

# Book Reviews

Tim DOWLEY. *Christian Music: A Global History*. Fortress, 2011. 264 pp. \$35.00.

Dowley's primary objective in this text is producing "a new popular history of Christian music . . . to sketch in the extraordinary breadth of musical expressions of Christians of different centuries, classes, colours, and traditions" (9). Because of this premise, Dowley constantly makes difficult choices of oversimplification and summarization for the sake of brevity and readability. The result is a volume that is highly accessible to the untrained novice and offers an adequate introduction to dozens of topics in Christian hymnody that frequently receive text-length treatments in more technical sources. As such, this text would be useful as a college-level introduction to Christian hymnody.

Like most histories of Christian music, Dowley begins his text with an exposition on second-temple Jewish psalmody and its potential influences on budding Christian music and liturgical practice. Thereafter, Dowley's presentation is linear and chronologically sensitive, tracing musical transitions through the patristic age. Later, in Dowley's discussion of medieval Christian music which was typified by ecclesiastical schism which fractured and isolated musical traditions, Dowley does a remarkable job keeping parallel developments in general proximity to one another. This method becomes useful when discussing church music after 1525 when Protestantism clearly attached itself to various hymn and psalmody writing traditions while Catholic patronage of Baroque, Classical, and Romantic music plotted a very different course. Dowley wisely alternates chapters of Protestant and Catholic trends and innovations, allowing the reader to clearly see the relationship between Classical church music and Protestant hymnody as they developed along divergent yet subtly interconnected channels.

Dowley concludes his text reviewing the musical upheavals and innovations of the twentieth century such as the Contemporary Christian Music movement and the influence of charismatic groups such as Hill Song United. Dowley rather uniquely allocates a sizeable chapter to secular styles of twentieth-century music such as jazz, blues, rock, and pop that Christian artists have influenced. Most surveys of Christian hymnody currently on the market inadequately discuss post-1970s compositions.

While Dowley's text gives more attention to non-English hymnody than most introductions to Christian music, seven out of twenty-one chapters are explicitly devoted to English contributions. Additionally, many nonwestern forms of Christian music such as the rather exciting developments of Christian music in Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, or the 1700-year-old traditions of Syrian and Chaldean Orthodoxy are marginalized to mere footnotes. In short, while Dowley's efforts are still more global in scope than most, Anglocentrism and a clear Western bias pervade his text.

The greatest selling point for Dowley's work is that he edits together high quality scholarly research very readably. The text is richly illustrated, and the formatting allows for plenty of white space for note-taking. Dowley's treatment of pre-Constantinian church music particularly credits him. Since the sources of this era are few and fragmentary, many liturgi-

cal scholars are hesitant to assert the universality of practices and trends across the churches of the Roman empire. Dowley honestly and carefully deals with this material, frequently stating where the lines of certainty and ignorance are, and properly acknowledges when his statements are based on conjecture. A final quality aspect of Dowley's work is that at least once per chapter, a guest writer provides a two-to-three-page spread. These side vignettes are of particularly high quality and allow for the exploration of interesting topics in greater detail than Dowley's survey paradigm normally allows.

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**James L. PAPANDREA.** *Reading the Early Church Fathers: From the Didache to Nicaea.* Mahwah, NJ: Paulist. 2012. 352 pp. \$24.95.

Over the past several years, there has been a noticeable rise in interest in studying the sources of early Christianity, as revealed by the publication of several introductory-level works dealing with patristic authors and their writings. This includes the present work, written by James Papandrea, assistant professor of church history at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. This volume provides an overview of early Christianity on two fronts: a brief summary of Christian authors and texts from the 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, and a sketch of some of the most important themes and topics from early Christian history.

The first several chapters are dedicated solely to early Christian authors and their texts. Following an Introduction on “How to Read the Church Fathers” and an initial chapter on the early “church” in Rome, Chapter 2 is dedicated to the Apostolic Fathers, Chapter 3 to the Apologists, and Chapter 5 covers an array of 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century authors which Papandrea has labeled ‘the Theologians’ (Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Origen, and Novatian). Within each of these chapters, the author offers a brief introduction to each author considered and a description and summary of their texts.

While most of these treatments are quite standard, offering important information and clear, concise abstracts, there are some occasions when the ideas that the author chooses to emphasize skew and even misrepresent important aspects of these texts. For example, in a very brief introduction to the *Didache*, the author devotes a significant portion of the summary to what this text might say about early Christian attitudes about abortion and infant exposure, giving the (incorrect) impression that this topic is covered at length in the *Didache*. There are many other aspects of the *Didache* that could—and should—be emphasized, so it appears that the author's treatment of this text is governed by a theological commitment concerning a contemporary moral/political question, resulting in a misrepresentation of one of the earliest and most important witnesses to Christian life and practice.

The remaining chapters of the volume are more “topical.” That is, they focus not on specific authors and texts, but rather on specific issues that arise in early Christianity. Two chapters focus on important aspects in the development of the growing ecclesiastical structure (Ch. 4: “The Church in the Subapostolic Age” and Ch. 7: “The Church in the Third Century”), and two other chapters deal with important historical developments: the development of the NT canon (Ch. 6) and the question of Christianity and Empire in the fourth

century. The final chapter (Ch. 9: "Ongoing Themes") traces the development of four topics from early Christianity (anthropology, ecclesiology, Christology, and soteriology) through various early and even medieval authors. These chapters offer good introductions to these issues. In particular, the treatment of the development of the canon and the subsequent introduction to patristic exegesis provide a very good starting place for understanding these complex historical issues.

There are two particular issues, however, for which the author's overly simplified treatment results in (perhaps even results from) ill-informed assumptions about important aspects of the historical development of Christianity. The first is the treatment of "Gnosticism" under the broad topic of Christology in early Christianity in Chapter 4. The primary problem with this treatment is that it relies too heavily on neat, tidy, essentialist definitions of terms like "Gnosticism" and "docetism" which are constructed upon tautologies of differentiation supplied by early Christian polemicists. Furthermore, and even more problematic, the author's reference notes do not point the reader to a single reputable scholar who actually works on early "Gnostic" Christianities. The most frequently cited secondary source in these pages is Larry Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Eerdmans, 2003), which is a fine volume but is in no way a scholarly treatment of gnostic thought. The author offers a summary of "general gnostic beliefs" (73-74) and a "gnostic family tree" (Appendix, 231), both of which are far too simplistic and generalized to offer an accurate depiction of the many texts and authors that have been called 'gnostic.'

The second example is actually even more historically problematic, because rather than resulting from an oversimplification of an extremely complex phenomenon like "gnosticism," this one results from sheer historical inaccuracy, albeit a very common mistake. The issue in question is the use of the term "Monophysite" to describe the various groups of orthodox Christians (218). After correctly describing the thought of Eutyches, who was in fact properly a monophysite, Papandrea observes that this movement lived on among the "Oriental Orthodox Churches," which the author further clarifies in an endnote as "Armenians, Syrians, Ethiopians, and Malankara Indian churches." At issue here is the fact that the author fails to distinguish between "monophysites" like Eutyches and his successors and "miaphysites" like Severus of Antioch, who explicitly rejected the thought of Eutyches. In other words, the author mistakenly lumps together two schools of thought, one of which was rejected at Chalcedon (Eutyches' monophysitism) and the other of which rejected Chalcedon itself as too much of a compromise between the two equally 'heretical' views of Nestorius and Eutyches. The Orthodox Christian Churches identified by the author's note are in fact "miaphysite" and not "monophysite." This is an extremely common mistake in historical treatments of Christianity, and it will only be rooted out if historians are required to be rigorous in their use of accurate terminology.

In summary, the present volume offers a basic introduction to the authors and literature of early Christianity. It could be useful as a teaching resource for those who teach introductory (undergrad level) courses on early Christianity. However, a few shortcomings of this work detract from its usefulness, especially when there are other competing options.

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Christopher Ben SIMPSON. *The Truth Is the Way: Kierkegaard's Theologia Viatorum*. Cascade Books, 2011. 214 pp. \$26.00.

In this volume, Simpson offers an “interpretative introduction to Kierkegaard’s published writings” (xiii). In his judgment, “the central question of Kierkegaard’s authorship . . . is nothing less than the question of what it means to enter upon and to walk in the way of Christ” (4). Simpson thus reads and interprets Kierkegaard’s corpus theologically; Kierkegaard’s philosophical “existentialism” cannot be separated from his Christian faith. In some ways, the volume may be described as a commentary on the Kierkegaardian maxim, “Truth is subjectivity,” rightly stressing that this subjectivity is not *per se* sufficient but must necessarily accompany the objective. The truth is the way of being, a “transformed existence” (24).

Part 1 of the volume, “On Truth,” treats in general terms the topics of Kierkegaard’s method of indirect communication, his understanding of faith, concept of truth, and the role of metaphysics and theology. The slightly longer Part 2, “*Theologia Viatorum*,” attempts to summarize, briefly but systematically, Kierkegaard’s theology, moving through the topics of God, world, humanity, Christ, and the Christian life.

One of the challenges in writing volumes of this sort is striking the right balance between, on the one hand, stringing together quotation after quotation from the figure in question and, on the other hand, providing structure, secondary analysis, and summary. If this volume is imbalanced in this regard, it errs on the side of letting Kierkegaard “speak for himself” (xiii), which is surely the more beneficial error in a work meant to introduce readers to a historical figure. Simpson’s fine grasp of Kierkegaard’s voluminous oeuvre, and the fact that hardly a sentence goes by without quoting from Kierkegaard, ensures that the reader is never too far from the mind and words of the Dane. But the constant quotations (from Kierkegaard) and the sometimes dense prose (perhaps imitating Kierkegaard), along with the too numerous (and sometimes distracting) parenthetical asides, occasionally obscure the message.

Despite the occasional obscurity, when Simpson does stop to provide his own analysis, it is often quite helpful, particularly on questions that would puzzle a newcomer to Kierkegaard. For example, on the potentially complex issue of Kierkegaard’s pseudonymous authorship, Simpson invites readers to take their distinctions of authorship seriously but also to recognize their ultimate unity in Kierkegaard’s project (19-22). This basic understanding explains how Simpson can quote almost indiscriminately from the various pseudonyms and seem to use them synonymously with one another, as if their thoughts are interchangeable (for example, as with “Kierkegaard,” “Climacus,” and “Anti-Climacus” (129-130), and at other times contrast the thought of Climacus with the later Anti-Climacus without specifying which one represents Kierkegaard (65).

Simpson’s introductory survey cannot do everything, but it is worth pointing out that, with its narrow focus on the task of theological summary, there are a few important things the volume does not do and the reader should not expect from it. By Simpson’s own admission, the volume does not engage secondary scholarship on Kierkegaard (7, n. 9). But even with its focus on Kierkegaard, there is very little sense of contextualization. For a figure whose life circumstances affected his thought in such obvious and pronounced ways, the omission of all biography could be interpreted as a deficiency. As to historical-intellectual

context, there is barely any mention of Socrates and Hegel and nothing at all on Lessing or Hamann, even in places where such mention would have helped to clarify (for example, 30, n. 12). This decontextualization extends even to the volume's title and central concern: One could easily come away from this volume thinking that *theologia viatorum* is something peculiarly Kierkegaardian (1), never realizing the long history behind this way of speaking of Christian theology and its juxtaposition with *theologia beatorum*.

The intended audience seems to be anyone interested in the Christian emphases of Kierkegaard, and perhaps especially those with limited exposure to Kierkegaard. There can be no doubt that Restorationist scholars and churches would benefit from an examination of Kierkegaard's thought, and that, notwithstanding some minor weaknesses, this volume would serve as a good entryway to his theology. However, it should not be a substitute for, but a supplement to, picking up Kierkegaard and reading him for oneself.

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**Daniel R. DRIVER.** *Brevard Childs, Biblical Theologian: For the Church's One Bible.*  
rev. ed. Baker, 2012. 368 pp. \$50.00.

This volume is a revision of Driver's 2008 PhD thesis at the University of St. Andrews, which was initially published by Mohr Siebeck (2010; ii, xi). The Baker edition corrects several errata in the first edition and, courtesy of Eugene Boring, supplies an appendix with "English translations of the untranslated German that appears throughout the study" (ix, 292-318).

The exigence behind Driver's work is twofold. First, Childs himself passed only comparatively recently (2007) and continued publishing through his posthumously released work on the Pauline corpus (2008). Consequently, previous assessments of Childs have necessarily worked with an incomplete picture (29). This incompleteness is particularly limiting because Childs' corpus shows both flexibility in adjusting lines of thought over time and coherence in certain trajectories that permeate the whole (3, 29-31). Second, even with a narrower body of material from Childs with which to work, earlier studies have tended not to do him as much justice as they should have done. Instead, particularly in English-language discussion, Childs' reception has been complicated by dependence on prematurely and incautiously negative assessments of his contribution—not least those stemming from James Barr (35-79). Protestations of "charitability" toward Childs have, unfortunately, often led not to greater attentiveness but to attempts to repair or buttress his supposedly ramshackle hermeneutic (58-64). Therefore, Driver takes up precisely this task of understanding and describing Childs on his own terms, even when doing so provides a portrait of a respectably consistent Childs with whom Driver might occasionally find himself having cordial differences (4, 29-31, 165-171, 263-264).

According to Driver, "[t]o put Childs' career thesis [briefly], the historically shaped canon of scripture, in its two discrete witnesses, is a Christological rule of faith that in the church, by the action of the Holy Spirit, accrues textual authority" (4). Childs' thesis is definite, but also one that takes some effort to defend, a fact that partly produces the various directions Childs' work takes (4). The Judeo-Christian tradition's canonical literature rises

from particular historical contexts through particular historical forces. Therefore, competent study of this literature requires a full array of historical-critical tools (14-21, 105-136). At the same time, for example, Genesis and Exodus rather than J, E, or P and Matthew and Luke rather than Q, M, or L have been preserved, cherished, and transmitted by their particular faith communities. This literature has taken shape within a confessional matrix, but in its shaping, the literature has also taken this confession into itself. Consequently, the text's final form—in all its theological richness and complexity—deserves pride of place in encounters with it (21-29, 105-205). For the two-testament Christian Bible, the theological strand that shapes the two testaments into one whole canon is the “canon” or “rule of faith.” Thus, for Childs, the theological canon “accrues textual authority” in the church's scriptural canon and provides the key angle from which the church may approach its whole Bible's witness to the activity of Israel's God through his appointed Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth (4, 209-286).

As Driver's discussion frequently rehearses, Childs' canonical approach has been fairly contested among some of his peers. Thus, the volume clearly and primarily addresses “biblical specialists” (31). Untranslated German quotations are frequent in Driver's discussion, so Boring's appendix will be helpful to readers who might be comparatively less comfortable with this material in its own language. Still, readers who often consult this appendix will make comparatively laborious progress through the volume. This fact and the volume's general structure do make the work most appropriate for those who already have command of the volume's primary languages and the general outlines of Childs' work and its reception.

Nevertheless, even without these prerequisites, sufficiently dedicated students may find the volume highly profitable and well worth their effort to consider carefully. Driver's engagement with Childs is penetrating and insightful. Especially valuable are Driver's persistent refusal to oversimplify Childs and the volume's patient assessment of such oversimplifications elsewhere. Childs' own thematic argument similarly insists that readers of Jewish and Christian scriptures attend to the full richness of these texts' historical and theological shaping. Distinctively central to this shaping is the theological tradition's emergence from the text and its impulsion toward further textual development (171-184). This thesis will doubtless continue to be debated from various angles. Yet, to this discussion, Driver's volume makes an incredibly helpful contribution for which the other participants in the conversation can be quite grateful, whatever the side of the “canonical question” on which they fall.

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**Gregg R. ALLISON.** *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine.* Zondervan, 2011. 784 pp. \$44.99.

This volume is designed as a companion volume to Wayne Grudem's *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, as Grudem says in the Foreword. The volumes' Parts are strikingly parallel, examining doctrines of God's Word, God, Humanity, Christ and the Holy Spirit, Redemption, the Church, and the Future. Early in Allison's volume, the chart “Reading the Companion Volumes for Greatest Benefit” compares the chapters, though Grudem covers more topics. The Introduction provides several important reasons for studying Christian history.

Each Allison chapter proposes a summary statement of the Church's historic belief, then traces the topic through early, medieval, Reformation, and modern periods, providing brief readings from documents or church leaders to substantiate his position. The belief statements are consistently fair, given what they include. Readers are struck by the extent of the undertaking. Coupled with Grudem's citing of biblical passages, Allison's volume is an excellent resource for quick review of how the Church's historic superstars have understood theology. Readers find quick explanations and sources to help them begin their study on specific areas of doctrine. The "Glossary of Major Church Leaders, Writings, and Movements," though noticeably brief, orients beginners to Christian history. Extensive footnotes provide resources for further study, at least on the theologians cited. The "General Index" is helpful. Taken together, Grudem's and Allison's volumes might be considered a systematic theology.

At the same time, there are weaknesses. The Introduction says historical theology's role is "to inform" exegetical, biblical, and systematic theology "with wisdom from the past," but without the "line of authority." Many today and in the past see historical theology as foundational to the other disciplines, partners whom we also consult on exegetical, biblical, systematic, practical, and other ministerial matters. Also, neither Grudem's nor Allison's volume does what the title describes. Systematic theologians often consider Grudem's to be more a topical investigation of classic doctrines than a system, and he neglects historical biblical exegesis and systematics. Historical theologians note Allison makes the same topical investigation, except he cites historic Christians rather than the Bible. This is only one part of what most historical theologians consider their task. In addition, Allison neglects much of the Church, at least after the early period. Chapter 21 on Election and Reprobation, for example, describes the early Church's majority synergism, but then turns almost exclusively to Western church leaders. No Easterner is cited after Cassian (Pelagius' and Augustine's contemporary). Chapter 16 on Sin articulates positions carefully, but characterizes synergism as a drift and describes modified Augustinianism as "the Church's doctrine from the fifth century on" (actually the West's majority doctrine) and neglects the East (who always considered synergism as part of the rule of faith).

Neither Grudem's nor Allison's volume should be treated as the primary or definitive source on the subject. Allison's volume would be difficult to use as a text in historical theology, considering its large size and Western bias. That said, I recommend Allison's volume, with Grudem's, as helpful tools among other resources for the student, professor, or pastor who understands the limitations of each.

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**Jason BEMBRY.** *Yahweh's Coming of Age.* Eisenbrauns, 2011. 163 pp. \$38.25.

In this volume, Bembry explores the roots of the Judeo-Christian depiction of God as an "old man" by asking a stimulating question: How did God become old? Highlighting the vision of Daniel 7, Bembry suggests that the epitaph "Ancient of Days" is a pivotal transformation in the depiction of YHWH. He posits that the "early traditions of biblical Israel" present a "relatively youthful God" by celebrating YHWH through the use of war-

rior god imagery. Bemby contrasts “early” and “late” depictions of YHWH in the HB, by analyzing the “transformation of Yahweh from a young and virile God to the elderly Ancient of Days” (2).

Bemby presents his argument for “transformation” in two parts. The first part concentrates on the portrayal of old age in the ancient West Semitic culture stream through a critical examination of both the Hebrew Bible and Ugaritic literature. In part two, Bemby proposes a rationale for “why old-age imagery was initially eschewed in the portrayal of Israel’s God and only later embraced” (5). Foundational to his argument is the theory of a gradual development of the concept of divine fatherhood in Israel which ultimately allowed for the acceptance of YHWH’s entering the human life cycle. Viewing YHWH as father allowed post-exilic Israel to appropriate anthropomorphic “age-related imagery” (92) in reference to their God.

Upon conclusion of the biblical evidence, Bemby presents a “multifaceted” assessment of old-age in ancient Israel. Two broad classifications emerge. In several narrative texts characters who have reached old age are depicted as vulnerable and easily taken advantage of (Isaac). However, in numerous other texts, old age is also considered as a manifestation of wisdom. Those who reach old age and are spared its physical and mental fragilities are considered blessed.

Bemby attempts to further reconstruct a general West Semitic conception of senescence through critical analysis of epigraphic and iconographic sources found at Ugarit. He emphasizes a differentiation of “indicators of relative age” between El and Baal, the former being the older “father” figure in the pantheon and the latter being the youthful warrior deity. Ultimately, Bemby argues for the existence of a “mirror” image of senescence between Ugarit and ancient Israel with depictions of El being the test case for Ugaritic conceptions of senescence bearing both the positive (wisdom, justice) and negative (exploited weakness) connotations.

While Bemby’s arguments are sustainable independent of one another, a cohesive paradigm does not hold them together. The fruitful textual analysis on senescence in part one is lost in proving the tenuous correlation of two broad trajectories, an evolution in the appropriation of Canaanite mythology and the conceptual fatherhood of YHWH. Regarding the latter, Bemby relies heavily on Böckler’s developmental trajectory of the concept of “god as father” which overshadows any engagement with broader concepts of patrimonialism in West Semitic cultures (Schloen). In addition, the volume does not deal properly with the important matter of genre diversity in the HB. In particular, he fails to address the development of the genre of apocalyptic literature.

Bemby’s work falls short of providing a fully sustainable argument that the “Ancient of Days” represents a radical transformation from imagery found throughout ancient Israelite literature and iconography. For instance, the seated “El type” figure of Daniel 7 has antecedents other than the Canaanite literature known from Ugarit. A number of scaraboid and cylinder seals depicting an enthroned bearded deity commonly associated with Aramean astral religion have been found in Palestine during the Neo-Assyrian (7th BCE) period (Keel and Uehlinger, 306-316). An argument could also be made that the depiction of YHWH in Isaiah 6 incorporates similar topoi. Admittedly these examples lie on the periphery of a focused analysis of the HB; however, the historical depiction of YHWH is more complex than the volume’s trajectories can support.



In summary, beginning with such a concern for unpacking the meaning of senescence within ancient Israel's culture stream, Bembry fails to connect this discussion with his ultimate conclusion that God has become "old" in Daniel 7. Ultimately, he subjugates his previous discussions of senescence to mere descriptions of "elderly" appearance. While Bembry offers a possible answer to his original question "How did God become Old?" what he leaves unanswered is the curious question, "Why is God depicted as 'old'?" If the author of Daniel has consciously/unconsciously appropriated Canaanite mythical imagery, what are the intended associations for his second Century Maccabean audience? Does YHWH's description in Daniel 7 as "advanced in days" and bearing a white beard, make him feeble or wise? I commend Bembry on proposing an engaging research question; however, I am left with the quandary of what it means to say that God is "old."

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**Ronald E. HEINE.** *Classical Christian Doctrine: Introducing the Essentials of the Ancient Faith.* Baker, 2013. 182 pp. \$21.99.

Although its connotations are not as stridently negative as those of "dogma," the word "doctrine," as Heine concedes in his new volume, can be a tough sell today among Christians. It is not uncommon to hear Christians blithely proclaim that they do not concern themselves with doctrine. As Heine notes, however, believing in Jesus entails believing something about Jesus, and hence holding some sort of doctrine. The question for the Christian can never be whether, but rather which, doctrine. Heine provides a helpful discussion of the word "doctrine," explaining that Christian doctrine is the "common core of Christian teaching that determines Christian self-understanding—that is, what it means to be a Christian" (5).

Doctrine is not the only word in the title of this volume that could prove alienating to some Christian readers. The word "classical" does not come quickly to the lips of many Christians today, at least when they discuss their beliefs. Heine attempts to obviate consternation at this adjective by explaining that it designates something that has endured over time and that many people regard as compelling. Thus the "classical Christian doctrine" of the title encompasses "those doctrines that were accepted as true by most Christians before the end of the first four centuries of the Christian era" (3).

So how does one go about giving a synoptic account of classical Christian doctrine in less than two hundred pages? Heine eschews the chronological approach and chooses to structure his exposition according to the Nicene Creed. What results is not a commentary on the Nicene Creed as such, as Heine himself notes; rather, he takes the topics treated in the creed seriatim as jumping off points for discussion of various doctrines. Thus, after a preliminary chapter on the early Christian view of Scripture, the volume begins with a discussion of the doctrine of God's oneness and ends with early Christian eschatology.

Given that in the Preface Heine says that he wants this volume to be accessible to those who have no theological background and to serve as a primer for early Christian doctrine, the first quality of his doctrinal discussions to be assessed is their degree of difficulty. *Mirabile dictu*, Heine is actually able to discuss the likes of Tertullian, Origen, and Gregory

of Nazianzus in such a way as not to make the layperson throw up her hands in despair. He takes great care not to use unnecessary theological jargon or presuppose any background knowledge. Moreover, Heine's prose style, while perhaps not distinguished for its verve, could not be more perspicuous. The user-friendliness of the volume is further enhanced by tables at the beginning of each chapter, briefly introducing the main figures to be treated therein, and discussion questions and a short bibliography at the end of each chapter. The clarity and economy of the writing make this volume suitable, as Heine hopes it will be, for an undergraduate course on Christian doctrine (though not a church history course, which would be better served by a chronological approach) or an ambitious church adult education class. If the theologically untutored reader gives up on this volume, it will be for subjective, not objective, reasons.

Other virtues besides accessibility mark his discussions of early Christian doctrine. He nicely conveys the dialectical and dynamic nature of early Christian doctrine by treating not only those early Christians whose views received ecclesiastical vindication, but also those whose views were ultimately rejected. In this way he not only informs the reader about the doctrines that were adopted by most Christians, but also shows how those doctrines were forged in the heat of opposing views. While discussing those opposing views, his tone is circumspect; he does not idolize the "orthodox" and demonize the "heretics" (interestingly, he tends to shy away from these terms), although, as we will see, his bias toward the former is entailed by the premise and purpose of the volume. Another strength of Heine's exposition is his consistent highlighting of the biblical texture of early Christian doctrinal debates. Time and again he shows how arguments among early Christians over doctrine were ultimately arguments about how best to read the Bible. In this way Heine makes a compelling case that early Christian doctrines were not simply imposed upon Scripture, but rather were interpretations thereof. In short, given the parameters and purpose of the volume, Heine's treatment of early Christian doctrine could hardly be bettered.

Moving from the what to the wherefore: Why this volume? Why now? In his Preface Heine notes a swelling of interest in recent decades in the early church and patristic writings, and hopes that this volume could serve as a starting point for those so interested. But as the volume unfolds it becomes clear that Heine's motivations go well beyond the satisfaction of curiosity. In the chapter "I Will Build My Church," he discusses the importance of the oneness of the church for the early Christians. In the course of this discussion Heine modulates from his usual descriptive key to a prescriptive one: "This concept of oneness is something that Christians today need to learn from the ancient Christians" (138). He goes on to endorse (seemingly) Robert Webber's proposal that the three major Christian groups (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant) look to classical Christian doctrine in order to find their true common ground and the basis of their unity. Heine remarks, "If such an approach were to be taken, the classical Christian doctrine reviewed in this volume would be foundational for a church unified in its doctrine but diverse in its cultural expressions" (139). This section reveals that the entire volume is animated by Heine's passion for the unity of the church and his hope that an embrace of classical Christian doctrine by those who tend to be ambivalent about it, or perhaps just woefully ignorant of it, would be a major step toward such unity.

At this point one hopes that readers within the Stone-Campbell Movement are sitting up and taking notice. They will likely be heartened that Heine, a professor at Northwest

Christian University, is concerned about Christian unity. But what will they make of Heine's contention that Christian unity could be significantly fostered if more Christians accepted classical Christian doctrine, which he regards not as an eclipse or perversion of Scripture, but rather an understanding (quite possibly correct) of it? And where might one find this classical Christian doctrine enshrined? According to Heine, one can do no better than to consult the Nicene Creed. For some, if not most, Stone-Campbellite readers, Heine's chain of reasoning will trigger a theological code red. To be clear, Heine nowhere explicitly calls for Christians to subscribe, in any sort of formal way, to the Nicene Creed. And Heine's rhetorical style could scarcely be more understated; for this reason alone, it would be a bit of stretch to see this volume as a bomb thrown into the Restoration playground. Indeed, one could wish that Heine might put a few more of his theological cards on the table, perhaps in a conclusion (which the volume unfortunately lacks). But I doubt that most Stone-Campbell readers will fail to notice that the underlying thrust of Heine's volume presses against some of our most neuralgic points. It would be a shame if they simply recoil in discomfort, because Heine's exhortation to rally around classical Christian doctrine ought to be seriously entertained by all Christians who purport to care about Christian unity.

Of course, there is Christian unity, and then there is Christian unity. For the founding figures of the Stone-Campbell movement, the desideratum was unity among Protestant Christians. Heine's citation of Robert Webber suggests that Christians today need to expand their ecumenical vision and aspire toward some sort of solidarity with their Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox counterparts. If such a goal is laudable, then their serious engagement with classical Christian doctrine is a must. And if they need some clarification on the genesis and content of that doctrine, Heine's volume is a wonderful place to start.

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**Dietrich BONHOEFFER.** *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Ecumenical, Academic, and Pastoral Work: 1931–1932.* Fortress, 2012. 576 pp. \$60.00.

Anyone interested in Bonhoeffer's developing theological and political commitments just prior to the fall of the Weimar Republic, his work for the post-WWI ecumenical movement, or even the beginning of his friendship with Karl Barth, will find that the eleventh volume of the Bonhoeffer Works series amply delivers. The volume contains material from June 1931 to October 1932: from Bonhoeffer's return to Germany after his year of study at Union Theological Seminary to the weeks preceding the demise of the Weimar Republic. As the editors maintain, this was a decisive period for Bonhoeffer's theological development and for the course his life would take in the coming Church Struggle.

The audience of the volume is primarily academic; it is a fruitful resource for Bonhoeffer scholarship but the volume would not likely be of much use to nonexperts or nonacademics. The content of interest to nonacademics would be more readily accessed in biographies or other secondary literature.

The documents are organized into three parts, each arranging the documents in chronological order: 1) Bonhoeffer's correspondence, 2) his academic lectures, papers, reports, and other publications, and 3) his sermons and devotions. Each document has extensive notes by

the editors on the historical context and publication history; the various documents are also thoroughly cross-referenced within the volume.

In addition to Bonhoeffer's material, the volume contains a number of other sections. There is a foreword by the editors of the English edition, and a translation of the afterword to the German edition. The appendices include a chronology of the period, a list of material left unpublished, references to material previously published in Bonhoeffer's *Gesammelte Schriften*, and a rather helpful set of charts detailing the organizational structure of the Ecumenical and German Protestant Church at the time. As expected in the series, there is also an extensive Bibliography section.

Bonhoeffer lived a very demanding life during this period, pursuing work in the academy, as a church minister, a chaplain, and as an active member of the ecumenical movement. Bonhoeffer's extensive work is evident throughout the three main parts of the volume. The correspondence portion has the expected letters between Bonhoeffer and his family and friends. The letters to Erwin Sutz are particularly personal, expressing Bonhoeffer's internal struggles, and his growing worries with the socio-political situation in Germany. These letters also contain Bonhoeffer's description of his burgeoning friendship and intellectual engagement with Karl Barth. Most of the correspondence, however, is dedicated to the organization and administration of the various conferences and meetings connected to Bonhoeffer's work in the ecumenical movement.

The academic material contains sundry reports related to Bonhoeffer's ecumenical responsibilities, and also includes extensive student notes on Bonhoeffer's lecture courses. These lectures cover topics such as the history of systematic theology, the nature of the church, and Christian ethics. Manuscripts of other lectures and addresses are also included. Two documents highlight important developments in Bonhoeffer's thought. "The Right to Self-Assertion" illustrates Bonhoeffer's criticism of the social mores of German society and his Christian modification of them. And the "Address at the International Youth Conference in Gland" expresses the dire situation he believed the church to be in and the urgency for the church's response to what we now know was the prelude to crisis in Germany.

The pastoral material comprises fourteen sermons and devotions from Bonhoeffer's service as assistant pastor at the Zion Church in Berlin, and as chaplain for the Technical College in Charlottenburg. Collectively they represent how his developing thought came to expression in the proclamation of the church for Christian discipleship. Some even adumbrate ideas he develops in later work. For example, in a sermon on the rich man and Lazarus, Bonhoeffer develops a tension between the spiritualization of the gospel he saw around him versus the Bible's concretization of it, hinting at what would become cheap vs. costly grace in Discipleship.

Overall, this volume meets the high standards established by previous installments in the series. There is a wealth of information for historians, Bonhoeffer scholars, and other interested readers. This volume, and the entire series, is essential for any theological library and will provide an excellent resource for scholarship in the decades to come.

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**Stanley HAUERWAS.** *War and the American Difference: Theological Reflections on Violence and National Identity.* Baker, 2011. 181 pp. \$19.99.

This volume consists of twelve essays written “to convince Christians that war has been abolished” (xi). Hauerwas knows his proposal will strike many individuals as absurd and unrealistic. However, he takes issue with these realists because they fail to consider “that there is another world that is more real than a world determined by war: the world that has been redeemed by Christ” (xii). Hauerwas posits that this latter world entails a political alternative called “church” and presents Christians with another worldview, one that is not constrained by the typical limitations of a world determined by war.

The volume’s twelve essays are divided into three parts. Part One, “War and America” explicitly discusses the prominent place war inhabits in the lives of Americans, both Christian and non-Christian. In Chapter One, “War and the American Difference,” Hauerwas distinguishes America from European nations. Contrary to the frequent assumption, it isn’t the prominence of Christianity or the religiosity of the American population that sets America apart, but the significance war plays as a liturgical act in American civil religion. In “America’s God” Hauerwas argues that, contrary to both European and American assumptions, “American culture is more determinedly secular than most Europeans can imagine” (14). This assumption, which also confuses many Americans, is a result of assimilating faith in God with loyalty to country. In Chapter Three, “Why War Is a Moral Necessity,” the author offers a critique of “just war” theory as traditionally presented by Reinhold Niebuhr. In turn, Hauerwas attempts to demonstrate that “just war” theory is really unrealistic as a national political policy. Pacifism is truly realistic.

In Part Two, “The Liturgy of War,” Hauerwas presents four chapters on various aspects of war and violence. In “Sacrificing the Sacrifices of War,” Hauerwas argues that the “greatest sacrifice of war is not the sacrifice of life, great as such a sacrifice may be, but rather the sacrifice of our unwillingness to kill” (56). In Chapter Six Hauerwas counters the objections to pacifism presented by C. S. Lewis who, having lived through two World Wars, was a “just war” advocate. Then, Hauerwas proposes ways in which Lewis’s own creative writings could assist Christians in envisioning an alternative to war.

In the third and largest part of this volume, Hauerwas shows the inadequacy of social justice alone to deal with the issue of war in the world. Instead, the last five chapters argue for the church as a necessary component to envisioning a world without war. Hauerwas demonstrates in Chapter Eight the strength of Dan Bell’s perspective of Jesus as the justice of God over against that of Nicholas Wolterstorff, who argues for justice as inherent rights, to convince Christians to have a passion for justice. Chapter Nine presents a theological interpretation of Pentecost that discusses how Christianity, a seemingly particularistic religion with its own language, can understand and speak the language of other world communities regarding war and violence. Ultimately, Hauerwas suggests that Christians must first learn to be speakers of the language of peace in their own communities if they hope to bring peace to others. This peace will require love for Christ that entails a refusal to kill those for whom he died. In Chapter Eleven, “A Particular Place,” Hauerwas argues that the concept of locality and place permits Christians to make meaning and develop an understanding for others, especially for those with whom we share the designation of place. Hauerwas distinguishes this idea, the significance of place and locality for the church, from the arguments that the church must abandon the concepts of locality and place for a more globalized perspective.

The size of Hauerwas's volume does not truly indicate the intellectual potency that this work offers the reader. At just under 200 pages, Hauerwas's essays provide more than enough material for one to contemplate a world without war and the possibility of being committed to nonviolence as an American citizen. As one would expect, Hauerwas's criticisms are insightful, yet well balanced. While he does address scholars with whom he disagrees, he also presents them respectfully. Furthermore, this volume brings just war theory and pacifism out of the realm of the purely theoretical to a more practical perspective. This work could have been enhanced, however, if Hauerwas would have provided a brief introduction to each of the three major sections to explicitly connect the material to the volume's overarching theme. Nevertheless, this volume of essays forms a useful resource to continue the dialogue between "just war" theorists and pacifists within Christian circles, especially in America.

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**Thomas R. YODER NEUFELD.** *Killing Enmity: Violence and the New Testament.* Baker, 2011. 179 pp. \$23.00.

What I appreciate most about this volume is its exegetical humility and honesty. The more I read and work in the area of NT and violence, the more convinced I become that a consistent pacifist position is getting harder and harder to extract from the biblical materials, much less from ambiguous second and third-century evidence. There are only so many texts that one can reinterpret, push to the margins, or dismiss altogether before the realization begins to dawn that one is fighting a losing battle. While certainly not wishing to concede defeat, Yoder Neufeld is at least willing to admit at a number of points that a pacifist reading of the NT is hardly won.

Yoder Neufeld begins his volume with a definition of violence, noting that a broadening conception that includes verbal and psychological components expands the field of NT texts implicated in violence quite considerably. The author chooses the texts that he does for their "representative character as a set of probes or soundings into the relationship of the New Testament and violence" (15). Delving into such texts and topics as love of enemies, forgiveness, Jesus' temple incident, atonement, household codes, Romans 13, and the divine warrior motif, the author stays true to his goal of engaging in "honest searching and listening," keenly aware of how texts can be interpreted differently depending on the reader's own perspective and interpretive tradition. The author's transparency about his own faith commitments and peace-making context gives this volume its distinctively humble quality and results in a work devoid of dogmatism, absolutism, and hermeneutical finality. The "true believer" will probably be frustrated that the author did not stake out firmer exegetical ground in his defense of pacifism.

Representative samples of the author's awareness of exegetical complexity are not hard to come by. Enemy-love, for instance, does not mean that God will not judge. "Matthew may well stress eschatological judgement with a violence that many scholars do not wish to attribute to Jesus, but at no point is it ever questioned anywhere by anyone in the NT, including specifically also in the Sermon on the Mount . . . that at the 'end' everyone will

face the judge” (32). Another example is the temple incident. Jesus’ “throwing out” the money-changers carries the “unambiguous implication of forceful expulsion of persons and their business from the temple precincts” (60). Nor does Yoder Neufeld try to distance God from the violence inherent in the atonement. “New Testament writers,” he says, “are interested neither in making violence good news nor in denying God access to the scene of the crime” (95). When it comes to the meting out of God’s wrath, whatever the nature of the coals heaped upon the head of the enemy, the fact remains that in Romans “‘wrath’ is inescapably part of the larger picture in which Paul’s exhortation takes place” (113). As for God-the-warrior, one cannot dilute the problem by relegating it mainly to the OT since divine warfare is “woven no less into the very fabric of the New Testament” (122). Perhaps most surprising, the author refuses to let the slaughtered lamb of Revelation 5 save the volume of Revelation from its own pervasive violence. Such a rhetorical strategy “requires of readers a nimble facility to read against the grain of inherited interpretation and against the surface meaning of the text” (133). The list could certainly go on.

Of course, for Yoder Neufeld the NT texts ultimately subvert the violence that they seemingly perpetrate. That perspective is what gives impetus to the volume and its title, drawn from Eph 2:16. Nevertheless, the author’s willingness to allow the NT texts to speak in some measure against his own ideological and interpretive tradition gives hope to non-pacifist interpreters that the biblical text can still speak today to challenge and judge us all.

Despite this admirable quality, the author does at times overlook key evidence or perpetuate questionable historical conceptions. In his discussion of Romans 13, for example, Yoder Neufeld alludes to Rom 12:18 (“If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all”), missing the all-important modifier ἐν δυνάτῳν (111). He cites Jesus’ prayer from the cross for the forgiveness of his crucifiers in Luke 22:34 despite that text’s very uncertain or even doubtful status (51). He implicates Herod Antipas in the violence of imperial power despite the fact of Herod’s long and relatively peaceful rule (9). At one point Yoder Neufeld falls prey to the kind of moral equivalence argument characteristic of more absolutist interpreters when he facetiously equates the Holocaust, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki as examples of a generalized and nuanced-less “violence” (134). And this despite his helpful observation earlier in the volume that “putting a mugging and a forceful pulling of a person out of danger into the same category is seen as undercutting meaningful ethical discernment and debate” (7).

In the conclusion to his volume, Yoder Neufeld asks concerning the violence in the NT: “[I]s this violence legitimized or nurtured, or is this violence subverted and overcome? Is this an enmity that kills or is enmity itself killed?” (150). Clearly, the author wants to argue the latter, believing that the central figure of Jesus as teacher, model, prophet, and dying/rising Messiah “leads to the subversion of violence, not its legitimization” (150). Yet Yoder Neufeld admits that much of the evidence is ambiguous, mysterious, and enigmatic. His own exegetical probes establish as much. The best that he can do is to point to readers and reading communities seeking to employ the NT in nonviolent, nonconfrontational ways. Ultimately the question of the “New Testament and violence” stands or falls on the believing community that reads and lives it.

Only once does Yoder Neufeld cite the text of Rom 16:20: “The God of peace will shortly crush Satan under your feet.” A striking observation that Yoder Neufeld fails to make is how Paul can juxtapose the language of peace and violence in such a closely proximate way

without perceiving a tension, much less a contradiction. (The words “peace” and “crush” stand next to each other in the Greek.) Is this juxtaposition ironic and subversive, or part of Paul’s apocalyptic understanding of reality? Perhaps we should admit that Paul is simply not operating from the same conceptual bifurcation that we are. How ironic would it be if in the end, violence were somehow necessary for peace to come?

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**Mae Elise CANNON.** *Just Spirituality: How Faith Practices Fuel Social Action.* InterVarsity, 2013. 208 pp. \$16.00.

In the “Introduction” to the volume, Cannon provides the foundational thesis from which she derives the title for her volume: “Just Spirituality presents the case that the practice of disciplines—such as silence, prayer, study, community, worship, Sabbath, and submission—provide the fuel by which people are inspired to make a difference in the world” (11).

The volume was enjoyable to read, making use of extensive footnotes as well as explanatory notes to facilitate the flow of the text. The author incarnates her thesis by utilizing a biological sketch of seven notable Christian leaders (Mother Teresa, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Watchman Nee, Martin Luther King Jr., Fairuz, Desmond Tutu, and Oscar Romero) and a corresponding “contemporary person who practices that discipline.” In this way she is able to provide historical and living examples of the way in which the various disciplines lead to appropriate engagement. Regarding the overall structure, each chapter also contains distinct guidelines for practicing the discipline. For those interested, the volume is also conducive to small group work, since it includes as an addendum a “Study Guide” that features from six to nine discussion-oriented questions for each of the eight chapters.

The focus of the volume is on what Cannon sees as a correlation between a spiritual discipline and social action: “There is a direct correlation between one’s relationship with God and actions of kindness, mercy, compassion and justice. The practice of spiritual disciplines empowers and equips Christians to better engage with society and exercise justice” (12). Chapters 1–7 discuss the way in which each of the “Christian leaders” were fueled by a spiritual discipline. Her subtitles for each chapter identify both the discipline and the social action: Mother Teresa—From Silence to Service; Dietrich Bonhoeffer—From Prayer to Discipleship; Watchman Nee—From Study to Evangelism; Martin Luther King Jr.—From Community to Proclamation; Fairuz—From Worship to Freedom; Desmond Tutu—From Sabbath to Reconciliation; and, Oscar Romero—From Submission to Martyrdom.

In the words of Cannon, the flow from discipline to action is a cyclical process involving “recursive disciplines.”

Engagement in spiritual practices leads to Christ-centered action through works of justice such as service, discipleship, and reconciliation. At the same time, justice-oriented action also leads back to reflection through spiritual practices such as silence, prayer, and study (15).

One of the strengths of the volume is that Cannon recognizes that successful social activism needs the empowering of faith; it is the disciplines that “provide the framework by which true and lasting change can occur” (175). Spirituality needs to be understood as a “mechanism” that takes us back to the work of God in our souls and the world. She con-



tinually returns to the need to be students of the Word who are open to the working of God: “As Christians seek to live out the gospel in the world, the disciplines keep us on track and allow the transforming power of God to work in our lives” (186).

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**R. Keith LOFTIN, ed. *God & Morality: Four Views*. InterVarsity, 2012. 256 pp. \$22.00.**

The focus of this volume is metaethics. Two atheists and two Christian theist philosophers represent the four views, addressing questions such as: “Where does morality come from? What, if any, is God’s role vis-à-vis morality? Is God necessary for morality? Are morals objective or relative? How do we come to know moral truths?” (7). In the introduction to this excellent volume, the editor briefly reviews the landscape for the study, surveying a few disputes of our age and previous generations, and gives a few critical definitions. In the rest of the work, one chapter is devoted to each view with a brief response from the other three scholars.

Naturalist moral realism is argued by Evan Fales, who is associate professor of philosophy at the University of Iowa. He, like all of the other participants, has published extensively in relevant fields and was well chosen for this volume. Fales argues that moral principles are objective, arising from completely natural evolutionary processes. He contends that moral facts can be known (23-25). He compares and contrasts theistic theories of natural law with naturalistic natural law theories (31-34).

Naturalist moral nonrealism is presented by Michael Ruse, the Lucyle T. Werkmeister Professor of Philosophy at Florida State University. Ruse begins with an intriguing discussion of Social Darwinism. He says some common conclusions among sociobiologists are that “we are genetically determined to believe that we ought to help each other . . . that we have the sense that we should be moral” (60-61). But Ruse rejects these traditional beliefs as “psychological beliefs put in place by natural selection in order to maintain and improve our reproductive fitness” (65). He contends that moral law has no foundation. Ruse discusses natural law theory (68-73) and closes wondering, almost tongue in cheek, whether or not his theory is completely new.

Moral essentialism is the position advanced by Keith Yandell, the Julius R. Weinberg Professor of Philosophy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Yandell analyzes cultural and ethical relativism along with the Euthyphro dilemma, outlining other alternatives beyond the traditional two horns of the dilemma (102). Yandell chooses abstracta, that is, what is good is determined by abstract objects that define what is good, which is essentialist ethics: “If it is true, it is necessarily true” (106). He does not believe the abstracta view is “disastrous for or inconsistent with a robust monotheism” (110).

Moral particularism is proposed in the last chapter by Mark Linville, who teaches philosophy at Clayton State University. He begins with a critique of morality by divine fiat, with the classic Euthyphro dilemma in the background. Agreeing that “there are deep problems for the theist who maintains that morality is ultimately the product of divine fiat” (142), the rest of his discussion moves toward affirming God himself as the standard. He closes with a delightful

quote by William Alston from a conversation with Norman Kretzmann who remarked, “The really staggering fact is that the Good is a person.” Which led Linville to conclude, “Precisely. Theism is committed to the view that a particular Person is both metaphysically and axiologically ultimate. This, I believe, is where a coherent theistic ethic must begin” (158).

The discussions were conducted on a very high level of scholarship, with the participants showing the utmost of respect and courtesy to one another. For a well-organized, scholarly discussion of key issues in metaethics, this volume is very well done. It would make an excellent graduate textbook for a theology, ethics, or philosophy class dealing with the relevant issues.

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**John C. HOLBERT and Alyce M. MCKENZIE.** *What Not to Say: Avoiding the Common Mistakes That Can Sink Your Sermon.* Westminster John Knox, 2011. 136 pp. \$20.00.

The authors of this volume intended to produce a work that would help ministers avoid “the mistakes that can sink your sermon.” The volume was intended to provide practical insight into sermon preparation from two of the most well-known professors of homiletics at Perkins School of Theology. This preacher, always hungry for new books about his craft, was impressed by much of the volume’s material although he filed it away after reading the first couple of chapters. If this reviewer would not have continued to read beyond the first twenty-five pages, Holbert and McKenzie’s strong doctrinal opinions would have sunk this author’s desire to complete the volume. This author assumed the volume to be a resource for general public speaking for ministers of all backgrounds. The volume eventually became that type of resource but the first two chapters seemed to be used as a bully pulpit.

The issues to avoid in the first chapter centered on the error of practicing and preaching predestination. Many may not deem this theology as defensible but this resource did not seem the proper place for its discussion. The authors may have better served their audiences by writing a separate volume about issues with predestination.

The second volatile issue discussed in the first portion of the volume was a short treatise on the appropriateness of homosexuality. Again, it seemed like an unusual venue for discussing this issue. Their section propagating homosexuality will be the last one read by many conservative ministers because the volume will be put aside. Unfortunately, many valuable tips for public speaking will never be discovered in other chapters.

When one gets beyond the chapters that appear as a plea for acceptance of Holbert and McKenzie’s theology, there are many tips that preachers, teachers, and public speakers of all faith groups will appreciate.

Because the volume was written by a man and a woman, the authors remind the readers to consider Scripture from male and female points of view. They reminded the audience of the dangers of complacency with spiritual concepts and sermon preparation while advocating the importance of reading Scripture from various perspectives.

Holbert and McKenzie provided good information about the importance of sermon introductions and conclusions. These concepts will not be new to the seasoned preacher but

review of them is necessary to avoid stale preaching that can come with years of repetition. New people to the ministry should read their material often.

The professors also delved into the importance of properly telling stories. They shared the importance of keeping a story interesting and the dangers of telling too many personal stories.

The unique element that provided the most benefit to this public speaker was a free video illustrating the ideas presented in the volume that can be downloaded at <http://HolbertMcKenzie.wjkbooks.com>. Many books on preaching excite the readers but they are left with no way to implement the concepts because they never have the opportunity to see them illustrated. Holbert and McKenzie have provided a great service with this additional resource. The video was humorous and informational which created a delightful setting for learning.

This volume is worth the read. The video is even more valuable. If this volume were written specifically for people from Holbert and McKenzie's faith tradition, this author would have no problem with their doctrinal assumptions. Since it appears to address a broader audience it would have been more beneficial to have omitted the aforementioned arguments in the opening chapters.

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**Gregory L. HUNT. *Leading Congregations through Crisis*. Columbia Partnership Leadership Series. St. Louis: Chalice, 2012. 166 pp. \$19.99.**

In this volume, Hunt draws on not only the experience of ministers and congregations that have experienced a gut-wrenching crisis, but also on his own experience in ministering during crises. The crises that are discussed here are not the traditional pastoral crises, such as a divorce or death of a child. The crises that are discussed here are more global in scale, crises that impact not only an entire congregation but also the community the congregation is in or the greater Christian fellowship. His material is divided up into three major units. In the first unit, Hunt focuses on what he calls "the anatomy" of the leadership during a time of congregational crisis. In chapter one, Hunt describes his own experience with congregation crisis. To be honest, I know of very few ministers who have experienced more crises in their ministries than Hunt has (a total of six). Out of this experience, Hunt developed several key lessons regarding crisis that provide the foundation for what follows: crises are inevitable; crises come in various shapes and sizes; crises represent a serious threat to the health and identity of the congregation; how the congregation responds in the short term will have long-term effects; and effective leadership is imperative in times of crisis (6). In chapter two, Hunt provides a crash course in crisis theory, including the pertinent terminology and theological foundations. It is brief; therefore the reader who is interested in exploring this material further should consult Howard Stone, *Crisis Counseling* (Fortress, 2009) or my own forthcoming volume, *Ministry in Times of Crisis: Theory and Application* (College Press). In chapter three, Hunt focuses on the necessary ingredient of leadership during a crisis. His emphasis is on teamwork, highlighting the functions of both visible leaders and behind-the-

scene managers. This chapter is one of the volume's strengths because we so often focus on one or the other. Yet, in large-scale situations, both are needed in order to guide the congregation through the crisis.

In the second unit, Hunt walks through the crisis process, "from onset to resolution." In chapter four, he looks at the initial stage of the crisis and the disorienting effect that it will have on a congregation and a community. In chapter five, he looks at the management stage of crisis intervention, where leaders navigate the pain in order to bring about recovery. This chapter offers practical advice about developing and implementing a recovery plan, a helpful addition since it is something most congregations neglect. In chapter six, Hunt focuses on finding "a new normal" (77). Here, he thoughtfully walks leaders and ministers through the resolution process, detailing how to help a congregation come to healthy conclusion of the crisis moment. Between each chapter, Hunt highlights a congregation that has experienced some form of large-scale crisis in hopes that these experiences will encourage other congregations that crises can be managed effectively. In unit three, Hunt offers some issues regarding planning and theology that leaders should consider. In chapter seven, Hunt makes the argument that all crises are beneficial for congregational development. In chapter eight, he stresses the importance of planning and preparation, of designing action and recovery plans for when the inevitable occurs. In chapter nine, he explores the value of corporate worship for communication and recovery. And in chapter ten, he discusses the dangers of burnout and offers some helpful tips for leaders. Again, between each chapter, Hunt examines a congregation that has walked through a major crisis to demonstrate how resolution and recovery can occur.

Overall, I enjoyed this volume. My only criticism is that Hunt's ecclesiastical purview was focused solely on congregations of his affiliation. Perhaps these are the situations that he is familiar with. However, it would have more far-reaching impact if he had examined congregations from other affiliations in order to broaden his scope. Yet, this is a sound guide for leading in times of crisis. As one who teaches a course on crisis ministry, I intend to add this volume and its distinctive material in future course offerings.

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**Robert C. DYKSTRA, Allan Hugh COLE Jr., and Donald CAPPS.** *The Faith and Friendship of Teenage Boys.* Westminster John Knox, 2012. 192 pp. \$20.00.

Dykstra, Cole and Capps have written a research project on the importance of friendships among teenage boys. This is a follow-up study on their previous volume, *Losers, Loners, and Rebels: The Spiritual Struggles of Boys* (2007). Their premise is that later friendships are extremely important for the development of men in the church; however society and the church put pressures on youth that interfere with the development of later adolescent friendships among boys. This volume is written to help the reader understand this importance of friendship on the spiritual journey of adolescent boys.

Friendships are an important element in our lives, especially in the lives of children. Close personal friendships develop in females from early ages and continue throughout their lives. However, among males close friendships develop through early adolescence but some-

thing happens as they enter late adolescence. Friendships are not close. The later adolescent seems to move away from the closeness and develop a more casual friendship. This has an impact on the spiritual development of males and their leadership within the church. The “Whys” that this happens and the importance of friendships are the basis for this volume.

The three authors each write from a different perspective to offer a greater awareness of the importance of friendships. Cole speaks of the importance of faithful friendships and the impact they have on teen boys. Dykstra provides a study on how subversive elements have destroyed friendships and where these elements come from. Personal friendships and faith are the central elements of Capps writing (xvi, xvii). These three create a full understanding on the need for the late teen to have close friends.

The volume is a very in-depth study of teenage boys and friendships. The writers have done excellent research on the subject. Cole has an in-depth study on how Erik Erikson’s infant stage and the identity crisis of trust affect the future development of the adolescent. The infant encounters with the mother, or other primary caregiver if the mother is absent, begins to build an element of trust in himself and others. This identity is closely tied to the adolescent throughout life and is reflected in friendship development (33).

Dykstra has done upper-level research writing on later adolescent friendships and the research of Sigmund Freud and Philip Culbertson. He focuses on the elements that cause the later teen to avoid close friendships. He points out that as adolescents approach late adolescence they develop “homophobia,” a fear that they will be perceived as homosexual. A strong force is needed in becoming strong male friends and future Christian leaders. In order to do this they must develop a “homosocial” relationship with other males. This borders on homosexuality and Freud’s castration anxiety (52, 53).

Capps’ chapter, *Close Friendships*, provides examples of men who have developed close male friendships. He also relates stories of what happens when men move away from friends, noting whether these can be reestablished and the influence on their lives.

The volume is an excellent research project, but there are a couple of concerns about it. The first is: lists. Cole seems to have an infatuation with creating them. Each subject area written about is broken down into several different areas. This is helpful to create an understanding of the concepts, however after 2 or 3 lists, it is difficult to remember the information and which subject is being presented.

Because of the research emphasis and the style of writing, this is not a volume for the general public. It would be difficult for those not in upper classwork or graduate work to understand. A little more effort and a few more pages would have opened up a valuable study to the general public.

One of the disappointing aspects of the volume is in the area of friendships. A very good study on the importance of friendships, it does not provide any insight as to what can be done to create this type of friendship. The reader is made aware of the need but is not enlightened as to how to encourage late adolescents to develop them. Overall, the volume is an excellent project to be used by college upper classmen and above.

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Timothy KELLER. *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City*. Zondervan, 2012. 400 pp. \$29.99.

Keller has written a magnum opus. This volume is a classic. Every page is loaded with thoughtful, balanced, deep theological concepts and practical ministry counsel.

Keller is centered in every area of his discussion. His continual mantra is “balance.” From the gospel presentation, to gospel contextualization in the city, to cultural engagement to the missional community, he presents a centrist view on how to approach theology, preach to secular people, and to do ministry.

While most of his references seem to be from Calvinist scholars, he does balance them with a wider net of evangelicals. Keller quotes significant voices in the past such as Francis Schaeffer and modern scholars, as well, such as D.A. Carson. His church is Presbyterian, but he has a charismatic flair. For the city’s sake, his church has helped plant Pentecostal and Lutheran churches. Keller’s motivation is to bring New York City to Christ, and he knows different people are attracted to the gospel in different ways. Perhaps, there is a hint of Stone-Campbell Movement values in his approach.

A few intriguing concepts are:

“Cities have more of the image of God per square inch than any other place on earth” (14).

“Find out ‘what God is doing in the world’ and join forces with him. And ‘what God is doing’ was generally thought to be in the secular rather than in the religious sectors of human life” (251, quoting Lesslie Newbigin).

“We are saved by faith and grace alone, but not by a faith that remains alone” (23).

“Truth without grace is not really truth and grace without truth is not really grace” (48)!

“The only way into a ministry that sees people’s lives change is through preaching the gospel to deconstruct both legalism and relativism” (66).

“Counsel believers to have both doctrine/knowledge and experience/feeling” ( 85).

“Paul’s approach to culture, then, is neither completely confrontational nor totally affirmative” (112).

“In other words, one of the very best ways to reach the far parts of the world is to reach your own city” (159)!

“The church should not have to choose evangelism over discipleship” (291).

“In the end, my main aim in examining the models is to suggest that the way forward on how to best engage culture is a careful balance among several polarities” (189).

We live in an age of extremists. This concept is often seen in political ideologies and religious convictions. We tend to react against those different from us and create a gulf between us. Generations react and counter previous generations. Younger generations tend to consciously attempt to do life differently than their parents. Younger Christians attempt to ‘do church’ differently, and, of course, better than the previous generation of the church. Keller attempts to balance extremes and keep reactive responses to a minimum. His centrist view sees value on both sides of the middle. Instead of choosing one extreme over the other extreme, he uses an eclectic approach. In that process, he hopes to bring the church together. He hopes to appeal to different kinds of people within the same congregation.

Some might think this viewpoint is noncommittal and spineless. Keller would consider it wise. There is some truth in the extremes. Why not take all the truth one can and utilize

it for the Mission's sake? Why alienate people unnecessarily? The cause of Christ is bigger than any isolated ideology.

One may agree or disagree with his philosophy, theology, or approach. However, one cannot deny his scholarship, churchmanship, and effectiveness in mobilizing all kinds of people by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

For Keller, being in the center of God's will, in the center of the theological debate, in the center of the city makes sense for the "Center Church."

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**Gary T. CAGE. *The Woodsman*. Reno, Nevada: Virginia Avenue Press, 2012. 237 pp. \$10.80.**

In this novel, Cage uses historical fiction to write a story of one man's struggle to understand his life in the face of adversity and injustice. As the story begins, an old man wakes up cold and exhausted in a canyon unable to remember anything, not even his name. He is lost and alone with no idea of which direction to go. It would have been easier for him to take the well-traveled path down the mountain, but he chose the more difficult path upward. This decision is a reflection of choices he had made throughout his life. He soon meets a grim and mysterious woodsman who agrees to lead him to a village for help. The journey leads up to the mountain summit before descending to the village. The trip, which takes several days, is difficult and demanding. The old man, who remembers that his name is Pavel, is tired and weary, but he persists.

With each passing day, Pavel begins to remember the people and events in his life. We soon realize that this story is about something far more than an old man lost in the mountains. The full meaning is revealed in the final chapter. The novel is a metaphor for the justice and the love of God in his relationship with humans.

Though the mystery builds and stimulates more interest as the story unfolds, it is slow in getting started. The first two or three chapters seem somewhat tedious with some repetition. However, it is worth being patient. You will soon feel the connection with your own life, especially as Pavel must deal with suffering, betrayal, forgiveness, and redemption.

Cage does not present Pavel as a religious man. Though the story deals with the question of God's existence, and providence, traditional Christianity is not a focus in Pavel's life. However, everywhere in the story is the ethical imperative. For Cage, it is enough for Pavel to live his life with integrity. Evangelicals may have difficulty with this. The key idea in the story is that God's judgment is based on our pursuit of truth and our commitment to live consistent with our convictions. Cage believes humans can discern between good and evil. However, the idea is not that we are saved by ethical behavior, but by God's love and grace toward those who pursue truth.

Neither should we get the idea that God lets humans off easily. In Pavel's journey, God is not a gentle, reassuring friend who puts his arms around him and embraces his weaknesses and excuses. God is tough. In the end he requires Pavel to account for his actions in no uncertain terms. Each one of us will have to climb to the summit and face the actual record

of how we lived rather than wishful perceptions or selfish justifications for our sinful behavior. Not everyone makes it to the summit. This idea may be a problem for those who see God only in terms of grace.

What is striking is Cage’s ability to convey philosophical and theological ideas within a narrative, illustrating how our perspectives about God and truth influence who we are and how we treat others. While not all of us, to the same degree, have suffered as Pavel, all of us are challenged in how we respond to those who hurt us. What does it mean to live in integrity and project grace in a world so dominated by power-lust, selfishness, and vengeance? Cage offers us new ways to talk about God and create spiritual awareness of how we should live. I recommend *The Woodsman*.

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**Stanley HAUERWAS.** *Working with Words: On Learning to Speak Christian*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books. 2011. 340 pp. \$29.60.

Having read only a couple of Hauerwas’s earlier works I was glad for the opportunity to be able to examine a volume with which I had not previously come into contact. This volume is a simple compilation volume of sermons, lectures, and essays with a single purpose: “rightly learning to speak about God” (xii). For those previously acquainted with Hauerwas, they will find little (or no) new additions to his wide body of work. The strength of his intellect and broad spectrum of experience all come to bear powerfully in this collection which is neatly sectioned into three broad slices: Learning Christian: To See and Speak; The Language of Love: From Death to Life; Habits of Speech Exemplified: Some Teachers. The taxonomy of the sections at times seems labored but upon rereading there was adequate rationale for including each essay or sermon into each of the divisions.

The first section is foundational and covers preliminary topics for understanding topics to follow. Basic themes covered in this section include theological and philosophical reflections on such topics as “seeing past the cross,” an excellent essay on Augustine’s view of the problem of evil and why Hauerwas believes that theodicy is not an existential human problem, a foray into understanding the book of Acts and its missiological focus in a post-political hermeneutic, and reflections on becoming a “major biblical scholar” (94) an essay in response to Richard Hays’s criticism of Hauerwas’s political hermeneutic.

The second section, the briefest of the three sections, is intended to be more practical in scope. It appears to me that he takes foundational elements of the first section and attempts to apply them in more practical ways in the second section. To that end this section includes more sermons which, in themselves, are less pedagogical and focus on application. Themes in this section include examining a brief working Christology in the American post-Christian context drawing on Yoder’s political interpretation of Jesus. Greed, with another tip of the hat to Augustine, and how we should theologically understand what we have, what we want, and how we have received ALL of it. Two sermons on the concept of love—a seemingly simple concept that Hauerwas gleefully obfuscates by delving into popular “hot button” issues like marriage and homosexuality, and an excellent sermon on missiology, ecclesiology, and



the concept of “being sent” (164-169) where he states emphatically, “. . . what it means for the Church not to have a mission but to be a mission. . . . Christianity is not just a missionary faith because it has to be given its beginning . . . the Church is a mission” (165). This particular sermon is worthy of a lengthier essay because it dwells on relevant issues about sharing the gospel in the “post everything” world we find ourselves living in.

The third section is composed primarily of brief essays that interact with those movements or peoples that Hauerwas believes have embodied the essence of “learning to speak Christian.” These essays are fascinating because they are not only informative but interact, both positively and negatively, across a spectrum of beliefs and worldviews. Especially interesting are those essays where he continues an ongoing dialogue with the works of Richard H. Niebuhr, whom, I believe, was especially formative to Hauerwas’s axiology, and an excellent essay on the concept of “friendship” between Bonhoeffer and Bethge based on Bonhoeffer’s poem “The Friend” from *Letters and Papers from Prison*. Not only is this an exposition of the relationship shared between the two men, but it is also an exposition of the poem itself. In the end Hauerwas sees both the poem and the relationship in political terms, “. . . to enact in a world of terror, that God’s Church exists, making friendships possible . . . but the poem is his [Bonhoeffer] alternative politic” (285).

Though this is a “collection” of essays and sermons, it is, like every Hauerwas work I have read, “weighty” to say the least. The essays especially are in-depth and academic, replete with copious footnotes and citations. The material is well worth the time and effort if you want to wade into the topics. I do not recommend this volume as an introduction to the work of Hauerwas. The “thread” that supposedly strings this multifaceted offering together is not strong enough in places to endure a cursory reading from someone without previous experience. Since Hauerwas is such a talented academic it is nearly impossible to glean every “gem” from his broad experience; this makes possible points of disagreement numerous. Too often, as is usually the case with Hauerwas, everything is boiled down to political application. While there is validity in his approach there are situations where his application seems a stretch for me. Those who find themselves in the Restoration Movement will find an affinity with Hauerwas’s raging against liberalism (though there is little of that in this volume), and his views appear to be biblically conservative on the surface. However, his hermeneutic challenges all modernistic assumptions and those who assume that worldview will find his work more than challenging.

There is much to think about in these collected works. Both academics and laypersons could benefit from its content. Vocational ministers will likewise find a fount of usable, and practical (though veiled in academia) content based in sound theology and grounded in a breadth of experience and understanding about our current cultural milieu that few authors offer.

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James K. HOFFMEIER and Dennis R. MAGARY, eds. *Do Historical Matters Matter to Faith? A Critical Appraisal of Modern and Postmodern Approaches to Scripture*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012. 542 pp. \$35.00.

These essays by conservative scholars dedicated to the memory of the late Donald Wiseman is a response to Kenton Sparks, *God's Word in Human Words*, who calls on evangelicals to abandon their adherence to the doctrine of biblical inerrancy and accept the consensus positions of mainstream critical Bible scholarship. In its place Sparks proposes what he calls "believing criticism" that can affirm all that is essential in the Christian faith while simultaneously affirming the conclusions of critical scholarship. Contributors to his volume clearly disagree.

The first essays deal with biblical, systematic, and historical theological aspects of this issue. Thomas McCall argues that Sparks's view means Jesus was wrong about his affirmation of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and questions whether an orthodox Christology can be maintained on Sparks's premises. He agrees that much good can be gleaned from critical biblical scholarship but sees no need to capitulate to it when it reaches heterodox conclusions. Graham Cole argues that the gospel is an interpretation of history, so denial of biblical historicity tends to undermine the gospel. Mark Thompson argues inerrancy is not a wooden literalism as is often claimed but is robust theologically and defensible exegetically, being based on the use of the Bible by Christ and the apostles and the truthfulness of God who inspired the Scriptures. James Hoffmeier, who has written a volume defending the historicity of the exodus, affirms with Roland de Vaux, "If the historical faith of Israel is not in a certain way founded on history, this faith is erroneous and cannot command my assent." He argues that denial of the historicity of the exodus undermines the theological use of the exodus motif in the Law, Prophets, and Psalms. Michael Haykin notes that Irenaeus based his belief in the fidelity (inerrancy) of apostolic writings on the truthfulness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The next unit deals with OT criticism. While those affirming the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch must accommodate some clearly non-Mosaic elements, Richard Averbeck agrees with Berlinerbau that the critical approach of Spinoza and Wellhausen leads to a kind of nihilism of the divine in Scripture. He then argues against Sparks for the literary coherence of Exodus 19–24. Robert Chisholm points out methodological flaws in source criticism and argues against typical source-critical conclusions in the flood narrative and in 1 Samuel 17–18. Robert Bergen uses word distribution not as an indicator of sources but of authorial intention in Gen1:1–2:3. John Hilber uses comparisons with extrabiblical prophecy to defend the credibility of the OT's portrait of prophetic phenomena and the authenticity of its prophetic sayings. Richard Schultz argues that an evangelical view can accommodate the position that Isaiah was updated subsequent to the prophet but not the critical view that less than half the volume originated in the eighth century. Schultz presents a case for Isaiah's unity and argues that Sparks's approach undermines the inspiration, validity, and authority of biblical prophecy. Alan Millard denies that Daniel has been proven to be historically inaccurate, discussing most of its alleged errors. Willem VanGemeren and Jason Stanghelle argue that Psalm titles are not flawed midrashic additions (Childs), but represent canonical editorial activity. They are open to the view that "of David" may mean the *vox* of David rather than simple authorship. Jens Kofoed describes the histories of the Bible as "cultural memo-

ries,” giving a lengthy exposition of mnemohistory. But he affirms that histories of memory can and should be used to reconstruct history.

Five essays are on the NT. Robert Yarbrough notes that critical biblical scholarship led William Dever and Bart Ehrman to abandon their religion, and led James Strange to affirm the resurrection of Jesus only as a metaphor. He adds that where Christianity is thriving, it is of the “old evangelical” sort, not Sparks’s. Bloomberg is concerned about challenges from the fundamentalist right, affirming a doctrine of inerrancy broad enough to accommodate in principle those who hold that the Pastorals were written by disciples of Paul in his name if this were an accepted literary convention rather than fraud. Eckard Schnabel, however, argues that there is no evidence of a literary convention of pseudonymity. He defends Paul’s authorship of the Pastorals. According to Darrell Bock, many alleged contradictions between the Gospels disappear once one recognizes that they can give the voice of Jesus (*ipsissima vox*) rather than his exact words (*ipsissima verba*). Thomas Davis tries to show the remarkable accuracy of the book of Acts in its description of Cyprus based on what is known archaeologically.

The last essays treat OT archaeology. James Monson reviews the problem of the archaeology of Jericho and Ai and proposed solutions. He defends the reliability of Joshua based on its accurate descriptions of many known geographic locations, including “the Ruin” (Ai). Richard Hess argues that the Kuntillet ‘Ajrud inscription that mentions “Yahweh and his (wife) Asherah” is not incompatible with the Bible’s view of Israel’s monotheism since the Bible recognizes the existence of polytheistic Israelite cults throughout Israel’s history. Michael Hasel shows how the Khirbet Qeiyafa excavations provide insights into the early kingdom of Israel. Finally Steven Ortiz, while admitting that archaeology cannot prove that David and Solomon existed, argues that archaeology proves there was a state in the hill country of the tenth century, a conclusion consistent with their existence.

These authors show that adherence to “inerrancy” can be defended in a scholarly way and that an affirmation of the doctrine is no deterrent to creative interactions with the Bible and extrabiblical materials. The volume is thus useful for young Bible scholars who are making up their minds about the viability of inerrancy as a doctrine. It could also be used as a textbook in biblical criticism by those who affirm that doctrine.

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**Russell PREGEANT.** *Reading the Bible for All the Wrong Reasons.* Fortress, 2012.  
136 pp. \$14.99.

In this highly accessible work, Pregeant begins by asserting three points: communication does not exist apart from interpretation, interpretation is fluid, not mechanical, and appropriate readings of the Bible, therefore, must ask questions in accord with its nature (1-7). The result of asking *inappropriate* questions is what Pregeant terms “Bible-abuse” which he dually defines as utilizing the writings for unsuitable purposes and as using the Bible “as a *tool* of abuse, a weapon to browbeat those with whom they disagree” (6, italics original).

Accordingly, chapter 1 (More than a Fortune Cookie) devotes its time to elucidating the *nature* of the biblical texts. For Pregeant, the Bible presents before the readers a grand meta-narrative, showcasing the story of God’s redemptive actions for creation. Thus, limiting the

Bible to a “fortune-cookie” sourcebook reduces the apprehension of this grand plan. Chapter 2 (Neither Fact Book nor Catechism) seeks to honor the diversity of opinions in the Bible by rethinking biblical authority; for the author, the Bible should be thought of as a “dialogue partner in a continual search for truths by which to live” (31). Regarding the Bible as the sourcebook of absolute authority is, in the author’s estimation, “*the* root cause of Bible abuse and hence the most basic among the wrong ways to read the Bible” (34, italics mine).

From there, Pregeant begins to reevaluate a number of contemporary issues that have not received their due diligence due to this form of Bible abuse. He begins, in chapter 3 (Neither Science nor Anti-Science) by approaching the interaction between faith and evolution and proceeds to discuss in chapters 4–5 the nature of biblical prophecy—and the book of Revelation in particular—and the sensitive issues of divorce, gender roles, and same-sex relations.

Chapter 6 reimagines the church’s classical conceptualization of theology and presents God as “the primary exemplification” of the universe’s continuous evolution. Chapter 7 sets forth Pregeant’s configuration of the heart of biblical ethics, establishing the virtue of love as the supreme vantage point of attaining the common good.

Throughout the work, Pregeant exemplifies an apt ability to simplify complex scholarly topics—such as the nature of Second Temple apocalyptic literature, the contingent aspect of prophecy, the method of *gematria*—without reducing their complexity or the polyvalence of opinions with respect to the experts in the various fields. Perhaps the best characteristic that emerges from this volume is his emphasis on interacting with the Bible in accord with its very nature (whether or not one agrees with the variegated implications he formulates).

The volume however, seems to flirt back and forth between functioning as a nonpolemical segue for beneficial discussions concerning *sensitive* topics and as a mere polemical degradation against variant stances; for example, Pregeant’s labeling of the rapture as a “bogus doctrine” (54) seems completely unnecessary and lacks the tact that the rest of the volume attempts to convey.

For the various readers among the Stone-Campbell tradition, this volume will no doubt invoke assorted reactions. Any time someone encroaches controversial topics and states his or her conclusions, the result is inevitably contentious. Regardless of how the readers evaluate his views; however, readers should appreciate Pregeant’s courage and attempt to address these difficult issues with a contextual anchorage and his desire to encourage readers to think more meaningfully about the Bible and its appropriation.

NATHAN SHEDD

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**Daniel M. BELL, Jr.** *The Economy of Desire: Christianity and Capitalism in a Postmodern World.* Baker, 2012. 224 pp. \$19.99.

While previous volumes of the celebrated “The Church and Postmodern Culture” series deal largely with critical theory and post-structuralist hermeneutics, this volume offers a robust, well-researched, and compelling account of the politics of will. It exposes the logics and practices of neo-liberal economics in late capitalism, and how they function as an economy of desire, shaping the social imagination of first-world citizens. Drawing from Michel Foucault’s genealogies of power and Gilles Deleuze’s narration of capitalism and modern statecraft, the univocity of being, and the politics of desire, Bell makes a convincing case that

capitalism has deterritorialized (Deleuze's term) the realms of government and religion, reterritorizing the configurations of the social in such a way that the market exists above and beyond the state, and is not subject to the moralizing sentimentality of religion. The result, argues Bell, is that all iterations of the good are judged by market structures of valuation. The practices of such valuation form desire to recognize and seek only those goods that accord with the maximization of individual interest and capital exchange.

Bell contrasts capitalism with a different economy of desire: orthodox Christian faith. Capitalism's god is the Stoic law of unintended consequences (Adam Smith's "invisible hand") that somehow redirects the effects of self-interest under the condition of perfect freedom toward the good of a whole society. This theology makes concupiscence, or the disordered desire of original sin, not a sickness for grace to heal, but a virtue to be extolled. Bell is very honest about the degree to which the capitalist economy of desire has infiltrated the very spaces where the theological virtue of charity ought to reign: the church. Insofar as contemporary churches have adapted themselves to the logic of market (pastor as CEO ecclesiology, tithing as member dues, ministry as philanthropic work to improve one's brand), they have not been alternative sites of desire formation. Yet, the Christian tradition's habits of life and thought can form desire differently than those of capitalism.

Bell points especially to two of the counsels of perfection—charity and voluntary poverty—as practices intended to heal desire and to orient it to the divine economy. Bell gives example after example of how the divine gift economy of the Spirit can transform contemporary men and women and their participation in the market. There are individual examples of the counsels such as Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement, community examples like Seeds of Hope and Church Supported Agriculture, but also corporate examples like the Mondragon Co-operative Corporation. Bell's goal is not to advance an alternative macroeconomics to the neo-liberal order that is intelligible within the logic of the order. His goal, rather, is to advance Christian practices of the divine economy that work to form—in fact, heal—our desire.

Methodologically and stylistically, this volume is very good. The main problem, however, is that capitalism is too often discussed as an abstract force rather than a concrete arrangement of social agency. While Bell clearly does not want readers to understand capitalism as only a vague notion, there is some risk that readers may misconstrue his portrayal. Nevertheless, his focus on the discursive practices that form subjects within a particular economy of desire mitigates this risk.

This volume is quite accessible. Those without special expertise in theology, philosophy, or economics can still understand its argument and benefit from its call to critical self-reflection. It could serve as a textbook in a Christian ethics or political theology course, and would certainly be a worthwhile read for ministers, elders, and lay people concerned with Christian formation and the church's social witness. Bell's frank insistence that Christianity is an alternative vision to that of capitalism may offend Christians on the political right. Its refusal to equate Christian charity with the welfare-centric social policy may offend Christians on the political left. Both groups, however, will see the degree to which their worldviews are shaped by an economy of desire, and see the exigence for choosing between God and mammon.

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**William V. FRAME.** *The American College Presidency as Vocation: Easing the Burden, Enhancing the Joy.* ACU Press, 2013. 175 pp. \$17.00.

Frame served as the president of Augsburg College in Minneapolis for approximately ten years. Near the end of his tenure in this role he became involved in a program conducted through the Council of Independent Colleges on Presidential Vocation and Institutional Mission. Presidents and aspiring presidents, and their spouses, were invited to conferences during which they responded to selected readings and participated in seminars regarding their sense of vocation. This volume was funded by the Lily Endowment and is essentially an overview and summary of the results of that project. Of the 210 individuals involved in the seminars, 35 couples were interviewed and asked to reflect on such questions as, "What experience have you had in helping your institution know and pursue its mission?" and "What have you done to align your personal vocation and the mission of your institution?"

While this volume was not intended strictly for leaders of faith-based schools, there is a natural connection derived from the very essence of the concept of vocation. My perspective as a reader comes from having served for 28 years as a senior administrator at three Christian Colleges associated with the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement, including 15 of those years as a president. I've always considered my work a "calling to ministry" in which I could exercise spiritual gifts within the Body of Christ. More than once in my reading I was reminded of conversations, experiences, and incidents that were instrumental in my decision to enter this vocation of college presidency.

Frame focuses attention on alignment between the vocational president and the missional institution in contrast to academic leaders who live and think in terms of career or profession. It is possible to accumulate the right combination of education and administrative background necessary for one's curriculum vitae to attract the attention of presidential search committees. Without the necessary experience and knowledge of higher education it is difficult to envision a situation in which an institution would not seek someone with these qualifications. Of those who participated in the CIC seminars and aspired to become college presidents, twenty percent achieved this objective either during the series of meetings or shortly thereafter. All of them followed a path of moving from teaching to administrative roles and then to the presidency, a logical progression in most cases. From the observer's vantage point it is not likely one could distinguish between the individual who accepted a presidency as a career advancement or professional achievement and the person who considered it a vocational decision. This can be determined only by understanding the orientation of the president.

A primary focus of the interview inquiry was to determine if, how, and when the sense of vocational calling took root. One key to this discernment was found to be that of "friendship." Frame refers to conversations that are informal, liberating, and confessional as being instrumental in helping the aspiring or sitting president work through questions about qualification or self-doubt and the apprehension of being the right fit for this responsibility. Sometimes that friendship was a spouse and other times a trusted colleague or mentor. He points out a general consensus from the participants in the Presidential Vocational and Institutional Mission Program that the higher education culture is not conducive to fostering close friendships for senior administrators. Such an observation has been commonly stated, "It's lonely at the top," and is not necessarily unique to higher education. It is, nonetheless, unfortunate and impairs the opportunity for reflection and discernment.

The alignment between the vocational president and missional institution is an ongoing process that needs opportunity to engage in thoughtful discourse with constituents in pursuit of a realistic vision for the institution. Referencing the “level five” leader described in Jim Collins’ work *Good to Great*, a conclusion drawn from the interviews found similar characteristics in the vocational leader. Individuals of integrity who fulfill their responsibilities with humble self-confidence, articulate the vision of the college, and attribute success to the collective community understand what it means to “see the bigger picture” and are able to move their institutions forward.

Frame dedicates much of the volume to recounting conversations and observations that came to light during the interviews, including one chapter that includes testimonies from presidents who found renewed commitment to their vocation from the CIC-sponsored program experience. The study was based on a premise that one who is “called” to the work of a college or university president will find greater personal fulfillment. The conclusion drawn found that the attribute of vocation “energizes rather than exhausts, engages rather than isolates, and enlarges rather than diminishes” both the president and the institution served.

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**Philip W. EATON.** *Engaging the Culture, Changing the World: The Christian University in a Post-Christian World.* InterVarsity, 2011. 206 pp. \$18.00.

Eaton, President of Seattle Pacific University at the time of publication, presents a visionary and challenging work, titled after the University’s motto, with which Christian higher education leadership should fully engage. His ideas are indebted to other works that have sought to provide a framework for thinking about Christian higher education, such as Arthur Holmes’s *The Idea of a Christian College* and Duane Litfin’s *Conceiving the Christian College*. Eaton acknowledges this indebtedness, but believes that we find ourselves in a post-Christian culture that necessitates reconceiving the Christian college and/or university. Specifically, Eaton believes the Christian university is in “exile,” where, “we must affirm the story of what is true and good and beautiful, our ancient Christian story, right in the midst of a culture that has grown profoundly suspicious of calling anything true.” (8) This should be done through engagement with culture, rather than disengagement or separatism: “The days of the comfortable, intellectual journey carried out safely in the middle of circled wagons are over. There is no room for separatism for the Christian university of our day. There is no room for the ivory tower of intellectual formation alone. We must engage. We enter into the swirl of our post-Christian culture. We must learn better how to influence the culture from the position of exile. This venture is fraught with all kinds of challenges, but what an exhilarating venture it can be” (8-9).

Eaton fleshes out his premise that “the Christian university holds special promise to lead the way toward a better world,” (13) by unpacking the nature of the “exile” in which Christians find themselves sidelined and lacking cultural influence, describing the great confusion and great needs of the post-Christian culture, and demonstrating how the Christian university is uniquely positioned and equipped to ultimately confront these issues. In fact, Eaton ventures to say that “*The world needs the Christian university*” (16) [emphasis origi-



nal]. Namely, in the face of colliding worldviews, the lack of a center (truth), the lack of a grounded morality, and ultimately, the lack of hope only found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Christian university provides the answers. Those answers are founded on the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the new creation which is yet to be fully realized, but that informs the ways in which Christians and their universities envision and seek to transform the world now. The secular university, without Easter and all that it implies, can never hope to accomplish what the Christian university can for a post-Christian culture.

This work leads to many practical implications, but is not a manual for Christian university leaders by which to, step-by-step, transform their institutions into world-changing educational institutions. Instead, it is a volume that challenges the administrators or faculty members of Christian colleges and universities to think deeply through the issues presented and bring conclusions to fruition in their contexts. Eaton is right that, first, we must fully embrace the truth of the Christian story and all of its components in the face of a culture that cast doubt and suspicion on such claims, but that perhaps our greatest challenge “is to learn better all the time how to equip ourselves to engage this culture and to change our world.” (17) Such tasks are not accomplished by one man in one volume. Eaton has contributed something very important to the conversation, in that he has thoughtfully and carefully sounded the alarm in order to spur Christian higher education into higher levels of commitment to the vision of “engaging the culture,” and “changing the world.”

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**Walter BRUEGGEMANN, Carolyn J. SHARP.** *Living Countertestimony: Conversations with Walter Brueggemann.* Westminster John Knox, 2012. 199 pp. \$20.00.

This small volume consists of five conversations with former students, fellow scholars, and the pastor of the church where Brueggemann attends. It also contains two sermons by Brueggemann and a reflective essay written by his longtime friend Terence Fretheim to which Brueggemann himself responds. The range of conversations is broad and the insights are numerous. We learn about his quirks, insecurities, and formative childhood experiences that have shaped his life and work.

Brueggemann is readily recognized by the participants in this volume to be a force in OT scholarship, but a deeper, more complex picture also emerges. We are allowed to discover his nagging sense of inadequacy, his anxiety about the book of Ezekiel, and the impact that he has had on innumerable people in the academy. We hear about handwritten letters of encouragement, prayers written on a manual typewriter each morning, and the use of eye-glasses as a powerful pedagogical device.

Brueggemann opens up about his years as a teacher and administrator at Eden Theological Seminary, the teachers who affected him most deeply in his early education at Elmhurst College, and his confrontations with others in the academy. He speaks frankly about the very public confrontation with Bruce Waltke at SBL as well as his tentative place in the academy.

While this volume engages in a diverse range of questions there is a tendency for other voices, particularly Carolyn Sharp, to take much of the space for conversation. Too often Brueggemann is left to answer with an affirmative or negative instead of a dialogue. Currently, this is the closest thing to a memoir of Brueggemann's life and work. It is a volume that is important for anyone wanting to better grasp the things that drive his work both in the academy and in the church. Overall, this volume gives helpful insights into the life and heart of someone that many of us know only through his writings and sermons. The comprehensive bibliography detailing Brueggemann's published works in both books and articles since 1965 alone makes this volume worth acquiring. This volume is a welcome contribution in understanding the life and work of this prolific and important OT scholar.

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**Andreas SCHUELE.** *An Introduction to Biblical Aramaic.* Westminster John Knox, 2012. 136 pp. \$30.00.

This volume is intended to be a reference grammar for Biblical Aramaic. As many students have experienced, Franz Rosenthal's seminal *Grammar of Biblical Aramaic* is the most comprehensive reference grammar available but is difficult to access for students. Though there are several excellent Aramaic primers that are available, such as those by Fredrick Greenspahn and Miles van Pelt, there is a need for an up-to-date, accessible, and linguistically astute reference grammar of Biblical Aramaic. Schuele's volume aims to meet this need, and the needs of students, as the direction of the volume has been determined by Schuele's teaching experiences.

The content of the volume begins with an overview of the history of the Aramaic language and the place of Biblical Aramaic in that continuum. Following this is the main reference section of the volume, divided into sections for vowel signs, nouns, verbs, and syntax. The volume concludes with sections on vocabulary and idioms, followed by appendixes containing sample readings from the Zakkur inscription, Qumran, and the Proverbs of Ahiqar, and paradigm charts of verbs. Every section contains exercises, to which answers are found in the back.

Schuele's volume has several positive aspects to offer students. The morphological discussions are detailed and clear, and the presentation of syntax and idioms is also very useful, as these are notoriously complex. Surprisingly however the volume lacks an index, which makes it difficult for students who are working with texts to find relevant syntactical discussions for their text. The exercises at the end of each chapter are helpful, and the appendixes with Aramaic readings from outside Biblical Aramaic whet the appetite for students to continue in their learning of Aramaic.

This volume is a step in the right direction to meet the need for an up-to-date and accessible reference grammar that has a particular focus on syntax. However, several details of the grammar need to be reconsidered and clarified. For example, Schuele's discussion of jussives states that jussives are commands, but students need to also be aware that the modal nuances of jussives can express the volition of the speaker and not only a direct command (39). Likewise, the theory of verbal stems presented on pages 40-41 is problematic. Schuele

divides the verbal system into “nine distinct conjugations,” in which *peʿal* is a “base” conjugation, made passive by *peʿil*, and passive-reflexive by *hitpeʿel* and *itpeʿel*. *Paʿel*, which corresponds to Biblical Hebrew *piʿel*, expresses a factitive-resultant notion, which is made passive in *paʿal*, and passive-reflexive in *hitpaʿal* and *itpaʿal*. Finally, *hapʿel/apʿel* is active-causative and *hopʿal* passive-causative. The problems of this classification however are evident by the definitions given for several verbs in the Word List on pages 84-90. For example, בָּרַךְ is glossed as “to praise” in both *peʿal* and *paʿel*, and פָּשַׁט is glossed as “to interpret” in both *peʿal* and *paʿel*, hence there is nothing “factitive-resultative” about the *paʿel* forms of these verbs. Likewise, the verb שָׁבַח in *peʿal* is “to abide,” whereas in *paʿel* it is “to begin,” which form does not bear a factitive-resultative relationship to the *peʿal* form. The gloss for the *hapʿel* כָּחַשׁ “to receive,” does not indicate causality. These observations could be multiplied, and cause problems for students who learn the *paʿel* as “factitive-resultative,” and the *hapʿel/apʿel* as “causative,” when in fact these categories do not apply predictably to a large number of verbs. Hence there is a need for a more nuanced approach to the verbal system based on verbal valency.

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**Richard S. BRIGGS, and Joel N. LOHR, eds. *A Theological Introduction to the Pentateuch: Interpreting the Torah as Christian Scripture*. Baker, 2012. 210 pp. \$22.99.**

This volume was designed as a “small-scale festschrift” for Walter Moberly. Its contributors were all either Moberly’s former students or University of Durham colleagues. Editors Briggs and Lohr map out the scope and methodology of the project in the introduction. They describe this work as an exercise in theological interpretation. By this they mean interweaving traditional and modern concerns of study, reading Christian Scripture while shaped by Christian theological concerns, and engaging in a dialogue between theological concerns brought to the text and the interests of the text itself. This is not a method of study but an approach wherein the interpreter allows theological questions to be part of the interpretive task. The nature of the essays and the function of the presentation are designed to be an introduction to theological interpretation. The contributors present each book of the Pentateuch in two parts. They begin by surveying themes, issues, and hermeneutical questions within each book before showcasing their hermeneutic in a close reading of a specific passage from each book.

Briggs surveys the book of Genesis. In briefly surveying its structure he mentions a couple of themes and key events but notes the book evades attempts to assign any rigid outline. When analyzing the place of Genesis in the canon, Briggs notes very briefly issues in the text that might support accepted historical-critical conclusions but prefers to engage these issues theologically, thus regardless of the history of composition and transmission of the text, his interest is the why of its placement at this point of the canon. Briggs concludes with a focused reading of Gen 11:1-9, the narrative of Babel. After a narrative reading of the text, Briggs looks at the themes of scattering and blessing, concluding scattering is a means of divine blessing.

Jo Bailey Wells surveys the book of Exodus, and her initial treatment of the book as a whole primarily surveys theological themes. Wells examines God as central character of the book as well as the issues of liberation, holiness, and priesthood. Regarding the historicity of the book, Wells suggests this discussion is “a distraction from the purpose of the received text.” In her focused reading of Exod 19:1-8, Wells suggests the holiness of the character of Yahweh in Exodus 3 becomes an invitation for Israel to share this holiness.

Lohr contributes the chapter on Leviticus, briefly investigating issues of corporate responsibility, Protestant bias against cultic ritual, anthropological readings, life and death, and the relationship of Leviticus to the NT. These themes contribute to his focused look at Leviticus 16 and the Day of Atonement, closing with a look at the place of Yom Kippur in Christian theology. Nathan MacDonald presents the book of Numbers, surveying the themes of people, priests, and land, before looking at Numbers 20–21 in relationship to the same account in Deuteronomy 1–3.

Rob Barrett surveys Deuteronomy, examining the theological themes of loyalty to Yahweh, blessing and curse, and the law. He then turns his attention to two texts in Deuteronomy; the sermon in Deuteronomy 8 and the Sabbatical year in Deuteronomy 15. Together, these texts illustrate the structure, themes, and ethos of the entire book. Finally, a closing chapter briefly summarizes the works of Walter Moberly and his contribution to theological readings of the Pentateuch.

The contribution of this volume is in its presentation and demonstration of an approach to scripture that is more art than science. It provides an avenue for this approach to be “caught,” since a scientific “theological” methodology cannot quite be taught. The only fault one might find is that in composing a practical guide to a theological hermeneutic, the volume presents more of a snapshot of the approach than a guide to be followed.

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**Daniel L. BLOCK.** *Deuteronomy.* The NIV Application Commentary. Zondervan, 2012. 880 pp. \$39.99.

Widely known for his work on Ezekiel, Block has for the last decade concentrated on writing this commentary. In the process, he has already produced two volumes of essays on the book as well. This commentary represents a vast amount of work. (He admits in the preface that he turned in a manuscript of 1250 pages!)

Block offers a brief preface, an introduction, an extensive outline of Deuteronomy (43-48), a select bibliography, then the commentary which begins on page 55. Each section of the commentary is divided into: Original Meaning, Bridging Contexts, and Contemporary Significance. He titles the outline “The Gospel of Moses” which reflects his strong convictions about the nature of the book. Moses is not a lawgiver, but a preacher/pastor (Torah = teaching, not law). In fact Moses is the consummate pastor who knew his people well and understood his ministry as a teaching ministry.

Block affirms strongly that Deuteronomy is the most important book in the OT, and maybe even in the Bible, because it emphasizes the redeeming grace of God, the human response which is to love God and neighbor, and the believing community which lives in a

covenant relationship with God. To call the book “Law” is to misunderstand and misinterpret it. Block says Luther’s perspective of a law/gospel dichotomy between the OT and NT is simply wrong. (And, we might add, so is that of many who maintain the early Stone-Campbell perspective.) According to Block, Deuteronomy is a book of sermons and the preacher is Moses. Block divides Deuteronomy into three speeches of Moses to which others later added narrative frameworks. Moses speeches are found in 1:6–4:40 (Remembering the Grace of Yahweh); 5:1b–26:19 (Explaining the Grace of Yahweh); and 29:2b–30:20 (Trusting in the Grace of Yahweh). The book ends with the song of Moses, 32:1–43 and the benediction of Moses, 33:2b–29. Block has no doubt the speeches were preached to Israel on the plains of Moab before Israel crossed into the Promised Land (though I think one could just as easily see some, if not many, preached several times during the whole of the wilderness wanderings). He is also convinced that Joshua had some written form of the book as he led the people into the land. The final form of the book with the narrative framework and extra-Mosaic material was complete by no later than the time of David. It provided the basis by which the king was to rule. It was the Torah which the priests were to teach, which the psalms praised, and to which the prophets appealed. Therefore, the book is Mosaic and authentic and provides the theological basis for virtually the entire OT. Block here is in clear conflict with the prevailing views on the origin and date of Deuteronomy.

Block likens Moses to Paul in the NT and Deuteronomy to the book of Romans. Jesus is not a “second Moses” for that is too low a Christology, but rather Paul is the second Moses. Paul structures Romans like Moses structured Deuteronomy: theological exposition (Romans 1–11 and Deuteronomy 1–11) and the practical and communal implications of the theological exposition (Romans 12–15 and Deuteronomy 12–26). Block also compares the book of Deuteronomy to the Gospel of John, for both represent mature reflection on the grace of God.

The sociological and historical key to the understanding of the book is its similarities to the second millennium Hittite suzerainty treaties. God as suzerain lovingly chose Israel and redeemed them from Egypt. Israel’s response was to declare Yahweh alone as their God and to demonstrate unwavering loyalty and total love for him by obeying him.

For the Christian, Deuteronomy is an invaluable resource for understanding the redeeming grace of God, for seeing that the appropriate response to God is love for him and our fellow human beings, and for confidence in the sure destiny of the redeemed.

This commentary is full of theological and pastoral insight. Block has the preacher clearly in mind as he often lists several theological (preaching?) points for each chapter or section, although sometimes the lists seem almost overwhelming. However, both OT and NT scholars and theologians will learn a great deal as well. One who reads this volume will never look at the OT in the same way again.

Block is most of the time very sensitive to the rhetorical structure of the various sections of Deuteronomy, although he misses the clear chiasm in Deuteronomy 8, one of the best examples in the OT.

I highly recommend this volume and strongly suggest that every Christian in the academy and the church read it. The picture of God that Block presents is at the heart of the Bible and our Christian faith.

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Glenn PEMBERTON. *Hurting with God: Learning to Lament with the Psalms*. ACU Press, 2012. 252 pp. \$19.99.

Books on prayer are plentiful. Less common are those that approach the study of prayer from a deep inquiry into the historical and linguistic realities of the biblical text. Rarer still are those that digest this information into something palatable to the average reader, making real-world connections to the realities of everyday life. A pearl of great price is that book on prayer that brings all of the aforementioned qualities to the table—historical investigation, textual analysis, readability, and real-world application—from deep, personal experience with the subject matter. Pemberton’s volume is one of the latter.

In this volume, Pemberton gives his readers an introduction to the psalms of lament. This volume is not a form-critical introduction to the psalms of lament (ground adequately covered in works by Westermann, Brueggemann, Jinkins, *et al.*), but rather an introduction for the nonspecialist with a view toward learning how to *pray*. Lament, as Pemberton defines it, is not unrestrained ranting, but instead the controlled dialogue of anger with God (194) imbued with complaint, protest, and appeal (30). “The language of lament is not an outburst of unrestrained speech that gives free reign to an emotional torrent of words. It is not venting for the sake of venting. Instead, lament is a structured, controlled language that by its methodical cadence helps restore a modicum of structure in times of disorientation” (65). With his description of the lament psalms (Chs. 1, 3–4), Pemberton notes (through an analysis of hymnals) the modern church’s tendency to ignore chaos and pain in favor of triumphalist, *Christus victor* approaches to worship (Ch. 2). Having articulated the need and legitimate place for the psalms of lament in the church’s liturgy, Pemberton takes the reader through a journey of discovery in the lament tradition and how those psalms stem from adversity of all kinds—from personal sin (Ch. 5), to depression (Ch. 6), to physical ailments (Ch. 7), to harassment by enemies (Ch. 8), even to God’s seeming apathy (Chs. 9–11). The volume concludes with some gentle but honest discussion about how the lament tradition can lead to thanksgiving (Ch. 12) and suggests ways that the lament tradition can responsibly and faithfully reclaim a place in the worship of the church (Ch. 13).

Without question, the major strength of this volume is Pemberton’s personal experience with the subject matter. Pemberton lives with pain. A still-unknown medical condition causes him physical pain at every waking moment and over the last decade he’s spent more than a few restless nights in anguish, crying out to the Father for relief. Pemberton has also had his fair share of nonphysical hardship (financial and relational) and wonders why there is no place for his cries of anguish in the ceremony, liturgy, and prayer life of the local church. There is a “praise-only” theology that underlies modern worship which has little place for lament, disagreement, disappointment, or even anger with God. Having taught through the psalms of lament on a regular basis, Pemberton knows that pain and disappointment are universal responses to the human condition. He also knows that the Psalms teach us how to give voice and expression to such pain in ways that are honest with God. He has no intention of writing an erudite monograph accessible only to those in the academy. Pemberton wants to help those who love God give honest, genuine voice to their pain and disappointment in ways that are commensurate with the way our biblical ancestors prayed.

The pain and chaos of life has not made Pemberton bitter or angry. A volume of this sort could have come across as its own lament, as a public display of his angst with God and

a written record (as are the Psalms) of his rage-filled conversation with the Father. But Pemberton lives what he teaches, and the speech that is written here is controlled speech, not unrestrained ranting. He writes to help, as a gentle shepherd navigating his flock through the valley of death's dark shadow that he knows all too well. He is what Henri Nouwen called a "wounded healer," a man whose pastoral skill is marked by scars, pain, darkness, loneliness, and a deep sense of abandonment. From this he cries out to God, and He answered him from His holy hill.

Because of its accessibility, this volume is suitable for a variety of purposes. The discussion questions at the end of the volume make it instantly ready for small groups and adult Sunday School classes. The volume would also be a solid resource for certain types of non-addiction support groups (divorce recovery, pain management support), perhaps those that specialize in therapy for victimization (rape, death of a child/spouse, or missing persons). Though this volume is focused on one specific type of prayer (lament), I am considering adopting this volume as required reading for my own college-level course on prayer. Those who teach in the Psalms will also find this volume a useful supplementary introduction to a major subgenre of the Psalter.

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**J. Daniel HAYS.** *The Message of the Prophets: A Survey of the Prophetic and Apocalyptic Books of the Old Testament.* Zondervan, 2010. 384 pp. \$44.99.

In this volume, Hays has produced an engaging and useful introduction to the OT prophetic books for college students and for those seeking deeper engagement with the prophetic literature. He presents conclusions characteristic of critically informed conservative, evangelical scholarship in a fluid and easily grasped style reminiscent of a college lecture.

The presentation unfolds in three parts. In Part One (chapters 1–5), "The Big Picture," he considers broad issues and concepts such as the nature of prophecy, the world of the prophets, the literary features of OT prophecy, its leading themes and messages, and its contribution to biblical eschatology. Part Two (chapters 6–18) is devoted to the Major Prophets and Part Three (chapters 19–27) to the Book of the Twelve.

In "Part One: The Big Picture," a section comprising some 19% of the volume's total contents, Hays wisely chooses to focus the readers' attention on key global ideas and concepts that will inform their understanding and thinking about particular books and passages. To devote this amount of space to the set of issues he discusses sets apart his treatment from other leading evangelical introductions and surveys of the Prophets. For example, Bullock (*An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophetic Books*, Moody) dedicates only 7%, McConville (*Exploring the Old Testament: Volume 4: A Guide to the Prophets*, IVP) allocates but 6%, and Chisholm's *Handbook on the Prophets* (Baker) contains no such separate discussion.

Chapter 1, "The Prophets and Prophecy," discusses the nature of ANE and Israelite prophecy and provides a helpful survey of trends in scholarship over the past couple of centuries regarding the origins of the prophetic books. Chapter 2, "The Prophets in History," places the prophets and the prophetic books within the broad geographical and historical contours of the biblical world, and Chapter 3, "The Literature of the Prophets," acquaints

readers with the interpretive strategies they should employ while reading prophetic texts. After devoting Chapter 4 to an outline of the key theological and ethical messages of the prophets, Hays dedicates Chapter 5 to a beneficial discussion of the principal interpretive challenges in the prophetic literature and of the interpretive and eschatological systems that exist among evangelicals. His irenic and thorough summary demonstrates his familiarity with and careful consideration of the various views as well as respect for those who hold them. Those who hold established views will not feel under attack, but will still find themselves challenged not to allow their “fixed theological understanding to dictate how [they] interpret a particular passage even before [they] begin to struggle with it” (89). Those yet to consider or to develop an opinion will find aid to think independently about the issue.

As the subtitle of the volume would suggest, what follows in Parts Two and Three resembles more a Bible handbook than a critical introduction to the individual books in the prophetic corpus. Hays focuses on the *message* of the Prophets and its implications for the contemporary reader and church. He avoids extended discussions of critical introduction and rarely refers to those pivotal scholars who have impacted the history of biblical criticism. Rather, footnotes point readers to sources for further discussion. An exception of sorts occurs in the case of Isaiah as Hays provides a general discussion of the leading lines of argumentation concerning the authorship of Isaiah. Hays, however, fails to do the same for Daniel. Instead, he simply offers a one paragraph statement indicating that most evangelical scholars believe the book comes from the sixth century BC while a few, along with nonevangelical scholars, date most of the book to the second century. It seems he has offered his discussion of the authorship of Isaiah as a singular case study in the trends in biblical scholarship he discussed in Part One.

Discussions of the various biblical books proceed in a fairly uniform manner. Key information about the setting of the prophet within his world is shared followed by a discussion of the book’s message. Hays then moves through the various sections of the book, commenting on their principal themes and literary features. This treatment demonstrates his familiarity with contemporary compositional criticism and trends in biblical theology.

Several features serve to make this volume reader-friendly and more useful as a textbook than most introduction or survey texts. First, a plethora of color photographs, maps, and charts besprinkle each chapter. The readers’ experience with the text is made more concrete by an array of photographs of ancient Middle Eastern reliefs, inscriptions, artifacts, and of places and items from the biblical world (clay jars, locusts, and ram’s horn *shofars*). Explanatory notes point readers to the significance of those places located on the various maps. Charts are simple, easily comprehended, and encapsulate leading themes in the particular prophetic book(s). Second, readers are alerted to key ideas in the various books as each chapter begins with a title-cover page bearing a pivotal quotation from the biblical text to be discussed. Third, short inset statements and summaries placed in the margins also highlight leading concepts and facts. Fourth, sidebar discussions punctuate each chapter. These address various topics of import to readers, but not at the expense of diverting the readers’ attention away from the chapter’s main lines of discussion. Examples of the sort of issues discussed are: “Theophany” (105), “What Happened to the Ark of the Covenant?” (152-153), “Yahweh’s Departure from the Temple—and His Return” (206), “Daniel 7 and the European Union?” (249), “The Day of Yahweh (the Lord)” (279), and “The Spirit of Yahweh” (281), and “Zephaniah the Son of Cushi, ‘the Cushite’” (335). Sidebars also



include a number of short “NT Connection” explanations devoted to the NT fulfillments or parallels to selected OT prophetic texts. Unfortunately, indexes to these photographs, maps, and sidebars have not been provided.

Three features beyond the reading experience heighten the volume’s usefulness as a college textbook. Each chapter ends with a list for “Further Reading,” a set of “Discussion Questions,” and a set of “Writing Assignments.” Although the “Further Reading” lists point primarily to leading evangelical studies of the various books and issues, key nonevangelical sources do appear. For example, the “Further Reading” list for “Chapter 18—Dan 7–12,” lists John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, and Lester Grabbe and Robert Haak’s *Knowing the End from the Beginning* while suggested readings for Jeremiah include William McKane’s ICC commentary and William Holladay’s Hermenia volume. Although “Discussion Questions” are distinguished from “Writing Assignments,” classroom instructors will find many of them interchangeable for in-classroom and out-of-classroom use. Bible study leaders likewise will find them to be valuable resources for group discussion and exploration. College and seminary students alike will find ideas for papers topics among the various “Writing Assignments.”

Hays has provided an excellent tool for students and teachers of the prophetic literature. This volume is likely to become a classic in evangelical theological education and a “go-to text” for sermon and lesson preparation as well as for private Bible study.

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**Daniel C. TIMMER.** *A Gracious and Compassionate God: Mission, Salvation, and Spirituality in the Book of Jonah.* New Studies in Biblical Theology 26. InterVarsity, 2011. 201 pp. \$22.00.

Though bibliographical indexing lists this volume under the reference heading “Bible. O.T. Jonah—Commentaries,” alert readers will recognize immediately that, as its author readily admits, it is not a commentary. More significantly, Timmer’s objective, can be discerned from the volume’s title: “*biblical—theological themes . . . [that] function like points on a map, guiding our understanding of what the book of Jonah recounts: mission as part of the relationship between Israel and the nations, conversion (including faith and repentance), and spirituality (revering God, imitating God)*” [135; emphasis added]. Although Timmer addresses the book of Jonah, in some detail, he devotes most of his volume to establishing these themes as the basis for reading Jonah through a very narrow evangelical lens toward a “Christocentric interpretation and application” (135). At no point in reading this volume will one evade this purpose.

Donald Carson’s Series Preface indicates this orientation quite clearly, “these monographs are creative attempts to help *thinking Christians* understand their Bibles better.” He goes on to qualify what he means by “thinking” with the words: instructive, edifying, “mind and heart . . . not divorced,” and “confessional evangelicalism” engaging “the relevant literature.” He praises Timmer’s work as “exceptional” as a “close reading of much of Jonah.” It is interesting in light of this preface to consider some of his conversation partners, many of whom would not place themselves within these constraints. In the Author’s Preface

Timmer acknowledges several “thinking evangelicals” to which he is indebted. He is quite selective, however, as to the Jonah scholars he includes in the rest of the monograph.

Timmer begins his volume by asking and answering the question “What is the book of Jonah?” Unlike most treatments of Jonah that start with discussions of genre, authorship, audience, and purpose, Timmer jumps immediately to what he calls “the grand theme of the Bible: the manifestation of God’s unmerited grace to those who have sinned against him.” Here, at least, he announces his intention to focus on the intertextual connection between Jon 4:2 and Exod 34:6-7. Nevertheless, he quickly moves on to the big themes of conversion, mission, spirituality, modern Christian apologetics, and application. He defends a “fundamental orientation”—a literal, historical, canonical reading that supports the authoritative value of the book of Jonah as Christian Scripture in order to bring “Jonah’s teaching on various topics . . . into relation with the rest of the Bible” (19).

In keeping, therefore, with his primary “biblical—theological” objectives for reading the book of Jonah, Timmer launches into a definitive summary of mission in the OT and an evaluation of the prophet Jonah as a missionary. Next come arguments regarding conversion and spirituality in the OT. Although one has the impression that Timmer is simply creating an evidential foundation for treating Jonah chapter by chapter, the so-called themes of Jonah (mission, conversion, and spirituality) persist and dominate any actual close reading of Jonah’s text. He asserts that the reason the book of Jonah “was written [was] to facilitate spiritual change in its readers” (19). This is therefore his aim.

While at times, Timmer discusses textual interaction between Jonah and other OT books, he does little with his core text, Exod 34:6-7, intertextually or form-critically related to Jonah 4:2. He excludes several important expositions on the form, function, and intertextual use of the Exodus 34 “credo” by Brueggemann, Fishbane, and Lane. There is no accounting for Jonah within the Book of the Twelve (BT), though Timmer has in his Conclusion a long section on the “Day of the LORD” motif. He fails to note, however, that the theme is completely absent from the book of Jonah; nor does he reference BT scholars who have dealt thoroughly with this theme.

Ten minutes into my reading, pages began to fall out of the binding; maybe I just have a bad copy. Among typographical errors are: fn. 2 “of Yahweh a fourth;” (47) fn. 1 “is tenuous is difficult;” (77) and in the Bibliography and Index the alphabetizing for the Ms begins with Mc rather than Ma. There is nothing, in my opinion, worthy of commendation for this volume. I do not recommend it for any audience.

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**John J. COLLINS.** *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Biography. Lives of Great Religious Books.* Princeton University Press, 2012. 228 pp. \$24.95.

Princeton University Press has launched this new series of volumes on the “Lives of Great Religious Books.” The series is aimed at the general public, and is packaged and priced accordingly. The publisher also gave some thought to aesthetics—in the spirit of the series’ aim, the pages of the volume under review are sparse: about 50 characters per line, and only

28 lines per page. Collins was chosen to write the volume on the Dead Sea Scrolls—not a single “religious book,” of course, but a corpus deserving a place in the series.

Although the Dead Sea Scrolls represent a terminal movement within Judaism—the Qumran sect did not influence the forms of Judaism that survived antiquity, much less contribute “canonical” aspects to today’s world’s religions—the decision to include the Scrolls was certainly correct. And Collins is the right person to write this volume. He is among the top scholars of the current generation, and his work on the Scrolls is both brilliant and extensive. Collins handles the discussion with ease, and his writing (consequently) possesses a certain easiness of style as well. Collins’s own views are mainstream (for academia), which is good for the series. He grinds his axes modestly (and tactfully), and his account of open questions is fair.

To speak of the “life” of a book implies dealing with much more than its origins. Presumably, a book’s “life” would also include details of its reception—an area of inquiry that is now very much in vogue. Collins’s volume captures the balance between the Scrolls’ originary aspects, the story of their discovery and dissemination in scholarship, and their effect in the way of (sometimes zany) theorizing about Jewish and Christian origins. Collins begins at the beginning, discussing the fascinating story of how the Scrolls were discovered. He then discusses aspects of the Scrolls’ contents, including the debate over their relation to the Essenes and to the Qumran site, the question of their relation to Christianity (a non-starter for academics, but fitting in this volume), and their relation to Judaism and the Bible. Finally, he treats the recent battle for access to the Scrolls. The story of the Scrolls’ discovery and that of the struggle to make their contents public make for a fascinating account. They might have been told as a single continual narrative—that is, as sequential chapters. In a volume this short, however, it makes sense to intersperse detailed accounts of the Scrolls’ contents, as Collins has done. The constant references to the colorful figures behind the struggles over the Scrolls add an element of intrigue, and an appendix helps the reader keep these figures straight.

It is worth noting how the appearance and feel of Collins’s volume recalls the (often derided) introductory volume on the Dead Sea Scrolls by the literary polymath Edmund Wilson. Standing side-by-side on the shelf, they look almost like counterparts of one another. The new volume by Collins, of course, is a much better (and safer) introduction, but the similarity between the volumes invites us, in a way, to reflect on how far our understanding of the Scrolls has advanced in the past forty years.

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**Tim GRASS. *F.F. Bruce: A Life*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012. 283 pp. \$22.00.**

Tim Grass, associate tutor at Spurgeon’s College, London, and assistant editor for the Ecclesiastical History Society, has done the scholarly and Christian world a good service with a biography of F.F. Bruce, an evangelical British scholar, who gave us around fifty books and nearly two thousand articles and reviews. I was surprised at how many of his books and articles I had in my own library as well as the positive influence F.F. Bruce had had on my own theological thinking during my formative years (late ’60s through the ’80s).

Grass divides Bruce's life into time frames in places where he lived, went to school, and taught. Bruce's early life (1910–1921) was greatly influenced by his father, Peter Fyvie Bruce (1874–1955), a northeastern Scotsman of the Open Brethren assemblies. Peter became a lifelong evangelist for the Brethren assemblies preaching in every county in Scotland. Peter gave to his oldest son, Fred Fyvie Bruce, of seven children, an independent mind on various theological issues including eschatology. The Brethren were mainly dispensationalists. This influence gave F.F. Bruce the courage to differ with his lifelong commitment to the Open Brethren leadership of their assemblies in matters of eschatology and other theological positions, yet never breaking ranks with the church assemblies that Bruce participated in all his life.

Bruce attended West End School in Elgin for six years and then he transferred to Elgin Academy (1921–1928) where he received a classical education, including the study of Latin, Greek, and all classical literature. Bruce was not interested in athletics like most boys his age, probably due to a lifelong bout with asthma, and was not very mechanically minded. He became what we would call today a “bookworm.” Bruce became adept at editing during these years, which would serve him well in his academic life. Due to Bruce's recognized brilliance in his studies, he obtained several scholarships to attend universities (1928–1938) at Aberdeen, Cambridge, Vienna, and Edinburgh. Bruce's first scholarly article was published in *The Bible Student* entitled “The Early Church in the Roman Empire.” This theme would become the heartbeat of Bruce's writing career as he moved from his Classics studies to becoming a biblical scholar. This transition slowly began with his new job as Assistant in Greek at the University of Edinburgh, a position with a salary that allowed him to marry his longtime girlfriend, Annie Bertha (Betty) Davidson, at King's College Chapel, August 19, 1936. Betty became a partner of Fred's academic career and a great hostess to hundreds as students and fellow scholars visited the Bruce's various homes. (My only regret of this biography is that Grass does not give us any information about Betty's life after her husband's passing. She was clearly a part of Bruce's successful career and life as a biblical scholar.)

The transition to biblical scholar occurred when Bruce accepted the appointment of Lecturer in Greek at the University of Leeds (1938–1947). During the war years a local Methodist college closed and the students left were taught NT Greek by Bruce, who, rejected for war service because of his asthma, became “an air-raid warden and fire-watcher.” It was here that Bruce's writing career began with the publishing of *Are the New Testament Documents Reliable?* (1943), a byproduct of his writing a commentary on Acts. The transition was complete by his appointment to biblical studies at the University of Sheffield (1947–1959). Bruce utilized his classical studies for his now professional cultivation of biblical studies. Besides his work with the Inter-Varsity Fellowship and Tyndale House (and many others besides), Bruce became involved with both the Society of Old Testament Studies and the Society of New Testament Studies (1947–1948), contributing to both in articles and lectures. Bruce's writing career developed greatly during 1947–1959. As author, editor, and reviewer of books, his views were sought after and read by a host of evangelicals. For his own fellowship with the “Open” Brethren he published “Answers to Questions” in *The Harvester* on a monthly basis throughout his career. Fred and Betty were always involved with a local assembly of Brethren and gave practical leadership as well as excellent teaching to such fortunate groups.

Bruce's scholarly career would be solidified by his appointment as The Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis (1959–1978) at Manchester University. Its occupant was to be nonsectarian and a committed nonconformist such as previous occupants: A.S. Peake (1904–1929), C.H. Dodd (1929–1935) and T.W. Manson (1935–1958). Bruce was surprised by the appointment but relished the opportunity. His expected public lectures from 1960–1986 were published in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*. His delivery of lectures and sermons were monotone and deemed dull and dry, especially by students, but the content was full of insight and practical gems. Grass includes a full chapter (8) to Bruce's prodigious writings during this time in Manchester. But his writing output did not stop at his retirement in 1978. As Grass wrote: "Bruce's retirement was marked by a literary productivity which would have done credit to the working careers of most ordinary scholars" (196). He produced at least eighteen books during these dozen years (1978–1990). Still writing and editing to the very day, Bruce died of stomach cancer on September 11, 1990, surrounded by his beloved wife and brother, a month before his eightieth birthday.

Grass concludes with a "legacy and evaluation" (ch. 10) of Bruce's life. The chapter is worth the price of the volume, and I will not spoil it for you. Grass has included a convenient chronology of Bruce's life as well as a chronological listing of his writings (again worth the price of the volume!). A selected bibliography is then given with an index at the end.

Bruce was unique among scholars, especially of the conservative persuasion, for his irenic spirit. He seldom criticized fellow scholars or confronted "head on" divisive issues either with the academy of scholars or the lay persons of the Brethren fellowship, though he was the target of much criticism by some to the left and right. I highly recommend Grass's warm but objective biography of a great Christian man. Bruce was personally a pious man, a churchman always, and a first-rate scholar. I close with Bruce's own words:

When a man's standing in the constituency which he serves, not to speak of his livelihood, depends on his reputation for fidelity to the truth of Scripture, it is a very serious matter for anyone else to broadcast doubts about his fidelity or orthodoxy. If he himself statedly renounces something which is of the essence of the historic Christian faith, he will be prepared for the consequences, but he should not be held responsible for the inferences which other people may draw from his statements. Most deplorable of all is the launching of a whispering campaign (91).

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**Gerd THEISSEN.** *The New Testament: A Literary History.* Fortress, 2012. 311 pp. \$49.00.

As the title of his volume indicates, Theissen's objective is to examine the literature that ultimately became the NT diachronically. According to his model, the period of development of the writings took place from roughly AD 50–130. This period was preceded by an era characterized by oral tradition rather than written literature, which had its origins in the teaching of Jesus himself. Theissen's presentation follows his understanding of the stages of literary development, which correspond to the four parts of his volume. Part one, the earli-

est stage of development, is divided into two phases: “The Charismatic Beginnings of Gospel Literature in Jesus,” and “The Charismatic Phase of Paul’s Epistolary Literature.” The first phase progressed from the earliest oral traditions employed by Christians, much of which was rooted in the teaching of Jesus himself. Theissen’s view of this stage follows recent work on both ancient and modern oral literature. From this stage came the first written tradition, the sayings source Q. This document represents early Jewish Christianity and was composed based on the sayings of itinerant charismatic Christian teachers, which were then translated into Greek. After Q came the Gospel of Mark, “The Second Written Form of the Jesus Tradition.” Unlike Q, Mark is associated with Gentile Christianity and is characterized as “a passion narrative with an extended introduction.” The second phase of the earliest stage of development is characterized by the development of the Jesus tradition in Paul and is reflected in the authentic Pauline corpus. For Theissen, Paul’s use of letters is a natural outgrowth of his work in Europe and the Aegean, where epistolary literature and letter collections were common. His analysis of the authentic Pauline corpus is based on comparison with the larger body of epistolary literature of the time.

The second phase of literary development Theissen identifies is what he calls “The Fictive Self-Interpretation of Paul and Jesus: The Pseudepigraphic Phase.” This phase is defined first by the reality of the loss of key charismatic leaders, particularly Paul, James, and Peter, in the mid-60s, whose teaching defined the earlier stage. In order to fill this leadership void, literature was produced within Christian communities in the name of these leaders in the form of pseudepigraphic letters such as Colossians and Ephesians. In addition, Jesus traditions were redactionally shaped “in such a way that they served the purpose of community guidance.” Appeal to the authority of Jesus was motivated by a desire to “exercise influence in the communities independently of bishops and elders.” Thus, writings of this time period are imitations of earlier authentic forms. Ascription to notable figures followed the tradition of works such as Enoch and Baruch. The letters of Paul widely considered deutero-Pauline and trito-Pauline are assigned to this period. So too are the Catholic Epistles, which Theissen characterizes as corrections of Paul (correction of Paul also takes place in the deutero- and trito-Pauline letters). Matthew and Luke are presented as fictive self-interpretations of the Jesus tradition, while the Gospel of John is placed in the same category as the Gospels of Thomas and the Egyptians as fictive self-interpretations associated with gnosis. Other noncanonical gospels are considered as well.

The third phase of literary development reflects The Authority of the Independent Forms: The Functional Phase. To this phase are assigned Acts, Hebrews, and Revelation, along with many noncanonical works. The authority of these works is derived not from their use of imitation and ascription to notable figures but because “they correspond to more general tendencies in ancient Jewish literature.” Thus, for example, the authority of Revelation comes from its use of the well-known, at that time, apocalyptic literary form. The fourth and final phase is the Canonical Phase, during which the NT took on the form by which we know it today. The establishment of a canon stabilized the tradition and provided a means by which to build consensus.

Conservative readers will certainly balk at Theissen’s views regarding matters such as pseudepigraphy and his literary development chronology. However, the author brings considerable knowledge of and engagement with theories of oral and written literary conventions that are characteristic of first-century Judaism and the broader Greco-Roman world.

Thus, he provides the reader with valuable insight into the relationship between the NT writings and the literary environment in which they were produced.

RONALD D. PETERS

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**Murray J. HARRIS.** *Prepositions and Theology in the Greek New Testament: An Essential Reference Resource for Exegesis.* Zondervan, 2012. 293 pp. \$42.99.

Harris is Professor Emeritus at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and is well known for his work on Greek prepositions. He has recently authored *Colossians and Philemon* for the new series he began, Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament (EGGNT), through Broadman and Holman Academic (2010). He is coeditor along with Andreas Köstenberger for *James*, the second volume in the EGGNT series (2013). A total of twenty volumes are anticipated in this series. He has also written several articles on the interpretation of various passages of the GNT in peer-reviewed journals.

This volume is a monograph which details at length his work on Greek prepositions. This volume expands his previous work on Greek prepositions, published as a chapter on prepositions in the NIDNTT, edited by Colin Brown (1978).

This volume is laid out with a preface and list of reference abbreviations, followed by twenty-four chapters and three indices. The preface explains the function and scope of the volume. The first three chapters provide an introduction to Greek prepositions in general, an overview on particulars of NT usage of Greek prepositions, and an overview to exegetical issues. The next seventeen chapters each contain discussion concerning appearances and uses of one “proper” preposition. Two additional chapters cover several prepositions when they are used in conjunction with the verbs, βαπτίζω, and Πιστέω, or the noun, Πίστις. The last two chapters include an explanation of the “improper” preposition category and a list of all “improper” prepositions, and a chapter on several theologically important uses of “improper” prepositions. “Proper” prepositions are attached as prefixes, while “improper” prepositions are always a separate word. Three indices organize the cited biblical references, Greek words and expressions used, and topics covered in the volume.

Each of the seventeen chapters on “proper” prepositions begins by indicating the frequency of that preposition in the GNT and sometimes in the LXX. The history and basic meaning of that preposition follows next, often with separate sections for each semantic domain. Each chapter then discusses several theologically significant uses of that preposition along with the interpretive issues that arise. Finally each chapter concludes by listing and defining several compound words that use that preposition.

Greek prepositions in sections of this volume devoted to NT uses are presented synchronically, while the larger discussion of each preposition analyzes them diachronically as well. The combination of both synchronic and diachronic approach to the Greek prepositions is a strong point for this volume. Another strong point for this volume is its collection of theologically significant passages, where the meaning of the preposition plays a major role in their interpretation. Mark 10:45 is included, where Jesus gives his life “instead of” ours. In this case, the preposition supports substitutionary atonement. James 1:13 is included as well, where our temptations are not “indirectly from” God. Harris points out that God does

not originate any temptation to sin, nor does he carry out those temptations. The holy character of God is upheld through the force of the preposition in this passage. Another reference, Col 1:17, includes the fact that Christ was “before” all things. Here, the preposition supports his eternal preexistence. The choice to include two chapters on prepositions used in conjunction with baptism and faith grounds this volume in the themes that matter most to Christians everywhere.

This volume displays excellent scholarship concerning Greek prepositions in a clear and readable style. This volume is best used as a reference resource for NT Greek exegesis courses or for advanced Greek courses at the graduate level, although other settings will enjoy this treatment of prepositions as well. This volume bridges the gap between the discussion of prepositions in typical Greek grammars and those in the larger reference grammars. Pastors and scholars alike will better appreciate both the complexity of Greek prepositions and the many elements to consider concerning their interpretation.

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**Craig S. KEENER.** *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts.* 2 vols. Baker, 2011. 1172 pp. \$64.99.

Keener, whose prodigious literary output is well known to most of the readers of *SCJ*, has produced a massive study intended to bolster the credibility of the accounts of miracles appearing in the NT. The “primary thesis is simply that eyewitnesses do offer miracle claims.” “The secondary thesis is that supernatural explanations . . . should be welcome on the scholarly table along with other explanations often discussed” (1).

Evidence that supports Keener’s primary thesis is presented in chapters eight through twelve, in which Christian miracle reports (mostly of healing in response to prayer) are cited. Chapter eight presents examples from Asia; chapter nine, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean; chapter ten, earlier Christian history; chapter eleven, the recent West; and twelve, dramatic reports of miraculous events involving blindness, inability to walk, death, and nature. Keener collected many, if not most, of the contemporary reports from family, friends, and others known to and trusted by him. He also includes a few examples that he himself witnessed.

Keener attempts to pursue his second and much more challenging thesis in two moves. First, in Part Two (chapters four through six) he challenges the Humean academic legacy that miracles are either impossible or that the “supernatural option” is always less probable than natural explanations. Second, he presents numerous miracle reports for which he argues that a truly neutral observer, i.e., one who does not exclude the supernatural *a priori*, though not a committed theist, would conclude that a supernatural explanation was more likely than any natural explanation. Thus, Keener concludes that in select cases, a witness or even a historian should entertain the possibility of supernatural causation.

When Keener’s two theses are applied to the miracles reported in the canonical gospels and the book of Acts, he maintains that there is no reason to deny that any of the miracles reported in the gospels and in Acts are too fantastic, too overtly miraculous, to have been reported by eyewitnesses. These accounts do not require “a long process of oral development” (764). Moreover, given the total context of early Christianity, Keener believes that an



honest historian with no commitment to atheism and naturalism would accept the *possibility* that the God preached by Jesus supernaturally caused at least some of the miracles reported in the NT (765).

At the end of the body of Keener's volume, there are five appendices, 116 pages in all, elaborating on "Demons and Exorcism in Antiquity," "Spirit Possession and Exorcism in Societies Today," "Comparisons with Later Christian Hagiography," "Ancient Approaches to Natural Law," and "Visions and Dreams." A massive 166-page bibliography follows, though, curiously, it omits my *Theios Anēr and the Markan Miracle Traditions* (1991) and David Du Toit's *Theios Anthropos* (1997). Finally, there are the usual indices and a list of the "Interviews and Personal Correspondence Cited," thus enlarging the volume to a total of 1172 pages (with relatively small font)—an impressive tome to say the least!

Perhaps readers of the *SCJ* will share the squeamishness of many Protestants when it comes to the question of "modern miracles" as opposed to those recorded in the Bible, but they will appreciate Keener's theological acumen. The author gladly concedes that God often heals in and through natural means, especially doctors and medicine, and that while God sometimes causes healings that nature is impotent to effect, he often does not. Moreover, Stone Campbell Scholars Community members will laud Keener's apologetic effort to shore up the facticity and supernatural nature of the miracles recorded in the Gospels and Acts.

Keener's work, however, raises questions. One pertains to the primary thesis of the volume, namely, that many miracle reports are given by eyewitnesses. Proving that this was true throughout history and remains so today, especially by Christians in the "majority world," is intended to demonstrate that the miracle stories in the Gospels and Acts need not be attributed to temporal development and/or theological creativity. To some extent, however, this seems to be a solution in search of a problem. Several years ago, I was able to identify a number of NT scholars who averred that at least some of the miracles attributed to Jesus in the Gospels were based on reminiscence ("The Miracles of Jesus," in *Studying the Historical Jesus*, 365ff.; ed. Bruce D. Chilton and Craig A. Evans; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994). It is true that some scholars would refuse, at least on historical grounds, to assign some or all of the so-called "nature miracles" to reminiscence, but even here one has to be careful. Is the facticity of the miracle being questioned because of an antsupernaturalism bias, or because of other factors, like the degree to which the narrative embodies and supports early Christian theology, or the tardiness and sparseness of evidence (the wine miracle at Cana, for example)?

A second question pertains to the interpretation of the supernatural when it is acknowledged. Apart from a revelatory act by God through the Holy Spirit, what do miracles signify? Keener believes that in the early church, as in the majority world today, most miracles occur in evangelization and legitimate the messenger and the message. This view prompts Keener to offer a theory as to why well-documented miracles happen in Roman Catholic contexts, especially at healing shrines and in connection with relics of saints. Here of course, Keener is forced to say that such miracles do not legitimate shrines and relics per se, or even a Catholic practice of Christianity over against a Protestant one, but represent a good God responding to human need and sincere faith. But what would Keener say about the many eyewitness reports of miracles that emanate from various religions, even those outside of the Abrahamic family? What do all of these miracles signify? What god and what religion do they legitimate? All of this, of course, means that there is no straight, inductive, rational line from

miracle to the God revealed by Jesus. This need not mean that Christian miracles play *no* role in revealing God, but their role requires careful qualification.

In any case, Christian scholars are deeply in debt to Keener for requiring us to think long and hard about the reality and meaning of miracles in earliest Christianity and in the global church today. The volume would be heavy sledding for undergraduates and (unfortunately) viewed as irrelevant by many pastors, but it certainly belongs in the libraries of seminaries and NT scholars.

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**Craig A. EVANS.** *The World of Jesus and the Early Church: Identity and Interpretation in Early Communities of Faith.* Hendrickson, 2011. 257 pp. \$29.95.

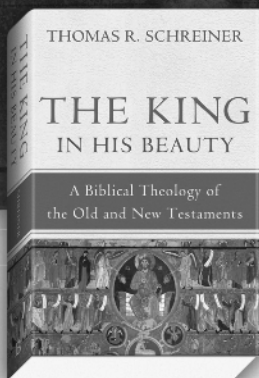
Readers of *SCJ* will no doubt be familiar with the contributions of Evans in the field of NT studies as well as his capable editorial hand. This volume stands out as a mature collection of essays by a distinguished group of scholars stemming from three conferences. Although the essays treat a range of issues pertinent to the study of Jewish and early Christian communal praxis, the volume is divided into two principal parts: one exploring the formation and perception of Jewish and Christian identity and another tracing the various ways Scripture came to be interpreted and appropriated, with a watchful eye toward scholarly reception.

In the initial essay John Collins prompts a series of questions regarding the literary and historical conclusions associated with the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Essenes, and Qumran. Rather than viewing Qumran as the epicenter for the Essenes, Collins cites Philo and Josephus to draw attention to Essenes being situated in various locales. Not only does this approach challenge the promulgation of the phrase “the Qumran community,” but Collins also explores the plausibility of Qumran’s earlier utilization by another group, perhaps as a Hasmonean outpost. Collins’s suggestion offers a way forward in handling interpretive challenges located within the Qumran literature by disentangling exclusivist presuppositions regarding the scrolls, the Essenes, and Qumran.

In the second chapter, Torleif Elgvin analyzes how noncanonical and OT writings and historical events potentially influenced the perspectives embedded in Hebrews and Revelation. By focusing on the full extent of the heavenly temple and the priestly quality of Hebrews and Revelation, Elgvin suggests the writers of the NT conceivably appropriated depictions such as Melchizedek in *2 En*. This notion of influence is further explored in the next chapter in Dorothy Peters’s essay on the import of noncanonical and marginal Qumran texts. As Peters points out, the presence of *1 En* in passages such as Matt 25:41, 2 Pet 2:4, and Jude 6 incline the reader to account for these traditions and the correlative impact these texts hold in the construction of collective identity.

Chapters four and five respectively treat the role of the Galilean economy and the place of children in social reconstruction. Mark Chancey, unpacking the Galilean economic situation, demonstrates the plasticity regarding existing economic theories. Chancey suggests the most responsible reply to the Galilean economy allows for divergent understandings to be juxtaposed. For Chancey, the looming question is not the existence of Galilean oppression

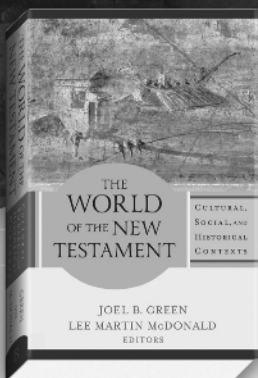
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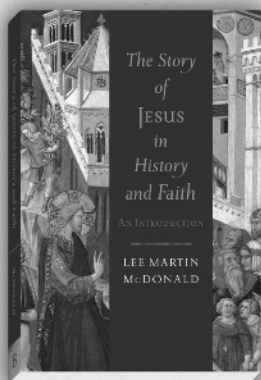
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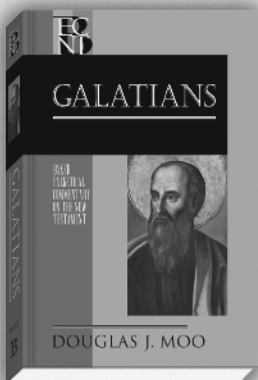
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or prosperity but a question of scale. In chapter five, Margaret MacDonald's consideration of the spatiality of life in community encourages a perspective that values the presence of children in the stratum of everyday life. Not only was the presence of children an unavoidable reality, but Macdonald also suggests wider implications within a house-church environment as well as in regard to group identity, pedagogical priorities, and social status.

The next two chapters consider how archaeological understandings contribute to a better comprehension of Jesus' time. In chapter six, Evans draws attention to ancient burial customs, with a special focus on the practice of ossilegium. Evans's treatment of the archaeological datum addresses numerous historical questions as well as the intrinsic familial solidarity associated with Jewish burial customs. In chapter seven, Shimon Gibson's assessment of archaeological evidence compels a feasible location for Jesus' trial before Pilate.

In the second part of the volume, the emphasis on interpretation takes center stage. In chapters eight and nine, George Brooke and Keith Bodner examine Qumran texts and assert that variants in writings represent a degree of literary flexibility and artistry that provided clarification in the reception process. After an extended treatment of the Qumran scrolls of Samuel and their insertion of a Nazirite status, Bodner concludes: "The Qumran scrolls of Samuel . . . alert us to the reality that these readers and scribes knew how to hear a story, and on the eve of the birth of the NT Gospel narratives, were familiar with matters of plot, character, point of view, irony, wordplay, direct speech, ambiguity, spatial and temporal settings, and the role of the narrator" (151). In chapter ten, the emphasis shifts slightly with Stephen Andrews's evaluation of an inscription from Khirbet Qeiyafa. Throughout Andrews's analysis, questions of dating and scriptural echoes come into view before his conclusion that the greatest import of this debated inscription pertains to its ability to appraise language during the Iron Age. In the next chapter, James Sanders discusses the fifth edition of the *Biblia Hebraica* and its goal to make the task of textual criticism assessable to a new generation of scholars.

Larry Hurtado and Paul Foster bring the volume to a close with a discussion of what can be gleaned by paying close attention to early Christian manuscripts. In chapter twelve, Hurtado emphasizes the codex, as opposed to the scroll, as the characteristic choice for copying and distributing Christian writings. Rather than viewing the codex as preferable for practical reasons, Hurtado builds a case for the Christian tendency to utilize it as a purposeful marker of cultural difference. Hurtado posits that giving primacy to the codex combined with the usage of the *nomina sacra* might signal "our earliest evidence of an emerging Christian material and visual culture" (188). Moreover, Hurtado observes that the appearance of Christian texts stand out with a higher degree of readability when compared to non-Christian texts. In sum, by paying close attention to the form and style of early manuscripts, an argument can be made that the medium of the codex was not only distinct but also purposefully penned with the intention of maximizing readership. In the final chapter, Foster traces the dating saga associated with *P. Egerton 2*, which was once mistaken to be the earliest surviving Christian text. In the end, Foster offers a sober warning for those eager to push texts earlier at the expense of questionable dating practices.

Foster's final charge is characteristic of the volume's greatest strength: its pointed reflection on the world of Jesus and the early church with a sharp awareness that interpretive traditions require ongoing assessment and scholarly integrity. From widely held presuppositions associated with Qumran, to Galilean economic models, to the dating of manuscripts, this

volume serves as a poignant placeholder for a range of archaeological and historical discussions. A weakness of the volume, typical of collected essays, surfaces in the disparate papers that at times present internal ideological inconsistencies.

Although reading this volume in its entirety is certainly beneficial, it is not an introductory-level text and is optimal for those with previous knowledge of the material covered within its chapters. Nonetheless, there are a few gems that deserve a wider audience such as Hurtado's first-rate and stimulating essay on early Christian manuscripts. This chapter alone justifies the price of the volume and could viably be a part of an adult study, undergraduate, or graduate NT course.

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**Adriana DESTRO and Mauro PESCE.** *Encounters with Jesus: The Man in His Place and Time.* Fortress, 2012. 256 pp. \$29.00.

NT research has become a stomping ground for interdisciplinary research of late. Destro and Pesce (the former an anthropologist; the latter a historian) continue this trend by offering this volume as an anthropological investigation into "the lifestyle and practice of the life of Jesus" (xi). As such, they seek to evaluate the historical figure of Nazareth in relation both to the prevalent social forms of his day and to his direct encounters with the people who thronged around him (xii).

Accordingly, they delineate their inquiry into seven chapters, each of which focuses on Jesus' interactions rather than merely on his direct discourse. This emphasis diverges, then, from many Historical Jesus works that tend to focus on his sayings.

Chapter 1, "Jesus on His Landscape," discusses Jesus' relationship to his land and includes his "strategy" to avoid urban centers and maintain his primary locus within the villages and countryside and how Jesus envisioned the geographical territory of the Judeans. Chapter 2, "Jesus on Foot," establishes the itinerant ministry of Jesus as the primary construct where "he found the very foundation of his person" (40). Chapter 3, "Jesus Face to Face," surveys the various data that evince Jesus' preference for direct encounters with people including his interface with John the Baptist, women, relatives, friends, supporters, sympathizers, and so on. Chapter 4, "Jesus at Table," analyzes the dynamics at work—both congenial and adversative—in first-century table-fellowship; they emphasize Jesus' subversion of social hierarchies (perpetuated by reciprocity among the social elite) by his inclusion of the marginalized.

Chapter 5, "Jesus Leaves Home," explores the "dialectic" between domestic absence and itinerant dependence on hospitality; it also sets forth the hypothesis that Jesus' call to leave home was directed primarily to adults of the "intermediate generation" (110-116). Chapter 6, "Jesus and His Body," seeks to penetrate Jesus' conceptualization of his own body and his contemporaries' configuration of it, including its status as a hub able to transfer health and power. Chapter 7, "Jesus and Emotion," studies the variegated emotions that the Gospels project onto Jesus and how these feelings serve as a mirror to reveal Jesus' goals, ambitions, and convictions.

A few positive qualities of this work readily emerge: its insistence to apply social-scientific analysis to the study of Jesus; its thought-provoking anthropological evaluation of cer-

tain narrative dynamics in the Gospels (the authors note that “*conflicts* should not be thought of solely as instruments of destruction or as forms of sheer aggression,” but rather as a “process that seeks to repair the dualism that divides people”) [116, italics mine]; its stress on interpreting (the) Jesus tradition(s) through an itinerant lens/framework (25) and its aim in constructing a portrait of Jesus via his spatial relationships.

Despite these positive characteristics, some negative constituents also emerged. For example, the authors’ utilization of the criteria of authenticity will put off many historical Jesus scholars who view the criteria as inherently flawed historical tools. Moreover, the volume uses endnote (rather than footnote or parenthetical) citations (this is admittedly a preferential criticism). Third, the volume sometimes ventured off course by merely summarizing narrative episodes rather than historically investigating them. Finally, a more comprehensive demarcation of the anthropological taxonomies utilized would have improved the quality of the work immensely.

I recommend this accessible volume (176 pages of text) for use in classes that introduce the life of Jesus and the synoptic Gospels, and in classes that emphasize the application of social-scientific schematics to the NT. Some of those associated with the Stone-Campbell Movement may be uncomfortable with discussions of authenticity, but reading a volume such as this may serve as a useful juncture to help these readers better understand how the nature of biblical-revelation (and thus the human dimension of the Bible) necessitates the historical task.

NATHAN SHEDD

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**Chris KEITH and Larry W. HURTADO, eds. *Jesus among Friends and Enemies: A Historical and Literary Introduction to Jesus in the Gospels*. Baker, 2011. 328 pp. \$26.99.**

For some two thousand years people have been studying and thinking about Jesus of Nazareth. For some two thousand years people have felt the need to put the results of their studying and thinking into written form. Here we have another volume to add to the plethora already available on Jesus. Yet, this volume offers a refreshing approach to the study of Jesus. For it is not a historical Jesus volume; rather, its focus is on Jesus’ friends and enemies and how the Gospel narratives portray them in order to make claims about Jesus’ identity. The volume is divided into two sections (Jesus’ friends and Jesus’ enemies), and each chapter in the volume is organized around two methods of research. First, a chapter examines the sociohistorical evidence about the friend or enemy being considered. Then, the chapter examines how the Gospel narrative portrays the response to Jesus by the character being studied. Keith asserts that “the canonical narrators’ portrayals of the multiple responses to Jesus reveal their strategic usage of characters in offering their image of Jesus” (30). The foundational premise upon which the volume is offered is that “the characters of the canonical narratives are invaluable to the narrators’ overall portrayals of Jesus. Their misunderstandings and affirmations of Jesus are central dynamics of each narrative that enable readers to decipher his identity as the story progresses” (30).

Keith, Professor of NT and Early Christianity, and Director of the Centre for the Social-Scientific Study of the Bible, at St. Mary’s University College, Twickenham, and

Hurtado, Emeritus Professor of NT Language, Literature and Theology at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland (Professor 1996–2011), have brought together cutting edge researchers in NT studies to explore the relationship between Jesus and the characters within the Gospel narratives. Space prohibits a detailed and balanced look at each chapter, so what follows is a listing of the contributors to the volume, the Gospel character(s) they have examined, and any highlights or observations that this reviewer found particularly noteworthy.

As a logical starting place, Keith, in the Introduction, examines the writings of Flavius Josephus and various noncanonical Gospels (from the “first to the third centuries”) to give the reader a perspective of how other people viewed Jesus of Nazareth. Keith then summarizes how Jesus is portrayed in each of the canonical Gospels highlighting each Gospel writer’s different emphases about who Jesus was (and is).

Edith M. Humphrey, in chapter one, examines the first of Jesus’ “friends,” God and the Angels. By using the different names of God (El, Elohim, YHWH, adonay), Humphrey reviews how God is viewed in biblical and later traditions followed by a brief review of the role that angels play within the same traditions. By the use of narrative criticism, Humphrey offers a fair and balanced understanding of how God and the angels positively contribute to understanding who Jesus is. One minor quibble about her narrative analysis is that she limits her data to consider only the beginning and end of a Gospel. For example, in her discussion of God and the angels’ roles in Mark she makes no mention of God speaking in Mark 9, but focuses only upon Mark 1 and Mark 16 (48). Given that God speaks two times in Mark (chapters 1 and 9) it seems odd to eliminate such a significant episode.

Michael Bird, in chapter two, examines John the Baptist’s life and ministry as it related to Jesus of Nazareth. Bird does a superb job of reviewing the historical data about John. However, Bird risks alienating some readers when he begins to mix historical methods/conclusions with what is supposed to be a narrative/literary analysis. On page 77, Bird makes the statement, “In material unique to Matthew and Luke (derived from their own respective sources or else stemming from their own creation).” Dependent upon considerations of nuance and how “own creation” is interpreted by the reader, he may lose his audience.

Warren Carter commits the same methodological error by mixing historical considerations in the midst of narrative analysis. Carter offers a strong historical overview of the disciples and an even stronger literary analysis of the disciples in Mark’s Gospel. However, when he explores how Matthew, Luke, and John use the disciples in their Gospels, Carter slips into using the historical method of redaction criticism, rather than staying with a literary/narrative approach. Ultimately, I believe Carter offers a valid conclusion as to the role that the disciples play in contributing to a strong Christology (102).

For this reviewer chapter four, by Richard J. Bauckham, was the most interesting and informative. Bauckham’s task was to examine the family of Jesus. Somewhere in my own biblical education I missed (or forgot) the early church tradition that identifies a brother of Joseph, thus an uncle to Jesus of Nazareth, as Cleopas. If they are the same individual it’s an intriguing detail for reading/understanding John 19:25 and Luke 24:18.

Chapter five, written by Dieter T. Roth, focuses on the Other Friends of Jesus: Mary Magdalene, the Bethany Family, and the Beloved Disciple. Chapter six is the final chapter investigating the “friends” of Jesus. David M. Allen explores the roles of the secret disciples: Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea in giving definition to who Jesus of Nazareth was.

The remaining chapters consider characters that are hostile to Jesus, according to the Gospel records. Loren T. Stuckenbruck examines the role and function of Satan and his demons. In chapter eight, Anthony Le Donne considers the prominent groups/sects within Judaism (the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes). Helen K. Bond, in chapter nine, explores the political authorities: the Herods, Caiaphas, and Pontius Pilate. Finally, in chapter ten, Holly J. Carey surveys what history tells us about Judas Iscariot and how the Gospel writers utilize his character to reveal who Jesus was.

Several features of the volume make it useful for someone with limited and/or introductory exposure to Jesus studies. The chapters average twenty to thirty pages, with sidebars used throughout the volume. The sidebars give basic information about people and texts (e.g., Enochic Literature; Burial practices; Gospel of Nicodemus; Gnostics). Overall, this is a solid resource that may be consulted when one desires a good, succinct summary of cutting edge research on different characters within the Gospels.

My biggest disappointment with the volume was a lack of agreement in methodology when doing “narrative” analysis. Perhaps I am being overly critical and too narrow in my definition of narrative criticism. Perhaps I am expecting something that the editors were not. Some chapter authors engaged in a more modern narrative criticism which suspends the question of historicity when analyzing the narrative. Other chapter authors utilized redaction criticism, which does not suspend the historicity question (thus it’s classified as a historical-critical method). My impression is that the editors desired a chapter to utilize a socio-historical analysis first and then analyze the Gospel text using the canons of modern narrative criticism along the lines of what is seen in the writings of Culpepper in *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* or David Rhoads, Joanna Dewey, and Donald Michie, in *Mark as Story*. My disappointment aside, this volume is worth the read by anyone interested in Jesus and how he interacted with other characters in the Gospel narratives.

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**Stephen E. YOUNG.** *Jesus Tradition in the Apostolic Fathers: Their Explicit Appeals to the Words of Jesus in Light of Orality Studies.* *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* 2/311. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011. 371 pp. 84.00

In the published version of his PhD thesis (Fuller Theological Seminary, 2010), Young sets out to test whether “orality studies” provide a more useful perspective to explain “the explicit appeal to Jesus tradition in the Apostolic Fathers that predate 2 Clement” (9), in contrast to the view that the Apostolic Fathers depend on any of the canonical Gospels. “Much of the evidence that has been brought forward in the past in support of the Apostolic Fathers’ use of the canonical Gospels points to the independent use of common or related sources by the Apostolic Fathers and the gospel writers” (9). Young explicitly locates himself in the Parry/Lord tradition of orality studies. Like much of this tradition he begins by identifying problems with both the form-critical approach to oral tradition (11-15), on the one hand, and Gerhardsson’s rabbinic model (15-23), on the other. In Chapter 1, Young establishes his parameters, which focus narrowly on explicit references to Jesus tradition in



the standard corpus of the Apostolic Fathers. In Chapter 2 Young surveys the history of research into the sources of the Jesus tradition in the Apostolic Fathers and especially the understanding of oral tradition in this research (36-69).

Young lays out his method for the remainder of the volume in Chapter 3 ("Method: Orality and Oral Tradition," 70-106). He begins with Classicist Egbert Bakker's important distinction between a text's "conception of discourse" (i.e., whether the discourse of the text "followed norms that govern spoken interaction or norms that govern literate communication") and its "conception of writing" (transcription versus composition; p. 71). This distinction leads Young into a fairly significant misunderstanding: "If a discourse was oral in its conception, and is then transcribed, it falls in the category of oral-derived literature" (71). Though he cites Jonathan Draper at this point, Young knows that the language of "oral-derived text" comes from John Miles Foley (esp. *Immanent Art* [1991] and *The Singer of Tales in Performance* [1995]), who defines the term as "works of verbal art that either stem directly from or have roots in oral tradition" (Foley, *Immanent Art*, xi). An oral-derived text may have originated as oral communication that was then transcribed, but there are other kinds of oral-derived texts. Whereas Foley's research focuses on the traditional dynamics of written texts, Young wrongly claims that oral-derived texts (as he has defined them) "must be studied not as a written composition but as the spoken word that preceded its transcription" (72). The remainder of the chapter addresses orality and literacy in the ancient world and especially eleven alleged "markers of orality" (81-97), most of which come from Walter Ong's description of "primary orality" (*Orality and Literacy* [1982]). Young's discussion of "orality and oral tradition" is careful and rather standard for the field of NT media criticism. Precisely for this reason, it shares many of the weaknesses and problematic assumptions of that field.

Chapters 4-9 present the textual analyses that are the heart of the volume. Chapter 4 provides a lengthy analysis of the string of sayings in 1 Clem. 13.1c-2 and their parallels to sayings in Jesus' covenantal Sermon on the Mount/Plain. Young begins with 1 Clem. 13.2 because it "contains the greatest number of sayings as well as the most parallels in other early Christian literature, making it the ideal candidate for a full initial exploration. Much of what is developed in chapter 4 will be presupposed in later chapters" (35). Chapter 5 provides a similar discussion of the similar sayings in Polycarp's Phil 2.3. The next three chapters (6-8) consider five further texts (1 Clem. 46.7b-8; Did. 8.2; 9.5; Ign. Smyrn. 3.2a; and Poly. Phil. 7.2c). In all of these discussions Young concludes (i) that none clearly demonstrates literary dependence on written sources (especially the canonical Gospels), and (ii) that all exhibit traits characteristic of oral Jesus tradition. Chapter 10 addresses the complicated question of Jesus tradition in 2 Clement, which contains more explicit references to Jesus tradition than all the other AF texts combined. As with the other Apostolic Fathers, Young doubts that the canonical Gospels influenced the text of 2 Clement (269-274). The volume ends with a concluding chapter that reflects on the conclusions of previous chapters, an appendix that considers the fragments of Papias, a bibliography, and indices of ancient sources, modern authors, and subjects.

A regular problem plagues Young's treatment of the Apostolic Fathers and NT parallels: He regularly moves directly from arguing that a certain text in the Apostolic Fathers does not require direct literary dependence on a NT text to assuming that both the Apostolic Fathers and the Gospels rely on a common (oral) source. To take one example at random,

Young argues (rightly, in my view) that Ign. Smyrn. 3.2a is not literarily dependent on Luke 24.39. He then confidently concludes, “Ignatius is not paraphrasing Luke in his own words, but rather *he and Luke both rely on a common tradition*” (231; my emphasis). But nothing in Young’s discussion thus far (229–231) has provided a basis for his conclusion that the oral tradition Ignatius relied on stems from *before* (rather than *after*) Luke’s Gospel. In other words, Young assumes that two texts relate to each other in only one of two ways: literary dependence or independence. Demonstrating Ignatius’s lack of literary dependence on Luke is not the same thing as demonstrating that Ignatius witnesses to pre-Lukan oral tradition! Instead, “oral tradition” may provide the explanation of *how*—rather than *whether*—the written Jesus tradition influenced the Apostolic Fathers (as Young recognizes in his discussion of 2 *Clement*) [239, 276–277].

Despite the problems with Young’s understanding of and arguments about oral tradition (problems which penetrate to the heart of the volume), Young’s textual discussions of both the Apostolic Fathers and the NT are careful, precise, and thorough. He engages the breadth of both ancient writings and contemporary scholarship. Though this volume will likely not replace other works in this field (esp. *The Reception of the NT in the Apostolic Fathers*, 2 vols.; ed. A. F. Gregory and C. M. Tuckett, 2005), it has certainly earned its place among them.

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**Margaret MITCHELL.** *Paul, the Corinthians and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics.* Cambridge University Press, 2012. 194 pp. \$45.00.

This volume is an ambitious exploration of the rhetoric of the Corinthian correspondence and its role in the development of patristic hermeneutics. Gregory of Nyssa and his introduction to his commentary on the Song of Songs serve as Mitchell’s own introduction and an evocative demonstration of this very process. Mitchell traces developing trends in interpretation in a dialogic fashion, winding between Paul, Corinth, and the early church fathers to weave together this story of the birth of a unique yet highly contextualized hermeneutic.

Three particular aspects of classical rhetoric and patristic interpretation prove core to Mitchell’s story arc: what she terms the “agonistic paradigm” of rhetoric (16), the strategic use of *topoi*—that, she claims, differs at a fundamental level from a modern systematic textual philosophy—and the “veil scale” (again Mitchell’s terminology, 59). According to Mitchell’s reading of the text, the Corinthian correspondence serves first as a demonstration of first-century rhetorical practices and, second, as both guide and incubator for the more nuanced, particular hermeneutics found in the patristic writings.

What Mitchell describes as the “agonistic paradigm of interpretation” refers to the implications of classical rhetoric for textual interpretation. As the art of persuasion, rhetoric is at heart a competition between two perspectives in which the orator with the best argument wins the debate. The best argument is not only the most fluently argued, but the case with the best (most convincing) evidence. A text is simply a recorded voice, a textual witness.

Thus the implication of this atmosphere for the use of texts is, according to Mitchell, that “texts are treated as evidence for or against one’s own case, and employed as witnesses” (16).

Two significant dynamics emerge out of this perspective. First, the standard argument when using texts became the assertion that one’s own reading of the text is the clearest, most common-sense, the most faithful to the original, and that the reading of one’s opponent is of course ambiguous or in some way self-evidently wrong (26). The second dynamic concerns interpretation more specifically: when interacting with rhetorical texts from this period, the first questions a reader must ask are “who was the opponent?” and “what was the purpose of this rhetorical text?” (49). Practically speaking, Mitchell’s prioritization of these questions places immediate and significant bounds on the interpretation of the rhetoric as a whole: it creates a very specific lens through which the entire work will be read.

It is important to keep in mind that these questions, this interpretive paradigm, is—according to Mitchell—only in effect where the author/speaker is using another text in the rhetorical work. Yet the inverse way to express this concept reveals some interesting assumptions in this argument: when the author/speaker uses another text, it *must* be interpreted agonistically. In Mitchell’s rhetorical world, is there no place—even in Hellenistic society—where text may be used simply to clarify, illuminate, teach, or provide reference? When placed within Paul’s Jewish-Hellenistic rhetorical melting pot, dismissing the influence of halakhah on Paul’s use of text seems a bit preemptory.

In fact, Mitchell convincingly demonstrates that the church fathers themselves dismissed Paul’s heritage of Jewish rhetoric (possibly because they had no experience of it). Yet this dismissal also raises the issue of how accurately and appropriately the patristic texts reflect Paul’s own meaning in their dissection of his words and methods.

Early in this volume, Mitchell submits Cicero’s list of *topoi* for dealing with textual sources (23-24) as evidence of the paradigm governing a Hellenistic rhetor’s approach to texts. The fundamental principle of this paradigm is, according to Mitchell, simply that there is no systematic approach to texts in the Hellenistic world (27). Instead, a source text is used and interpreted in whatever manner is most effective and expedient for the purpose of the speech.

The difficulty with accepting this paradigm wholeheartedly lies simply in the question of the bounds of interpretation. What Mitchell has argued for here appears to be a thoroughgoing pragmatism at the heart of Hellenistic hermeneutics, and she has offered no argument against assuming Paul’s full acceptance of this pragmatism. The irony of this, of course, is that Mitchell has also argued that the Hellenistic approach to source texts implies—or even demands—that there exists no thoroughgoing systematic textual hermeneutic. Yet a hermeneutic that primarily considers what interpretation of a source may transform it into something useful is, by today’s reckoning, a pragmatic philosophy of text.

And if it is indeed a pragmatic hermeneutic, the same questions asked today must be asked of the Hellenistic paradigm. If the primary concern with texts in rhetoric is their usefulness, what are the bounds of interpretation? How may it be determined if or when a rhetor steps outside of the bounds of acceptable interpretation? Paul’s free use of OT material could lead one to conclude that he is quite comfortable standing outside of generally accepted trajectories of OT interpretation (based on Second Temple literature), leading one to wonder what bounds he may have recognized and how he defined them.

Yet these questions must be left unanswered as Mitchell offers a final significant contribution. In addition to the agonistic paradigm in which texts serve as witnesses affirming or

undermining a particular argument, a text may also be interpreted according to an apocalyptic paradigm in which a given text hides and yet provides clues toward its meaning or toward truth (49). Thus the picture of the mirror and veil in 1 Corinthians 13 and 2 Corinthians 3 merge together to provide for the early fathers a guide to reading and hermeneutics (59). The flip side of this concept is what Mitchell terms a hermeneutics of occlusion, based particularly on 1 Corinthians 13 and 2 Corinthians 3 (59), according to which a text is read as deliberately written to be ambiguous or confusing, thus inviting the reader to search for a deeper, hidden meaning (a concept very reminiscent of parables). This play of clarity and obscurity is intriguing, yet one wonders if it is realistic, given Paul's need to communicate clearly to his distressed churches.

Mitchell's reading of the early church fathers is masterful, as is her ability to seat their interpretations in Paul's text. Yet the case for the legitimacy of reading Paul this way remains to be fully made. Simply because the early fathers read Paul in a particular way does not mean that Paul himself intended to be read that way. Reading all of Paul's letters through the lens of the agonistic paradigm, the *topoi* of how to use source texts, and the veil scale seems to limit Paul and push him into an interpretation that, unsurprisingly, looks exactly like an agonistic paradigm, Cicero's *topoi*, and the veil scale.

There can be no question that Mitchell has contributed a thesis that demands thoughtful consideration and interaction. However, it is to be hoped that such interaction will not stop with simple affirmation or rejection, but with nuanced growth that develops a brilliant series of lectures into a balanced, holistic approach to Pauline rhetoric.

JUDITH ODOR

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**Jonathan D. H. NORTON.** *Contours in the Text: Textual Variation in the Writings of Paul, Josephus and the Talmud.* Library of New Testament Studies Volume 430. New York: T & T Clark, 2011. 210 pp. \$120.00.

Norton's excellent monograph is a revision of his PhD dissertation written under Christopher Tuckett at Oxford. The volume is guided by a keen focus on rethinking scholarly approaches to textual plurality in Paul's citations of Jewish scripture. Norton is interested in discerning if and how Paul used different textual forms.

To begin Norton provides a brief review of approaches to textual plurality in Paul's citations and draws attention to the central issues in the debate. Norton frames the discussion with the opposing perspectives of E. Earl Ellis and Dietrich-Alex Koch. On the one hand, Ellis argues that Paul consciously and skillfully used various text-forms, including Hebrew and Greek. On the other hand, Koch's more "widely accepted" position is that "Paul used only Greek scripture and was entirely unaware of his own use of different text-forms" (1). Norton's study attempts to bring methodological clarity to the discussion regarding whether or not Paul intentionally employed different textual forms in his citations, by questioning the dominant approach of Koch.

Norton points out the central questions in determining whether or not Paul intentionally employed plural text forms. First is the question of "Paul's ability . . . to cite from memory" (25). Second, Norton raises the question of how to weigh "circumstantial data" alongside "lex-

ical data" (30). By "circumstantial data" Norton refers to the historical circumstances relevant to Paul's engagement with texts, for example, Paul's education, scribal competence as a Pharisee, linguistic milieu, and access to physical copies of scripture. By "lexical data," Norton means the citations of scripture found in Paul's letters. The premise of Norton's study is that both types of data are important but that the "circumstantial data" is too hotly debated to provide firm conclusions. As a result, Norton argues that common literary activities of the first century "can be considered open to Paul, as a literate person, without predicating judgments on his political, sectarian, professional or linguistic background" (36).

In chapter two Norton turns his attention to text-critical analysis of Paul's citations. The prevailing argument against Paul's awareness of textual plurality has come from Koch and Christopher Stanley who employ what Norton calls the "suitability argument" (47-48, cf. 153-161). This argument suggests that there are instances where Paul's citations would have been more congenial to his point if he had cited a variant reading. From these instances, "Koch and Stanley generalize . . . that Paul *always* cited his sources uncritically" (47). Taking this argument head on, Norton argues that their approach is fundamentally flawed because it is based on modern text-critical approaches to textual plurality.

Typically textual variation is discerned by comparing the lexical similarity of Paul's citations with various text forms of the Jewish scriptures. Instead of basing evaluation of textual plurality on lexical similarities of Paul's citations to these text-types, Norton astutely suggests comparisons should be based on "semantic criterion." These comparisons are more fruitful for two reasons. First, it has been shown that ancient writers "frequently altered the wording of their sources for rhetorical, stylistic and theological purposes" (51). Thus, lexical changes may be a result of authorial change and not necessarily an indication of text form. Second, distinct text forms of a given passage can convey the same meaning in different lexical forms, making the distinction unimportant to an ancient reader. Norton's point, and it is a crucial one, is that discerning ancients' awareness of textual forms should focus on semantic criterion, what he calls "sense contours," rather than the modern text-critical concentration on lexical criterion.

In chapters three and four Norton applies semantic criterion to the writings of Josephus and the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran to evaluate textual plurality. In his study of Josephus, Norton concludes that he was well aware of textual plurality, and consciously employed Hebrew and Greek sources. In his study of interpretive practices at Qumran Norton concludes that in some instances the sectarians consciously employed different sense contours. In these instances, Norton argues that the users of these texts were aware of different semantic forms of the text and intentionally exploited these differences for their exegetical purposes. Both points of comparison indicate that this same practice would be theoretically possible for Paul as well.

Anticipating objections, in chapter five Norton asks how comparable Paul and Qumran sectarians actually are. After all, the objection goes, Qumran was a scribal community, putting them in the unique position to consult multiple copies of a given work, but Paul as a traveling missionary was not in such a position (106). In response Norton draws from the work of Martin Jaffee and Walter Ong to argue that, even in the Qumran community, written texts were accessed "more commonly through oral performance than private reading or study" (112). Thus, the kind of exegesis that occurred at Qumran, including awareness of textual plurality, was not inherently "scribal," but was part of "a common exegetical her-

itage” carried out in an oral context. Oddly, Norton never evaluates how comparable Paul and Josephus are, with the result that the third chapter feels disjointed from the rest of the volume.

Returning to Paul, chapter six locates Paul’s use of scripture, like the Yahad, in an oral environment. Finally Norton analyzes Paul’s citations based on semantic criterion in chapter seven. In this analysis Norton distinguishes between two types of citations: rhetorically supportive and logically structural. The former “play purely supportive rhetorical roles in his writing” (135). Had Paul left these supportive citations out, his argument would still work. The latter, logically structural citations, “are indispensable for the coherence of Paul’s argument” (138). These need not always be cited (Lev 18:8 in 1 Cor 5:1-13), but often are (Gen 15:6 in Romans 4:1-25). The distinction between types of citations allows Norton to focus on structural citations as more indicative of textual variation since the sense of the text is more central to Paul’s argument.

Norton identifies three particularly instructive structural citations as possible examples of intentional utilization of textual variation. He cites two structural citations in which Paul appeals to a distinct sense contour that would not have worked if he cited a different form of the text (Isa 8:14 [Rom 9:33]; Isa 25:8 [1 Cor 15:54]). Based on these two examples, Norton cautiously argues that “Paul has *reason* to prefer a distinct semantic form of a passage when the passage is *both* structurally indispensable to Paul’s argument *and* only one semantic form of the passage supports his argument” (142). With a third example (1 Cor 2:10-16), Norton argues that Paul draws on two distinct sense contours of Isaiah 40:13 as “part of his wider argument in 1 Corinthians 1-2” (174). Thus, Norton finds two examples of Paul’s structural citations being cogent in only one text form and an example of Paul using multiple sense contours to structure his argument. These structural citations show Paul utilizing distinct sense contours for his exegetical purposes, implying that Paul was likely aware of textual variation and consciously utilized it as part of the broader exegetical heritage of oral discourse.

Norton’s study is marked by insightful exegesis, cautious conclusions, and clear focus on textual plurality from the perspective of the ancients. He makes a coherent and in many ways convincing argument, but leaves numerous questions unanswered. For example, how helpful is it to evaluate Paul without reference to the historical data Norton describes as “circumstantial”? One also wonders how exactly the oral environment of Paul’s exegetical activity helps in describing his use of texts? Norton appeals to “oral thought structures,” but never moves beyond generalities. Still, Norton’s study is exemplary in its sharp focus on textual plurality based on lexical evidence. His work is worthy of much attention for graduate students and professors interested in ancient textual plurality. However, the cost and the frequent appeal to German, Hebrew, and Greek will keep this volume out of reach for all but specialists.

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**PHEME PERKINS.** *First Corinthians*. Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012. 238 pp. \$27.99.

Esteemed NT Scholar, PHEME PERKINS, has written a gem of a commentary. PERKINS brings a wealth of breadth to the subject, counting among her extensive written works both a NT Introduction and specialty studies related to Gnosticism. Hence, we have a commentary on 1 Corinthians that is strongly lodged in the socio-historical background of the Greco-Roman world and the development of the growing early Christian movement—along with the challenges and opportunities afforded by both.

The commentary opens with an extensive introduction that focuses on the cultural setting of Corinth and what we should know about a believing audience in that context. Attention is given to Paul as well, but more notably in the section on theological themes (and then within the textual commentary proper). The balance is helpful and necessary to situate this letter in its historical context and to represent the dialogue nature of a letter exchange. The textual commentary is arranged as follows: The Letter opening (1:1-9); Against Divisions: God's Wisdom (1:10-2:16); Against Divisions: Paul and Apollos as *Exempla* (3:1-4:21); Reports about Unholy Conduct among Believers (5:1-6:20); Questions in a Letter from Corinth (7:1-11:1); Problems in the Community Assembled for Worship (11:2-14:40); Reports That Some Deny the Resurrection (15:1-58); The Letter Closing (16:1-24).

PERKINS includes many up-to-date and important works on 1 Corinthians and the references show careful and complete breadth in coverage. In addition, she quotes and applies to the text a variety of primary sources from the wider cultural milieu (e.g., 2<sup>nd</sup> temple writings, Roman writers, moralists, papyri, graffiti from Pompeii, church fathers). Paul is appropriately nuanced in 1 Corinthians 1-4 and 9 as a moralist teacher of standing who attempts to persuade his audience, rather than as an angry, defensive, and authoritarian apostle. The issues regarding men and women in Christ in 1 Corinthians 7 and 11 are dealt with honestly and decisively with appropriate theological comment about the need for the inclusion of all members with every gift who express themselves with self-control and care for all. There is a clear bridge built between the conduct of women prophesying and the principles necessary for proper worship in the larger section of 12-14. First Corinthians 14:33b-36, however, warrants more extensive treatment and options for interpretation than what is given. The discussion of resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15 is cast in the context of wider beliefs of the time, but strongly supports Paul's distinctive view of the resurrection of the bodies of believers in an apocalyptic context of thought. Useful comparison to other apocalyptic sections of Paul's letters (e.g., 1 Thess 4-5) provides an extended understanding of Paul's view of the world within and beyond present history.

This commentary is recommended for the pastor's library and the seminary student's collection. In following with the Paideia series guidelines, it has informative sidebars and very useful charts that integrate well with the text. This is not a verse-by-verse critical commentary, but rather the focus is on reading the text as a whole well. The running sidebar outlining Paul's rhetorical argument within each section is very helpful in guiding the reader forward (and reminding one of the path already traveled). PERKINS has taken theological commentary on each major section of the text very seriously—carefully bringing the conversation of 1 Corinthians into the context and issues of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century churches. She testifies

in the Preface that one of her controlling perspectives is the firm conviction that “the Bible is the church’s book” (xi). Thoughtful, careful, relevant, and textually based theological engagement is not always apparent or included in all commentaries. I appreciate her strong efforts.

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**D. Stephen LONG. *Hebrews. Belief: A Theological Commentary on the Bible.* Westminster John Knox, 2011. 238 pp. \$30.00.**

This volume is an excellent theological commentary. Long speaks of writing his commentary as “a duty of delight” (xvii). The duty is evidenced by his careful handling of sources, ancient and modern. Long plows deep.

His delight shines through in the light touch with which he handles serious topics. His discussions of perpetual and important differences in interpretation range from the OT (Habakkuk, 181-182, 186), to the early church fathers (Irenaeus, 90), to the protestant reformers (Calvin, 10-11), to a YouTube parody of a certain understanding of the substitutionary atonement of Christ (138, footnote 19). Long intersperses personal stories, which illustrate points in the discussion (e.g., his tale of the encounter of a bicyclist [himself] with a dump truck driver, 149-150).

Regarding Heb 11:6, Long comments, “Certain truths are necessary for our existence. . . . Only philosophers get themselves in irrational binds by trying to find a level of certitude that requires they bracket out all faith and only assent to that which is indubitable. But in so doing they miss what is most obvious—their own existence.”

Some of the discussions were a bit difficult to follow, particularly when the author was discussing the early church fathers and philosophers. These are areas where many associated with the Stone-Campbell Movement may be more than a bit skeptical—or at the very least, not as knowledgeable as we would like. However, even when I did not fully understand the discussions—or agree with his conclusions—Long’s treatment of Hebrews increased my desire to understand.

An index of ancient sources, both Scriptural and noncanonical, is helpful for finding discussions in the volume. There is also a subject index, which is fairly thorough, although it should perhaps be even fuller, since different readers will mentally file discussions under differing rubrics.

This volume will be beneficial for any pastor who wishes to deal with big issues, either in sermons or in small groups, although each teaching pastor will need to use it judiciously, if he wishes to challenge hearers, and not simply confuse them. It will also be helpful for theological seminary professors and upper-level undergraduate professors. It will be a good read for individual believers, who desire an approach to Hebrews which summarizes some of the historical interpretive issues, and seeks to relate them to modern faith struggles. The volume will stretch readers and hearers, but without, I think, breaking them.

This stretching process is, in part, because of Long’s attempt to value a wide range of approaches to the volume of Hebrews. He tries, for example, to point out both the strengths and weaknesses of the Roman Catholic emphasis on Christ as Priest and as sacrifice, *and* the



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Protestant emphasis on Christ as God's final word to us (129-131). Long seems to be aiming, not so much at consensus, as at a healthy mutual respect and a fruitful tension between two approaches, both of which occur in Hebrews.

At the beginning of his commentary, Long writes, "If this commentary prompts anyone to pick up Hebrews and read through it carefully, then it will have been worth it." In *my* case, Long has achieved his goal! I hope that you will come along for the journey as well.

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