has validity only in “the imaginative world of the artist” and not in the actual events of human history (169-170). In addition to exploring its central themes, the volume also functions as a stimulating introduction to the works of Blake, Byron, and Mann. This volume would be a great text in a literature course in a Bible College or liberal arts institution. It could also function well as a supplemental text in an undergraduate or graduate theology course, especially if one want-

ed to introduce poets and novelists as conversation partners with the standard theological authorities.

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Brad J. KALLENBERG. *God and Gadgets: Following Jesus in a Technological Age.* Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2011. 188 pp. \$22.00.

We live in a culture that uncritically embraces nearly every new technological gadget to grace the market. Not only is every new technology presumed superior until proven otherwise, but the newest electronic gadget has also largely become the singular object of our insatiable desires. Though some philosophers and cultural commentators have brought a critical eye to the unquestioned role that technology plays in shaping daily human life, these critiques and warnings have barely penetrated the popular imagination, while careful theological reflection on technology and its role in human life has been all but absent. Indeed, it's difficult to think of another equally pervasive element of contemporary human life that receives by the average person so little sustained reflection of any kind.

To help redress this puzzling omission, Kallenberg, Associate Professor of Theology at Dayton University, has offered us a most welcome set of essays that explore the subtle and complex interplay of technology and human life, doing so with a level of theological and philosophical sophistication that is as inspiring as it is illuminating. Equally impressive, Kallenberg addresses these difficult and complex issues in a highly accessible fashion, leaning heavily on a wealth of examples that put flesh on his conceptual arguments. Yet it would be a mistake to suggest that this volume is primarily *about* technology in any straightforward way. It is not. Instead, Kallenberg offers us a much more important book, one that is first of all about Christian discipleship. Kallenberg is interested in technology because he is first of all interested in discipleship, and he rightly recognizes two fundamental truths regarding technology and our discipleship: first, that “technology is shaping our discipleship in ways we do not easily recognize” (4); and second, that discipleship includes being involved in God’s reconciling work in the world, a work of reconciliation which includes the redemption of all of human life—including human technology—to the glory of God.

In the space of six separate but loosely connected essays, Kallenberg probes a number of critical issues where technology impinges on human life. His first chapter examines the ways in which technology marked by standardization, reductionism, and instrumentalism subtly shapes our ways of seeing and living in the world. The following three chapters all deal in one way or the other with the impact of technology on what we might call evangelism, but which Kallenberg helpfully calls “gospelizing” in an effort to keep us from too quickly foreclosing on what we think

such activity entails. His final two chapters explore what it might mean to employ technologies redemptively and what Christians (including theologians and ethicists) might learn from the practices of discernment that are at the heart of disciplines such as engineering.

Throughout these essays, Kallenberg patiently unfolds a number of distinctions and conceptual arguments that he hopes will inform much-needed discussions about the place and role of technology in human life, including Christian life. For example, in his discussion of evangelism (or “gospelizing”), he examines why effective communication always takes seriously issues of time, place, and bodies, and how these three conditions are the ones “that technology bewitches us into thinking we can ignore” (43). Kallenberg also helpfully employs the distinction between “natural” languages (such as English, Greek, or Spanish) and “conceptual” languages, the latter being that through which we see the world. He writes: “[A] conceptual language isn’t just about talking or reading. It is about *seeing* in entirely new ways” (53). His point in raising this distinction is to help us recognize that “gospelizing” our culture is less about finding new technologies to spread a disembodied message and more about creating the cultural conditions necessary for people to internalize a new conceptual language, a new way of seeing and rendering the world. Too often, Kallenberg rightly insists, our conversations regarding evangelism and technology readily assume that the gospel is simply disembodied information. In contrast, Kallenberg reminds us that the gospel requires an embodied community for its intelligibility. As he writes: “There simply are no technological surrogates for actual human beings living with each other in a cruciform manner transparent enough for the neighbors to see” (81).

Kallenberg also wisely devotes considerable energy debunking the widespread notion that technology is simply a tool, a view which assumes that technologies are themselves therefore morally and politically neutral. Such an instrumentalist view of technology fails to see that technology is not simply a tool, but also always a human “doing” and a “revealing.” As such, technologies inexorably script the way we see and interact with the world. Indeed, “so closely is technology bound to our life together that we must conclude that all technology has moral, political, communal, even human properties” (117).

These essays should be read slowly and digested carefully by all thoughtful Christians interested in thinking through the relationship between human beings and their technologies. One comes away from these pages with a profound sense of the inextricable relationship, for good and ill, between the shape of our lives and the technologies within which we find ourselves immersed. To be clear: Kallenberg is no Luddite. He rightly understands the potential power that technology has to be used for redemptive purposes; however, he’s also honest about the ways in which technological systems come to take on a life of their own, long outliving anyone’s intentions, regardless of how noble they may have been. As a result, this collection of essays represents neither an uncritical paean to technology nor a reactionary screed against it; instead, Kallenberg offers us something much more helpful: the

conceptual resources to begin making theologically informed discernments about how best to use technology redemptively. Moreover, a number of the issues Kallenberg takes up have important implications far beyond discussions of technology. For example, his fascinating and provocative treatment of discernment, tacit knowledge, and the difference between concrete directives and heuristic-guided training in the field of engineering offers potentially fruitful ways for reconceiving the entire process of Christian moral formation and the use of Scripture in moral argument. For these reasons alone this volume is worthy of both a wide readership and serious engagement.

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William T. CAVANAUGH. *Migrations of the Holy: God, State, and the Political Meaning of the Church.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011. 200 pp. \$18.00.

In his recent volume, Cavanaugh collects some essays previously published from 2004–2007 in academic journals, such as *Modern Theology* and *Political Theology*. The work serves as a critique of secularization theories and in Cavanaugh’s words, “This book amounts to an argument that . . . the kinds of public devotion formerly associated with Christianity in the West never did go away, but largely migrated to a new realm defined by the nation state” (1). While Cavanaugh does advocate a separation of church and state, he does not argue for a separation of “religion” from “politics.” He critiques the viewpoint of those who see the state as savior and calls Christians to look to the church as “a network of local ‘political’ spaces connected translocally” (4). This understanding keeps Christians from restricting their interests to some “ethereal ‘spiritual’ life” and aids in maintaining an incarnational theology (4).

Cavanaugh sketches the development of the nation state in the west and the ways in which these states attempted to unify people and demand sacrifice from its citizens, which Alasdair MacIntyre likens to “being asked to die for the telephone company” (37). States try to unify people and demand sacrifice by developing liturgies in order to create their own sacred spaces and imagine a communion of the nation’s people. Cavanaugh utilizes Augustine’s concept of the two cities to critique “the modern monolithic concept of a single public space, bounded by the nation state, in which the church must somehow find a place” (63). He is thus critical of American (or other national) exceptionalism rooted in both religious and secular language, for both minimize the political role of the church, see the state as savior, and “transfer the sovereignty of God to the sovereign state” (105). In the words of Carolyn Marvin and David Ingle, “nationalism is the most powerful religion in the United States” (182).

Cavanaugh instead calls the church to participate in and witness to the city of God to all the polities of the world that do not know God. By calling the church a political space, Cavanaugh does not see the church as another lobbying organization. The church is political in that she gives “order through law and ritual to the social life and everyday practices of a distinctive community of people” whose lives participate in salvation history (124). The church is not a private group and should not simply influence the political indirectly. Instead, the church should see “the political as a direct response to God’s activity in the world” (137). The church should thus not withdraw from the world, but serve it as a visible and holy community. Cavanaugh gives some examples of how the church should function politically, such as mobilizing Christians to care for the poor, practicing civil disobedience in the face of laws which restrict the church’s ability to support migrants, and denouncing torture.

Cavanaugh roots his political ecclesiology in the ministry of Christ, Scripture, the Christian tradition, and liturgy. For example, he notes that numerous NT scholars, like N.T. Wright and Richard Horsley, note “Paul’s view of the church has deep political overtones, for it cuts across allegiance to any earthly kingdom or empire” (107). Also, Christian liturgy transcends national boundaries and allows Christians to participate in “the transnational body of Christ on earth and in heaven” (121). This volume also concludes with a helpful discussion of Stanley Hauerwas’s recent engagements with democratic theorists Jeffrey Stout and Romand Coles.

Some will disagree with Cavanaugh’s conclusions. For example, readers from the Stone-Campbell Movement may express discomfort with his discussions of penance. Nevertheless, he provides a needed voice in contemporary political theology.

The volume builds well upon Cavanaugh’s previous works *Torture and Eucharist* (Blackwell, 1998), *Theopolitical Imagination* (T&T Clark, 2003), *Being Consumed* (Eerdmans, 2008), and *The Myth of Religious Violence* (Oxford, 2009), but could also be used as an introduction to his thought. The work would benefit graduate students and scholars interested in political theology and ecclesiology.

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Amy E. JACOBER. *The Adolescent Journey: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Practical Youth Ministry.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2011. 183 pp. \$18.00.

Jacober has written a volume in which she deals with the concepts of youth and their theological journey. Today’s youth are wrapped in the culture around them and do not see the effects of the non-Christian world on their lives. Every youth minister wonders what happens when their youth go away to college and end up

leaving the church. Amy says the problem is the lack of a theological understanding of who God is and what He has done for each of those who follow after Him.

She “proposes a bilingual conversation, core to the concept of practical theology, between the theological and psychosocial context of adolescence” (back cover). Youth ministers need to help youth understand God’s work within their lives and at the same time to comprehend changes in adolescent development. The youth of today respond differently and live in a different world, and youth ministers need to understand what is happening.

Jacober’s objective is great. The subject matter is of great benefit to those in youth ministry. However, the book is very difficult to understand. It reads like she has adapted her dissertation to book form. The first chapter provides a basis for writing the book, laying out three areas of consideration: Trinitarian, Christocentric, and Transformational. Understanding these areas will help youth ministers become bilingual—combining understanding of how psychosocial and practical fit together. It is here that she introduces the element of threes; in each chapter she has three of something.

The dissertation feel of the volume appears in chapter two. Here she provides all of the previous research on the subject. The subject matter is presented in a deep research style making it very difficult to read. Her use of language is very academic making it even harder to read. It becomes obvious that this book was not written for the undergraduate to read.

As Jacober presents each of her points, she provides a great background of information to provide support for her proposal. Often it appears that she provides too much information in trying to support her ideas. In one instance in chapter five she cites Walter Rauschenbusch. She then spends nine pages giving his life story and theological background in an effort to support her argument. Though this is the most conspicuous of the involved support efforts, she will spend up to two pages and use multiple scholars to support one point.

Each of the chapters begins with a reflection on some element of youth work. These are refreshing moments and do provide a basis for what she is about to write. These examples provide an excellent rationale for her efforts. At the end of the chapters are Questions for Further Thought. These help the reader to reflect and comprehend what was written.

Jacober’s volume, though intended for Youth Ministers, was not written for the undergraduate. The book is sound and gives many good arguments but is definitely written for the graduate student.

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Timothy Paul JONES, ed. *Perspectives on Your Child's Education: Four Views.* B&H Academic, 2010. 176 pp. \$19.99.

This volume addresses four approaches to schooling for Christian families: public school, covenantal Christian school, open admission Christian school, and home school. Each of the four authors is an advocate for one of the perspectives. The book is organized into eight chapters: one chapter for each perspective along with a follow-up chapter that contains responses from the other authors and a counter-response from the primary author. The intended audience is well-resourced Christian parents who are making decisions regarding their children's schooling and church leaders who are advising families. Students of education who are studying varieties of schools would find this useful as well. Reading this book may be helpful for parents to begin understanding some of the options for schooling, but it does not offer a complete picture of the schooling landscape.

The authors are well chosen; each is personally and professionally invested in the education of young people from Christian families, including their own. Eckel, who advocates for covenantal Christian schools, is a Dean and Professor of Old Testament at Crossroads Bible College and a former high school teacher at a covenantal Christian school. Fischer, who advocates for open admission Christian schools, is a headmaster of Veritas Christian Academy, an open admission Christian school in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Temple, who writes with his wife Karla, is an Associate Dean and Associate Professor of Youth and Family Ministry at Southern Baptist Seminary. He argues that Christian families should consider sending their children to public schools, which he does. Wilder, who advocates and practices home schooling, is also an Associate Dean and Associate Professor of Leadership and Church Ministry at Southern Baptist Seminary. The personal experiences and professional backgrounds of these authors have shaped and enriched their understanding of schooling options. Each author is an ardent and articulate advocate for his particular perspective.

The Christian parent or leader who wants to hear straight from the horse's mouth why one kind of schooling is better than another will not be disappointed with this book. The reader gets the feeling that s/he is sitting in a heartfelt school (approach) recruitment meeting. However, the parent or leader who wants a dispassionate analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of each approach will be disappointed. Each author's arguments are rebutted by each of the other authors, but the book is missing an analysis from a wider perspective. Many objections by one author are left unanswered by others, some claims and criticisms are overgeneralized or taken out of context, and taken together, the rebuttals leave the reader with a sinking feeling that none of the four approaches are adequate. The reader is left with significant gaps in understanding by these four respectful yet contrary rhetorical arguments.

Nearly every decision regarding education has advantages and disadvantages; very few decisions are entirely good or entirely bad. Sending a child to one school

creates opportunities that would be hard to come by in another school, and vice versa. Parents must choose which opportunities they want more. And these opportunities, though grounded in a particular theoretical approach to schooling, are enacted in particular situations by particular people. Each author presents his approach in the best possible light, so that the arguments are about theoretical models, which, when enacted by humans, almost always diverge from the ideal. Wilder, for instance, may not have been writing a chapter advocating home schooling if it hadn't been for a negative experience with a Christian school that eventually led his family to home school. There are all kinds of covenantal Christian schools, all kinds of open admission Christian schools, all kinds of public schools, and all kinds of home schools. The most glaring omission is that a student's experience in any of these schools will be determined by the decisions and actions of the educators involved more than the kinds of foundational ideas that are addressed in this volume.

In general, the authors treat schooling as a decontextualized force in a student's life. The influence of families, churches, peers, and communities is disregarded by all but Temple, who advocates consideration of public schools. In fact, Eckel implies that parents would need to spend a couple hours each evening correcting the work of public schools, and the reader wonders if some of the authors believe that youth ministry to public school students is a wasted effort. All the authors consider students as passive recipients of shaping, training, and exposure (terms used frequently) and neglect the fact that students think for themselves and make decisions about how to take up in their lives what they experience in school.

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Siang-Yang TAN. *Counseling and Psychotherapy: A Christian Perspective.*
Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011, 495 pp. \$39.99 (\$17.65 Kindle).

Tan has set himself the task of making a comprehensive review of all the major psychological theories and their application to psychotherapy. He is obviously familiar with these theories, and he does an excellent job in the middle section of the book of summarizing these various psychological and psychotherapeutic orientations.

As the title indicates, his primary purpose is not to merely review the field of psychotherapy but to do so from a distinctly Christian perspective. Thus at the end of the description of each theory he provides us with his own Christian theological critique. The main criticisms of most of the secular theories focus on their reductionistic materialism and/or their failure to account for the reality of sin as a significant factor in many emotional, mental, and interpersonal problems.

The last section of the volume undertakes to explain more fully the author's personal Christian theological perspective regarding human nature and how it affects the practice of Christian counseling and psychotherapy. His theological per-

spective is conservative and evangelical. This volume seems designed to serve as the basic text for a course in psychotherapy theory and practice in a Christian seminary. It would also serve well as an introduction to a Christian theory of counseling in any graduate program in psychology—assuming the unlikely possibility that secular programs in psychology have any interest in how Christians think about their discipline.

The middle section of the volume offers a critique of the various secular theories based on a Christian worldview. In the last section, the author offers specific and concrete help for the counselor. These include helpful suggestions for the use of prayer and of Scripture in counseling. I personally appreciated the chapter on the Holy Spirit in counseling and in human transformation.

This volume contains a wealth of information and would obviously help the beginning counselor, first, to understand the plethora of theories about counseling and psychotherapy and, second, to understand how his or her faith might be brought to bear upon the counseling process. Nevertheless, the volume does have a few weaknesses. Although the author is obviously biblically literate and makes liberal use of biblical texts, he does not make clear precisely how he intends to use Scripture. That is, he often quotes Scripture but without clarifying his hermeneutic.

This volume could profit from a chapter near the beginning that specifies much more fully the author's theological methodology. The closest he comes to this is in the chapter which begins the third section on "A Biblical Perspective on Human Nature and Effective Counseling and Psychotherapy." This occupies the author for a mere five pages. Perhaps it lay beyond the scope of the author's intention, but in my opinion the Christian counseling movement is sorely lacking a thorough investigation and exposition of a Christian theological anthropology and soteriology. Such a theology would not only be biblically grounded but would also explain the hermeneutic that guides the theological use of Scripture. Such a theology would also explain how a modern theology of psychotherapy is related to the church's history of spiritual practice and pastoral care.

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Dyron B. DAUGHRITY. *The Changing World of Christianity: The Global History of a Borderless Religion.* New York: Peter Lang, 2010. 290 pp. \$34.95.

Since the Fall of 2007, Pepperdine University in Southern California has been immensely blessed to have Daugherty teaching courses in the areas of Christian History and Theology, World Christianity, and World Religions. I count it as one of the greatest privileges of my graduate school years not only to learn religious history from him, but also to become close friends with someone who is passionately invested in the lives of his colleagues, students, family, and the concerns of God's

kingdom. My academic and ministerial endeavors, both now and in the future, are greatly indebted to his influence.

Daughrity's approach to researching, writing, and teaching the history of the world's largest religion has been heavily influenced by such significant individuals as Kenneth Scott Latourette, Stephen Neill, Andrew Walls, David Barrett, Philip Jenkins, and Lamin Sanneh. Daughrity rightly asserts that Christianity—the religion of 1/3 of the world's population—should be viewed from a global perspective, as opposed to the traditional perspective that emphasizes the North American and Western European experience of the faith. Nowhere is this clearer than in this, his latest volume.

Daughrity's volume, written especially with his exceptional students in mind, is broken up into nine chapters, followed by an afterword and an extensive bibliography. Drawing upon the work of such contemporary scholars as Lamin Sanneh and Philip Jenkins in Chapter 1, Daughrity examines the numerical shift of Christianity from the Global North to the Global South, the turning point occurring in 1980. This date is significant for one major reason: people were uncertain as to what would happen to Christianity following the collapse of European colonialism in the 1950s and 1960s.

Around the turn of the 20th century, Protestant missionaries were calling for world evangelization within their generation. Now, Daughrity asserts, this goal has been achieved: every cultural block/region of the world has heard and responded to Christ's call, responses which are still having an effect to this day. Christianity basically affects every country and society. As it turns out, the Christian message which the earlier missionaries from the Global North/Western World brought has made all the difference (19). Only now, Global South Christians are truly indigenizing the message these missionaries taught them, thus making it their own.

This would explain why today, many commonplace Christian beliefs, practices, and expressions among Global South Christians, such as resurrections, demonic healings, ecstatic utterances, supernatural dreams and visions, the existence of Satan, and vastly differing interpretations of the Holy Scriptures, seem utterly foreign to their Northern counterparts. Christianity's growth is uncontrollable and unpredictable. However, assuming that current trends continue more or less unchanged, there is good reason to be optimistic about the future of Christianity, especially in the Global South and in its more liberating Pentecostal expressions. For example, if the exceptionally high fertility rates among African women more or less continue, then Africa will easily become the most Christianized region in the world.

While it was the case just one century ago, it is no longer the case that "Europe is the faith" (69), as Europe is largely secular now (although in what sense it is secular is a much-debated matter). The heartland of World Christianity, both now and for the foreseeable future, lies in the Global South! Indeed, Christianity is experiencing a return to its foundations and roots! Christianity has never been solely—or even primarily—a Western religion. Centuries before Christianity became associat-

ed with the Western world, the faith's heartlands could be found in North Africa, the Middle East, and as far away as India, China, and Tibet. From its earliest days up until now, Christianity, unlike other World Religions, has been a "borderless religion," capable of adapting to a wide variety of new social circumstances and contexts. Thus, it is entirely appropriate to speak of Christianity as being "the first *world* religion" (19).

In Chapters 2–9, Daughrity takes a geographical approach to the study of Christianity, dividing up the world into eight cultural blocks/regions: the Middle East (Chapter 2), Eastern Europe (Chapter 3), Western Europe (Chapter 4), Latin America and the Caribbean (Chapter 5), North America (Chapter 6), Asia (Chapter 7), Africa (Chapter 8), and Oceania (Chapter 9). His survey of each cultural block/region begins with general descriptions of the political and social backgrounds, followed by a section on the history of Christianity in this area. He then moves to an examination of present-day Christianity, followed by a short description of the faith in each country.

This allows Daughrity to draw some startling comparisons and conclusions, as well as raise some significant questions. For example, he argues the current weaknesses of Christianity in the Middle East, the birthplace of the faith, can be attributed in part to divisions among Christians over the Trinity and the Doctrine of Christ during the Rise and Conquests of Islam (33–34). In Europe, had Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand not expelled the Muslims from Spain in 1492, the entire exploration of the New World may very well have been undertaken by the Muslims and not the Christians!

How should the story of Christianity in Latin America be told? Should it be told as the story of European conquests of the Natives—often "genocidal" in nature, thus rendering invalid any claims that they were bringing them genuine Christianity? Or should it be told as the story of missionaries who, though under the banner of the Mother Country, gave their lives in Christian service to the Natives, shielding them from the injustices of slavery and oppression? Why did Christianity in North Africa die overnight in the face of the Islamic conquests, but still retain a considerable, sometimes influential, minority in Egypt, a nation under the rule of Islam since the 600s?

Numerous other examples could be given. Suffice to say, Daughrity's book raises just as many, if not more, questions than it actually answers. This provokes further and deeper investigation, as will be discussed below.

For students first being introduced to the academic study of religion in general and of World Christianity in particular, the vast amount of data, statistic, and detail that Daughrity provides on birth rates, conversion rates, immigration trends, and such might seem overwhelming at first. It would be all too easy to get so bogged down in all of these details that the reader(s) misses the bigger picture; to get so caught up with the trees that one misses the forest. However, once students are able to understand the significance of these data/statistics for interpreting the history of

World Christianity, this should not be a problem. In fact, it will prove not only important for understanding the bigger picture, but even interesting and fascinating! Daughrity's research and writing are done with nothing but the highest standards of excellence!

Daughrity writes in a very compelling and readable style that makes this book an especially helpful introduction for students to the study of World Christianity. I would not at all be surprised if this book becomes—if it hasn't already become—a standard introduction for church history classes at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Daughrity's work is truly groundbreaking, the first of its kind, in that it attempts to geographically trace the trajectories of the long, rich, and varied expressions of the 2000-year-old Christian faith in less than 300 pages. As the various data, statistics, and details in this change, surely some new interpretations will have to be made. Nevertheless, Daughrity's book makes an invaluable contribution to the continuing study of World Christianity, and should continue to contribute to this ever-emerging field of study and scholarship. Any scholar or student of religion, even just the general reader, would do well to thoughtfully and critically read this great volume.

For me, an aspiring minister/missionary, it is not enough to simply come away from reading such a significant book like this and just be content to have acquired a lot of new information. Nor can I deny that reading this book has raised just as many, if not more, questions than it has actually answered, including the following: Why should I care that Christianity is moving to the Global South? What difference does it make that the new centers of Christianity are in places like Accra, Seoul, and Brasilia, not London, Paris, and New York?

Why should I care what a Nigerian Christian thinks about Jesus' proclamation of a year of Jubilee (Luke 4), or how the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10) might bring a message of hope to a Dalit Christian in India? Have I grown too comfortable and complacent with my faith, simply accepting that the Euro-American expression of the faith is the only valid and normative one? Would I, living in great comfort and ease, be less likely to take my faith for granted if I lived within a predominantly Muslim region of the Middle East or Northern Africa, where I would undoubtedly be persecuted for my commitment to Christ? How does understanding the history of Christian-Muslim relations challenge the stereotypes that each religion's adherents have of the other, and how can this understanding foster more peaceful relationships amongst the world's two largest religions: Christianity (33%) and Islam (21%)? What commitments has Daughrity made to Christian-Muslim relations? How does an understanding of Christianity in Latin America inform the ways in which North Americans talk about and relate to the many immigrants who are coming to America (seeing as how much of our discussions about this issue right now are divisive and unfruitful)? If India and China are fast becoming—and, in a very real sense, already are—global superpowers, then shouldn't our churches be focused more on making an impact there? And how can we do this?

In the end, Daugherty's volume, while it raises more questions and issues than it answers, nevertheless represents a monumental step in helping readers to understand Christianity in a global perspective. It is a first-of-its-kind, groundbreaking work. It is well-researched, well-written, and exciting to read! It will (and should) no doubt continue to play a role in the continuing exploration of World Christianity. It is with great appreciation, enthusiasm, and excitement that I commend the thoughtful reading of this volume.

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Alan G. PADGETT. *As Christ Submits to the Church: A Biblical Understanding of Leadership and Mutual Submission.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011. 151 pp. \$19.99.

The author, who is Professor of Systematic Theology at Luther Seminary, is a veteran in the debates among evangelicals over women's "roles" in the home and church. He draws on earlier publications for some of the material in this book. Padgett's central argument is that Christ's voluntary submission to those around him during his ministry and his continuing submissive service to the church furnishes a model for the mutual submission of Christians, including men and women to each other.

The Introduction validates the use of "role" language in gender relationships, arguing that roles are not fixed descriptors, but are ways of acting out our character, as when a Christian "takes up the role of a slave in caring for one's sisters and brothers out of love for Christ" (xv).

Chapter One surveys evangelical debates on male/female roles and relationships over the past 50 years. Padgett argues that, prior to the 1970s, traditional arguments for women's submission to men were based largely on women's supposed secondary status within the order of creation. When some evangelicals began to argue for women's equality on the basis of Scripture ("egalitarianism"), the traditionalists adjusted the ontological argument in favor of equality in *being*, but hierarchical difference in *role* ("complementarianism"). Padgett outlines his own approach to an "evangelical theological hermeneutic," which includes a threefold sense of scripture: "conventional" (its literal meaning), "canonical" (the meaning of any text within the context of the whole Bible), and "contemporary" (application of the text).

Chapter Two argues that, contrary to the view of many complementarians, "servant leadership" is not congruent with men's headship over women. Rather, the life and teachings of Jesus and Paul call all believers to take up voluntarily the role of servants (slaves) in mutually submitting to each other. Padgett holds that Christ

submitted to the church by giving up power “in his earthly ministry, humiliation, passion, and crucifixion” (55).

Chapters Three, Four, and Five deal with specific “submission commands” in the letters of Paul. Padgett understands Eph 5:18-33 to teach mutual submission of husband and wife, based on the function of 5:21 (“being in submission to each other”) and, even more, on the model of Christ’s taking on the role of a servant for the sake of the church. Padgett points to 1 Cor 7:3-4 (neither the husband nor the wife has “power” over his or her body) as an expression of Paul’s egalitarian perspective on role relationships between husbands and wives. With many others, he interprets the “women’s silence” passage in 1 Cor 14:34-35 as strictly contextual, i.e., women were not to disrupt the worship with intrusive questions, but submit themselves “to the peace and order of worship.” He looks to context also to explain the ethic of submission in 1 Peter and the Pastoral Epistles. Submission was not mutual, but was of inferiors to superiors, because the church was under minute inspection by outsiders and in danger of being persecuted if seen to be a danger to the traditional social order.

In Chapter Five, Padgett devotes nearly 30 pages to a counterreading of 1 Cor 11:2-16, in which he argues: (1) that the sense of “head” (*kephalē*) in the passage is “source,” not “authority”; (2) in 3-7a Paul is not giving his own teaching but citing the mixed-up teaching of the Corinthians; (3) in 11:7b-16 Paul is correcting the erroneous Corinthian theology; (4) the point of the passage is to emphasize that in Christ men and women are equal and women ought to have authority over their own heads, regardless of local customs.

Chapter Six grounds the mutual submission ethic in the larger framework of love for self, love for neighbor, and the search for justice in the community of believers.

Aside from the somewhat eccentric interpretation of 1 Cor 11:2-16, there is little new in this book. The author rightly emphasizes the importance of setting the interpretation of the Bible within a theological, canonical, and contemporary context, rather than simply proof-texting. I remain unconvinced that he has solved the many exegetical problems in 1 Cor 11:2-16.

There are some missteps: Padgett insists on translating the last clause of 1 Cor 11:12 as “all people come from God” (110), despite the fact that *ta panta* is neutral, not masculine, and should be translated, as traditionally, “all things.” On 1 Cor 7:3-4 (husbands and wives equally have authority over each other’s bodies) he makes the common error of assuming that equality in marriage was rarely taught in Paul’s time (43, 69). In fact, parallels to Paul are found in the Greek, Latin, and Jewish moral tradition. He attributes the scribal practice of *scriptio continua* (no breaks between words) to the desire to save space, because paper was so expensive! (104) This is an impossible explanation, given the wide margins and large lettering on many manuscripts.

Those interested in having as full a collection as possible of contributions to the continuing debate on female/male roles and relationships will probably want this volume on their shelves.

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John J. PILCH. *Flights of the Soul: Visions, Heavenly Journeys, and Peak Experiences in the Biblical World.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011. \$24.00.

Pilch has been researching the anthropological literature on alternate states of consciousness since 1993 and, since 1999, has been working with Felicitas Goodman and her institute in New Mexico, the Cuyamungue Institute, researching dreams and other alternate states of consciousness experiences (xii-xiii). This volume is a compilation of fourteen of the articles that Pilch has published since the beginning of his research in this field. For this publication, he has updated the bibliography for each chapter and added indices of authors, Scripture, and other ancient literature at the end of the volume.

The focus of the volume is on alternate states of consciousness (ASCs), which Pilch defines as “conditions in which sensations, perceptions, cognition, and emotions are altered,” which may be characterized by “changes in sensing, perceiving, thinking, and feeling” (1). While ethnographic studies show that 80 percent of circum-Mediterranean societies (both ancient and modern) experience ASCs, modern Western biblical scholars have tended to read biblical accounts of such experiences through antisupernatural, rationalist lenses, which is, in anthropological terms, an etic approach, a view from outside the system under study. An etic reading of the Bible leads to an interpretation of the text that is anachronistic and ethnocentric. Pilch seeks to read the Bible instead from an emic perspective, with a view from within the system under study. He proposes that the anthropological study of ASCs can help elucidate many events recounted in the Bible.

The book is divided into two parts. Part 1 consists of six essays that focus primarily on Ezekiel and Enoch, one of the pre-flood patriarchs (Gen 5:21-24). In Chapter 1 (17-29), Pilch proposes that Ezekiel may have induced an alternate state of consciousness through the use of a breathing technique. Chapter 2 (30-47) situates Ezekiel’s call in the context of an alternate state of consciousness experience. The next three chapters explore a specific kind of alternate state of consciousness experienced called “sky journeys.” In Chapter 3 (48-60), Pilch presents a social-scientific model that he designed for investigating reports of such experiences. In both Chapters 4 (61-72) and 5 (73-88), Pilch uses this model to study the descriptions of sky journeys attributed to Enoch. Chapter 6 (89-105) explores the use of music as a means of facilitating an alternate state of consciousness experience, and examines specifically the funeral in Matt 9:18-19,23-26. In Part 2, the focus is primarily

on the Synoptic Gospels and on the apostle Paul. Chapter 7 (109-123) consists of a survey of ASC reports in the Synoptics. Chapters 8, 9, and 10 each examine specific events. Chapter 8 (124-145) examines the Transfiguration of Jesus, Chapter 9 (146-162) the resurrection appearances, and Chapter 10 (163-173) the ascension of Jesus. In Chapters 11-13 (174-215), Pilch studies the ASC experiences of the apostle Paul, with a focus on Paul's experience on the road to Damascus and his call to be an apostle. The final essay in the book, Chapter 14 (216-230), examines visions and ASC experiences in the book of Revelation. This chapter is the first study of ASCs published by Pilch, and it serves as a convenient summary of the foregoing chapters in this volume.

This volume draws heavily on anthropological studies, which may be foreign to some readers in biblical studies. In addition, the idea of ASC by itself may be discomfiting to modern Western readers. However, while rationalistic Western societies view cultures that claim to have ecstatic religious experiences with suspicion, those cultures are actually more representative of the human experience throughout global history. Erika Bourguignon, an anthropologist who has spent much of her career studying altered states of consciousness, explains that "after all, as we have seen from our survey of the widespread existence and ritualization of altered states of consciousness among human societies, a culture such as our own, where such states are not given respectability in a ritual context, except among marginal groups, is atypical of [hu]mankind" [*Culture and the Varieties of Consciousness* (An Addison-Wesley Module in Anthropology, No. 47. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1974) 27]. The fact is that altered states of consciousness are normal and are institutionalized in many societies as part of religious observances. The idea that God seeks to reach cultures by speaking in their vernacular is a key principle of hermeneutics. If ASCs were familiar within the circum-Mediterranean world, then it makes sense that God may have used them to convey ideas, spiritual truths, and even himself, to his people. For this reason, "instead of attempting to determine the facts of the biblical report, or to separate fact from interpretation in the report, the exegete ought to attempt . . . to understand how this report would be received and understood by the original readers or listeners" (186-187).

Readers will certainly not agree with everything they read in this volume. However, anthropology has much to contribute to biblical studies, but its use is still in the nascent stages. This volume makes an admirable attempt at utilizing anthropological tools to understand and illuminate certain phenomena reported in the Bible. It warrants careful study and consideration by those in both biblical studies.

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Christian SMITH. *The Bible Made Impossible: Why Biblicism Is Not a Truly Evangelical Reading of Scripture.* Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2011. 234 pp. \$22.99.

Frequently contributing insights from his sociology background, Christian Smith argues that, on its own terms, “biblicism” is not a consistently viable, evangelical hermeneutic (3-89). Instead, a thoroughly evangelical hermeneutic must centralize Jesus Christ and the rule of faith (vii-xii, 93-172).

“Biblicism” here denotes “a theory about the Bible that emphasizes . . . its [1] exclusive authority, [2] infallibility, [3] perspicuity, [4] self-sufficiency, [5] internal consistency, [6] self-evident meaning, and [7] universal applicability” (viii; cf. 4-5). Therefore, on this understanding, biblical interpreters should develop unified readings (emphases 2-6) that authoritatively guide the church’s faith and practice (3-16; emphases 1-2, 7). Yet, considering sociologically how biblical interpretation works, even among biblicists, actually undermines biblicism because biblicists do not develop mutually coherent interpretations or functionally authoritative applications (16-54). Therefore, biblicists must implement numerous ad hoc adjustments to maintain biblicism’s validity (67-89). Sociologically, this behavior is entirely typical, but rather than salvaging biblicism, these adjustments’ cumulative weight strongly suggests biblicism’s bankruptcy and the need for an alternative paradigm (43-47, 60-65, 192n32).

For Smith, a successful alternative to biblicism would read Scripture chiefly toward Jesus Christ and the rule of faith rather than biblicism’s own modernist predispositions (55-60, 93-106, 149-172). Indeed, even the rule of faith grows from and focuses on Jesus Christ, through whom scripture’s coherence manifests itself (102, 107). With this christological hermeneutical key, evangelicals could: (1) be much more comfortable with difficult texts and intertexts; (2) better distinguish degrees of certainty for individual, Christian beliefs; and (3) more richly apply scripture to contemporary contexts (127-148). Consequently, evangelicals need not yoke themselves to modernity and be led where they should not go. Rather, thus rehabilitating the church’s own interpretive tradition would help mitigate pervasive interpretive pluralism and strengthen the evangelical community around its true center—Jesus Christ (96-116).

Generally, Smith’s work is engaging and thought provoking, and he carefully considers the implications of lived hermeneutical experience. Additionally, very early, Smith proposes a working definition for “biblicism,” but as articulated, this definition may create new difficulties as it resolves others. Initially, this definition seems fairly descriptive of at least very much of evangelicalism. In practice, however, “biblicism” seems to mean something closer to “insufficiently critical hyper-confessionalism” (cf. viii, 5). This focal shift presents a difficulty because Smith’s argument does not particularly seem designed to address hyper-confessionalists on their own terms, and non-hyper-confessionalists whom Smith’s formal definition of biblicism embraces may see parts of his argument as striking straw men more than

themselves. Smith's argument is worth hearing, but to do so well, some audience members must be especially attentive.

Further, in part two, Smith salutarily proposes a christological hermeneutic informed by the rule of faith, but this part also bears additional focus. Smith rightly recognizes this proposal cannot fully and finally address the difficulties he tries clarifying in part one (96-97). Yet, Smith affirms this christological hermeneutic as, minimally, a partial antidote to evangelicalism's apparent interpretive pluralism and fragmentation (97, 113, 116, 137-138). To this end, however, the history of biblical interpretation renders dubiously effective simply a christological *method*. Nevertheless, if combined with a shift in evangelical identity toward "mere" or "simple" Christianity as embodied in the rule of faith, Smith's unity proposal holds greater promise (120-121, 146-148). Hence, although Smith occasionally disparages certain Stone-Campbell Restoration slogans' verbiage (34-36, 137-138), his central concerns resonate strongly with the Stone-Campbell ideals: (1) Christian identity be constructed strictly and solely around Jesus Christ and (2) scripture be read within this identity's context. For Smith, these ideals' consequences may differ more or less from what various Stone-Campbell adherents have traditionally espoused. Still, if for no other reason, Smith's volume seems worth considering for how it may help Restorationists better understand and articulate the Movement's own mission, identity, and practice.

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Grenville J. R. KENT, Paul J. KISSLING, and Laurence A. TURNER.

Reclaiming the Old Testament for Christian Preaching. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010. 256 pp. \$23.00.

The task of preaching God's Word can be divided into two separate and yet inseparable components: what is said (content), and delivery (how it is said.) Perhaps the most illusive of all ministerial gifts is the ability (and frankly desire!) to understand the process of doing both well. This volume attempts to address both components.

This volume takes several approaches to dissecting the OT. It covers various literary genres of OT literature (law, lament, praise poetry, wisdom, and apocalyptic), specific OT texts (Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and the Minor Prophets), literary devices (plot, and characters), preaching from difficult texts, and preaching Christ from the OT.

From the standpoint of a seminary class, this volume would serve well as a textbook. The authors certainly come from the Academy and write from that perspective. It analyzes the OT text from several different perspectives and does a very good

job of educating them to the subtle nuances of understanding not just the text, but the message of the text contained in how it appears in literary form.

Other than use in a seminary context, this volume has real value to the preacher in a local church environment. For someone facing the rigors of a weekly deadline to study for, write, and present a sermon each week (and sometimes 2–3 per week), practicality is paramount in resources. When reading a book written by “academics,” practicality is not always evident. That is certainly not the case with this volume, though. I found not just interesting information in each chapter, but very practical steps I could use when preparing for my own teaching and preaching. While this could be said more or less of every chapter, I found the first two chapters on plot and character to be the most helpful in this regard.

The greatest strength, though, is that it provides very specific steps that preachers can take as they work through a given text. The reader is not left with the question of “exactly how do you do this?” Many examples are provided within each chapter that demonstrate and apply the principles.

Again, preaching has two aspects: what is said and how to say it. This book certainly addresses and educates the reader on better understanding and accurately developing “what is said.” In an attempt to provide the reader with “how to” patterns, each chapter ends with a sample sermon that demonstrates and utilizes the material from the chapter. These sample sermons vary from manuscript to short, bulleted outlines.

While I understand the reasoning behind including these sermons with each chapter, they are not all that helpful. First, for many of the chapters, they just appear to be added on to satisfy a requirement for including it. The sermons do not figure prominently into the purpose of the chapters. Second, the outlines are so skeletal in their presentation that they serve only as very superficial examples.

In the world of contemporary books on preaching, many focus only on the “how to say it” component of preaching. This volume serves as a welcomed addition to the preacher’s shelf in that it fills a need on the “what to say” side. I found it educational and practical without descending into nonpractical issues (and after all, isn’t preaching at it’s heart a practical enterprise?). I envision re-reading specific chapters depending on the text on which I am preaching.

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Herbert W. BATEMAN IV and Brent SANDY, eds. *Interpreting the Psalms for Teaching and Preaching.* St. Louis: Chalice, 2010. 288 pp. \$34.99.

Over the years, I, like many preachers, have developed a wonderfully complicated relationship with the book of Psalms. As Bonhoeffer noted, it is the “divine prayerbook” for people of faith (*Psalms*, 25). The prayers collected within its pages

express our humanity in relationship with a Sovereign who now communicates back to us through these same prayers. It is a book of contradictions. On one hand, we are encouraged to “Make a joyful noise to the LORD” (100:1). On the other hand, we are admonished to “Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10)! Yet, at both extremes there stands a relationship between the God who demands worship and the worshiper who humbly offers service.

Yet, how do we preach these texts? Perhaps a more appropriate question is should we preach these texts? During the past few years, a number of noted scholars have attempted to answer these questions, even admitting their own muddled success. Thus, we who feel brave enough to mine the homiletical possibilities from this ancient liturgical manual return yet again to the bookshelf to find another discovery. In their edited collection, Herbert Bateman and Brent Sandy pull together a number of OT and pastoral scholars to share some reflections on preaching and teaching from Psalms. The book is broken down into three major sections: introduction, interpretation, and application. The first section looks at developing a strategy to interpreting Psalms in order to approach it homiletically. In chapter one, Brent Sandy and Tiberius Rata develop a framework for interpreting the Psalms: they are from another time and place; they are emotional; they stem from real-life situations; they are a collection; they are liturgical; and they are pre-Christian. This framework helps the sermon-maker to then move to the next stage of the hermeneutical journey—interpretation. In chapter two, Robert Chisholm makes a compelling argument for applying the basic tenets of narrative theory to Psalms. Focusing on the “real-life situation” aspect, Chisholm argues that in seeing the Psalms narratively “God invites us to express our joy and pain, our faith and even our doubts in him. . . . we draw closer to God and experience in new and profound ways the vibrant relationship he desires to have with each of us” (16).

In chapter three, Timothy Ralston develops a strategy for preaching these prayer-hymns as spiritual journeys that are image-driven rather than academic lectures that are proposition-driven. The second section offers expository reflections on selected psalms from each of the five “books” within the collection. Of note are the essays by Glen Taylor (ch. 4, Psalms 1 and 2), Herbert Bateman (ch. 6, Psalm 46), Walter Kaiser (ch. 8, Psalm 73), and William Barrick (ch. 14, Psalm 130). The third section focuses on applying the Psalms to “the life of faith,” to use Walter Brueggemann’s classic line. In chapter seventeen, Julius Sing offers an extension of Chisholm’s use of narrative theory by challenging the reader to see Psalms as a storyline—a narrative, if you will—for faithful living. In chapter eighteen, Marion Ann Taylor offers a historical essay on how women in the nineteenth century applied the Psalms in their teaching and practice. In chapter nineteen, David Dockery discusses the use of the Psalms in worship, which is fitting seeing as how the Psalms have never lost their liturgical meaning to Jewish communities. The book ends in chapter twenty with Brent Sandy and Kenneth Bickel admonishing preachers and teachers to carefully handle the Psalms so that their true message and meaning is not lost on triviality and trite sentiment.

As an amateur scholar in the field of Psalm studies, I found the application of narrative theory to the interpretation of Psalms interesting and enlightening. Also, the reflective essays in section two will add depth to ongoing exegetical study. My only criticism of the book concerns Taylor's essay on the use of Psalms by nineteenth-century women. I appreciate the essay as a stand-alone essay; however it does not fit the overall project. However, if the application section had included essays about how African-Americans or the LGBT community have applied the Psalms to their particular situations, then it would have warranted merit for inclusion. Yet, despite this singular point of critique, this volume makes an excellent addition to any scholar's library.

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J. Gordon McCONVILLE and Stephen N. WILLIAMS. *Joshua*. The Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/Cambridge, U.K., 2010. 257 pp. \$20.00.

This commentary series is a new approach to biblical study in terms of the OT. The "Two Horizons" are theological exegesis and theological reflection in one volume. So this volume is not a commentary in the conventional or traditional sense which emphasizes "philology, grammar, syntax, and concerns of a historical nature," and recently including concerns of "social-scientific, political, or canonical questions and more." However, within this volume all of the above will be "touched upon" to some degree, lightly.

The "theological exegesis" of this volume on *Joshua* is developed paragraph-by-paragraph (by McConville) and covers only 92 pages. The "theological reflection" section covers 140 pages (mainly by Williams), so the emphasis in this volume is the theological issues found in the Book of Joshua. Those issues include the topics of "land, covenant, law, miracle, judgment (with the problem of genocide), [and] idolatry" (11). Since "much of what is commanded and done in Joshua cannot be taken as command to any modern people," the book of Joshua must be approached from a "Christian biblical and theological interpretation and action" according to McConville and Williams.

Having met Professor McConville in February 2008 while visiting one of his doctoral students and my former TA (Jason LeCureux), I have a high regard for his scholarship and love of the OT, which parallels my own love for this text. Both McConville and Williams take a high view of the Hebrew Scriptures, meaning that they resist the "minimalists" views that include the idea that "Joshua is not a factual account of historical events" (4). Yet, they are aware of all the difficulties of establishing such historicity of the text, especially the "story of Jericho," a stylized account labeled a "conquest account." The question is asked: "[I]n what sense does

the book of Joshua have to be ‘historical’ in order to be valid theologically?” (5). Both authors discuss the issues well enough so that the reader who is new to these problems of “fact and interpretation, history and tradition” may grasp the issues involved and what a difference it makes in the approach to the text. The authors seek to not get bogged down in these issues while giving their view of the theology of the text and various topics rising from the text and its broad biblical context. Thus, they tend “to leave certain specifically historical questions open” (7). This may not satisfy some readers.

In spite of the above statement McConville discusses briefly the problem of the “historicity” of the story of Jericho as recorded in Joshua 6. He admits that many scholars consider it “legend” and that it should be dismissed as an historical factual account. McConville attempts to mitigate that view by looking at more conservative views of the archaeological evidence as well as a second look at the narrative genre. He views the account as having been “theologized” (36). “This does not mean that it tells us nothing about actual events; rather, it means that it is difficult to reconstruct a course of events in a realistic way on the basis of the narrative” (37). This is contrasted with the conquest story of Ai, which is considered a more normal historical account.

Curiously, McConville spends some time discussing the strange event of Joshua 10:12-14 where the sun and moon “stand still” while the victory of the Israelites over their enemies is completed, mostly by God’s hailstones (10:11). He seems to accept the story “at face value” that God listened to Joshua and made the sun and moon stand still. The “hand wringing” over this unbelievable story is echoed by Williams where he remarks: “Does this mean that, for all we know, God might have made the sun stop in the sky and not just look as though it did? Is this not obviously possible for the God of Joshua” (162)? This is in his discussion topic of “God of Miracle and Mystery.” A solution is close at hand, which neither author seems to acknowledge. John H. Walton has made the proposal that this is a celestial omens poem in Josh 10:12-13. It makes sense of the poem and the context and one does not need to defend the impossible or indefensible (see J.H. Walton, “Joshua 10:12-15 and Mesopotamian Celestial Omen Texts,” in *Faith, Tradition, and History* [ed. A.R. Millard, J.K. Hoffmeier, and D.W. Baker; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994] 181-190. Also, John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible* [Baker, 2006] 262-263. Even the notes in the ESV Study Bible make this suggestion.). Either the authors do not know about this alternative interpretation (a cultural context) or they chose to ignore it—both an anomaly to me.

On a more positive note, readers will benefit much from the theological discussions concerning the promised land, its conquest, settlement, and subsequent loss due to the national sin of idolatry. The question of genocide (total destruction of the inhabitants—a *herem*) presents a more difficult problem than the land itself. Williams examines seemingly every possibility of thinking about genocide in the

land of promise. One will need to be familiar with Calvin's view of these matters in order to understand thoroughly his arguments. The two most beneficial theological discussions were about "idolatry" and "covenant." Both topics need to be understood in order to properly read Joshua theologically.

In "Reading Joshua Today" Williams gives a summary of the book of Joshua: "What is indisputable is that the book of Joshua offers an account of entry, slaughter, occupation, and land allocation by and for a covenant community identified as the people of Israel, all taking place in narrative and religious succession to the ministry of Moses, whose death concludes the previous book, Deuteronomy" (207). Williams declares that "historical truthfulness *does* matter" (208). In terms of "history" in the Bible Williams writes: "'Minimalists' find a minimum, 'conservatives' a maximum of reliable history in the biblical accounts, and both agree that there are important issues at stake. The book of Joshua is at the heart of all this" (209).

This volume will certainly challenge the thinking of readers and students of the book of Joshua. Insights and issues can be found on every page. In spite of the few anomalies, one given above, I highly recommend this volume to "students, pastors, and other Christian leaders seeking to engage in theological interpretation of Scripture," the purpose of this series. It is not your "normal" commentary.

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Craig G. BARTHOLOMEW and Ryan P. O'DOWD. *Old Testament Wisdom Literature: A Theological Introduction.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2011. 336 pp. \$30.00.

Bartholomew and O'Dowd have written this volume with the stated goal of not simply orienting the readers to the literature, but "to open a dialogue about what it means to embrace and embody a theology of Old Testament Wisdom literature today" (16). This hermeneutical concern is evidenced throughout the book in their emphasis on the theological questions this literature raises and their discussions of how best to appropriate the message of Wisdom in the church today. The volume is comprised of an introduction followed by twelve chapters. Each chapter ends with a "Recommended Reading" section with suggestions for both the general and more advanced reader.

The first three chapters provide a context in which to understand and interpret Israel's Wisdom tradition. In the first chapter, the authors introduce the concept of "wisdom" and wisdom literature. The second chapter discusses Israel's wisdom literature in the context of the ancient Near East. This chapter highlights the similarities and differences between ancient Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and Israelite world-views and wisdom literature. The authors argue that while Israel is indebted to ANE wisdom traditions, it is nevertheless unique in its rootedness in monotheism and its

critique of “the naturalism and pantheism of her neighbors” (45). The third chapter is an insightful and penetrating discussion of poetry. The authors not only reflect on how Hebrew poetry works, which they do quite adeptly, but also on how poetry is best suited to communicate wisdom. Poetry “evokes wonder” and “has the ability to address . . . our human nature as *embodied* creatures” (68).

The following six chapters are the heart of the volume (4–9). The authors devote two chapters each to Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes respectively. The first chapter for each book walks the reader through the content and main theological themes of each book. Throughout their overviews, the authors dialogue with the latest and most influential scholarship as well as the history of the book’s interpretation. The second chapter for each book presents an exegetical and theological reading of a poem from the book. The authors choose Proverbs 31, Job 28, and Eccl 3:1-15 for this close analysis.

The final three chapters focus on synthesis and application. Chapter 10 evaluates how Wisdom was used and interpreted by the NT writers. The authors suggest that, in the NT, second Temple messianic themes get combined with Wisdom theology and focused on Jesus. In chapter 11, the authors outline a full orbited theology of OT Wisdom. The final chapter suggest ways in which the message of the Wisdom books can be applied today.

Bartholomew and O’Dowd have written an engaging and accessible introduction to OT Wisdom literature for the church. The volume succeeds in accomplishing the main goal of all introductory books; it makes one want to study and engage with the literature firsthand and helps one do so more intelligently. Bartholomew and O’Dowd’s passion for Wisdom literature is evident on every page. The only drawbacks of this volume are things that it did not include. Unlike many introductions to Wisdom Literature, this volume does not deal much with the intertestamental Wisdom tradition (*Ben Sira*). Also, it is light in its treatment of the compositional history of the books under discussion. Nevertheless, the volume is bristling with fresh insights and new approaches to old theological problems. Especially helpful is the concern throughout the volume to not simply understand Wisdom Literature, but to wrestle with how to appropriate it today. This volume is ideal for pastors, upper-level college courses, and seminary classes.

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Daniel J. TREIER. *Proverbs & Ecclesiastes. Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011. 288 pp. \$32.99.

The volume contains a preface from the series editor, a preface from the author, a list of abbreviations, an introduction, commentary on Proverbs, commentary on Ecclesiastes, a bibliography, a subject index, and a scripture index. The commentary

for the first nine and last two chapters of Proverbs and the entire book of Ecclesiastes is organized sequentially, and the discussion of Proverbs 10–29 topically (according to seven virtues and seven vices—a useful schema in the reviewer’s judgment).

The commentary includes what one would expect of a Christian theological commentary, with perhaps the most prominent element being incorporation of the texts into the whole of the Christian canon. In addition, Treier includes (and at times critiques) the opinions of church fathers. He also makes a clear effort to connect the texts with modern contexts, and, although the author often admittedly skirts some technical disputes, he does not neglect to include helpful textual notes and proffer reasoned opinions. In addition to the standard fare, despite his theological commitments, Treier does not fail to recognize tensions between Proverbs and Ecclesiastes and also the greater canon. Furthermore, Treier consistently emphasizes the depth of the wisdom offered in these two books.

Treier’s audience will presumably appreciate his references to other books of the canon, particularly the NT (the most substantial being connections between Proverbs and Jesus’ teachings in the Gospels). Moreover, the author does not go about this task naïvely, often engaging texts that challenge the wisdom of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes and reaching thoughtful, though never simplistic, conclusions.

The most disappointing (to this reviewer, at least) aspect of Treier’s canonical reading of the texts is his insistence on establishing a connection between them, on the one hand, and salvation history and the Christ, on the other. Solomon, the traditional author of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, provides the necessary link, although even Treier indicates awareness of the tenuous nature of this connection. Nevertheless, it is possible that portions of Treier’s audience—sharing similar commitments—will appreciate these attempts.

Again, Treier never pretends to write a technical commentary, but he does not completely avoid such matters. (While not entirely necessary, a basic knowledge of biblical Greek and especially biblical Hebrew would enhance the reader’s ability to evaluate Treier’s treatment of translation issues.) So, for example, he calls attention to chiasms and acrostics, discusses different possibilities for translation due to ambiguity in verbal roots and also textual variants, and even engages in a minimal amount of parsing. This should establish some credibility for the theologian among textual scholars, and it certainly enriches the commentary.

A surface reading of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes produces a considerable amount of tension between the two (and among them and other biblical texts). Treier is fully aware of this and comments on the tensions frequently. Importantly, he also draws attention to the apparent tensions within each of the books individually. This is not evidence of slipshod editing, Treier explains, but rather the complex nature of wisdom literature. Yes, different perspectives are present (the author notes, “Two distinctive voices can be heard at the backyard fence”), but each demands rumination rather than thoughtless assent.

While Treier usually recognizes difficulties within the text, at times he appears to gloss over them. For example, when commenting on Proverbs 3:19-20, Treier speaks of the “deconstruction of ancient battle myths regarding deep waters,” implying such myths were completely foreign to the Hebrew Bible. Yet Psalm 74 (see especially vv. 12-14) and other texts indicate that such mythology was part of the Hebrew tradition as well.

Throughout his treatment of these two books, Treier challenges simplistic notions of what they contain. For instance, while he acknowledges that some wisdom of Proverbs assumes self-interest, he sees balance in the responsibility that one has for his or her neighbor. Moreover, Proverbs challenges the assumption that wealth guarantees happiness. Thus Treier observes: “Most proverbs are not mere platitudes; they are for pondering.” In a similar manner, the author challenges characterizations of Ecclesiastes as an essentially secular work.

Overall, when not attempting a christological reading of these wisdom texts, Treier generally offers valuable commentary for the layperson but especially for the preacher. His insistence on reading the books in their entirety (particularly Ecclesiastes) and also dialectically ensures a richer understanding of both. Undoubtedly Treier’s greatest contribution is that he helps the reader appreciate the depth of these books and the nature of the wisdom that they contain. Responsible preachers will convey this to their congregations.

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Jack R. LUNDBOM. *The Hebrew Prophets: An Introduction.* Fortress, 2010. 258 pp. \$24.00.

Influenced heavily by James Muilenburg (the revered father of rhetorical criticism in biblical studies) and William Holladay, Lundbom developed a lifelong deep interest and expertise in ancient Hebrew rhetoric and the Hebrew prophets. He is especially known for his three-volume commentary on Jeremiah in the Anchor Bible series (Anchor Bible, 1999). His dissertation, directed by Muilenburg, was published originally in the SBL Dissertation series in 1975 as *Jeremiah: A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric*. It was republished in 1997 by Eisenbrauns. This current volume, not surprisingly, brings all of his passion for rhetoric and prophets together in an introductory text long overdue in the study of the Hebrew prophets. Students unacquainted with Lundbom’s qualifications and background will surely question the inclusion of Chapter 5: Rhetorical Discourse in the Prophets. It is, however, a valuable and very accessible rhetorical handbook that serves to fill the void Lundbom laments: “But we have no textbook on the subject” (165).

Lundbom structures the volume in two broad parts: I. Marks, Messages, and Measures of Authenticity in the Hebrew Prophets, and II. Poetry, Prose, Rhetoric, and Symbolism in the Hebrew Prophets. Under the first part he asks the basic ques-

tions of what is a prophet and what is the prophetic message. He discusses six distinguishing marks of the Hebrew prophets including: the divine call, the divine word, the divine vision, mighty works, the divine spirit, and prayer. Lundbom admits that not every prophet possessed every trait and that some of these marks are found among the false prophets. Thus, “such marks, then, are no guarantee of prophetic authenticity” (8). The authentic prophet, “a messenger to speak on behalf of Yahweh the King,” is one whose message was primarily corrective dealing with a broken covenant, social injustice, and nations needing to be punished. He asserts that “an authentic prophetic message must fit the times” (35). He goes on to capsule the messages of the Hebrew prophets in a somewhat chronological order under subtitles that capture the focus of the individual prophet in a few words. In most cases, he also describes the historical setting for each one. This second chapter is the bulk of the book at over a hundred pages. The final chapter in Part I deals with Authenticity. Here Lundbom discusses tests for true prophets and their moral integrity. Part II opens with a five-page chapter on Hebrew poetry and prose in the prophets. Despite its brevity, this chapter sets up the following one on Rhetorical Discourse in the Prophets, the concise handbook on Hebrew rhetoric. This forty-plus page chapter offers example after example of rhetorical figures, the primary source being the oracles of Jeremiah, though many other prophets are included. From repetition to keyword inclusio to chiasmus to contrast, Lundbom highlights the rich diversity of speech in the prophets. In a final chapter, before a brief conclusion that makes a connection with contemporary prophetic claims, he discusses the importance of signs, wonders, and symbolic acts among the prophets. He makes the point that Hosea, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel were themselves symbols.

This text is an excellent choice for undergraduate students, though it has a number of typographical errors: line break and “aind” for *and* (9); “propheta” for *prophets* (31); Amos 7:14-15 for *Amos 4:6-11* (171); “week” for *weak* (105); and in the index, “conditional Sinai covenant” appears twice with the second entry out of order. Despite these editorial problems, uncharacteristic for Fortress Press that reflect poorly on the author, the content of the volume is solid, and I recommend it highly.

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Lawrence H. SCHIFFMAN. *Qumran and Jerusalem: Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the History of Judaism.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010. 512 pp. \$35.00.

In this volume, Schiffman shows the relationship between Judaism at Qumran and that practiced by their Jerusalem opponents (xi) by evaluating the competing halakhic views. Naturally, then, the major threads that weave this volume together

are the Jewish legal systems at Qumran and Jerusalem. His presentation reaches beyond the Qumran collection of scrolls, though, and incorporates, for example, literature from Josephus, Philo, Pliny the Elder, papyri from Wadi Daliyeh, Wadi Murabba'at, and Nahal Hever, and later talmudic sources. The twenty-five chapters constitute twenty-four of Schiffman's previously published articles (1987–2007), one split into two for chapters 8 and 9. Each has been updated and revised so as to make the whole represent “a cross between a book of collected studies and an independently written volume” (x). The chapters are organized into six sections: 1) “The Scholarly Controversy,” 2) “History, Politics, and the Formation of the Sect,” 3) “Jewish Law at Qumran,” 4) “Religious Outlook of the Qumran Sectarrians,” 5) “Qumran Sectarrians and Others,” and 6) “Language and Literature.” The massive editorial work—including the solidarity of the bibliography and footnotes—has succeeded in making this volume flow with narrative and thematic cohesiveness.

Halakhic matters (Jewish legal issues) are the centerpieces of this volume. According to Schiffman, these issues “stand at the center of all discussions of sectarianism in Second Temple times” (5). Sectarian regulations were often combined with the halakhic system, but this combination is most noticeable in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Due to his emphasis on Jewish law, Schiffman's primary textual considerations from the scrolls are 4QMMT, the Temple Scroll, and the Damascus Document. The legal system within these scrolls often opposes the system in Jerusalem; thus, Jerusalem and Qumran are indispensably studied together (xi). He compares the scrolls with halakhic systems in Sadducean/Zadokite and Pharisaic camps (Chapter 11). In “Halakhah and History” (Chapter 3) he shows that competing halakhic trends coexisted, thereby making the “linear or evolutionary approaches to the history of halakhah” unsatisfactory (77). The *Halakhic Letter* (4QMMT) lists roughly twenty-two laws for why the community broke from the Jerusalem authorities. This has led Schiffman to understand the Qumran sectarians as a group of Sadducees who broke away from the halakhic norms of the Pharisees, as well as from Sadducees who continued to participate in the Hasmonean temple cult. The Jewish legal systems of the Hellenistic period form the major backdrop from which to interpret the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Scrolls scholars commonly identify the Qumran community with Essenes. Schiffman believes, however, that probing the laws in 4QMMT in light of talmudic sources “proves beyond doubt” that the sect's origin is located in a Sadducean group (31). This is obviously a departure from the dominant consensus in scrolls scholarship. While thought-provoking, this bold claim lacks convincing substantiation in this volume. Nowhere does Schiffman note the talmudic references to resurrection and the “world to come” in *m. Sanh.* 10:1 (B. Sanhedrin 90a); he notes this list only in reference to the practice of epispasm (240). This text is pointed against the Sadducees' unbelief in the resurrection, which fits with the eschatological reality understood in IQM, IQS, and IQSa (262); in other words, it appears here that the Qumran sectarians did not believe in a resurrection. Other texts, how-

ever, might suggest that the community did believe in a resurrection (e.g., 4Q385; 4Q416; 4Q418; 4Q521). It seems problematic to advocate that the talmudic sources support “beyond doubt” a Sadducean-type identity without qualifying these issues. The qualification would even coincide with the overall thrust of the volume, since halakhic issues exist within these texts.

The usefulness of this volume is not restricted to those interested in Jewish scholarship. As it relates to Christianity and the NT, Schiffman shows how the scrolls inform Christian interpreters of halakhic views of Jewish groups found in the New Testament. The scrolls have provided a means “to reconstruct the history of the Pharisees and the Sadducees in the Hasmonean period” (338). Connections to NT Christianity are not left implicit, but rather Schiffman demonstrates much familiarity with and appreciation for both the New Testament and other Christian material, as well as their contributions to one’s understanding of ancient Judaism (the relationship between Essenes and Christianity; references to the tripartite divided canon in 4QMMT and Luke 24:44; trends of Wisdom literature, messianism, and dualism of light and darkness in the New Testament). In light of the variegated nature of Hellenistic Judaism, Schiffman says, “The proper way to use the scrolls for understanding Christianity is to recognize them as documents illuminating the full spectrum of Jewish groups in the Hellenistic period in Judea” (36). In other words, the scrolls illuminate the Jewish backgrounds to Christianity rather than its “origin,” and they provide a link between the Hebrew Bible and rabbinic tradition (28).

This volume even addresses the scrolls in popular media and the tendency for them to be Christianized. Schiffman acknowledges that the media has exaggerated the scrolls, some tabloids even claiming to have found “the appearance of Elvis in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the cure for AIDS, proof of life after death, and the perdition of the end of the world.” Statements like these were “mocked in a cartoon which shows scholars eating chocolate brownies and declaring that this great recipe was discovered in the Dead Sea Scrolls” (416). With the amount of tabloid press and segments on the Discovery and Learning channels, Schiffman’s volume helps clarify any misconceptions about the scrolls that the media may have projected.

There is a great practicality and sophistication in this volume intended for students of the Dead Sea Scrolls, rabbinics, and NT backgrounds. Schiffman’s arguments and instructions flow beautifully. His presentation is dynamic and user-friendly. The writing style has storyteller type qualities: clarity, humor, and energy. For those interested in the topic at hand, his style invites readers to listen and move through every line with excitement for the next.

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John CLABEAUX. *NT Greek: A Systems Approach.* Scranton, PA: University of Scranton Press, 2009. 322 pp. + CD. \$50.00; and **Rick Brannan,** *The Apostolic Fathers Greek-English Interlinear* Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2011. \$49.95.

When it comes to maintaining biblical languages, the old maxim of “Use it or lose it” often applies. In this brief review, I want to highlight two Greek works, one a grammar and the other a reference text, which have the capacity to help New Testament (NT) readers gain and maintain their facility in Koine Greek. Both volumes have benefited my own studies, and therefore, I must highly recommend them both from the outset.

Clabeaux’s volume has a lot going for it. For starters the extra-large print makes the text incredibly easy to read. In the great majority of grammars the font size is 12-pt or smaller, which can often make diacritical marks difficult to assess. With this book there is no squinting necessary! Hopefully a trend has been set in this regard and other authors will follow suit. Another strong point of Clabeaux’s work is that it has an accompanying audio CD. The audio recitations range from simple pronunciation exercises to larger prayers and scriptural readings. Students will find this most helpful.

First-year students will also find the grammar itself very conversational in tone; at some points it is even as if Clabeaux himself is right there with you (and he can be, in some sense, if the CD is playing!). Additionally, throughout the book Clabeaux offers a number of fun and creative mnemonic devices that will assist readers in remembering paradigms as well as grammatical rules and functions. The verb maps that Clabeaux provides are done exceptionally well and will aid learners in seeing how the Koine verbs fit and work together as a system.

Clabeaux’s “Systems Approach” seeks to provide students with a “way to handle the massive memorization required for learning Greek” by enabling them to “set everything within a coherent context” (vi). He says, “We remember things as parts of networks or systems of other meaningful details. When we have the context fleshed out, even minute details are recoverable” (vi). Two of the minute details that Clabeaux focuses on more than many grammars are the six principal parts and accents. Some will undoubtedly find his explanations of these concepts helpful and refreshing. His systems approach is also mirrored in the setup of each of the sixteen chapters, which begins with vocabulary-building exercises, moves on to grammatical explanations, proceeds to oral exercises and parsing, then moves into two-way translation of sentences (first from Greek to English and then from English to Greek). Despite a handful of typos throughout and an emphasis on using Modern Greek pronunciation, there is relatively little worthy of critique; Clabeaux has provided learners with a fun, creative, and intuitive grammar—something long overdue in the field of biblical languages.

Similarly, Brannan’s new one-of-a-kind resource has filled a long-existing void in Greek studies, particularly studies of the Apostolic Fathers. Brannan’s volume is highly user-friendly, and as a part of the Logos software platform, it has many bells

and whistles that make it enjoyable to read. From the ability to adjust font sizes and reading styles (columnar, paragraphs, etc.) to the wide variety of display options (manuscript, transliterated, Greek lemma/transliterated, morphology, lexical value, literal translation and keyed to Louw-Nida) and linkage to various purchased lexicons (BDAG) within the Logos platform, this work is incredibly valuable. The copy/paste, print, and mouse-over capabilities are other added bonuses.

Perhaps the best thing about this interlinear is that it opens up a much easier door than related resources (Loeb, Holmes, Lightfoot) to studying the texts of the Apostolic Fathers in both Greek and English. One can only hope that a print version of this resource will be made available in the near future. A nice addition would be the audio reading add-in that Logos offers with Greek texts like NA27 or English ones such as the ESV. Being able to hear the Apostolic Fathers read aloud in Greek and English would likely help create more interest among students in engaging these timeless works.

At the end of the day, any library—whether personal or institutional—that lacks these two works is really lacking! Again, I recommend these two resources to anyone interested in the fields of Koine Greek and Early Christianity. Students, pastors, scholars and institutions alike will all be bettered by having these texts available to them.

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Jonathan HILL. *Christianity: How a Despised Sect from a Minority Religion Came to Dominate the Roman Empire.* Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011. 256 pp. \$29.95.

This volume is intended as an introduction to the subject, rather than an innovative work of scholarship. It is written in an accessible style and is well illustrated with a picture on almost every page. Hill rightly emphasizes the significance of the Jewish origins of Christianity, and discusses the complexity of the sources for our knowledge of Jesus. He offers a concise summary of the thought of Paul, “the most forceful and dominant personality of the NT outside the Gospels.” The movement to the second generation is smoothly handled with a discussion of Christian living, baptism and eucharist, and the development of the ministry of the church. But opposition and persecution came from the Jewish religious authorities and some Roman emperors respectively, with consequent shifts in belief, reflected in Revelation and 2 Peter, which have profoundly affected Christian thought to the present day.

There follow two chapters on the development of the church in the Empire (with an all too brief reference to Christianity east of the imperial border), and the development of more systematic persecution and the consequent significance attached to martyrdom. Then come two chapters on Christian philosophy and the simultaneous definition of orthodoxy and heresy. Hill avoids simply listing variant

beliefs as though it had always been obvious that these were heretical, and he acknowledges that often they were the articulation of what some had believed for a long time. Nevertheless as the church moved into the fourth century, unity of belief was even more important as Constantine removed the earlier restrictions on the practice of Christianity, and this enhanced the significance of unitive elements in the church, such as bishops and synods, and the emergence of a distinctive Christian understanding of the canon of scripture. Apart from one chapter on the beginnings of monasticism, the remaining chapters are concerned with the development of a Christian empire in the fourth century, culminating in the decree of Theodosius and Gratian in 380 that all imperial subjects should profess Nicene Christianity. The significance of this is explained by reference to the Donatist schism and the Arian conflict, where for a time the emperors themselves professed Arian Christianity. Again there is a brief reference to developments in the east with the emergence of the Sassanid Empire in Persia and the barbarian invasions from northern Europe. The book ends with a relatively pessimistic assessment of Augustine's pastoral policy in relation to the Donatists in North Africa, by comparison with the enormous influence of his theology on the subsequent history of the Western Church. The suggestions for further reading include only four books published before 2000, and Hill's volume is a good summary of the current scholarship.

For the most part the standard lines for any history of the early church are followed. It is a pity that more was not said about the development of the church east of Rome, despite the paucity of the sources (which are not so much less than those for the first century itself). A quick look at the map shows how close to that border Jerusalem is. Arguably the ways in which Christianity spread in the east—through the influence of merchants, usually beginning with the Jewish diaspora itself—is an important alternative understanding of mission to that on which those schooled in the history of Western Christianity take as normative. There is almost no dependence on the power of political authority, just as the later evangelization of northern Europe depended on monks rather than soldiers. Diarmaid MacCulloch's mammoth *A History of Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years* (Allen Lane, 2009) offers this alternative approach, and takes roughly the same number of pages as Hill to cover the early period. But the presentation of Hill's volume will make it attractive to many readers, and perhaps surprising to some.

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Edward W. KLINK III, ed. *The Audience of the Gospels: The Origin and Function of the Gospels in Early Christianity*. (Library of New Testament Studies 353). London: T & T Clark, 2010. 177 pp. \$130.00.

For more than a half a century scholars have examined the Gospels with the presupposition that the authors of each composed it for a specific, geographically

located community in mind. From that point, scholars then sought to describe as accurately as possible where those communities existed and what specific social contexts characterized them. Once the audience's distinctive context was postulated, the Gospel would then be interpreted with their concerns as part of the background so that the Gospel became not only a commentary on Jesus' life but also on the experiences of that early Christian community.

In 1998, Richard Bauckham and other NT scholars contended, in *The Gospels for All Christians* (Eerdmans, 1997), that this presupposition regarding the intended audience of the Gospels is misplaced. What he and the other essayists argued was that the original authors wrote with the intent that their work be distributed to and influence many Christian communities. They did not compose a life of Jesus only to address the concerns and issues limited to one community living in one specific place. Therefore, interpreters of the Gospels should stop treating them as allegories for what was going on in the life of those communities. Instead, they should read Gospels as Greco-Roman *bioi*, whose purpose is to tell readers about its main character: Jesus of Nazareth.

Klink, one of Bauckham's students, has edited the volume currently under review. It contains five essays by five scholars, plus an introduction and summary conclusion by Klink. In the introduction Klink reviews the history and present state of the traditional consensus and the challenge to that consensus that was made since the publication of *The Gospels for All Christians*. He characterizes the current debate about Gospel audiences and origin as chaotic and that the purpose of this volume is to help clarify the issues under debate and provide new insights with regard to hermeneutical presuppositions and methodologies. In the conclusion, Klink provides a summary and critique of each essay and highlights how they contribute to advancing the discussion.

In the first essay, "Sectarian Gospels for Sectarian Christians? The Non-Canonical Gospels" and Bauckham's *The Gospels for All Christians*, Michael Bird addresses the question, Do the non-canonical Gospels show that their authors had an interest in a wider audience than their immediate community and does this evidence have a bearing on identifying the intention of the canonical Gospel? Bird concludes that those scholars who think that these Gospels were written for an immediate community only and therefore undermine Bauckham's thesis have misread them. On the contrary, they show an interest not only in the immediate circle of the author but were intended to compete with other Gospels and therefore the authors intended for them to be disseminated widely.

Justin Marc Smith argues in "About Friends, by Friends, for Others: Author-Subject Relationships in Contemporary Greco-Roman Biographies" that identifying the genre of the Gospels as Greco-Roman Biographies also requires scholars to identify what form of subtype genre they represent. Smith proposes four subtypes: non-contemporary-focused (where the subject is not within "living memory" of the author); noncontemporary-open (where the subject is accessible to the author via "living memory"); contemporary-focused (where the intended audience is distin-

guishable); and contemporary-open (where the intended audience is indistinguishable). After giving contemporary examples of each subtype from Greco-Roman sources, Smith argues that the four Gospels are best seen as contemporary biographies, which were written via the living memory of its authors about Jesus of Nazareth. Furthermore, they reflect a personal nature that is common among many contemporary biographies and as such they seem to indicate a desire that their work is read widely, rather than simply for one immediate audience.

The third essay, written by Bauckham, is the longest in the collection (43 pages) and is entitled “Is there Patristic Counter-Evidence: A Response to Margaret Mitchell.” As his title makes clear, Bauckham is responding to a criticism made by Mitchell in a 2005 article published by *NTS*. She claimed that Bauckham incorrectly argued that no one prior to the mid twentieth century thought the Gospels were written to just one community. Pointing to Patristic evidences, she claims the Church Fathers recognized that the different Gospel authors had specific localized communities to whom their Gospels were directed. After examining Mitchell’s major pieces of evidence, Bauckham shows why he believes she has misunderstood both what the Church Fathers wrote and what he had argued. He concludes that the actual evidence of Patristic sources demonstrates that the Church Fathers did not recognize any type of historical particularity for the Gospels, as they would for instance Paul’s letters, in which they should be interpreted, as they are commonly done so by the current consensus.

The fourth essay, “The Gospels for Specific Communities *and* All Christians,” is Craig Blomberg’s effort to find a third way. He does not see why positions have to be polarized between *either* an author having the intention to address a specific localized community *or* a wider general Christian audience. Blomberg, whose approach is clearly indebted to redaction criticism, sees details in each Gospel that point to *both* an awareness of its author that a specific community would initially receive it *and* an interest that the Gospel would be taken to other Christians and, as in the case with Luke’s Gospel, even to non-Christians.

The final essay is the most critical of Bauckham’s thesis. Adele Reinhartz argues in “Gospel Audiences: Variations on a Theme” that Bauckham’s major arguments about the nature of the Gospels’ genre, the rapid and expansive movement of Christians across the Roman empire and their network do not decisively show that the Gospels were written for a wide audience. He perceives that these arguments can just as easily be used to support the “specific Christian communities” hypothesis.

This volume presupposes a readership that is exceedingly familiar with the debate raised by Bauckham and *The Gospels for All Christians* and the methodologies currently employed by Gospel scholarship. Those interested in the questions about the original audience of the Gospels will benefit significantly from these thorough, provocative, and balanced five essays.

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Michael CARD. *Luke: The Gospel of Amazement.* *Biblical Imagination Series.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2011. 284 pp. \$18.00.

This title is contemporary Christian artist Card's first commentary on the Gospels in his *Biblical Imagination Series*. The volume is Card's attempt to condense modern Lukan scholarship and to present the Gospel of Luke to a nonscholarly, evangelical audience. In the preface he describes his method of exegesis as reading the Bible with his imagination (11), which means that Card often supplies details to the narrative that are lacking, such as the feelings and thoughts of the story's characters. Following the preface, he provides a succinct introduction to the Gospel of Luke in which he discusses the identity of the author of Luke and major Lukan themes such as: divine reversal, attention to the outcasts of society, prayer, the universality of the gospel, and the kingdom of God (15-31). The majority of Card's publication consists of his actual commentary on Luke, which includes a helpful summary page of each chapter of Luke, followed by a reproduction of the text, and a short, nondetailed commentary on major events of the narrative.

There are several commendable aspects of Card's work. First, the volume is composed in such a way that it should reach Card's targeted, popular audience. For example, he avoids certain theological terms that riddle most tomes. Furthermore, Card wisely focuses upon major themes and the pertinent texts of Luke in his commentary and does not attempt to provide a verse-by-verse explanation of each pericope. Finally, at times Card incorporates noteworthy historical information such as historical facts about Augustus Caesar (47), Tiberius Caesar (56), Pontius Pilate (56), Herod the Great (37), and Herod's sons (56).

Nonetheless, the book contains numerous problems. First, Card's initial claim of condensing Lukan scholarship is myopic, for his research consists of only five evangelical commentaries on the Gospel of Luke. Second, and most troubling, while Card asserts that his work is designed to reach a nonscholarly, evangelical community, he often enters into scholarly dialogue with his use of background materials. In doing so, his research is often one-sided and presented in a manner that leaves readers with the impression that Card's assertions are final and authoritative. For example, he provides numerous pieces of historical background information that cannot be supported by our current knowledge of the Graeco-Roman World and Second Temple Judaism. He bases the majority of his arguments upon late rabbinic sources; even going as far as claiming that the Mishnah dates back to 200 BC (141)—400 hundred years earlier than the date given by many contemporary scholars. Moreover, his constant references to the Mishnah and the Talmud present first-century Judaism(s) as monolithic. A simple reading of the Gospels and Acts does not lead to this conclusion. From these documents we at least know that the Sadducees and Pharisees possessed differing opinions about the resurrection.

Consequently, while Card's attempt is commendable, I cannot recommend his book. Even though it is written in such a manner to reach his target audience, the average reader of a popular-level work does not have the proper education to sift

through Card's anachronisms, historical inaccuracies, and generalizations about the Graeco-Roman World in their search for truth. Furthermore, even if the average person in the pew attempted to do so, they would be unable, for Card provides no citations for his lofty assertions. Thus for members of a faith tradition that prides itself with "speaking where the Bible speaks and being silent where the Bible is silent," Card's imaginative exegetical technique will not be appreciated.

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Dale C. ALLISON Jr. *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, and History.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010. 588 pp. \$54.99.

Allison offers this volume as the capstone to his multiple publications on the historical Jesus. His historical thinking and method have matured and offer real advances on perennial problems within the field, and though this volume closes out Allison's tenure as a historian of Jesus, those of us still practicing in the field will find much to learn here.

The first chapter begins with a thoroughly documented discussion of memory that is sober to the point of melancholy: "The frailty of human memory should distress all who quest for the so-called historical Jesus" (1). Things only turn bleaker; our "partisan sources" exhibit "strong ideological biases" and "frequent differences from each other" (8). Allison, however, does not abandon the quest for historical knowledge about Jesus altogether; instead, he has given up on questing after "the particular" details of Jesus' life (10-17). If our sources convey anything of the actual, historical Jesus, they do so at the level of "the outlines of an event or the general import of a conversation" (13). Consequently, Allison approaches our sources from an angle he calls "recurrent attestation," "by which I mean that a topic or motif or type of story appears again and again throughout the tradition" (20). The rest of *Constructing Jesus* explores what kind of Jesus emerges from material recurrently attested in the Gospels.

In the second chapter, Allison argues for an apocalyptically oriented Jesus. Allison lists thirty-two relevant sayings that exhibit Jesus' interest in apocalyptic themes (33-43). Even if some/most of these sayings are secondary (Allison supposes this to be the case), "[t]he pertinent material is sufficiently abundant that removing it all should leave one thoroughly skeptical about the mnemonic competence of the tradition" (47). Second, Allison offers rejoinders to various (I count nine) negations of an apocalyptic Jesus (88-156). This section ranges widely across the secondary literature, but the Jesus Seminar and its fellows rightfully feature prominently throughout. This chapter presents a formidable obstacle to anyone who would deny that Jesus harbored apocalyptic sympathies. Two excursuses close out the chapter. The first argues that the dominant understanding of *kingdom of God* as

God's dynamic rule (God's *reign*) rather than the locale over which he rules (God's *realm*) "is probably not the exclusive or perhaps even chief meaning of ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ in the Jesus tradition" (169). The second argues for significant continuities between John the Baptist and Jesus.

Chapter three sets out "only to give [Allison's] best historical judgment as to what Jesus of Nazareth encouraged others to think about him" (225). He defends the plausibility that Jesus placed himself at the center of God's plans for the future, including the judgment and the reign over God's people. As always, Allison neither defends the authenticity of very many specific traditions nor denies that Jesus' followers developed and expanded ideas they received as part of Jesus' teaching. Nevertheless, he concludes that, "when Jesus looked into the future, he saw thrones, including one for himself. . . . We should hold a funeral for the view that Jesus entertained no exalted thoughts about himself" (303, 304).

In the fourth chapter, Allison provides an extensive argument that Q 6.27-42, "is not an anthology made up of smaller anthologies, nor was its history as protracted and complex as often imagined; rather, it represents, by and large, the work of a single individual" (312-313). Allison rightfully avoids arguing that the central section of Q's Sermon on the Plain "is a word-perfect transcript of somebody's oral performance"; instead, "it is a version or adaptation of a more or less stable composition" (377). Rather, this unit represents "recollection of a series of sentences that Jesus uttered on more than one occasion, or even uttered regularly, perhaps something like a stock sermon" (380). So not only is Q 6.27-42 a coherent unit; it is an *authentic* coherent unit.

The fifth chapter asks whether Christians prior to Mark's Gospel knew a unified narrative of Jesus' passion. The data from Paul's authentic letters (among which he includes Colossians), and parallels with Mark and John, suggest to Allison, "Paul knew a pre-Markan passion narrative" (421). Allison returns to the research on memory (and especially memory of traumatic events) to suggest that from the very beginning Jesus' closest friends must have revisited and retold the events leading up to the crucifixion in order to make sense of those events. When, however, Allison runs the data through the gauntlet of recurrent attestation, he addresses only one aspect of Jesus' passion: his willingness to face death (427-433).

The final chapter asks whether the Gospels ever intended to convey historical information. Allison is not convinced that the authors thought they were speaking metaphorically when they narrated angelic appearances or midday darkness, even though he agrees that such events never happened. While Allison does produce some criteria for identifying intentionally fictitious material (446-455), he does not find any such material in the Gospels.

In the end, this volume is a very sober, even-handed account of how a historian wrestles with, on the one hand, the question, "What really happened?" and, on the other hand, the sparse evidence available to determine "what really happened." Allison has grave doubts that traditional historical-critical methods reveal the historical Jesus,

and this book represents his attempt to find new routes of questioning. He accepts that we simply cannot answer many questions, but he nevertheless finds reason to keep asking them. Despite some areas of disagreement in terms of the specifics, I at least find myself largely in agreement. The questions matter, and the answers—fewer than I would like, to be sure—are nevertheless precious once found.

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Ben WITHERINGTON III. *On the Road with Jesus: Birth and Ministry.*
Nashville: Abingdon, 2011. 70 pp. + DVD. \$58.00.

In this volume, Witherington travels to Israel to survey the lands that Jesus and his followers walked. Witherington is a well-known study guide; each track on the disc is keyed to a corresponding chapter in the book. The DVD, less than an hour in run-time, transitions back and forth between Witherington, the Narrator, and tour-guide. The book, seventy pages in length, is written in a conversational tone, which makes it user-friendly for laity and students.

The disc tracks and book chapters, which I will refer to together here as “sections,” are segmented in a fourfold manner under the following headings: Unto Us a Son Is Given, Troubling the Waters, Fishing for Followers: The Cast of Characters, and From the Sea to the Wedding to Home. There is also a nice bonus video on the disc, which gives an overview of Asbury Theological Seminary.

The first section, “Unto Us a Son Is Given,” takes viewers to the sites of Nazareth and Bethlehem. Here, Witherington shows how the archaeological remains of an ancient house comport with Luke’s story of Jesus’ birth in the family home. Footage of nearby plains with sheep grazing and shepherds tending their flocks help bring Luke’s narrative to life. With tiny bits of humor interspersed throughout, viewers also see Witherington converse with a local camel. About ten minutes in length, this section, or portions of this section, would be good for use during Advent as a sermon-starter or as Sunday school material.

The next section, “Troubling the Waters,” finds Witherington at Qumran. After briefly discussing the history of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Witherington spends the remainder of time conjecturing about John the Baptizer, an ex-Essene who left Qumran and paved the way for Jesus’ ministry. The Essene emphasis on water ablutions, Witherington suggests, contributed largely to John’s emphasis on water baptism. Thus, the next stop on the road with Witherington is the Jordan River, the location where John is believed to have baptized Jesus and many others. Topping out at around the twenty-minute mark, portions of this section could easily be used during Easter and on consecration or baptism Sundays.

“The Cast of Characters,” the third section, covers the least amount of ground in terms of the DVD. Much of this section is simply Witherington standing near the

Sea of Galilee. While he does visit what many believe to be the home of Peter's mother-in-law in Capernaum, most of the fifteen minutes is spent talking about Mary Magdalene or more properly, as Witherington emphasizes, Miriam of Migdal. There is a point within this section where Witherington, looking at a Hebrew artifact, curiously mentions that the script contains Hebrew "capital letters." Of course, Hebrew does not contain capital letters and thus, this statement may be taken with a bit of caution.

Finally, the fourth section, "From the Sea to the Wedding to Home," follows Witherington from Sepphoris to Nazareth to the Mount of Beatitudes. Only about ten minutes in length, most of the emphasis in this section is placed on an ancient synagogue in Sepphoris, which shows traces of Hellenization among early Jewish folk. Witherington suggests that Jesus likely frequented and perhaps worked in Sepphoris, which is only a couple of miles from Nazareth. Portions of this section may be used in ecclesiastical and academic settings where the life of Jesus is being studied.

While this project has much to commend, one which promises companion volumes, several suggestions might be made. For starters, the price does not seem comparable to the product. With less than an hour of footage, viewers like myself might wish that the cost were a bit less. Further, while the videography and production are high quality, wind frequently intrudes and causes static within the audio. Additionally, at a number of points, Witherington's words get jumbled; several retakes may have proven beneficial.

In the end, I would recommend this to church leaders and libraries alike. Just as well, for those who are unable to travel to the Holy Land, this series of projects of exploring Jesus' life may be one of the next best options.

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Riemer ROUKEMA. *Jesus, Gnosis, and Dogma.* Translated by Saskia Deventer-Metz. New York: T&T Clark International, 2010. 256 pp. \$27.95.

In this volume, Roukema aims to trace the history of beliefs in early Christianities. The goal is to present the continuities and differences between Jesus and gnosis (as discovered in gnostic texts) and between Jesus and dogma (as formalized by the council of Nicaea). The approach is historical, not theological.

In the introduction Roukema outlines his approach. In laying out methodology he provides examples that make the study's theoretical concerns clear; such a practice will be especially helpful for readers new to the field. He notes the complexities of historical Jesus work and of using the terms "orthodox" and "gnostic." All difficulties are broached honestly but succinctly, again making the work accessible.

Chapters two through four survey the depiction of Jesus in the letters of Paul, the canonical Gospels, and certain noncanonical texts. First, conceptions of “Jesus’ Origin and Identity” are given. The texts covered include the Gospel of Thomas, Irenaeus’s description of Cerinthus and the Ophites, the Gospel of Judas, Clement of Alexandria’s summary of Theodotus, and the Tripartite Tractate. Chapter three presents “Jesus’ Teaching” as given in the canonical texts, the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Judas, the Gospel of Mary, and the Tripartite Tractate. Chapter four presents the beliefs about “Jesus’ Death, Resurrection and Exaltation”; texts include the Acts of the Apostles, the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Judas, Irenaeus’s description of Cerinthus and the Ophites, Theodotus, the Tripartite Tractate, and Irenaeus’s report of a gnostic tradition about Simon of Cyrene. This wide variety of material is surveyed clearly. Each chapter draws to a close with a “comparison of the New Testament and other writings.”

After this systematic presentation of the materials, Roukema uses chapter five for “Interim Conclusions and New Questions.” Early Christian views of Jesus were diverse. Roukema points out the similarities and differences between mainstream and gnostic views. The main difference is the way in which they relate Jesus to the OT. Roukema connects some gnostic beliefs to Hellenistic thought. Other differences may come from ancient Jewish Christian thought. Therefore, Roukema examines Jewish Christianity next.

Chapter six summarizes beliefs in Jewish Christianity. It considers what can be known about the Ebionites, the Nazoreans, and the Syrian communities alluded to in the Pseudo-Clementine writings. This chapter serves as a brief survey of Jewish Christianity in the ancient world. Later, Roukema will address the Jewish origins of some Christian theological beliefs.

Chapter seven raises the question, “Did Jesus Have a Secret Teaching?” Roukema compares one of the underlying claims of gnostic texts (that Jesus left a secret teaching with a specially-selected disciple) with claims about unwritten traditions within orthodox Christianity. Roukema concludes that the mainstream tradition does make claim to oral teaching; it does not claim that Jesus left special teaching for an elite few and does not intentionally suppress any secret teaching.

Chapter eight considers, “Does Jesus as LORD and Son of God Fit into Early Judaism?” Roukema investigates the Old Testament, the writings of Philo, non-canonical Wisdom texts, targums, and pseudepigrapha. Some of these texts depict figures alongside God, personify attributes of God, or exalt human beings to divine status. Roukema concludes that these Jewish ideas are formally related to the early Christian views of Jesus.

Chapter nine (“Jesus and the Dogma of God’s Trinity”) surveys the NT, second-century church documents, and gnostic writings for conceptions of the Father, Son, and Spirit. It discusses adoptianism and modalism. The chapter closes with an account of the Nicene Council. Final conclusions are made in chapter ten.

This volume provides an excellent overview of early Christian texts. While Roukema is frank about his own faith, he presents the material objectively. The

thorough information will enable readers to follow Roukema's arguments, but also to draw conclusions of their own.

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Patrick J. HARTIN. *Exploring the Spirituality of the Gospels.* Liturgical, 2011. 131 pp. \$14.95.

Ever since Stephen Barton's *The Spirituality of the Gospels* (Wipf and Stock, 2006) went out of print, scholarship has deserved a resource that bridges the gap between critical study of the Gospels and the burgeoning interest in spirituality studies. Hartin's work begins to fill the void, addressing issues of spirituality in a way that is historically informed, contemporarily relevant, and easily accessible to the average reader.

This volume is quite simple in scope. Hartin begins this journey by defining "spirituality" in order to provide a working definition that suits his purpose, is comprehensible to the reader, and remains faithful to Scripture. Part One moves the reader through a brief sketch of each Gospel, noting the major motifs and their meaning for Christian spirituality. Part Two then demonstrates how each of those "Gospel spiritualities" have been fleshed out in everyday life by ordinary people.

One of the major drawing points for readers of *SCJ* is Hartin's definition of and approach to spirituality. He bears a strong commitment to Scripture in his presentation, noting that any spirituality that labels itself "Christian" must necessarily be focused upon its founder (33) and the primary source documents which reveal Him (xi-xii, 6). Though Hartin writes as a Catholic priest (with the Imprimatur), readers of *SCJ* will appreciate his commitment to the Bible as the locus of authority—especially in the morass of nonsense that often gets connected to spirituality. Also noteworthy is that, contrary to so much inner-self attention in spirituality studies, Hartin insists that Christian spirituality must push beyond the inward journey and express itself in everyday actions (2-3, 6, 106), whether they be ascetic practices like prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, or more community-focused actions like helping the poor and communal suffering. Hartin's approach is little-informed by appeals to Catholic tradition and focuses squarely upon the Gospels as the primary witness for a biblically rooted and relevant Christian spirituality.

For all of its strengths, however, this volume is a work unashamedly written by and for Catholics. And in that regard, two weaknesses immediately emerge. First, while this volume is generally well-informed historically and textually (many arguments are made from the Greek text of the Gospels, not the English text), it bears the influence of a more progressive kind of scholarship than conservatives in the Stone-Campbell Movement are accustomed to. The Second Vatican Council's document *Dei Verbum* and the Pontifical Biblical Commission's "The Interpretation of

the Bible in the Church” (1993) have explicitly identified the historical-critical approach as the sole authoritative hermeneutical method within Roman Catholicism. While the historical-critical approach to interpretation yields fruitful results, it is often subject to speculations and arguments that work against traditions handed down to us by the early church fathers. Present in Hartin’s own work is a reticence to identify the traditional authors of the Gospels (45, 48, 69-70, 112), an assertion that Matthew’s understanding of the Trinity lacks precision (113), and a belief that Luke has “expanded” Mark’s Gospel, particularly in the Jerusalem journey narrative (45, 48). Readers well-versed in the pertinent issues will find none of these interpretations and viewpoints shocking, but will identify them as part and parcel of the way that Roman Catholicism approaches the authorship, development, and composition of the NT. Second, the examples put forward in Part Two of the book are all Roman Catholics, many of them “sainted” (or in process). Hartin attempts to locate the spirituality of the Gospels in the lives of “ordinary people” (108) in an effort to show that Jesus-style spirituality is still incarnationally relevant. One wonders whether these “saints” will be perceived by Catholic readers as the spiritually elite, canonized by the authorities (examples out of reach for most readers) rather than everyday people.

Let me stress once again, however, that Hartin’s consistent focus in this volume is upon a *biblical* spirituality, and to that end, he has allowed Jesus and the Gospels to come to the foreground. What readers might expect from an overtly Catholic text—veneration of Mary, the exaltation of church tradition, and a post-Vatican-II religious pluralism—simply do not appear. The volume is a good blend of scholarly insight and contemporary application, best suited for undergraduate students in the areas of spirituality and the Gospels. Because Hartin walks the reader through each Gospel’s basic contents to present its spirituality, this volume may also serve well as a resource for those seeking to understand the Gospels for the first time.

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Keith WARRINGTON. *Discovering Jesus in the New Testament.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010. 240 pp. \$19.99.

We all seem to have our own picture of who Jesus actually is. In addition to the Bible, people draw from pop Christianity, what they hear at church, and their own sensibilities to shape their understanding of who this man of Nazareth was and consequently what that requires of them. Unfortunately, these reconstructions frequently contradict the presentations made by the biblical authors. Warrington examines the texts of the NT and encapsulates the unadulterated Christology revealed therein.

The bulk of the work is the twenty-one chapters that deal with the NT books. Each of these chapters gives a brief introduction to the text, distills the main message concerning Jesus into two or three points, shores up those with a full treatment

of the pertinent passages, and wraps up the discussion with a concise conclusion. Though the books are given a focused treatment, it is done in light of the bigger picture of the whole NT. Also included are an introduction, bibliography, index of subjects, and index of ancient sources.

The chapter on John showcases the value of Warrington's contribution. The main elements he sees are Jesus' supremacy and provision of salvation. In supporting the former, appellations of Jesus are surveyed. Different names are not merely pointed out but explained. Insight is shared regarding titles such as Logos and Son of Man. With Son of Man, Warrington's attention to detail can be seen in distinguishing between John's use of "the Son of Man" to refer to Jesus' exaltation as opposed to the Synoptic emphasis on its connection to his suffering, humiliation, and death.

Because Warrington's work is essentially a systematic treatment of NT portrayals of Jesus, the author rightly recognizes the limitations involved. Not every NT author was laying out everything he knew about Jesus. Sometimes they mentioned things in passing, while other times it may have been more explicitly theological. The authors were not excited so much by many of the questions that intrigue us today but rather wanted to address their audiences' needs by revealing Jesus and his mission to them. Warrington is usually even-handed with the text in this respect, not forcing it to say things it does not. When interpretations of certain passages are unclear, he generally presents various approaches fairly before declaring the one he takes.

The writing is clear and accessible, but the book probably serves more capably as a reference work than a page-turner. All the facets explored are informative but a bit overwhelming, blurring together in toto. Also, though it is largely the nature of the task, some might deem the work as glorified proof-texting, since more emphasis is placed on Christology than in the original works. Warrington does mitigate against this though by treating the passages in their context.

Warrington's judgment is questionable at times. For instance, particularly to those from the Stone-Campbell tradition, commentary on Gal 3:27 comes across as unwarranted and rather curious. While the possibility of "baptism" referring to water baptism is acknowledged, Warrington states, "It is more likely, however, that Paul is speaking of the moment when a person comes to faith." However, items like this did not tend to undermine the overall arguments put forth.

This volume may find use in the classroom for a Christology class. It reflects a less sterile approach than many alternatives. Furthermore, the minister may deem it handy, especially when preaching or teaching from a certain book. Works such as this can help one draw out biblical truths about Jesus that may otherwise be missed when exegeting a passage.

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Nicholas PERRIN and Richard B. HAYS, eds. *Jesus, Paul and the People of God: A Theological Dialogue with N. T. Wright*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2011. 294 pp. \$24.00.

If you are searching for the perfect textbook to accompany your next course on NT Introduction, then this is your text. In the format of friendly but critical dialogue, nine prominent scholars probe N.T. Wright's theological landscape in eight essays, each followed by direct response from Wright. Two additional essays by Wright complete the collection. This volume represents the proceedings of the 2010 annual Wheaton College Theology Conference. The common goal of the contributors is to relate Wright's historical works on Jesus and Paul to the life of the church. Accordingly, the book is made up of two main parts dealing respectively with the historical Jesus and the historical Paul. The volume also contains a subject index and a Scripture index.

In the Introduction, coeditor Perrin frames the program of the volume as a sort of critical *Festschrift*. The essayists are admittedly personal friends, colleagues, and former students of Wright. However, they present their essays not in the spirit of "undiluted applause" or "empty flattery," but in the spirit of "sympathetic and critical assessment" in the conviction that even "fundamental disagreement" with Wright at some points can be appropriately incorporated into the "*festlich* experience." For his own part, Perrin draws attention to several commonalities that he finds between N.T. Wright and Albert Schweitzer—commonalities that underscore the importance of the current exercise, testing whether and how Wright's historical studies translate into Christian theology.

Marianne Meye Thompson's essay on "*Jesus and the Victory of God* Meets the Gospel of John" opens the dialogue and probes the glaring absence of the Johannine witness in Wright's biggest book on Jesus. Acknowledging the relative absence of Johannine studies in the historical Jesus studies milieu, where Wright's work stands next to the likes of John Dominic Crossan, E.P. Sanders, etc., Meye attempts to bring key points of Wright's *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Fortress, 1994) into dialog with the fourth Gospel. In particular, she focuses on the role of Jesus in John's Gospel as replacement of the Jerusalem temple. She concludes that "John and *Jesus and the Victory of God* would get along quite well," suggesting that both arrive at the same conclusion about Jesus, albeit via different routes.

Richard Hays's piece: "Knowing Jesus: Story, History and the Question of Truth," offers perhaps the most confrontational dialogue in this collection of "friendly cross-fire" essays. Promising a "challenging conversation between two friends," Hays highlights seven features of Wright's working method in and identifies an "unresolved tension" between Wright's theological and historical perspectives. While acknowledging definite gains in Wright's "Critical-Realist Historicism," Hays also flags up five significant theological losses. Hays wants to "introduce" his friend, Tom Wright, to another of his friends, Karl Barth, suggesting that the two

friends—while finding plenty to argue about—might find many productive points in common within their respective theological and historical methodologies.

In an essay that draws its title, “Outside of a Small Circle of Friends,” from the lyrics of a socially charged folksong, Sylvia Keesmaat and Brian Walsh explore the potential impact of Wright’s Jesus studies beyond his own theological circle of friends and into the realm of social justice and global economics. Their essay is captivating with its clever discursive format, in which the authors both embrace the riches and probe the gaps in Wright’s approach to Jesus and social justice. In particular, they explore the problem of global debt and economic injustice at the macro level, suggesting that Wright’s historical reconstruction of Jesus provides a theological framework within which to address this injustice. At the climax of their argument, they compare Zacchaeus with the third slave in the parable of the talents (Luke 19:11-27) and present a new interpretive twist on that parable.

Nicholas Perrin’s essay examines Wright’s contribution to the discussion of “Jesus’ Eschatology and Kingdom Ethics” against the theological backdrop of W.D. Davies and the question of whether Jesus’ ethical call had to do with “a strictly personal affair” or whether it addressed “Israel as a whole in light of an impending national crisis.” Not strictly within the pages of *Jesus and the Victory of God* (from earlier in Wright’s career), but certainly within the bishop’s ensuing work, debate, and life witness, Perrin concludes that the Tom Wright of today is “fully consistent” in reconciling the corporate and individual ethic of the historical Jesus, particularly in light of the resurrection.

Edith Humphrey’s essay entitled “Glimpsing the Glory: Paul’s Gospel, Righteousness and the Beautiful Feet of N.T. Wright” opens the second main part of the volume with its focus on the historical Paul. Providing an Eastern Church perspective on Wright’s contribution to Pauline studies, Humphrey traces how his feet traverse the theological mountains of righteousness, apocalyptic language, and the ascension. She suggests that Wright often “moves beyond his brief as historian, literary critic and wise church leader” and, in order to avoid missteps along the way, would do well to “venture more deliberately into the world of the church fathers.”

In “The Shape of Things to Come: Wright amidst Emerging Ecclesiologies,” Jeremy Begbie offers an innovative systematization of Wright’s ecclesiology through an exploration of Wright’s influence upon the “emerging church.” Begbie identifies five key features of Wright’s ecclesiology, from his writings on Paul, that especially resonate with leaders in this church network on both sides of the Atlantic. Begbie also finds important ecclesiological themes in Wright’s understanding of the ascension, Israel, and catholicity that the emerging church has either forgotten or chosen to ignore. He argues that emerging ecclesiologies would do well to pay attention to these forgotten themes.

“Did St. Paul Go to Heaven When He Died?” is Markus Bockmuehl’s contribution to the discussion. Bockmuehl scrutinizes Wright’s contribution to New Testament eschatology through the lens of the traditional Christian belief in life

after death as it emerges from Pauline thought. Arguing from an ambiguity in Paul's writings, along with a general lack of tension surrounding this issue among Paul's earliest readers and exegetes, Bockmuehl finds a weakness in Wright's insistence that an affirmation of bodily resurrection necessitates a denial of the traditional belief that the faithful "go to heaven" when they die.

Systematic theologian Kevin Vanhoozer is Wright's final dialog partner in this volume. Vanhoozer's essay, "Wrighting the Wrongs of the Reformation?" admits the possibility of Wright's contention that Protestant soteriology has "bowed the knee to tradition rather than scripture." Finding himself awakened from his own dogmatic slumbers, Vanhoozer engages with Wright on the Pauline doctrine of justification in an effort to help people "navigate their way across the Berlin Wall separating biblical studies and dogmatics" and "to encourage peace talks between New Perspectives and old Protestants."

Bishop Wright's responses to each of the essays are generally limited to one or two salient points that clarify, often fortify, his position on the various topics of discussion and critique. Even in their brevity, these reflections provide instructive indications of the issues and ideas that guide Wright's thinking. For many readers, however, the highlight of the volume will be Wright's full-length essays on the "Whence and Whither" of Jesus studies and Pauline studies, respectively. With the assignment to relate his whence and whither reflections specifically to the life of the church, Wright proposes the short letter of Philemon and the simple Pauline agenda of promoting reconciliation "here, now, where it matters" within the life of the Christian community as a guiding principle for Pauline studies in general. Wright's essay on Jesus studies, the longest essay in the volume, offers a rich autobiographical sketch of Wright's own theological journey through the 20th-century landscape of Jesus studies and underscores the need of the church "constantly to reconnect with the real Jesus," who, though indeed present in the canonical gospels, has been badly misunderstood.

As noted in the outset, this volume provides an excellent primer on the theology of N.T. Wright. It is a scholarly resource for the seminary classroom and the pastor's study, but thoroughly accessible to interested lay persons. Written by friends of N.T. Wright, the collection is likely to be most appreciated within that wider circle of friends who have come to know and appreciate the Bishop through his writings and lectures. But, in the midst of the friendly cross-fire, there is plenty here for skeptics as well, who wish to engage theologically with one of the most influential "N.T." scholars of our time.

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James P. WARE, ed. *Synopsis of the Pauline Letters in Greek and English*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010. 350 pp. \$49.99.

Ware has done all students interested in Paul a great service with this new Synopsis. All letters in the Pauline corpus (without judgment of authorship) plus the relevant sections from the book of Acts are laid out in three columns, Greek on the left page (from the Nestle/Aland Greek Text 27th edition [NA27]) and NRSV on the right. Brief notes at the bottom of the page list potentially important textual variants: the notes on the Greek page are strictly devoted to the Greek text (in the tradition of the NA27) whereas on the English page the same footnotes are stated in a way that will make sense to English-only readers, including some additional notes. The NRSV is not strictly followed and is sometimes altered (and noted) when the editor felt it did not help to show the parallels between texts.

The Introduction targets “scholars, students, clergy, or laypeople” and describes the Scope and Format of the Synopsis, how to study Paul’s letters through Comparative Study, and how to use the Greek Textual Apparatus. This well-stated introduction should be read and marked carefully by everyone prior to using the resource.

At least three reasons are listed as “marked advances” over previous tools for Pauline studies: (1) the first to include a Greek text (xi); (2) a greater ability to address “themes, facets, and motifs” by arranging the parallels according to topic and using a master Table of Parallels (xiii); and (3) use of the Greek text as the basis for selecting parallel texts (for that reason, “connections between parallel passages in this work are often only fully evident in the original Greek, not the English translation,” xiii). All are welcome features.

The key to using the Synopsis is the Table of Parallels (xix-xxvii), in which every text-block is listed (in canonical order) that occurs in the Synopsis. So this is where we start and study the project. For example, looking up Phil 2:5-11 we find the following subdivisions: 2:5-11; 2:5; 2:8; 2:9-11; 2:10-11. Each of these refers to a combined 14 Topics, which means that the text is listed (or referred to) in 14 different places throughout the volume. That is nice to know (to have such parallels listed in one place), but it is a bit sobering to realize that you’ll be spending a lot of time flipping pages to examine those parallels. It is even more sobering when you see a text like Rom 15:14-33, which has 14 subdivisions, which are mentioned in a combined 33 Topics. This is not a complaint of the Synopsis, but a realization, which the Table of Parallels makes readily visible.

The Table of Topics lists 177 in all, divided into 6 subheadings: Epistolary Structure (1-8), Epistolary Forms (9-14), Literary Forms (15-22), Themes (23-161), Key Events (162-166), and Co-Workers (167-177). All of these are short (eleven Topics or less), except for the Themes category (139 Topics). Themes are listed (where possible) in the order of Romans—which probably makes sense; but it also makes it hard to find certain themes. Personally, my own user experience would be helped if all the short lists of Topics were put either first (my preference) or last,

and the Themes were listed (in the Table of Topics) both by the current order and also alphabetically.

Of the 139 Pauline Themes or Topics, it is likely possible to nitpick an editor to death about the choices. Not wanting to do that, I nevertheless am curious about a Topic like Jesus as Lord. Topic 31 is of “The Last Adam,” and 82 is “Authorities and Powers,” both quite appropriate. But that I could find, there was no Topic or location in which Rom 10:9; 1 Cor 12:3; 2 Cor 4:5; and Phil 2:11 are paralleled. Based on Greek parallels, this would seem to qualify. The word “confession” in the subject index points to Topic 20, where there are references to other Topics and even a special note. Even so, these texts are never all referred to for that purpose. Perhaps an additional comment about consulting a concordance for particular phrases (as at the end of Topic 40) would be an alternative.

The workhorse of the Synopsis is, of course, the main body of the volume (1-311). Each page is in three columns for nice comparisons. Even though only slightly larger, I prefer the 8.5 x 10.6 page format of Aland’s *Synopsis of the Four Gospels* (UBS, 1976) format to the this format (7.2 x 10.2), which makes the print too small, even though the fonts are clear for the small size. Each Topic is followed by additional references to other related texts. The one page glossary at the end, followed by the (too small) index, are both helpful.

One final comment about the Introduction: The section on using the Greek Textual Apparatus is properly concise, and yet is just a bit problematic. Obviously not a primer for textual criticism, and so necessarily brief, the section nevertheless overpromises, implying that the listing of textual variants “enables the student . . . to weigh the various readings and come to a sound decision regarding the original text” (xv). This almost “sets up” laypeople or students without proper background for failure (or abuse). A nice summary of text-types is offered, but there is no mention of the value of quotations of church fathers or ancient translations in the process (also left out in the main resource—there is a bald mention in passing (xiii), but it is well out of mind by this time). Perhaps an equal mention at this place could have been given, with all the attention to manuscript evidence. Also, in keeping with the helpful tenor of this section, a more clear note on the complexity of the field and the care to be taken, and perhaps a couple of bibliographic references, would have been suitable.

Despite these concerns, Ware, with the help of Baker Academic, has done a terrific job placing a massive amount of material in a very small and affordable volume. The research system of interconnections is extremely helpful, and the presence of the Greek text is simply wonderful. This is a clean, useful, and welcome resource for anyone interested in studying Paul.

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Martin HENGEL. *Saint Peter: The Underestimated Apostle.* Translated by **Thomas H. Trapp.** Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010. \$18.00.

This volume is a translation of *Der unterschätzte Petrus: Zwei Studien* (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2006; 2nd ed., 2007). It is one of Hengel's last publications, best understood among his late *kleine Schriften*. He considered both of the studies in this book ancillary to his planned four-volume work on the history of early Christianity. Volume 1 of that history appeared in 2007 in cooperation with Hengel's Tübingen colleague Prof. Dr. Anna Maria Schwemer. Mohr/Siebeck has indicated their intention to follow through on the remaining volumes in consultation with Prof. Schwemer and others.

The volume consists of two essays; the first, "Peter the Rock, Paul, and the Gospel Tradition" (1-102), is based on a lecture Prof. Hengel first delivered in 2005 (and several times thereafter). The second essay, "The Family of Peter and Other Apostolic Families" (103-134), is based on a 1997 article on apostolic families, recast to emphasize Peter. Appended are a chronological chart (from Tiberius Caesar through Marcus Aurelius), and helpful indexes. As always, in his arguments Hengel brings to bear his formidable command of the ancient sources. In this review I focus mainly on the first essay.

Beginning with Matt 16:17-19, the main essay paints a portrait of Peter, the "Man of the Rock," in which Hengel seeks to answer the question, Why was Peter foundational to the early church? Challenging recent critical scholarship, Hengel constructs an image of Peter as foundational for the church from the beginning, not just a figure made to function that way by the later church. With that interest in mind, Hengel continues by exploring Peter in Mark, Peter in conflict with Paul, and Peter as missionary during the "unknown years."

Hengel died on July 2, 2009 (not in June of that year, as suggested in the translator's preface), but he lived long enough to oversee the translation work on this volume, including approval of the English title. He specifically mentions the title in his preface to the translation, although does not explain the choice of "Saint Peter," as opposed to just "Peter" (the German original). While this is a small matter, it points out a major question raised in any study of Peter (including this one), namely: Where does history end and tradition take over? Although Hengel sets out to give a historical elucidation of the apostle Peter, starting with Matthew's "Rock" passage (Matt 16:17-19), the reader is confronted with the reality that separating the "Peter" of history from the "Saint Peter" of tradition is often not possible, and never easy.

The problems encountered when studying the "Historical Peter" are notorious. Unlike Paul, our evidence for Peter is, at best, mostly indirect. Even though we have two New Testament letters attributed to Peter, the authorship of these is disputed, and in any case they provide scant information about the apostle. Whereas we can compare Paul's letters with Acts for our picture of the Apostle to the Gentiles, we have very little opportunity for similar comparison when it comes to Peter. For Peter, we are mostly left with tradition.

Hengel asserts that “the Man of the Rock” was not merely an average theologian who passed on the theology of others (35). Rather, the “teaching of the apostles” (Acts 2:42) was that of Peter. It was Peter who reported the traditions about Jesus that underlie the Gospel of Mark, his student, and which motivated Luke and Matthew to base their Gospels upon Mark (101). Hengel chastises Udo Schnelle (*Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, the standard NT introduction which has replaced Kümmel), for discounting the Papias tradition that Peter stood behind the Gospel of Mark. “Where does Schnelle get to know ‘Petrine Theology’ so well he cannot find it ‘behind Mark?’” (37-38), challenges Hengel. But of course this is the critical problem: where does Hengel get to know “Petrine Theology” so well that he can find Peter clearly standing behind Mark? Are we bound to begin with the assumption of the trustworthiness of tradition—dubious in so many cases—and demand that all others falsify the claims? The answer to that question depends largely on the interpreter’s assumptions about critical method. It should be noted that Hengel invokes a kind of argument from silence at this point: since “only” Paul’s letters and the pre-Synoptic logia predate Mark, how can we be sure we are *not* hearing the voice of Peter in the second Gospel? Or, asks Hengel, would we rather consign the origin of the Gospels to an “ill-defined fog”? My question is: do we really have a choice? Attempts to find “Petrine Theology” in the NT have always foundered on these slippery problems (recent evangelical attempts included).

Although impressive in its depth, one weakness in Hengel’s presentation is his near-total exclusion of evidence from the ancient Eastern Church, especially Syriac-speaking Christianity. That is, he treats almost exclusively canonical texts and their western inheritors. Similarly, Hengel pays only scant attention to the very old apocryphal “Peter” writings, some of which originated in the 2nd century—that is, documents possibly containing valuable “Peter” traditions, a couple of which are nearly as old as the Gospel of Matthew itself (assuming Hengel’s 2nd-century dating of the first Gospel; see Martin Hengel, *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ*). While Hengel mentions Tertullian’s connection of Christ the Rock (1 Cor 10:4) and Peter as “Rock,” it would have been interesting had he also treated the Syriac tradition that Jesus himself was the Rock, his own title which (in that tradition) he then passed on to Peter. This tradition raises issues of apostolic succession in a way, which is not usually addressed in Protestant circles. Similarly, Syriac traditions about Peter’s missionary activities might have been informative.

The “underestimation” of Peter highlights the problem of understanding our rather one-sided NT canon, i.e., the western collection in Greek, dominated by Paul, his mission, and co-workers, that so overshadows James of Jerusalem and the original Twelve Disciples that the inclusion of the Jerusalem-based leaders in the General Epistles comes off almost as an afterthought. The shape of our NT collection is a big part of the enduring legacy that stems from the ancient question of what to do with Peter. We are reminded that, in some ways, Peter and the rest of the Twelve were “undervalued” (*untergeschätzt*) in the Western Church very early on—

in a sense the “underestimation” of Peter is intrinsic to the canon—and that this treatment of Peter exists in New Testament studies for some valid, if not entirely positive, reasons.

Reading this volume in light of his earlier work, one has the uneasy feeling that in this volume Hengel tries to “have his cake and eat it, too.” In previous studies on the Gospel of Mark, Hengel defended the Papias tradition that Peter stands behind Mark’s Gospel (*Studies in the Gospel of Mark; The Four Gospels*, Trinity Press International, 2000). He has likewise defended an early date for Luke and Acts, and the role of Acts primarily as history of the early church (*Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity*, Wipf and Stock, 2003). In the process, however, Matthew’s Gospel was relegated historically to a distant secondary role, a second-century redaction by an anonymous author in which the original historical setting is sometimes blurred and where it is often impossible to tell whether we are seeing the evangelist’s sources or his own contributions (see *Die vier Evangelien und das eine Evangelium von Jesus Christus*). According to Hengel, Matthew is so late that it reflects the Jewish War only where he inherits the material from Mark. Matthew reflects the later developments of the Christian argument with the Synagogue that emerged strongly after the war. Matthew presupposes the postwar emergence of the Pharisaic Scribe as preeminent religious authority in Palestine, a situation reflected throughout the Gospel. Additionally, the trinitarian formula of Matt 28:19 suggests a relatively late time of writing (see *Die vier Evangelien*).

Yet in this volume, Hengel seems to display a newfound optimism about the historical value of the Peter traditions in Matthew. Matthew may have expanded, sharpened, or made more precise the references to Peter, but “he certainly did not fabricate what he wrote” (28). For example, Matthew did not “discover” the *petros/petra* wordplay, but inherited it from the first Hellenistic Christians. Similarly, in his contribution of unique “Peter” material, Matthew “strengthens and dramatizes” Mark (including the additions of Peter walking on the water; paying the temple tax with the *stater* from the fish’s mouth; forgiving seventy-seven times; 28 n. 86). For Hengel, Matthew’s trustworthiness is closely tied to his extensive use of “Petrine tradition,” i.e., the Gospel of Mark (39). After all, he argues, Mark could not have been written by “Mr. Nobody,” but needed behind it the apostolic authority afforded by Peter. However, Mark’s reception in the early church was somewhat less than enthusiastic, the Papias tradition about Peter notwithstanding. While Mark was retained in the four-Gospel codex, liturgically, at least, it was largely supplanted by Matthew. Moreover, in *die Vier Evangelien* Hengel contended that the apostolic authorship (falsely) attributed to the latest two Gospels—Matthew and John—betrays the late setting of those two Gospels, precisely in the desire to associate them with apostolic authority.

At the same time, Hengel does acknowledge certain limitations in Acts, noting that Luke cuts off the story of Peter at Acts 15, omitting any information of Peter’s apparent missionary journeys. But he stops well short of exploring the role of Acts

as propaganda promoting Paul's mission to the Gentiles which left Jerusalem Christianity behind (reflections of the rift with the Synagogue similar to what Hengel finds in Matthew), or its canonical function as the narrative that "explains" the Pauline one-sidedness of our western-oriented canonical collection and abets the underestimation of Peter. Even so, Hengel displays his usual impressive depth of understanding of early Christian sources, mining various church fathers for—among other things—later traditions about Peter's missionary activities not mentioned in Acts.

In his 1993 SNTS presidential address ("Aufgaben der neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft," *NTS* 40 [1994] 321-357; see "Tasks of New Testament Scholarship," *BBR* 6 [1996] 67-86), Martin Hengel laid down a challenge for future generations of New Testament scholars, to broaden and deepen the scope of their inquiry while eschewing the increasing faddishness in methodology. Noting the relative youth of "New Testament Studies" as a discreet discipline, he challenged its practitioners not to forget that "New Testament" was once but a subdiscipline of theology, along with systematic theology, OT, and church history. Historically, he called for this discipline to be defined as reaching from 200 BC to AD 300, and to emphasize the classical languages. His own work, including this book, demonstrates this commitment.

I have the utmost respect for Martin Hengel. I consider it a great privilege to have sat in some of his lectures as a grad student in Tübingen during the late 1970s. I attended his funeral in 2009. His work and his example have continued to inspire me; he "set the bar high." Whether one agrees with his conclusions or not, Hengel's body of work—and his example—will be a force to reckon with for many years to come.

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