

Book Reviews

Peter GARDELLA. *American Civil Religion: What Americans Hold Sacred*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. 384 pp. \$24.95.

When Robert Bellah wrote his groundbreaking essay for *Daedalus* in 1967 on American civil religion, he sounded both notes of caution and optimism. His cautionary message, which he crafted while observing a major surge of troops being committed to an increasingly disastrous war in Vietnam, was that civil religion in America could have an arrogant, dangerous side that might fuel social evil. His more optimistic tone was struck in the prediction that American civil religion might be subsumed into a cosmopolitan, global civil religion under the auspices of the United Nations. He saw such a development as a nod to the millennial hope of many Americans that the country might lead the way towards the full unity of humanity. Bellah also argued in *Daedalus* that “the American civil religion is not the worship of the American nation but an understanding of the American experience in the light of ultimate and universal reality” (18).

That understanding of American civil religion is contested by Gardella in this volume. The main argument of this volume is that American civil religion, with all of its sacred texts, monuments, prophets, and martyrs, “amount to a true religion” (2). Gardella defines religion as “a system of nonrational commitments that holds life together” (5), and he identifies these commitments as personal freedom, political democracy, world peace, and cultural tolerance. Included under the heading of personal freedom is “free enterprise or capitalism” (3). He further explains in his preface that he views religion not simply as a system of belief, but as a set of practices, which can lack both requirements of faith and a deity. In this vein, Gardella sees American civil religion as a bundle of national values wrapped in concrete practices and imbibing in patriotic sacraments that impart spiritual power to the believer.

The majority of this volume is an explication of America’s sacramental places and objects in order to illustrate and sustain his thesis. In thirty-four short chapters, ideal for assignment for undergraduate reading, Gardella surveys over 40 different American icons, explaining both the history of these places and things, and describing their significance to the civil religion. Where appropriate, Gardella examines fights between conservative and progressive elements over these icons, their use, and their politico-religious significance for the national life. For instance, Gardella explores the dismay of conservatives when the National Park Service erected a monument to the slaves of George Washington after discovering the former President’s slave quarters during archaeological excavations at Liberty Hall in Philadelphia. He also deftly explores controversies regarding the use and desecration of the American flag from both sides of the disputes. At the same time, while Gardella does not ignore the fact that American civil religion can and has been used to oppress many peoples, he often quickly and simplistically glosses over such issues with a heady optimism, pointing instead to the good

in American virtues and the possibilities that our national commitments might bring for tomorrow.

Overall, Gardella succeeds in his attempt to reinforce the reification of civil religion originally completed by Bellah but also succeeds in proving Bellah wrong. He shows that American civil religion is indeed not just an understanding of American experience in relation to ultimate realities but also a worship of the nation itself. Such a religion also dooms Bellah's hopes for a larger cosmopolitan religion that could serve to unite humanity together. As a scholar, I find this volume praiseworthy. As a committed Christian, however, I am reminded by this volume how easy it can be for Christians and the Church to turn the good of America into an idol that displaces the only worthy object of our worship.

As an exposition of American civil religion, this volume will prove useful for undergraduate courses on the topic, along with courses on Religion and American Culture, Political Theology, and other related themes.

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Everett FERGUSON. *The Early Church and Today, vol 2. Christian Life, Scripture, and Restoration.* Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 2014. 345 pp. \$25.99.

While the first volume's subtitle was *Ministry, Initiation, and Worship*, the second volume, which includes journal articles, book chapters, lectures, and sermons spanning from 1958–2008, comes with the subtitle *Christian Life, Scripture, and Restoration*. While the first volume primarily almost exclusively dealt with the early church, the second volume also includes essays on Alexander Campbell, the Restoration Movement, and issues like religious liberty. Like the first volume, these pieces fall “between technical writings for an academic audience and popular writings for a church audience” (1:11).

Part one centers around Christian living in the ancient world. The first chapter compares and contrasts Christian and pagan morality. He says, “Impressive to me is the way Christian apologists of the second and third century put so much emphasis on Christian living as an argument for the truth of Christianity” (15). Ferguson then asks if Christian apologists could make a similar claim today. He notes that early Christians rooted their ethics in theology. Within this section, Ferguson goes on to discuss early Christian views of exposure and abortion, homosexuality, nonretaliation, penance, and wine, and their relevance for contemporary Christians.

Part two discusses the purpose, as well as the theological, literary, and historical themes of the book of Acts. Within these essays, Ferguson demonstrates the role that Luke plays as a historian, theologian, apologist, and writer who interacted with both the Hellenistic and Jewish worlds. As a part of his writing on Acts, Ferguson seeks to defend the historical reliability of the book. He does so saying, “Luke's history must be evaluated by the historiography of his time, not by modern standards of history writing” (117).

Part three then includes some pieces on biblical interpretation. In the first chapter of this part, “The Lord's Supper and Biblical Hermeneutics,” Ferguson seeks to deter-

mine how often early Christians celebrated the Lord's Supper. While helpfully determining a scriptural precedent for weekly celebration of Communion, Ferguson questionably argues that Christians should only partake of the Lord's Supper on Sunday (see Acts 2:46). Another chapter of particular interest in this section is a chapter entitled, "Christian Use of the Old Testament." In this chapter, Ferguson surveys the ways in which early Christians read and understood the OT, and also the ways in which NT writers utilized OT texts. Ferguson, again, does not expect early Christians to follow contemporary historical-critical methodology or historiography, and instead understands their use of the OT as parallel to Jewish interpretive methods of the time period. While that aspect of the chapter is extremely helpful to those interested in early Christian biblical interpretation, one could argue that Ferguson's perspective on the OT borders on supercessionism. In the next chapter, "Using Historical Foreground in New Testament Interpretation," Ferguson not only advocates understanding the Jewish and Greco-Roman *background* of the NT, but also understanding the *foreground* of early Christian history as an aid to interpreting the NT.

Part four includes writings on the Restoration Movement, among them essays on Alexander Campbell's "Sermon on the Law" and understanding of the church. In an additional chapter, Ferguson seeks to define and legitimize the restoration principle. While admitting the sinfulness of the churches presented in the NT, Ferguson says, "The plea to be the New Testament church today meant to take the apostolic teaching about the church as found in the New Testament as a guide and model" (258). As he does throughout the rest of his writings, Ferguson advocates the study of history in aiding the church to discern apostolic teaching rather than viewing the canon as "an abstract ideal" (259). Ferguson also notes that the churches of the Stone-Campbell Movement are not alone in advocating the restoration motif.

Part five consists of two essays on religious liberty. The first one focuses on the arguments of early church fathers like Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tertullian, and Lactantius that Christians are not deserving of punishment for following the Christian faith. The other chapter discusses seventeenth-century Baptist leader Roger Williams, who "founded the colony of Rhode Island on the principles of religious and civil liberty" (292).

Part six consists of one long chapter entitled "Biblical Eschatology." Ferguson begins the chapter by comparing and contrasting Greco-Roman and the various Jewish views of the afterlife and eschatology. Ferguson then examines the eschatology of the NT, which includes the examination of some key passages (Matt 24, 1 Cor 15, 1 Thess 4:13-5:11, Rev 19:5-20:15). Ferguson says, "The New Testament passages do not give a consistent and systematic account of the end times. However, certain things are repeatedly emphasized: the return of Christ, a judgment, God's care for his people, and punishment for the wicked" (335). Ferguson then closes the chapter by commenting on various issues related to eschatology and the afterlife, such as the condition of the soul at death, what resurrected bodies will be like, the millennium, universal salvation, whether or not punishment will be everlasting, and the ethical issues involved.

Ferguson has done much to prevent the movement from an ahistorical perspective concerning the Christian faith. His scholarship has benefited not only scholars and

church members in the Stone-Campbell Movement, but in various other denominational backgrounds. All of us in Christian scholarship within the Stone-Campbell Movement are indebted to Ferguson. His newest set of volumes will greatly benefit those interested in what the early church can teach the contemporary church.

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Marcia L. COLISH. *Faith, Fiction & Force in Medieval Baptismal Debates.* Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2014. 370 pp. \$69.95.

Although those associated with the Stone-Campbell Movement and medieval scholastic theologians are seldom thought of as theological bedfellows, readers of Colish's magisterial volume will discover that both groups share a passion: arguing about baptism. But the affinity between the two groups does not end there. Both groups are disputatious about baptism precisely because of how seriously they take it as an indispensable mechanism for human salvation. Indeed, as the first part of Colish's book demonstrates, patristic and medieval theologians devoted much energy to reckoning with the question whether one who intends to be baptized but dies without water baptism can be saved. Stone-Campbell readers will find this book especially instructive because it deals with some familiar baptismal questions from the unfamiliar vantage point of medieval writers. Good history is always a *mélange* of the strange and the familiar.

Colish is interested primarily in three contested baptismal questions. The first has already been mentioned, namely, whether one whose baptismal intention is frustrated by death can be saved nonetheless by a "baptism by desire." The second question concerns what Colish dubs "fictive baptism," an elastic category that encompasses everything from "play baptisms" enacted by children to baptisms sought duplicitously by those lacking faith or the intention to live according to the Church's moral code. The third question, which overlaps slightly with fictive baptism, is whether baptisms should ever be performed coercively. All three of these questions began to be considered at some point in the patristic era, and all were debated in the medieval period as well. For each of the three questions, Colish carefully considers the relevant patristic texts, and then tracks the debate through the early fourteenth century, at the latest. Particularly when it comes to medieval sources, Colish casts her net widely, canvassing not only scholastic theologians, but historians and canonists as well. Conveniently, at the end of each of the three chapters Colish includes a Conclusion that recapitulates her findings. In general this book should be commended for its friendliness to readers, who will be grateful not only for these regular summaries but also for the lucidity of Colish's prose, which renders translucent subject matter that could easily seem opaque.

The reader of this book will not only learn about the positions, intriguing as they are, of early and medieval Christian thinkers on the baptismal issues at hand, but also about the texture and temper of medieval theology generally. I suspect one will come

away impressed by the scholastics' argumentative verve, their careful attention to but willingness to challenge prior theological authorities (for instance, many of the authors Colish treats explicitly disagree with Augustine on baptismal matters), and their desire to do justice to the scriptural witness. At the same time, Colish does not hesitate to expose the weaknesses of scholastic theology; toward the end of the book she notes how rarely the scholastics took account of the broader context of the quotations of authorities with which they buttressed their arguments. Anyone looking for an entrée into the fascinating world of medieval theology would be well served by this work.

Although Colish often makes connections between theological developments and the broader historical contexts in which they unfold, as she does in her chapter on forced baptism, in some cases theological positions are left uncontextualized, and certain theological trends are registered without being adequately accounted for. For instance, in her chapter on baptism by desire, she points out that after the fifth century this theological topic was put on ice, with a few exceptions, until the twelfth century. Colish provides little to help the reader understand why the topic went into abeyance, and why it revived when it did. There are other questions of causation that are not addressed satisfactorily. What accounts for the almost unanimous affirmation of the validity of baptism by desire during the high scholastic period? Why was Duns Scotus a contrarian on the matter? Colish consistently excels at description, but sometimes stops short of explanation. Occasionally she outstrips both description and explanation and offers evaluation of the texts under investigation. While her candor is refreshing, and her judgments often shrewd, some of her assessments are questionable. For instance, on numerous occasions she refers to Canon 57 from the Fourth Council of Toledo (633) as self-contradictory because it both proscribes the forced baptism of Jews and stipulates that Jews who have already been forcibly baptized must practice the Christian faith. To be sure, these two injunctions stand in tension with one another and cannot be easily reconciled. However, they are not *logically* contradictory, however much one may deplore the second injunction on moral or theological grounds.

But Colish's willingness to venture beyond strictly expository and explanatory modes is to be applauded. In the Afterword to the book she even provides an example of how medieval baptismal debates could help contemporary Christians navigate thorny baptismal issues. Though the particular issue she raises, that of parents who wish to baptize their infants but have no intention of raising them in the faith, will not be terribly pressing for Stone-Campbell readers, such readers may find much food for thought in this volume regarding baptismal issues closer to home. For example, few Stone-Campbell churches have not had to deal with the question of rebaptism, whether of one affused as an infant or immersed as a child or adult. For those seeking guidance on this and other baptismal questions, the patristic and medieval writers who populate Colish's book will prove to be stimulating interlocutors. Nothing is more bracing to thinking than strange perspectives on familiar questions.

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Nancy KOESTER. *Harriet Beecher Stowe: A Spiritual Life*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014. 371 pp. \$24.00.

This volume is a spiritual biography that explicitly presents Stowe's faith as a key element of her historical experience, a notable contribution to women's religious history. She recreates "the story of the life of Harriet Beecher Stowe as a Christian author who drew inspiration from her faith." Based on extensive collections of letters and other personal papers by Stowe and her close associates, this volume explores in detail the major and minor events of Stowe's life. Koester chronicles Stowe's life with a particular focus on the inspirations for her novels, the evolution of her faith from her father's Calvinist roots to a more Episcopalian orientation, her contributions to the antislavery movement, the development of her international celebrity status, and the ways in which Stowe's experiences reflect the context in which she lived. Koester succeeds admirably in producing an engaging narrative in which Stowe remains a dynamic woman both a product of her context and a person who sought the deepest possible relationship with God.

This volume excels most clearly in its readable narrative, its utilization of secondary sources to clarify how Stowe's experiences reflect the context in which she lived, and its insight into Stowe's research in producing *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Koester's writing style produced a book that reads almost like a novel. The availability of extensive primary sources allowed her to recreate Stowe's life in sometimes astonishing detail. Koester also demonstrates familiarity with secondary sources relevant to Stowe's experiences. For instance, to analyze Stowe's experiences as a teacher she brings in works from Mary Kelley and Sally Schwager on women and education. One of the most intriguing elements of the book is the examination of the influences under which Stowe wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Koester details the Stowe family's employment of servants in their Cincinnati home, many of whom were former or escaped slaves. These servants shared with their employers harrowing experiences of being separated from loved ones (especially their children) and the violence that characterized the daily life of the enslaved.

This biography excels in presenting the complexity of Harriet Beecher Stowe's journey of faith. Koester describes how Stowe's childhood faith was rooted in her father Lyman Beecher's Calvinism. But Stowe later struggled to accept Calvinist prescriptions particularly the necessity of a conversion experience. She would flirt with many of the religious ideas of the day including spiritualism, but eventually her struggles culminated in her union with the Episcopal Church. It offered a religious home that embraced the ancient and medieval traditions surrounding the sacraments that she was drawn to but remained in the Protestant fold. While she struggled with the lack of "moral urgency" among the Episcopalians (especially the lack of a significant antislavery movement) she appreciated their embrace of the arts.

The book's biggest weakness is the absence of a true introduction. Koester makes clear her intention to provide a readable text that takes Stowe's faith seriously, but she offers no explanation for the advantages gained by investigating Stowe's faith. Thus, the book reads more like a daily chronicle of Stowe's life with no explanation for why the reader should value this approach or what insight one might gain from it. For this

reason, while students and scholars of religion and literature will find its insights into *Uncle Tom's Cabin* valuable, seminary students, theologians, and scholars of women will find its treatment of issues of theology and gender roles somewhat superficial.

Ultimately, despite any shortcomings, Koester's biography succeeds in demonstrating that Harriet Beecher Stowe was much more than just the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. She was an international celebrity, a woman of deep and abiding faith, and one of the most important authors in American history.

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John S. BURNS, John R. SHOUP, and Donald C. SIMMONS, Jr., eds.
Organizational Leadership: Foundations and Practices for Christians. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014. 288 pp. \$25.00.

Christian leadership studies are often approached with very little theology or theory regarding leadership studies. Successful Christian leaders have transparently chronicled their journey, and Christian authors have extrapolated leadership principles from biblical character studies. This approach centers study on specific contexts, isolated individuals and events, and a limited literature base. There is a need to learn from both specific revelation (theology) and general revelation (theory). There is a need to study leadership in such a way that Christian leadership is practiced not only in the church but also in the family, schools, communities, commerce, and government as well.

Burns, Shoup, and Simmons aim "to provide a practical theology of leadership from a Christian worldview for emerging and established Christian leaders who want to conduct leadership in a manner consistent with their faith in both religious and non-religious organizational contexts" (7). The distinctive of Christian leadership is a Christian worldview. Christian leadership is not a combination of two individual tasks (Christian + leadership); it is a full embrace of the Christian worldview and way of living and then leading from that understanding (Christian → leadership). The primary call of the Christian is to follow God and be formed in the image of his Son. The secondary call is to serve God with the gifts, passions, abilities, and experiences in the individual situated context. It is the righting of affections (orthopathy), trust (orthocardy), and belief (orthodoxy) leading to right living and practice (orthopraxy). Thus, *Christian* in front of *leadership* is paradigmatically distinct from any other adjective or modifier that could be used.

The academic fields of worldview studies and leadership studies have had a profound influence on the contemporary understanding and practice of leadership. Although the study of worldviews, and the Christian worldview in particular, is familiar to most, the book presented a good introductory review of the basic worldview questions and the implication of the different answers. A Christian leadership model is presented and explored with sensitivity to its use in the secular context. Divine calling and biblical leadership images (shepherd-servant-steward) created an evaluative framework for the field of leadership studies. The practical leadership application focused on

communication, conflict, decision making, financial integrity, and leader sustainment and health.

The greatest contribution of this book is its clear and succinct treatment of leadership studies. Burns provided a foundational justification for the study of leadership studies and an articulation of the pertinent chronological progression. The river metaphor helped to understand the progression and incorporation of different influences over time. The illustrated map helped to visualize both the major contributing influences (Word/Christ-God the Creator, political science, business management, Industrial Revolution/management, Christ/God the basis for moral leadership) and major leadership schools (power, divine right, scientific management, trait theory, human relations, one best way, situation/contingency, excellence/quality, transforming, Christian leadership) (94-95). The “new sciences” (quantum physics, organic metaphors, natural phenomena) introduced complex points of interplay with leadership studies (chaos theory, complexity theory, double-loop learning, self-organization). This will be a vital section for anyone who is unfamiliar with any of the mentioned terms, influences, and theories.

The weakness of this book is its overreliance on seminal authors and not on synthesizing the literature base. The literary works that are heavily relied on are familiar and recognizable. Although presented as a weakness, this can also be a strength considering the aim and the audience of the writing, “emerging and established Christian leaders” (7). The book avoids detailed and technical jargon in order to present a foundational and introductory approach.

The edited approach of authorship allows for expertise to be expressed in the varied areas (theology, theory, practical) and illustrates the need for community in articulating complex ideals for the Christian community. This book should be a mandatory study for any “emerging and established Christian leader” (7). This is a wide audience disclaimer due to the intentional effort to articulate this needed exploration of leadership studies to Christians despite the individual situated context. This book will provide fresh insight to the church leader, direction and encouragement to Christian leaders, practical application for the academic, theoretical orientation for the theologian, and a beginning point for the student. Every Christian will benefit from the presented definition of Christian leadership.

Christian leadership facilitates the transforming and sanctifying journey of individuals and organizations from X^1 to X^2 in both material and spiritual ways . . . where X^2 represents the purpose and values of organizations or individuals, and X^1 represents an honest assessment of where they are today with regard to absolutely fulfilling the purpose and values (119, 122).

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James W. SKILLEN. *The Good of Politics: A Biblical, Historical, and Contemporary Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014. 240 pp. \$24.00.

As the varied debates of public life from gay marriage to climate change to the size and role of government embroil Christians and others of good will in often heated debates about matters of politics, or more properly political thought, this volume grounds an argument for a Christian approach to politics that emphasizes the common good—but with a decidedly Reformed slant. Among contemporary Christian voices as varied as Jim Wallis’s Sojourners community and the long tradition of Roman Catholicism, many have championed engaging public life in the United States, and western democracies more broadly, in terms of the common good. In qualifying this political norm of the common good with another norm of public justice, Skillen forcefully argues: “Securing the commons for the good of all does not dissolve everything that is not shared in common but instead draws people together in the common *public* purpose of upholding justice for all” (137).

Skillen is an evangelical Reformed Christian in the Kuyperian tradition and a former president of the Center for Public Justice, where he sought to argue for a Christian pluralism in public life that concretely engaged policy issues ranging from a call for proportional representation in electoral reform to school vouchers. His thoughtful independent approach to politics could support charitable choice in welfare and be critical of George W. Bush’s Iraq war. As a participant in his Center’s Civitas program I came to appreciate his open and passionately committed spirit. His latest book consistently expresses the argument he has made in public life since the 1970s.

Though Skillen is a disciple of Abraham Kuyper, this book is more generically Augustinian and Reformed in its approach. Skillen works through an argument that he grounds in the drama of the biblical narrative which he places in dialogue with major Christian traditions. From that base he engages current political questions from his distinctively Christian viewpoint. This engagement ranges widely as Skillen addresses citizenship, family, marriage, education, economics, the environment, as well as globalization, war, and peace. By not limiting itself to either foreign or domestic affairs, this volume is a substantial, learned, and positive development that brings light—rather than heat—to Christian engagement with political thought.

In engaging other viewpoints, he is notably critical of the more Anabaptist-like perspectives of Richard Hays and Stanley Hauerwas. His critique highlights the need for more constructive offerings concerning public life and politics from the scholars steeped in the Anabaptist tradition or sympathetic to the Ekklesia Project. Similarly, his focus on “the good” makes for a constructive interaction with moral and political philosophy that emphasizes “the right.” I find his approach to nation states and the nature of political community in dialogue with the kingdom of God and the Two Cities tradition to be useful. Also I find his responsibilities economy approach to be beneficially provocative, particularly since he illustrates it via a concern for the environment that chastens the market fundamentalism of many evangelicals.

Skillen’s vision of political thought grounds itself in a generous appropriation of the biblical witnesses and streams of the Christian tradition. His theological reflection respectfully engages other viewpoints, and so Skillen makes the development of his

own argument a fitting vehicle for students in political science and political philosophy, as well as an occasional pastor or seminarian, to read and argue with in the generous spirit in which its author has offered it.

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Jeremy R. TREAT. *The Crucified King: Atonement and Kingdom in Biblical and Systematic Theology.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014. 320 pp. \$26.99.

In this volume, Treat, a pastor at Reality Church L.A. in Hollywood, California, and adjunct professor at Biola University, explores the connection between two central themes of the Christian faith: the Kingdom of God and the atoning work of Christ on the cross. By surveying contemporary works on biblical interpretation and theology, Treat shows that the kingdom and cross are frequently pitted against one another as mutually exclusive concepts. In an effort to correct this false dichotomy, Treat not only reaffirms the paradox of a “crucified king” but also advances the discussion with a detailed explanation of how Christ’s royal authority is expressed through the cross.

In this thorough and clearly written volume, Treat seeks to restore methodological unity where divisions have come to prevail. In the author’s view, the fragmentation of Scripture by biblical interpreters has contributed to the separation of kingdom and cross in Christian thought. Approaching the Bible as a collection of discrete units of material rather than as a unified whole allows interpreters to assign kingdom and cross to different layers of biblical tradition rather than to struggle to explain the interrelationship of these seemingly contradictory ideas. Likewise, Treat observes that the division between biblical theology (which has emphasized the Kingdom of God) and systematic theology (which has emphasized the atonement) has further contributed to the separation between the two concepts. In this volume, Treat assumes the Bible’s canonical unity and insists upon the complementary relationship between biblical and systematic theology. The result is a persuasive demonstration that the Kingdom of God and Christ’s work of atonement are literarily connected in the biblical text as well as logically connected in the traditional categories of systematic theology.

In Part 1, Treat begins with biblical theology to demonstrate the unity of kingdom and cross. Starting with the Hebrew Bible, Treat argues that as early as the *protoevangelium* of Gen 3:15 (“he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel,” NRSV), royal authority and suffering are intimately linked throughout the OT. The intertwining of these two themes finds its clearest expression in the Song of the Suffering Servant in Isa 52:13–53:12. In an excellent chapter devoted to this passage, Treat argues that the Servant of Isaiah 40–55 should be identified as the promised Davidic Messiah of Isaiah 1–39 who will lead Israel’s return from exile described in Isaiah 56–66. Turning next to the NT, Treat provides a thoughtful exploration of his subject in the Gospel of Mark and its paradoxical proclamation of a hidden and crucified Messiah. In a subsequent chapter, Treat focuses on selected texts in which the ideas of the cross and Christ’s royal authority are linked, first in the Christ hymn of Col 1:15–20 and then in small units in Rev 1:5–6; 5:5–6; and 12:10–11.

In Part 2, Treat turns to systematic theology, dividing this section into chapters devoted to traditional categories of Christology, Atonement, and Kingdom. In his discussion of Christology, Treat seeks to soften the categorical boundaries between the “states” (humiliation and exaltation) and “offices” (prophet, priest, and king) of Christ. For example, he argues against a *successive* view of the states of Christ (exaltation *after* humiliation) in favor of the idea that Christ was exalted *through* his humiliation on the cross. Similarly, against the tendency to assign the atoning work of Christ to his priestly office, Treat argues that the cross should also be associated with the office of king. The heart of Part 2 is chapter 8 in which the author seeks to reconcile two opposing theories of the atonement: *Christus Victor* and penal substitution. In doing so, Treat offers not only a compelling explanation for how Christ’s royal victory was achieved through the cross but also helps to soften the artificial distinction between the universal and individual effects of that victory.

This volume is a stimulating and helpful new take on themes that have been at the center of Christian theology from the very beginning. Though Treat assumes the reader’s basic familiarity with the doctrinal issues involved, his clear and thorough prose, extensive documentation of ancient, medieval, Reformation, and modern authors, and the frequent summaries of his argument throughout the book, make this volume accessible to a broad audience. It would be particularly useful as a supplementary text in a seminary-level biblical or systematic theology course. Those in pastoral ministry will also find this volume to be an enriching resource for preaching and teaching in a church setting.

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Jennifer R. AYRES. *Good Food: Grounded Practical Theology.* Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013. 233 pp. \$34.95.

In recent years there has been a renewed interest in the way that eating shapes faith and faith shapes eating. Perhaps the most influential book on the subject is Norman Wirzba’s *Food & Faith*, which is a systematic theology of food. But as in any field, the systematic eventually needs to find its way to the practical. Ayres attempts this in the current volume. Ayres, Assistant Professor of Religious Education at Candler School of Theology, chooses the word *grounded* not only to make the obvious connection to soil, but also to emphasize that theology be practical (close to the ground).

In Part One, Ayres describes the current food system. Her first chapter champions healthy and just agriculture, while noting the ways that policies have hindered it. In Chapter 2, she discusses food policies, particularly as they affect the poor. This chapter connects the previous chapter (agriculture) with the subsequent (theology) in part because America’s current system of helping the poor comes through Farm Bill legislation. In Chapter 3, Ayres crafts a theology of food, which primarily focuses on the Eucharist.

In Part Two, Ayres explores practical ways that faith communities and other groups have implemented some of the vision she describes in Part One. These chap-

ters tell stories of how churches are networking with farms in hopes of bringing fresh food to their communities. In addition, she relates stories of Christians being advocates for farmers, specifically those in Mexico who are paid a fraction of what they would make here.

Ayres succeeds in drawing attention to serious problems within the food system. But her case is strengthened by stories of faith communities who plant, grow, and eat in mindful ways. She proposes that the church, not just individuals, participate in the solution. This corrects much of our individualized eating culture that too often uses food to divide, not unite. This is just one of the many contributions that this book makes to theology and congregational life.

I might take exception with her implications regarding the Eucharist, though. She confuses what Jesus does through table fellowship in the Gospels with what Paul does in the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians. It seems that Jesus uses his table as an inclusive rebuke of sectarian opponents, particularly in Luke (7, 15, 19). But to suggest that Paul uses the Eucharist in 1 Corinthians 11 to emphasize that "all belong" (59) betrays his reminder that the "saints will judge the world" (6:2), and that there are behaviors that disqualify some from belonging (6:9). Paul's strategy in chapter 11 is not to create a table where everyone belongs, but instead to eliminate injustices against those who do belong. To suggest that Paul would see the implications of his teachings as combating global hunger seems to be a stretch.

Ayres also argues that by observing the Eucharist, Christians are being bound not just to the Lord and to one another, but also to the food, the farmer, and the land. Of course, this is true in terms of our participation in the food system. But it is difficult to imagine that the biblical writers see such connections when they discuss the Supper. Connecting responsible land care to the Eucharist is comparable to supporting clean water projects because of a high view of baptism. It might be more reasonable to argue that care of the land is significant enough to be sacramental on its own, without needing the stretched connection to the Eucharist. A concern for justice, love of neighbor, honor of creation, and care of the body might be better foundations for a theology of food and eating.

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Curtis FREEMAN. *Contesting Catholicity: A Theology for Other Baptists.* Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014. 478 pp. \$49.95.

Freeman, director of the Baptist House of Studies at Duke Divinity School, has written a theology for "Other Baptists." These are the Baptists who, when asked to identify their subdenominational branch of Baptistism, must check "Other," Baptists who don't fit comfortably within conservative or liberal categories. The term also refers to those Baptists who have been willing to engage in conversation with "Others," such as Catholics, Orthodox, and mainline Protestants. Though the book is specifically aimed at disaffected Baptists, his arguments easily extend to theological outsiders in any Free Church tradition; Freeman's project aligns with similar work

done in Stone-Campbell churches by theologians such as Leonard Allen, Paul Blowers, Newell Williams, and more recently Jeff Carey.

The book is divided into two unequal parts. In the Kierkegaardian first section—titled “Sickness unto Death”—Freeman tells the familiar tale of a church which has descended into a binary stasis of calcified conservatism and undisciplined liberalism. Both sides are essentially foundationalists in their philosophy, relying excessively on reason or experience, and both functionally deny the doctrine of the Trinity, either through old-fashioned New England Unitarianism or through the “Unitarianism of the Second Person” characteristic of Southern fundamentalists. Both are Constantinian in the sense that they share “a confidence in the ultimate triumph of Christian culture.” Drawing on four hundred years of Anglo-American Baptist history, Freeman “renarrates the Baptist story as a community of contested convictions within the church catholic,” calling Free Church Christians to a generously orthodox third way which locates itself within the ancient tradition of the Church Catholic while recognizing its distinctive Free Church charisms—thus “contesting catholicity.”

The second part considers a “cure for otherness” which comes through engagement with the catholic Other. His first and fundamental point is that catholicity rests on a robust Trinitarian theology: “there is nothing more qualitatively or quantitatively catholic than the Trinity.” This claim echoes Leonard Allen’s proposal for congregations associated with the Stone-Campbell Movement in the last chapter of *Things Unseen*. Such a Trinitarian revival would not only transform theological discussions, he argues, it would reform worship practices such that ministers would invoke the Triune name “when they baptize and lay on hands, offer prayers and pronounce blessings, voice invocations and give benedictions, confess sin and proclaim pardon, and make the sign of the cross and exchange the right hand of fellowship.” Trinitarian theology is also the basis for a more developed theology of the church as a communion of covenanted communities.

Later chapters re-imagine specific practices such as biblical interpretation, priestly service, Eucharist and baptism, and the assembly in light of a generous orthodoxy. In each chapter, he provides a theologically constructive narrative based on “a retrieval of sources from the Baptist heritage and in conversation with the wider church.” Thus, he calls for a Christocentric interpretation of the Bible, grounded in the consensus of the faithful and open to “new light” from the Spirit. The Eucharist mediates the “real presence” of Christ, and Thomas Cranmer’s *via media* formula “to drink of the cup and eat the bread *in faith* is to feed upon Christ” is adopted. He affirms the normativity of believers’ baptism, while calling for open membership and the recognition of infant baptism. The Church is “a community of *believers* gathered by *baptism* in *covenant* with God and God’s people to walk together under the rule of Christ.” In each chapter he seeks to reconcile Baptist traditions with the ancient practices of the whole church.

In the era of post-Christendom, Free Church ecclesiology has a new relevance and also a new appeal. At least some Catholic theologians have understood this, and scholars such as Gerhard Lohfink in Germany, Jean-Marie-Roger Tillard in France, and William Cavanaugh in this country have attempted to recover a gathered church ecclesiology within their own communion. Freeman does not mention any of them (though

he does incorporate the reception of the Vatican II document *Lumen Gentium*); any future work must surely include their contributions. Also, and I take this point from Bruggemann’s review in *Christianity Century*, Freeman says nothing about the poor. Surely one area Baptists and Catholics have in common is that they have been each in their own way religions of the people, more comfortable in the northern factories and southern foothills than among the affluent and elite. Freeman’s retrieval is essential for the long-term vitality of Baptists, baptists, Catholics, and catholics—all of us, basically. Yet, for those of us engaged in this conversation about extended catholicity, I pray that we can proceed in a way which does not alienate, but elevates the least among us.

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Moisés SILVA, ed. *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014. 3552 pp. \$249.99.

This multivolume set, originally published in three installments in the late 1970s and updated in 1986, is now in its second edition. The revision editor, Silva, is retired professor of NT at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and a former student of F.F. Bruce and James Barr. This new five-volume edition, which expands 800 entries and 3,000 Greek words along with significant updates in current theological discussions, is so extensive that it required a transition in name (the addition of “and Exegesis”) as well as dubbing it “the second edition.”

The first edition and subsequent updates of *NIDNTT* were grouped conceptually rather than alphabetically. This created a simple “one stop” for exploring the semantic field of word usage, and was unique compared to similar dictionaries like *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT)* and *Anchor Bible Dictionary (ABD)*. The second edition represents a change to alphabetical orientation, while maintaining the use of conceptual groupings. So in preparation for a sermon on Rom 8:18-25 I looked up *apokaradokia* (eager, expectation). Instead of arriving at a single entry on *apokaradokia*, I am sent to *ekdechomai* (to expect, wait). Under this word seven separate entries are presented, all sharing the semantic domain of waiting and expectation. This format is helpful regardless of whether one is using this for sermon/teaching preparation or scholarly inquiry. The ability to immediately see shared semantic fields between words saves time and page flipping. This format also allows for the dictionary to be slightly more concise, more cost effective, and more user friendly than larger single entry dictionaries like *TDNT* and *ABD*.

Under each entry the dictionary offers three sections: General Greek usage (GL) and Greek (and Semantic) usage in Jewish writings (JL) and NT usage (NT). The final volume indexes all the citations in this literature. For instance the GL entry on *eleutheria* (state of being free, freedom, liberty) discusses its political function, Stoic philosophy, and mystery religions. The JL segments focus, generally, on the OT and the LXX, with notable citations to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Hellenistic writers like Josephus. Some familiarity with Hebrew will be helpful for these entries. The two background

sections (GL and JL) vary in length, but were incredibly helpful in rounding out how the word functioned in its literary and historical context.

NT entries are given a much more thorough overview, and the articles strive not just to provide background material but also theological discussion. The standard entry will give some basic statistics and usages as well as the most pertinent texts. Of interest are the theological notes that have frequent citations to outside sources, and each entry ends with a surprisingly extensive bibliography.

While it is probably fair to say this comes from a more “evangelical” perspective, controversial topics are handled with a relatively even hand. The article on *baptizo* and its cognates, often a source of controversy between those of the Stone-Campbell movement and other denominations, shows, however, the Reformed leanings of the editor, evidenced in the most explored perspective being the Reformed tradition’s emphasis on a covenantal view of infant baptism. Similarly with the issue of the objective/subjective genitive debate around *pistis/pistueo*, while both perspectives are addressed clearly, the author favors the former. Thus even with a fairly even hand favoritism is sometimes still shown in discussion of other theologically freighted terms.

This set functions as a tool with a wide range of uses. From sermon/teaching preparation to scholarly inquiry this multivolume set is a simple to use, “go-to” set, with a price-point set low enough that it could be on anyone’s shelf. While there might be some theological sticking points, this valuable resource is a thorough compendium of primary sources and an excellent starting point for any study on Greek word usage in the NT.

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Alister McGRATH. *C.S. Lewis—A Life: Eccentric Genius, Reluctant Prophet*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2013. 448 pp. \$24.99.

In the preface to his book, *Jack: A Life of C.S. Lewis*, George Sayer recounts the story of his initial meeting with Lewis while a student at Oxford University in 1934. Lewis, he recalls, had asked a colleague to give him a few moments with the new student (Sayer) before the two Oxford academics would convene for lunch. At the meeting’s conclusion, Sayer met Lewis’s waiting colleague—who he later learned was J.R.R. Tolkien—as he exited the building. When Tolkien asked Sayer about his meeting with Lewis, Sayer replied that he thought Lewis would be a most interesting tutor. Tolkien responded, “Interesting? Yes, he’s certainly that. You’ll never get to the bottom of him.”

As one of the most celebrated and oft-written-about Christians of the twentieth century, one may still conclude that Tolkien’s rejoinder to Sayer rings true. It seems that Lewis’s many biographers have failed to truly “get to the bottom” of the man who created Narnia and introduced the world to “mere Christianity.” Corresponding to the fiftieth anniversary of Lewis’s death, however, Alister McGrath has presented a new biography that he hopes will “get to the bottom” of Lewis. “This biography,” McGrath explains, “sets out, not to praise Lewis or condemn him, but to understand him” (xiii).

In the typical fashion of a biographer, McGrath leads his reader down a chronological pathway through the unfolding events of Lewis's life. All of the well-known events of Lewis's life are covered, from his family background and early life to his death and continuing influence. Perhaps the most significant contribution McGrath makes to the narrative of Lewis's life is the discovery of an incorrect dating of Lewis's conversion to theism. In Lewis's autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*, he identified 1929 as the date for his acceptance of theism. Through an intense investigation of Lewis's letters and the events surrounding his change of belief, McGrath reveals that Lewis's actual conversion to theism was in 1930 (140-145). McGrath concurs with Lewis and his other biographers, however, that Lewis's ultimate acceptance of Christianity did not occur until September 1931.

Among the other contributions offered by McGrath in this biography are his clear explanations of the philosophical obstacles Lewis overcame to affirm a belief in Christianity. His friend and colleague, Owen Barfield, helped Lewis reject the notion of "chronological snobbery" (102-103), which promoted "the inevitable superiority of the present over the past" (187). Tolkien and Hugo Dyson, fellow academics at Oxford, also convinced Lewis that the Christian myth is the "true myth" (146-151). The realignment of Lewis's understanding of these philosophical positions enabled him to become a follower of Christ.

Many of McGrath's most significant shortcomings in this biography arise from his unsubstantiated (and sometimes unfounded) judgments about Lewis. When discussing *Surprised by Joy*, for instance, McGrath compares Lewis's extensive coverage of his year at Malvern College with his scant mention of his service in World War I. McGrath questions the space Lewis gave to his "relatively minor woes" at Malvern College in comparison to what he deemed to be "the vastly more significant violence, trauma, and horror of the Great War." Thus, without attempting to recognize the hardships of Malvern College on Lewis or the literary purposes for what Lewis chose to include in his autobiography, McGrath simply concludes that "Lewis could not bear to remember the trauma of his wartime experiences" (50).

McGrath's biography provides a fresh look at Lewis and a highly readable overview of his life. And while it may be the best available biography of Lewis, there are a number of weaknesses that leave the world waiting for the biography that will finally "get to the bottom" of C.S. Lewis.

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Peter W. GOSNELL. *The Ethical Vision of the Bible: Learning Good from Knowing God.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014. 410 pp. \$30.00.

This book stands at the intersection of ethics and biblical studies, an intersection where countless interpretive wrecks have occurred. The book is a fresh approach to ethics. The word "approach" is crucial. Gosnell does not propose new answers to ethical dilemmas. Rather, he encourages readers of his book and of the Bible to ask a deeper

question: How does the Bible teach us to develop the ability to reason ethically? In other words, how should those who take the Bible seriously approach ethical formation?

Uncharacteristically, I began reading this book at the last chapter: “CONCLUDING THOUGHTS: What can we do with all this?” The end was an excellent place to begin.

In this last section, Gosnell deals with how the Bible helps to form ethical thinking by means of four broad concepts: covenant, consequences, kingdom, and transformation. For Gosnell, these are fundamental approaches which correspond (respectively) to the Torah (minus Numbers), Proverbs, Matthew and Luke, and 1 Corinthians and Romans. Gosnell acknowledges that these are not the only fruitful approaches for the discussion of biblical ethics, but thinks that they are helpful exemplars of how the Bible helps to form ethical people who can then make informed ethical choices. The book has copious endnotes, an extensive bibliography, and helpful indexes—both scriptural and name/subject.

While acknowledging other possible motivations for good ethical behavior (utilitarian motivations), one of Gosnell’s foundational arguments is that biblical ethics flow out of relationship with God. Furthermore, motivation matters in biblical ethics. Ethics is a matter of avoiding harm and doing good (15). It is important to Gosnell that ethics is not so much a matter of *doing* good as it is a matter of *being* good.

Gosnell’s approach also underlines the importance of “thought patterns” and “motivations,” which the biblical writings encourage, in order to help people to avoid doing harm and do what is good (16). For example, Genesis 1–2 is about God’s creation moving from disorder to order, and suggests one basic template for understanding making good ethical choices.

One helpful distinction which Gosnell makes is between *prescriptive* and *descriptive* ethics (16). While the descriptive approach he takes helps with the task of prescriptive ethics, the two should be kept separate. Gosnell deals with the task of describing *how* the Bible texts can help form ethical reflection and behavior (16).

Gosnell distinguishes between morality and ethics. Both are concerned with right and wrong. The distinction is that morality is a sense of what is right and wrong, whereas ethics understands *why* certain actions are right or wrong (22–23). Similar (or even identical) moral codes may have very different ethical foundations (23).

The Bible is not only—or even primarily—interested in ethics (24). Furthermore, Gosnell holds that there are ethically neutral matters in the Bible (24, 21). This may be a more problematic position than Gosnell seems to recognize. If ethics is (as Gosnell believes) primarily concerned with relationship to God, others, and creation (see especially 40–43), then the question begs to be asked: Is there anything which does not, in some way, affect our relationship to God, others, or creation—or all three?

This book would be helpful in seminary or advanced undergraduate courses. While I found some of Gosnell’s positions problematic or overstated, I also found this book to be very stimulating and thought-provoking. Perhaps this is the highest praise for any book.

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Chuck DEGROAT. *Toughest People to Love: How to Understand, Lead, and Love the Difficult People in Your Life—Including Yourself.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014. 183 pp. \$14.00.

Success and even simple survival in ministry are rarely a matter of how much Bible and theology the minister knows, but instead depend on the minister's ability to deal with people. Often those people are problem people. There are relatively few books that address this critical issue. DeGroat, in this volume, explores the minister's ability to relate to and minister to difficult people in the church.

DeGroat does not promise an easy formula, but there are still plenty of practical advice and many helpful suggestions in the book. DeGroat's practical and academic experience in pastoral ministry, counseling, and seminary education give him a unique perspective. This volume reveals and benefits from the author's wide variety of interests, along with a wide and eclectic reading list. The chapters are filled with references from Christian writers from a broad theological spectrum: from Spurgeon to Buechner. Evangelicals should not be put off by the author's approach nor his acquaintance with thinkers outside the evangelical circle. The author also displays the ability to integrate theology with modern insights into psychology, never losing his Christian and biblical foundation.

At the center of this volume is the contention that people, even problem people, are worth understanding. He counsels that we should resist the tendency to dismiss such people without trying to understand how they became problem people. Also crucial is the author's emphasis on understanding ourselves and our own complexities, thus creating sympathy for those we deal with, even facilitating peace if we can't fix the problem.

The book begins not with the problem people themselves but with the individual minister and the most common "twisted" leadership styles. These styles have been categorized as motivational leadership, mechanical leadership, manipulative leadership, and moralistic leadership. DeGroat steers the reader away from these towards a more healthy relational approach to leadership.

The author then articulates a brief but helpful discussion of the four most common types of personality disorders he sees in his counseling practice, namely narcissistic personality disorder, borderline personality disorder, obsessive-compulsive personality disorder, and the histrionic personality disorder.

A whole chapter has been devoted to addiction and is particularly eye opening. Also beneficial is a fascinating discussion of "foolishness" and the different kinds of fools, namely the simple fool, the self-consumed fool, and the sinister fool. These designations may not be technically kosher, but will be recognized as true to life by anyone with experience in pastoral ministry.

The final chapter suggests several disciplines that will enable the minister to engage in ministry in a more peaceful state. It may not seem at first glance to be directly relevant to the topic of the book, but this chapter will both help the reader avoid becoming a problem person and provide a specific framework to engage in ministry with those difficult people.

The book closes elegantly with a benediction from the author. A helpful and prac-

tical resource list pertaining to the various subjects discussed in the book is included as an appendix.

This book should help the located minister feel encouraged that what is happening in the church with problem people is common and the nature of things. It will also give the minister more confidence in dealing with this critical issue. It is not likely that problem people will simply go away. It is more likely that new problem people will arrive to fill in the gap. This book may not help you to disarm the mines in the minefield, but it will help you to survive and navigate the minefield with compassionate effectiveness.

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Cincinnati Christian University

Brian K. BLOUNT. *Invasion of the Dead: Preaching Resurrection.* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014. 135 pp. \$16.00.

Our culture is currently fascinated with the undead—the walking dead (those animated corpses from the horror films and video games that are often wrongly referred to as zombies, a misconception that Blount corrects for us). In hooking on to this image prevalent in contemporary culture, Brian Blount, president and a NT professor at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Virginia, realizes something that, I think, we in the church have become blind to—our culture gets death and resurrection (apocalyptic eschatology). As Blount writes, he did not need to make “apocalyptic eschatology . . . more accessible to individuals and communities in our time,” he simply needed to connect the dots so that those outside the church’s fold could see how the writings of Mark, Paul, and John connect with *The Walking Dead*, *Dawn of the Dead* and, my personal favorite, *Warm Bodies* (xiii). Our culture, as many missiologists have noted since the late 1980s, is a culture that feels at home in the here-and-now. As a people, we are uncomfortable with the concept of that moment beyond our expiration. Thus our collective views fluctuate between the pessimistic nihilism of Nietzsche and the ungrounded triumphalism of *Left Behind*. Blount is not attempting to argue for a middle ground as much as he is attempting to argue for seeing resurrection as a fundamental thread of the gospel. Resurrection, to Blount, is not a second level of existence; it is our continuation due to our life in Christ.

The volume attempts to blend theoretical instruction with practical application. Following his introduction to the volume, Blount offers three content chapters—his lectures from the 2011 Lyman Beech Lectures at the Yale Divinity School. He examines the three of resurrection as it appears in Revelation, Paul’s writings (mainly Galatians) and Mark’s Gospel (in that order). In this way, this volume is similar to *The End of Words: The Language of Reconciliation in a Culture of Violence* by Richard Lischer (2007) or *When God Is Silent* by Barbara Brown Taylor (1997). Where Blount differs from these heralded and oft-recommended volumes is that he also offers three accompanying (and previously preached) sermons, sermons that come from the very texts that he addresses in his lectures. [This should, however, not detract from the important contribution of Lischer and Brown, both excellent preachers and homilet-

ics teachers. It is simply to remind us that scripture must be spoken in order to fully be considered preached gospel.] In this way, this volume is similar to David Bartlett's 2002 lecture volume entitled *What's Good about This News? Preaching from the Gospels and Galatians*. This, then, blends the theoretical with the practical, demonstrating that Blount—like Bartlett—is a preacher at heart.

Overall, I enjoyed reading Blount's volume. I am not sure if he has totally convinced me, although he has certainly intrigued me to give his concept of apocalyptic eschatology a deeper hearing.

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Jerome F. D. CREACH. *Violence in Scripture. Interpretation: Resources for the Use of Scripture in the Church*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2013. 286 pp. \$35.00.

In a world scarred by the insufferable loss of 9/11, religiously motivated violence looms large in the minds of believers and nonbelievers alike. Christian publishers have been quick to weigh in on the subject. Some books have been too light or trendy to satisfy the careful or skeptical reader, including David T. Lamb's *God Behaving Badly* (IVP, 2011) and Paul Copan's *Is God a Moral Monster?* (Baker, 2011). Others have cast too much suspicion on the biblical account to persuade those with a high view of Scripture, including Eric Seibert's *Disturbing Divine Behavior* and *Violence of Scripture* (Fortress, 2009 and 2012) and J. Denny Weaver's *Nonviolent God* (Eerdmans, 2013).

This volume paves something of a middle way between these approaches. While offering above average biblical exposition, Creach approaches this topic with what he calls "empathy" for the biblical text (3). He reads the entire Bible as the Church's Scripture, and he considers even the most violent portions to be God's authoritative word. Thus, one will not find him chalking up the less palatable portraits of God as the ignorant blunder or nationalistic propaganda of a naïve or ideologically driven author. Nor is he supplying shallow answers that hover over the surface of the text just long enough to surmise a pat answer for those who are already convinced or are fishing for sensational blog fodder.

Instead, Creach unashamedly wears his faith on his sleeve and takes the time to offer a depth-level reading of the text that requires patience and discipline. Readers will not find a quick fix to any theological puzzle. They will be invited into the complex world of Scripture with its manifold historical, literary, and canonical contexts. This volume also stands out in that it does not simply leap from one controversial text to another. Rather, it locates all the relevant texts within the basic storyline of the Bible. So his account begins with Genesis' comparatively nonviolent account of creation, over against its conflict-laden ancient Near Eastern counterparts.

From there Creach proceeds to tell the story of Scripture in canonical order highlighting and explaining the most violent sections one encounters along the way. Toward that end he dedicates significant attention to the Genesis flood account, the portrait of Yahweh as a warrior during the Exodus and beyond, God's judgment upon

those whom Creach identifies as the enemies of creation (the Sodomites, Pharaoh, and Amalekites), the conquest of Canaan with its all-destroying practice of the ban, the grotesque violence and seeming misogyny of Judges, the vengeance seeking prophets and poets, and the nonviolent witness of Jesus. This final section is quite brief and focuses mostly on how to read the OT and NT together in a unified way that emphasizes the continuity between them.

This volume is not a quick read, but it is a relatively easy one. Several of his arguments are quite strong, though others notably weak. Some readers will find his willingness to draw upon the symbolic readings of Origen and other early church fathers to be refreshing; others will find them lacking. Conspicuously absent is a substantial treatment of Israel's monarchy. Most of the NT also falls beyond his purview. Readers would do well to read Thomas R. Yoder Neufeld's *Killing Enmity* (Baker, 2011) to fill the NT void and John C. Nugent's *Politics of Yahweh* (Cascade Books, 2011) to fill the monarchical void. As a place to start, however, this volume is one of the best.

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J. K. JONES and Mark SCOTT. *Letting the Text Win.* Joplin, MO: College Press, 2014. 190 pp. \$22.99.

I need to be honest: I really wanted to like this volume. Aside from Fred Craddock and Ron Allen (both Disciples of Christ), introductory books in preaching from those associated with the Stone-Campbell Movement come too infrequently (it has been at least fifteen years), and when they have come, have often been inadequate theologically or rhetorically. I resonate deeply with their concept of "letting the text win." The preached sermon *must* begin with the written text. Also, many take the spiritual condition of the minister for granted, something that can lead to ruin. Thus, for a book to begin with the spiritual life of a minister had me intrigued.

Unfortunately, however, this volume left me disappointed on several accounts. First, there is nothing necessarily new here (except some traditional homiletic concepts that have simply been rebranded). For example, Jones discusses his Textual Dominant Thought (TDT) and Sermonic Dominant Thought (SDT). While this sounds like a good idea, there are some serious problems here. As he describes them, the TDT and SDT sound curiously like Tom Long's focus and function statements from *The Witness of Preaching* (1989). However, Long is never referenced seriously, only receiving one footnote where he is referenced more as an afterthought than the major contributor to homiletics that he is. Another problem is that these thoughts run the unintentional risk of contradicting each other because the SDT is actually Jones' application point which guides the sermon and overrules the TDT. Ultimately the text does *not* win. Additionally, this point of application is an abstract concept rather than a concrete action, meaning the sermon "application" remains in the head and cannot be carried out by the listener, therefore making the application void of both intention and meaning.

Second, most of the resources cited are from the 1980s, implying nothing useful has been written since. And those books that have a newer publication date that are

mentioned are done so either because 1) the authors take issue with the book, as they do in the case of narrative preaching (which the authors completely misconstrue) and creativity (the preacher should resist the urge to be creative), or 2) they support Jones and Scott's agenda, which is promoting a definition of preaching that equals the tried and tired 3-point, deductive (linear) outline.

Thirdly, there are some technical issues that need to be addressed: 1) The use of sidebar quotations are distracting at best and filler at worst. They add absolutely nothing to the discussion but are simply "highlights" from the text and should have been left out. 2) There is a lack of consistent footnoting that leaves the reader to wonder what the role of the project editor was. Jones uses parenthetical notes but does not follow APA or MLA style, and Scott uses the Chicago style yet offers an exceeding amount of content notes that leads this reader to wonder why this material was either not included in text or even included at all.

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Ruth C. DUCK. *Worship for the Whole People of God: Vital Worship for the 21st Century.* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014. 320 pp. \$35.00.

Duck has taken many years of scholarship and experience and compiled a multidimensional study of worship. The material gleaned from her diverse background opens up what will likely be new avenues of interest for many readers.

In the first three chapters, Duck succinctly describes several important theological foundations for any congregation looking to evaluate the content of its Sunday gathering to consider. Her emphasis on participatory worship is quite convicting and offers many practical applications. She insists that leaders must know and understand their flock in order to make worship accessible to all, allowing for the building up of the body. Included in the discussion is the involvement of children as worshipers and the need to develop friendships between adults and children within the community. Duck has also compiled a useful chart outlining issues that affect persons with disabilities and ways in which these can be addressed by those planning and leading the gathering.

She also pleads for an ethos of diversity in Christian worship, citing the need to determine the relationship between a given culture and the gospel. The third chapter describes the worship of various cultures. Duck challenges her readers to reflect upon the unique makeup of their particular congregation with open minds and hearts. The result of this process, she suggests, will be diversity reflected not only in the Sunday gathering, but as the community is cared for in Christian love.

While the title claims to reach the "whole people of God," the remaining chapters are strongly tilted toward what many readers will identify as "liturgical" worship. These chapters still contain valuable, worthwhile lessons concerning the approach to the Sunday gathering in terms of structure and content. Suggestions for the use of music, art, symbol, movement, silence, and Scripture reading, for example, can be adapted for use in other contexts.

A good deal of attention is given to formal structures of prayer, the use of the lec-

tionary, and the celebration of the Church Year. Duck does a good job of making a case for and explaining the benefit of these traditions. While these particular practices may not be typical for many readers, the information is still beneficial.

One valuable aspect of the book is the discussion of several worship practices from a historical standpoint. Duck gives brief, but thorough explanations as to how congregational worship has developed over time.

The final chapter, entitled “Vital Worship for the Twenty-first Century,” attempts to define and describe contemporary and emerging worship. Duck seems out of her element here, and fails to capture the full spectrum of these groups. The chapter is overly simplistic in its descriptions of contemporary worship and equates the two groups without taking into consideration the distinctions between them and their various subsets.

The final chapters are dedicated to baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and pastoral liturgies (weddings, funerals, etc). Attention is given to practices that may or may not be adaptable to churches outside of her audience, and therefore require careful consideration. Furthermore, constituents of the *Stone-Campbell Journal* may find areas of disagreement concerning scriptural and theological interpretation.

In general, this book is readable and not overly complicated, but it is repetitive and disjointed at times. It is best suited for ministers and worship leaders who are looking to broaden their understanding of worship beyond their own context. If read with an open mind and careful discernment, it may lead to the desire for further examination of some of its most thought-provoking insights.

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Margaret BENDROTH. *The Spiritual Practice of Remembering.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013. 142 pp. \$16.00.

Within the pages of this slim volume, Bendroth, director of the Congregational Library in Boston, contends that the past has meaning for the present and that remembering is and should be a spiritual practice. The aim of this study, Bendroth states, is not to “debate the correct interpretation of the past.” Instead, it is to explore “the idea of the past itself” (11).

Bendroth’s book seems to divide itself into three primary sections. The first section, consisting of the initial three chapters of the book, describes “different ways in which the modern world has shaped our view of historical events and people, and why it has become so difficult for us to feel a genuine connection with them” (11). Our sense of modernity, the author argues, has cultivated within us an idea that the past truly is the past and has little bearing upon the present. Bendroth further contends that modernity has instilled within us a conviction that the past is inferior to the present. Lastly, she examines how modern researchers have questioned various aspects of the past and caused many to reject it as untrustworthy. While there may be difficulties associated with the historical past, Bendroth suggests that Christians must recognize that “history is not about sorting the good people from the bad, or the real believers

from the frauds.” It is also “not about finding allies to support our personal judgments or the particular causes of our time.” Rather, it is “a way of knowing ourselves, of seeing more clearly the strengths and weaknesses of our Christian faith as it has been shaped by the demands of the early twenty-first century” (51).

Chapters four and five describe a relationship between the past and present by drawing attention to the continuing conversation with those who have gone before through the traditions, practices, and beliefs that they have left us: “People without an anchor in their traditions of the past,” Bendroth explains, “have far fewer protections from the present” (92). She further insists that our place amid the “Communion of Saints” requires us to “live within a web of holy obligation” with responsibilities to both the past and the future (118).

The final section of Bendroth’s book is chapter six, which is also the namesake of the volume. In this closing chapter, Bendroth deals with the spiritual practice of remembering and “how it might shape us into mature and thoughtful people of God” (121). The spiritual practice of remembering is both important and necessary, she concludes, because “we the living are a ligament between the generations, the only connection between what was long ago and what is yet to come” (132).

While Bendroth investigates a number of fascinating issues surrounding the relationship of the past and present, especially in her fourth and fifth chapters, her overall objective seems to fall short of what is promised. Her culminating chapter of this book promises to explore “what Christian remembering might look like in practice” (121), but provides little in the way of useful assistance in the task of making remembering an actual spiritual practice (as the title of the book and final chapter suggest). Perhaps the true value of this book lies more within its plea and rationale for remembering as a spiritual practice than in its effort to offer assistance or insights to readers who are on a quest to develop remembering into a spiritual practice.

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Patricia J. SOTIRIN and Laura L. ELLINGSON. *Where the Aunts Are: Family, Feminism, and Kinship in Popular Culture.* Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013. 236 pp. \$34.95.

The cherished aunt is a quintessential character in society; an illusory scan of modern media reveals aunts of all ages, races, and types. In this volume, Sotirin and Ellingson expand on an earlier book, *Aunting: Cultural Practices that Sustain Family and Community Life*. While their research is scholarly and deep (demonstrated by the 26-page bibliography), this volume deals with aunts observed in mainstream media: movies, television, advertising, and internet. The authors observe how these aunts affirm traditional family values and still suggest new possibilities for womanhood in the 21st century.

Aunts are categorized into six types: Those who are “like a mother” and care for family members (Aunt Bee, from *The Andy Griffith Show*); the domestic “mammy aunt” (Aunt Chloe, from *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*); those who are “like a (bad) mother”

(Helen, in *Raising Helen* or Aunt Petunia in *Harry Potter*); aunts who are witches (Zelda and Hilda in *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch*); eccentric aunts (Auntie Mame, title character of the book, play, and movie); and aunts used as stock advertising characters (Aunt Jemima of pancake fame).

Many of these aunts typify assumptions that women are better suited than men are to parenting and housework. For example, in one episode of *Andy Griffith*, Aunt Bee leaves town for a few days leaving Andy and Opie to fend for themselves; only girlfriend Peggy can save the day. Yet against these stereotypes, Sotirin and Ellingson note that Aunt Bee is also part of an “asexual, non-procreative model of family life based on emotional commitments of choice,” suggesting an opportunity to validate nonnuclear family relationships, many of which exist in modern society.

Other aunts highlight continued racial and class stereotypes. Aunt Jemima is one example, suggesting a nostalgic view toward “racial hierarchy as normative” (42) and portraying black women as “naturally fit for servitude” (37). In fact, one of the book’s strengths is the ability to use the discussions of feminism and families to raise additional concerns about race and poverty. These observations benefit both social science scholars, and ministers whose congregations may be overcoming racist tendencies. Another strength is the book’s recognition of positive female role models; for example, even in the authors’ critique of Sabrina’s witch aunts, they applaud Hilda and Zelda for mentoring their young charge. The aunts’ willingness to mentor their niece is in strong contrast to “the cultural bias toward valuing boys, men, and masculinity over girls, women, and femininity” (88). The extensive bibliography has already been mentioned; a third strength is the authors’ detailed notes section and significant appendixes of media resources. Those who preach and teach may find these valuable when commenting on gender or family roles in popular culture.

Regarding preachers and teachers, one weakness of the book for that audience is that there is no overt effort to bring the topics into conversation with Scripture. Additionally, some in the Stone-Campbell movement may be uncomfortable with the authors’ views toward the LGBT community, along with the authors’ willingness to see alternate family models as normative. Admittedly, these authors make no claim to a Christian audience; it is an academic book with excellent resources for scholars working in social science disciplines.

Yet the value to ministers should not be overlooked. Those who serve in family ministry and those who oversee church calendars and programming should be aware of the variety of family structures which do exist in our communities. Diversity is real, and if all programming is designed with the nuclear family (mom, dad, and kids) in mind, many community needs will go unmet. Of particular interest to family ministry is the analysis of “rituals of passage” (139). And those who lead women’s ministries should also be conversant regarding gender/ethnic issues (50), along with the reality that not all women have the luxury of being stay-at-home moms (63-68). This volume provides a broadly researched voice in the conversation about women, their families, and opportunities for women to impact in the world.

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Steven L. MCKENSIE and John KALTNER, eds. *New Meanings for Ancient Texts: Recent Approaches to Biblical Criticisms and Their Applications*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014. 192 pp. \$35.00.

This volume is a collection of essays describing (in broad brushstrokes) critical approaches that have emerged due to biblical scholarship's growing recognition of the need to invite interdisciplinary perspectives. This particular volume offers nine essays reflecting this invitation and discussing ways in which these various perspectives are and may be used in biblical criticism. The essays are written by scholars who not only have been published in these particular fields but have in some way helped develop these approaches into the critical perspectives they are today.

The approaches discussed in this volume include cultural-historical criticism (Timothy Beal), disability studies (Nyasha Junior and Jeremy Schipper), ecological criticism (Norman C. Habel), New Historicism (Gina Hens-Piazza), popular culture and the Bible (Linda S. Schearing and Valerie H. Ziegler), postcolonial criticisms (Warren Carter), postmodernism (Hugh S. Pyper), psychological criticism (D. Andrew Kille), and queer criticism (Ken Stone).

The essays follow a set pattern in their structure: the author introduces the critical approach, offers a definition, discusses its historical development, provides an example or two of what that approach might look like applied to Scripture, and finally sets forth some thoughts on future directions and applications of that approach. Although several of the approaches are closely related methodologically or philosophically, the alphabetical arrangement of the essays obscures the relationships between approaches. However, it is important to note the debt—both philosophical and methodologically—many of the authors acknowledge to feminism. The emphasis on reading and interpreting the marginalized characters of a text gains significant traction in disability studies, ecological criticism, New Historicism, postcolonial criticism, and queer criticism. In terms of method, reading against the grain and using a hermeneutic of suspicion characterize these approaches as well, though also demonstrating strong ties to postmodernism in the shared values of ambiguity, open questions, and inversion.

In addition to feminist criticism, several of these approaches (including particularly those just mentioned above) also share a particular emphasis on power. This emphasis echoes the fundamental Marxist principle that power is unequally shared and must be (often violently) re-appropriated by or on behalf of the powerless. Yet the example of Christ in the Gospels does not demonstrate this obsession with power. Instead, the kingdom is based on love. In fact, love—this fundamental, essential quality of kingdom living—is noticeably absent from those philosophies, perspectives, and critical approaches that are based on power. This weakness must be addressed in order to use or engage with these recent critical approaches in a manner faithful to Scripture and the example of Christ.

Another behind-the-scenes factor that is sometimes alluded to, sometimes ignored is the question of a historically appropriate reading strategy. Some critical approaches (such as postmodernism) deliberately disconnect the text from its historical context, while other approaches such as ecological criticism, queer criticism, and popular cul-

ture and the Bible tend to (in these essays) anachronistically read modern social issues and values (and value judgments) back into and onto the biblical text. Other essays in this volume—such as cultural-historical criticism, disability studies, and psychological criticism—are self-consciously grounded in a historical reading, using historical context to bound interpretation. The challenge is to discern how these approaches may be used to address these social concerns without losing sight of the text's historical (and, from a faith perspective of its inspiration, its self-imposed theological) and hermeneutical boundaries.

For those interested in engaging or teaching recent critical approaches, this volume is an excellent introduction yet brings with it certain challenges. Those coming from a faith perspective will need to address issues of faith and the inspiration of Scripture, and the implications of these on hermeneutics as they embark on these critical waters. For example, ecological criticism could look very much like pantheism (as in this volume) or like stewardship (which Habel disdains), depending on one's stance on faith and Scripture. These issues take on even more complexity when engaging with queer criticism, as the social and moral issues must be considered not only in light of today's society but even more importantly in light of the whole of Scripture.

The volume is undisputedly geared toward an academic audience, and the standardized structure of the essays makes them quite useful in the classroom as well. In short, it is an excellent introduction to methods and approaches that may feel quite unfamiliar, yet with proper grounding in faith and Scripture, offer different perspectives that may help develop our theology of and responses to critical issues in our church and world today.

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Timothy Michael LAW. *When God Spoke Greek: The Septuagint and the Making of the Christian Bible.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. 240 pp. \$24.95.

This volume is a readable history of the origins, rise, and decline of the LXX as Christian Scripture. Law's work reflects recent scholarship, locating developments within their historical context to help readers understand the origins and development of Christian scripture. The book is well-suited for advanced undergrads and interested lay people, and will serve well as supplemental reading for graduate students.

"Why this book?" asks Law. For non-academics the book provides a wealth of introductory information. It spans from the third century BC through Augustine (5th c.). Law lays out his case in clear and convincing fashion: while many assume that the biblical writers "sat down one sunny afternoon" and penned their works (2), the historical evidence shows that the "biblical books were formed after a long process of accumulation, combination, and reformulation of other sources" (2). During the three centuries before Christ, the texts of Scripture were being edited and some were "rewritten." The resulting revisions existed side by side with older editions of the same books, sharing authority. This process has been confirmed by a half century of scholarship on the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The proto-Masoretic text was but one of several alternative Hebrew texts used concurrently at the time. The Qumran Torah scrolls reflect the MT only 48% of the time, and texts outside the Torah reflect the MT only 44% of the time (25). Texts from Qumran have confirmed that the LXX—along with the Samaritan Pentateuch—offers several readings older than the proto-Masoretic text. No fewer than thirteen editions of the twenty-four books of the Hebrew Bible have been identified (28). The eventual “choice” of the Masoretic text was probably not a conscious decision, but the result of using the text at hand (83).

Study of the LXX has been enriched through the Greek OT fragments found at Qumran (75-76). In the three centuries before Christ both the Hebrew and the Greek text of scriptural books was fluid. These were the Greek texts the early Christians used as scripture. The NT authors were unconcerned by their often wide divergence from the Hebrew texts of the same book, and at times from each other. There was not yet a canon of the Hebrew Bible, and the fluid state of scriptures—both the developing texts and the lack of canonical “boundaries”—influenced the early Christians in their (fluid and open) views of scripture. Early Christian scripture included numerous documents later deemed “apocryphal,” as well as the occasional use of OT wording known to us not from scriptures, but from the Greek Psalter (Hebrews, Revelation).

For Eusebius (4th c.), the LXX was part of God’s plan to prepare the world for Christianity. Until then, messianic prophecies had been concealed in Hebrew, but God providentially provided the LXX to reach the nations (*Preparation for the Gospel* 8): “This was the time when God spoke Greek” (131).

Chapters include “Gog and His Not-So-Merry-Grasshoppers” (multiple versions of the same biblical texts in both Greek and Hebrew traditions); “Bird Droppings, Stoned Elephants, and Exploding Dragons” (Apocrypha); “E. Pluribus Unum” (the illusion that the divergent textual traditions merged into the Masoretic Text); “The Man of Steel and the Man who Worshipped the Sun” (Origen, Constantine); and “The Burning Hand vs. the Honeyed Sword” (Jerome vs. Augustine).

Law’s Postscript questions the modern fixation on “the original text,” implying that we might be better off with the views of the first Christians. The theology of the LXX is *not* identical with the theology of the Hebrew Bible. Since Christian theology is based on the LXX (through the NT writers), we are faced with a theological conundrum in our “Old Testament” translated from the Masoretic text: “What would Christian theology look like if it returned the LXX to the place it occupied at the beginning of the church, or at least began to read it alongside the Hebrew Bible?” he asks (171).

Such suggestions are complicated. An early Christian “theology of the Septuagint” is an impossibility, since—as Law has already pointed out—in the first Christian century there was not one fixed text of the “Septuagint” or the Hebrew Bible, nor was there yet a canon. Since our earliest (nearly) complete Christian LXX dates from the fourth century (Codex Vaticanus) and was influenced by Origen’s “Hexapla Recension,” it is problematic to speak of a theology of “*the* Septuagint” as it was at the beginning of the church. Nor would any solution to this technical problem address the question of how to handle scripture as tradition (both handed down and developing).

A couple of minor criticisms: Law intentionally simplified his writing, using throughout “Hebrew Bible,” instead of the proto-MT vs. other versions, and “Septuagint” as if it were monolithic (7-8). Neither use is accurate, as Law well knows. Those decisions are potentially confusing, perhaps even more so than if Law had been a bit more precise. Since such specifics are among those central to his argument, one wonders if Law did not oversimplify. Also, the lack of a Scripture index is disappointing, though not surprising in a semi-popular book.

In this book, Law gently but persistently directs readers to the historical realities of the Bible and its textual and canonical development. The history was not neat and tidy, but the fact remains: history matters. For the Bible to be our source of faith and practice, it must be so in its historical reality. It is not acceptable to allow (or require) students and lay people to settle for naïve or mystical views of the Bible and its origins, simply because it makes the transition to abstract doctrine easier or avoids embarrassing historical disconnects with our idealized views. As in the biblical documents themselves, God’s truth is always transmitted in a historical context. History and theology are inseparable, and are by definition “messy.” This also holds true for any theology of scripture. These days the question is being asked about the “pay-off” for the church of critical studies. For some, the answer is simple: historical and critical studies have been abandoned. But such a reaction “throws the baby out with the bathwater.” At the very least, the benefit of historical study is helping students avoid a crisis of faith, engineered by simplistic or misleading teaching. Law’s book is a reminder that historical and critical study moves us closer to the way things really were. What we do with that, theologically, is our challenge.

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Peter ENNS. *The Evolution of Adam: What the Bible Does and Doesn’t Say about Human Origins.* Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2012. 172 pp. \$12.80.

This volume is another book by Enns, formerly of Westminster Theological Seminary, that deals with issues of genre studies, interpretation, science, and the book of Genesis. Enns is a well-known and prolific writer, having become controversial for his book *Inspiration and Incarnation* (Baker, 2005). Those familiar with his books or his blog (*Rethinking Biblical Christianity*) will be well versed in much of the material contained here, as Enns has written numerous times on similar topics involving the relationship between science, faith, inerrancy, and hermeneutics.

This volume is Enns’s attempt to offer a reading that removes some of the interpretive obstacles between the idea of human evolution as it relates to the first humans, and the biblical understanding of Adam, most importantly Paul’s understanding of Adam found in Rom 5:12-21 and 1 Cor 15:21-22,44-49: “The problem is self-evident. Evolution demands that the special creation of the first Adam as described in the Bible is not literally historical; Paul, however, seems to require it” (xvi). Enns proceeds exclusively from a hermeneutical perspective and deals entirely with biblical texts, seeking to understand Adam as a literary figure from the ANE. The main issue for Enns is

not to answer the challenges of evolution, but to ensure that Christians do not make unnecessary demands of the text.

The book is divided into two sections: Part One (3-76) places the story of Adam's creation within the context of Israel's worldview and the literary setting of their surrounding ANE neighbors. With the exception of reading Adam as a Proto-Israel figure, much of what is offered here is very similar to what Enns first expressed in *Inspiration and Incarnation*. Nonetheless, placing the creation account within the context of the ANE remains an essential and helpful step for what follows. Similarly, after describing the interpretive issues facing Paul's use of Adam, Part Two (79-136) seeks to answer those questions by illuminating Paul's cultural context and the style of biblical hermeneutics practiced by those living during the Second Temple Period. The concluding chapter is one of the most helpful in the book, as it lays out nine significant implications from the study.

Enns has aimed this book at a church/undergraduate level audience, one that he envisions as "Christian, of whatever tradition or stripe" and who believe that "evolution must be taken seriously" (x). More specifically, the target audience is American evangelicals. The book is very well written, easy to understand, and would be at home in an introductory-level classroom. The pages are free of footnotes, substituted instead by 12 pages of endnotes and a five-page bibliography. Despite what may come across in his other writings, here Enns is gentle towards faith issues, but remains challenging. He is asking hard, important questions that cannot be avoided: "A historical Adam has been the dominant Christian view for two thousand years. . . . To appeal to this older consensus as a way of keeping the challenge of evolution at bay is not a viable option for readers today" (xvi).

As with some of his other works, Enns is very good at poking holes in biblical readings that overlook textual tensions or offer inconsistent interpretations. However, he often does not take the time to properly rebuild what he has torn down. The same can be said here. In this volume, Enns offers a reading of Paul's use of Adam that does not conflict with modern scientific theories, yet does not offer a new, fully detailed creation theology. This is a small critique, and understandable in light of the aims of the book, but would have been a valued addition nonetheless.

This is indeed a contentious academic and faith-related topic, and Enns deserves credit for addressing it. Even some of the academics who helped Enns with his manuscript were afraid to have their names associated with it (vii). Overall, however, this is an honest work asking honest questions, written by someone who has lost his job over these issues. Of course, not all will agree with everything he writes, and this is to be expected. However, with endorsements by Scot McKnight and Tremper Longman III, this book would be a welcome addition for classroom discussion.

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Frederick J. MURPHY. *Apocalypticism in the Bible and Its World*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012. 416 pp. \$39.95.

Murphy, longtime professor of religious studies at the College of the Holy Cross, bestowed the academic community with a departing gift just before he left this world. His legacy will survive in this and other works of high scholarly merit on the world of Second Temple Judaism. This work deserves a place on the bookshelf of every serious student of the Bible. It will prove particularly valuable as a textbook for courses on NT introduction and Second Temple Judaism.

From the beginning Murphy reviews the scholarly consensus regarding the often-misinterpreted apocalyptic texts with characteristic aplomb. The first chapter defines the topic of study. Following many scholars, Murphy divides the apocalyptic genre into two classes: the heavenly journey and the review of history (6). These definitions provide a framework for his subsequent commentary, which follows a curious though thoughtful arrangement. Murphy begins with origins and “proto-apocalyptic” texts of the Hebrew Bible, moves to a comparison of Daniel with the contemporaneous *Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch*, both of which rightly influence the following discussion of Revelation. He then returns to the Jewish sources in chapters five through seven, including the Dead Sea Scrolls, which, given their identity as an identifiable social unit, introduce the subsequent Christian material in chapters eight through eleven. His final chapter provides something of a defense of apocalypticism, a worldview which can appear violent, misguided, and strange to the uninitiated. Throughout, Murphy provides interpretations that are unlikely to cause offense, without venturing too far from the scholarly middle. When there is a difference of opinion, as there is in the debate regarding the “Son of Man” figure(s) of Ezekiel, Daniel, *Similitudes of Enoch*, and the NT for example, Murphy does not delve deeply into the debate but does offer his interpretations. He is often reliant upon John Collins’s work.

Murphy excels at untangling the sometimes inconspicuous apocalyptic elements from texts where they might go unnoticed. The two strongest chapters of the book are chapter 2, “Proto-Apocalyptic Biblical Texts,” and chapter 11, “The Rest of the New Testament.” It is in these “non-apocalyptic apocalyptic” texts that the real influence of apocalypticism is felt. In these sections the reader is led to the inescapable realization that apocalypticism is the river in which the NT swims. That is, the apocalyptic worldview provides the library of images and schemas shared between the original authors and their original audiences.

In any task of so great a scope as this, it is easy to point out issues that should have been explored. It is, of course, the writer’s prerogative to choose what will and will not be covered. However, that editorial choice can sometimes lead the reader to false impressions. Murphy states, “Persian religion . . . contained elements that fed into apocalypticism. These included dualism, periodization of history, heaven and hell, postmortem rewards and punishments, resurrection, angels and demons, the clash of superhuman forces of good and evil, eschatological battles with attendant suffering, and ascent of the soul” (15). It is such an extensive list that one might wonder what of apocalypticism does NOT derive from Persian religion, yet beyond this short paragraph there is no more discussion of Persian religion. Instead, Murphy devotes five

pages to Mesopotamian influences, and a chapter to Israelite influences that preceded apocalypticism. The full treatment on Israelite antecedents to apocalypticism, excellent though it is, when compared to the barely-a-disclaimer on Persian religion and short excursus on Mesopotamian religion, can leave the impression that apocalypticism is a more distinctly Jewish phenomenon than it is. Murphy gets the data right, but his editorial choice may misguide the novice reader. *Caveat lector*: a full treatment of the origins of apocalypticism must include prolonged discussion of especially Persian but also Mesopotamian religion. Murphy does not mention Egyptian parallels at all, but they too likely had some role in the formation of apocalypticism. At the very least they should be examined as parallel developments.

I recommend this book highly with the qualifier that it should be read alongside a fuller account of apocalyptic origins such as Norman Cohn's *Cosmos, Chaos and the World to Come: The Ancient Roots of Apocalyptic Faith* (2nd edition. New Haven: Yale, 2001).

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J. MERRICK and Stephen M. GARRETT, gen. eds. *Five Views on Biblical Inerrancy*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013. 328 pp. \$19.99.

No one would argue that Christian orthodoxy has been indelibly shaped by the ecumenical council of Nicaea in AD 325 (more accurately, 381). In fact, very few theologically informed believers would subscribe to a statement of faith that did not bear strong resemblance to (if not directly cite) the Creed that has been dubbed “Nicene.” Even in a supposedly “non-creedal” tradition as the Stone-Campbell Movement, the biblical integrity of Nicaea’s declaration is readily acknowledged. In short, historic, Scripturally based Christianity is hard to conceive of without a Nicaean-like articulation. Of this there is no debate. However, for more than a few adherents to the Stone-Campbell Movement—and most certainly the majority of evangelical world—what is up for serious discussion is the dogmatic status of a statement that emerged from Chicago in 1978. Students of contemporary ecclesiastical history will recall that in October of that year, 268 delegates of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy (ICBI) drafted a document that was entitled the *Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy* (CSBI) affirming that “Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God’s actions in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God’s saving grace in individual lives.”¹ While inerrancy had already come to shape the evangelical ethos of the twentieth century (the Council was in effect, “defending” a part of the recent conservative tradition), the *Chicago Statement* offered a clear, scholarly erudition of this doctrine that has achieved near canonical status in the numerous and diverse schools and churches that constitute Evangelicalism. Or it used to do so.

This volume is essentially a “state of the union” report on the status and health of the CSBI in this second decade of the twenty-first century. Unlike the fairly monolithic

¹ *Forever Settled: Various Documents of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy* (ICBI, 1979) 22.

voice that offered the “Declarations of Chicago,” today’s evangelicalism interprets the term in a diversity of ways including eschewing the term altogether. In this volume, editors Merrick and Garrett have gathered together five well-known scholars who align themselves with orthodox Christianity and clearly disagree on the meaning and usefulness of inerrancy. I am not sure that Carl Henry could have seen this coming.

In essays beginning with Albert Mohler, continuing with Peter Enns, Michael Bird, and Kevin Vanhoozer, and concluding with John Franke we are treated to a virtual history of post-World War II evangelicalism from its uncompromising past, its present confusion, and its uncertain future. Such is the case when Chicago becomes Nicaea.² In Mohler’s seminal chapter, the author not surprisingly presents us with a definition of inerrancy that could have come out of the CSBI itself; in fact, it is largely an apologia for the permanence and sufficiency of the Statement. Indeed, the very public Southern Seminary president argues that “the CSBI remains the quintessential statement of biblical inerrancy and that its clearly defined language remains essential to the health of evangelicalism and the integrity of the Christian church” (36). Mohler points to three fairly common popular-level “apologetic” points to sustain this claim: 1) internal claims of the Bible about itself; 2) the history of the church; and 3) practical needs of the church (37-43). These arguments are not new to anyone who has read the evidentialist works of Norman Geisler and Josh McDowell, although Mohler clearly offers them up in a more academic tone. On the other hand, true to his presuppositionalist heritage, the author contends that the “total truthfulness of the Bible is rooted in our confidence that God himself is completely and totally trustworthy” (43). Thus, since God is perfectly and wholly truthful, any book bearing his signature must be of such character—in everything it addresses be it faith, history, or science. In his conclusion to a discussion of the archaeological challenges to the historicity of the fall of Jericho (Joshua 6), Mohler unequivocally asserts that he does not “allow any line of evidence from outside the Bible to nullify the slightest degree of truthfulness of any text . . . the only position that is fully compatible with the claim that every word of Scripture is fully inspired and thus fully true and trustworthy” (51).³ With statements and a tone such as these it is not surprising that the “dialogue” of this book is largely conducted by the other four writers. For Mohler, Chicago inerrancy *is* Christian orthodoxy.

In contrast to Mohler’s authoritative air and uncompromising presentation (which is unfortunately becoming more definitive in circles like the ETS), Enns, Bird, Vanhoozer, and Franke offer chapters that more readily admit the difficulties in the biblical text and the problematic nature of a term like “inerrancy.” These are the most

² My appropriation of the “Chicago-Nicaea” motif is borrowed from the essay by Evangelicalism’s consummate, Kevin Vanhoozer. It should be also noted that Michael Bird is similarly gifted in speech, however in a more “earthy” fashion. Consequently, the contributions of these two wordsmiths as well as their interactions with each other and the other authors make for a “fun” read.

³ It should be noted that each author addresses three texts that pose challenges for inerrancy: Joshua 6 (lack of archaeological support for the fall of Jericho), Acts 9:7 and 22:9 (inconsistencies between these versions of Paul’s Damascus Road experience, and the apparent moral contradiction between the divine command to exterminate Israel’s enemies in Deuteronomy 20 and Jesus’ command to love our enemies [Matthew 5]). Obviously, Mohler’s view *necessitates* that any alleged contradiction must ultimately be dismissed since the Bible is *a priori* true.

constructive pieces in the book, as they demonstrate that quite diverse methodologies can yield similar theological judgments. Let me illustrate this by analyzing these authors in terms of their affinity for the debated word. On one side we find those who maintain that “inerrancy” is an important part of our theological vocabulary. These writers include Vanhoozer and surprisingly Franke, along with the aforesaid Mohler. On the other end of the spectrum, we encounter those who would prefer to jettison the term altogether—Enns and Bird—but for quite different reasons. (Methodologically, one would group Enns with Franke and Bird with Vanhoozer).

Let’s begin with the two very diverse pathways to maintaining inerrancy language. In dramatic contrast to Mohler’s “modernist/rationalist” understanding that ties Scripture to history and science (74), Vanhoozer offers an Augustinian-inspired, “well-versed” view of inerrancy that recognizes the vast richness of biblical language and truth as more than simply communication of facts (200). The undisputed pioneer of speech-act theory in evangelical theology reminds his readers “that the relationship of language to reality is not always simple or linear, as if we could draw a straight line between words and things in the world” (209). Thus, the biblical interpreter must not confuse the truthfulness of the text with their understanding of it since we may be reading Scripture on our terms rather than the authors. In short, our Western penchant for detailed information can prohibit a genuine “hearing” of the Word and authentic participation in the gospel drama (a favorite Vanhoozer motif). The Trinity professor admits that the *Chicago Statement* probably encourages this rigid correspondence theory (Mohler), but believes the term should remain in a conservative theological system, as long as it is understood as a “nonidentical equivalence to what Scripture teaches about itself” (213). *SCJ* readers will find much to like about Vanhoozer’s chapter, whether or not they would place themselves in the inerrantist camp. While Vanhoozer defends the Chicago, he does so in very *un-Chicagoan* terms: “well-versed” and Augustinian.

The third, final and most-surprising apologist of inerrancy is the post-foundationalist, John Franke, whose articulation of the concept looks nothing like the aforementioned two. In fact, it is rather bizarre. Franke writes, “*Inerrancy* is a technical theological term that serves to preserve the dynamic plurality contained in the text of Scripture by ensuring that no portion of the biblical narrative can properly be disregarded or eclipsed because it is perceived as failing to conform to a larger pattern of systematic unity” (276). Franke takes to task the modernist milieu that has framed much of the inerrancy discussion, and he rightly cautions against a (western) “cultural hegemony” that assumes their reading of the text is universal (279). Yet, in its place, the writer of this essay offers a less-than-satisfying view of biblical truthfulness in his seemingly coherentist arguments by asserting that the Scripture has the “purpose of creating a socially constructed world that finds its coherence in Jesus Christ” (274). Simply put, the Bible is true because it all hangs together. Franke’s postmodernist epistemology is further supplemented by observations such as “an approach to inerrancy understood as applying primarily to the Christotelic formation of a missional community” (282), giving his atypical inerrancy a decided *pragmatic* flavor. Is this a promising way to salvage the term? I have my doubts. In actuality, an essay such as Franke’s—and more constructively, Vanhoozer’s—seem to vindicate my own stated position that,

try as we might, inerrancy cannot transcend the fundamentalism (albeit in more refined terms) of Mohler and Chicago.

But opponents of inerrancy are hardly less diverse. Like this reviewer, the former Westminster Seminary “classical inerrantist” Peter Enns questions whether the term is salvageable today but for different reasons. (In keeping with the Chicago theme of this review, I cannot help but note that the distance between Chicago and Philadelphia is minuscule, theologically, that is). While I agree with him that the term tends to stifle the difficulties that must honestly be recognized in the scriptural text, I recognize that *my western presuppositions of truth* (largely, correspondent) need to be challenged and modified by the Bible’s own understanding of truth-telling (91). More like the *inerrantist*, Vanhoozer, however, I want to be subject to the text’s message rather than subject it to my narrow truth conceptions. Enns, on the other hand, dismisses inerrancy precisely because the Bible is *error-prone*, as determined by the “best historical and scientific inquiry” (91). This is not a problem for Enns since these imperfections are themselves, a “witness of God’s pattern of working—that God’s power is made known in weakness, [that] he reigns amidst human error and suffering, and he lovingly condescends to finite human culture” (91). Readers of Enns will not be surprised that he employs one of his favorite figures to argue for the finitude—and goodness—of Scripture, the Incarnation. In Jesus, we see truth revealed in the limitations of a human body (and at times, knowledge), but he is still the Son of God. In the same manner, Scripture is constrained by the prescientific knowledge of the ancient world, but it is still the Word of God (115). There is a certain appeal to Enns’ incarnational analogy but there are philosophical assumptions lurking under its surface that I am not sure this OT scholar, himself, recognizes. As one who gives considerable credence to the findings of critical scholarship, he also imbibes much of the *modernist* juice that sets up truth definitions shared by Marburg and Chicago: western modern science and historiography set the agenda. In the case of the liberal critic, these measures expose the Bible’s many errors, while to the conservative inerrantist such as Mohler, these measures set the formidable barriers that must be explained away in order to demonstrate its credibility. Perhaps, as Enns does rightly propose, it is time to allow the Scripture to present its truth on its own terms and conform our reading of the text to its presentation rather than judge it by the tools of modernity. Conservative apologetics and the historical-critical method share a common parentage that in their own ways, silence the biblical text. “If Jericho, is razed, is our faith in vain?” may be an interesting archaeological question but it may not be relevant to the story-telling technique of a Semitic writer.

Finally, there is the non-inerrancy view expressed by Michael Bird that in this world of strange theological bed-fellows appears to favor Peter Enns but has the essential DNA of Kevin Vanhoozer. Like the former, he wants to jettison the term, but primarily because it does come out of and reflect the theology of the global church. Chicago is not Nicaea, in terms of ecumenicity. Bird argues that “the American inerrancy tradition, though a largely positive concept, is essentially modernist in construct, parochially American in context, and occasionally creates more exegetical problems than it solves” (145). However, this does not imply that this rising Australian theologian agrees with Enns’ on the Bible’s erroneous nature. Bird contends that “the

language of revelation is accommodated to the worldview and expectations of its audience in matters of cosmology and historiography” (159); in theory, Enns would agree. But then Bird adds this non-Enns-like conclusion, “accommodation is never a capitulation to error. God does not speak erroneously, nor does he feed us nuts of truth lodged inside shells of falsehood” (159). Mohler would agree with Bird’s firm assertion that “God’s Word is always true in what it affirms” (159), but would parse the biblical affirmations in ways much too “modernistic” and American for the Aussie. Yet methodologically, Bird is most at home with Vanhoozer’s understanding of divine communication as he argues that “Revelation is not mere propositions about God waiting to be decoded from the morass of biblical genres. Revelation is God’s work in imparting cognition of his person, plan, purposes, and the entire reality he represents . . . revelation consists of worldview, belief, ethics, tasks, and behaviors that are created by the act of revealing . . . the goal of revelation is not only knowing facts about God but also enjoying fellowship with God” (164). One could even say that Bird is compatible with Franke on this community-formation function of Scripture although for the former it is based in ontological reality.

While Bird’s essay is written with more of a postmodern perspectivalist character, his view of Scripture is most definitely traditional and historically ecumenical. Like the authors of the *Anglican Thirty-nine Articles* and the majority of world evangelicals, Bird pushes us to re-adopt terms like *authority* and *infallibility* as we express our belief in the divine inspiration of the biblical text (160–163). In short, we need to pay attention to Melbourne as well as Chicago.

This volume is a must-read for Stone-Campbell scholars, students, and ministers who stand on both sides of the issue as well as positions in-between. In my professional experience, I have interacted with colleagues who insist on inerrancy as dogma and those who ridicule it as a naïve, obscure relic of a fundamentalist past. For the sake of the Church, it is time to move past such monolithic stereotypes and responsibly engage this many-sided discussion. This volume provides us with some needed perspectives to understand contemporary Christianity’s *Tale of Two Cities*—Chicago and Nicaea.

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William G. DEVER. *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel: Where Archaeology and the Bible Intersect.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012. 436 pp. \$25.00.

Those familiar with William Dever may recall both his profession of secular humanism as well as his long battle against historical revisionists. Both factors play a role in this volume. Dever’s goal is to write a history of eighth-century Israel based primarily on archaeological data. His stated presupposition is that the text of the Hebrew Bible is written by, and reflects the concerns of, elitist members of the population. His goal is to give voice to the much larger, voiceless populace through use of the independent witness of archaeology (10).

Dever identifies his approach as post-processualist (viii). He believes artifacts can

be read and interpreted like written texts, and occasionally comments that archaeology is not mute, also suggesting the tangible nature of artifacts makes them easier to understand and easier to avoid the pitfalls found in interpreting ancient texts (4-5, 370-371). He also believes individual initiative, art, and religion play an important role in cultural change and understanding history. Subsequent chapters illustrate his interpretation of archaeological finds and contain numerous drawings and photos of artifacts and sites.

After addressing issues of methodology in chapters one and two, chapters three and four survey the geography of ancient Israel and the sites (whether positively identified or not) that have been discovered by archaeologists. Chapters five and six look at what archaeology has uncovered about the size of, and life in, cities, towns, and villages. Chapters seven and eight address socioeconomic structures and religious practices, and chapters nine and ten address Israel's neighbors and what archaeology can tell us about the Assyrian conquest of Israel.

Chapters consist of three sections. The first section recounts archaeological finds and how these are interpreted. This occupies the majority of each chapter. The second section turns to the Hebrew Bible to see what, if anything, it says about the topic at hand. Finally, Dever begins to interpret these findings and speculate on what life might have been like in eighth-century Israel as evidenced by archaeology. Rather than summarize each chapter, this review will discuss issues of methodology and conclusions drawn.

Dever's picture of Israel sometimes differs drastically from the biblical text. Most notable is his description of the religion of the masses, which "consists of almost everything that the biblical writers forbade" (287). More representative of his conclusions throughout the book is his statement regarding the socioeconomic structures in ancient Israel, that the biblical texts provide "not much, and nothing essential, or even helpful" (247). From here it is only natural for Dever to admit it is the archaeological evidence (the primary data), which corroborates the biblical text and not the other way around (138), and that artifacts do not need corroboration (248). However, despite Dever's preference for the primacy of archaeology, he does note the usefulness of the biblical text when it provides unique information, such as the mentality of the "house of the father" (190), or the function of city gates (362).

Perhaps the most interesting portion of each chapter (especially his account of daily life, 194-205) is the final section speculating what it was really like in ancient Israel. Dever is clear that this is speculation, albeit based on ethnographic parallels and his own personal experience in underdeveloped areas of the modern Middle East (195, 373, see also 169 n. 35, 173 n. 40). While this portion of each chapter provides a captivating picture of ancient Israel due to its rootedness in archaeological evidence, its practice in these pages may also be slightly problematic. Dever states, "*The fact is*, most ancient Israelites had never been to Jerusalem in their whole lives; had never seen the Temple or met an official Levitical priest; had little familiarity with the developing 'Book religion' of the elite establishment; and remained largely polytheistic until the end of the monarchy" (251, emphasis mine). This statement is rather emphatic, not to mention it is found in Dever's introduction to religion and cult in ancient Israel and not in his section speculating what religion was really like. Statements such as this illus-

trate that Dever’s own interpretation of archaeological evidence is, in places, tainted by his own presuppositions. This is troubling considering his extensive critique of the false presuppositions of minimalists and claim that he avoids this himself.

Despite this caution, this work engages important issues and offers positive answers. Dever’s first two chapters are especially useful in surveying issues of history and ideology, sources and methods of history writing, and the role of archaeology in the discussion between minimalists and maximalists. Dever closes by examining how successful his effort at telling a secular history of Israel was—answering in the affirmative—before turning attention to how this study affects the fields of archaeology and biblical studies. He makes helpful comments on the benefits of divorcing archaeology from biblical studies as a way to allow both fields to produce fruitful results.

This volume is an intermediate text. It assumes some knowledge of the archaeological task, method, and terminology, as well as some familiarity with the works and methods of others also writing in the field. Technical issues are mentioned in footnotes and the reader is directed to other sources. Readers will find this text invaluable in compiling the amount of data on the present state of archaeology of ancient Israel.

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Jack R. LUNDBOM. *Deuteronomy: A Commentary.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013. 1034 pp. \$80.00.

Originally intended for Eerdmans Critical Commentary Series (discontinued after the death of its editor, David N. Freedman), this massive paperback features a delightfully readable introduction of 97 pages (1-97), 57 pages of bibliography (98-154), and 85 pages of appendices (citations of Deuteronomy in the NT [950-955], an author index [956-967], and a scripture index [968-1034]). In the introduction, Lundbom gives minimal attention to critical matters of text, versions, and translations (just wait for the “Notes” on each unit). Instead, his interest is the date and composition of Deuteronomy, including the relationship of Deuteronomy to Hezekiah’s reform (rather than that of Josiah). Lundbom argues that Deuteronomy 1–28 was not Josiah’s lawbook, but the first edition of Deuteronomy written during Hezekiah’s reform, to which a first supplement was added (chs 29–30) most likely between the reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah. Lundbom argues that “A reform document such as Deuteronomy is more likely to have emanated from a reform in progress” than to have been the impetus for a reform (12). So instead of what is typically regarded to be Josiah’s discovery, the book found by Josiah’s workers was the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32, included as part of a second supplement, chs 31–34, added to Deuteronomy later in Josiah’s reign). Lundbom supports his claim by an unconvincing (to this reader) comparison of Huldah’s oracle (2 Kgs 22:16-20) to the Song of Moses. General similarities do exist, but not enough evidence to support Lundbom’s claim that the “exact combination of ideas” set within the chiasmic framework created by 31:24-30 and 32:44-46 leads to the conclusion: “*Deuteronomy 32 is the lawbook Hilkiyah found in the temple in 622*” (16, emphasis Lundbom’s). The ideas Lundbom sets forth as evidence

are not unusual among the prophets, nor do they constitute precise parallels since they are scattered piecemeal in Deut 32:15-22 and concentrated only in 2 Kgs 22:17 with different vocabulary (Huldah's oracle is in 22:16 and 17). The chiasm is also weak, created only by selective identification of phrases from Deut 31:24,26,30 and phrases from each verse of 32:44-46. Other claims Lundbom makes about the Song of Moses also seem exaggerated: 1) that the lawbook Josiah found is the book Jeremiah consumed (38, see Jer 15:16), and 2) the Song was "a masterful poetic composition that served as a model for all subsequent prophetic preaching" (90-91). One cannot doubt the importance of the Song of Moses, but nor can one question that Lundbom's normally cautious claims are overdrawn here.

The introduction continues with a brief survey of biblical and ancient Near Eastern Law codes (26-28), followed by extensive consideration of the relationship of Deuteronomy to the Prophets: Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. Lundbom suggests that the parallels and overlap of ideas between Amos and Deuteronomy gives "reason enough to support the view that Deuteronomy was written in response to the preaching of this prophet from Tekoa" (30). Reflection on "Deuteronomy and Wisdom" leads Lundbom to consider several prominent wisdom themes: Treatment of the Poor and Needy, Teaching of Children, Blessing, Avoidance of Shame, and Discerning False from True Prophets (an odd inclusion with wisdom, defended on the basis of wisdom's concern for discerning what is true from what is false). Lundbom concludes the introduction with a survey of theological themes in Deuteronomy, including two pages on Holy War—a topic that also receives minimal attention later in the exegesis of pertinent texts, a disappointment in a commentary of this size. Three excursions are included after the introduction: Centralized Worship in the Reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah, Divorce within Judaism and Early Christianity, and the History of Research into the Song of Moses.

The commentary proper (155-949) works through each rhetorical unit by providing a title for each unit followed by Lundbom's translation and sections on: "Rhetoric and Composition," "Notes," and "Message and Audience." Lundbom's translation is true to his goal of staying as close to the Hebrew as possible so as to give the reader a "feel for the language, grammar, and style of the original" (xviii); like the NASB or other "literal" renditions, Lundbom's translation is perhaps a greater benefit for those who read Hebrew than non-Hebraists. "Rhetoric and Composition" includes evidence for the delimitation of the unit under consideration, and the identification of rhetorical features; frequently recognizing balancing or chiastic structures, and inclusios. In poetic texts, Lundbom (heavily influenced by Muilenburg) expands his analysis to the identification of climactic or ballast lines that define stanzas, the repetition of words and particles, the use of rhetorical questions, and shift from third to second person direct address.

Lundbom's most important and significant work appears in the "Notes" of each unit. He begins with meticulous analysis of text-critical issues, followed by detailed consideration of the English translation. In these subjects and his following explanation of the text, phrase by phrase and word by word when necessary, Lundbom offers a compendium of the most important scholarship on Deuteronomy from the Targums to Rashi and ibn Ezra to Driver, Skehan, Weinfeld, Tigay, Nelson, Rofé, Mendenhall,

and many more (as evidenced by the 56-page bibliography that has not merely been offered to the reader but exhaustively used by the writer). He concludes each section with a summary of the unit's message and the possible significance of this message for an audience in late eighth- or early seventh-century Judah ("Message and Audience"). I find these insights to be carefully thought out and of special value to the book. Many commentaries on Deuteronomy claim a date of authorship only to leave the subject and never return to consider the meaning of the text for those receiving it. Lundbom does return, not only at length in the introduction, but as part of his reflection on each unit.

Lundbom provides an enormous service to the graduate student, researcher, or pastor by his critical summation of scholarship on the book of Deuteronomy and the clarity of his own interpretive voice. Despite his claims otherwise, I think non-Hebraists will have some difficulty navigating his numerous references to Hebrew phrases and words, but their patience will be richly rewarded. Hebraists will appreciate the inclusion of Hebrew text and find Lundbom a careful guide in text criticism and translation. Whether or not we agree with his views on the Lawbook of Josiah and the Song of Moses, and I suspect many will not, the relaxed style of Lundbom's prose will invite readers to a wise and pastoral conversation partner for a thorough exegesis of one text, or a journey through the whole of Deuteronomy.

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John HARRISON and James DVORAK, eds. *The New Testament Church: The Challenge of Developing Ecclesiologies*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012. 267 pp. \$26.10.

Discussion ensues on how developed the church's structure was at the time of various NT writings. Views on this structure influence opinions on authorship, readership, and more. Arguments arise on what the NT Church looked like and how that should influence how Christians view and structure the church today. Is the first-century church described or prescribed for us in the twenty-first century?

Harrison and Dvorak take a unique approach. They have combined the efforts of thirteen scholars to look at "The Church" book by book through the NT. *SCJ* editor, William Baker has a chapter on James. Interestingly, ten of the NT documents do not use the term *Ekklesia*: Mark, Luke, 2 Timothy, Titus, 1 & 2 John are among them. The writers for these "non-churched" documents had to take a different approach. Rather than focusing upon the word "church," they gleaned what the writing stated about the "nature" of the church.

Mark Rapinchuk in discussing Mark states, "The absence of a specific term does not warrant the conclusion that the concept it represents is likewise absent . . . [that] there are no ecclesiological ideas and principles present in this text" (26). He proceeds to draw out of Mark issues of the church such as: leadership model, theology of the church, and asks who are the "true church"?

Regarding the Pastoral Epistles Christopher Hutson states, "A major point for

ecclesiology, then, is that Christianity is not the exclusive domain of any nation or ethnic group, but that the God of all people has acted through Christ for the redemption of all people” (167). Hutson goes on to show that the Pastorals (even though two of them do not specifically mention “church”) have a high ecclesiology. Issues such as factionalism within the Christian community, social criticism from outsiders and polity leadership roles reflect the nature of the church even if the term is not used.

William Baker focuses on the problems and concerns in the church James addresses: conflicted souls, the poor, harassment from without, distressed within, prayer, confession, baptism, and leadership. He concludes with this thought: “the ideal church consists of people who whole-heartedly trust in God” (224). The nature of the church can be gleaned without the term church being used (only once in James).

This volume is unique. It takes a holistic approach to the church. By looking at each NT document’s view one can see how each author approached the church. Thus, Harrison and Dvorak have produced a helpful theology of the church. For the historian the book helps one evaluate the development of the church over time. This book is a worthwhile study!!

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Lee Martin MCDONALD. *The Story of Jesus in History and Faith: An Introduction.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013. 393 pp. \$30.00.

For many ministers in the church and students in Christian higher educational contexts, the topic of the historical Jesus is approached with no small measure of suspicion and trepidation. Critical scholarship about Jesus is sometimes minimalistic in what it affirms about his person and life; this, in turn, is sometimes perceived as an attack on the faith. In this substantial volume, McDonald attempts to soften such suspicion and trepidation by introducing his readers to historical Jesus studies within the context of Christian faith. In McDonald’s view, many universities and seminaries approach the study of Jesus primarily from a historical-critical perspective and leave questions of faith to the side. McDonald seeks to redress the problematic dichotomy between history and faith and attempts to “bring history and faith perspectives together” (xx). He is in large measure successful in this attempt to bridge critical scholarship and Christian theology.

In the opening chapters, McDonald offers his readers a welcome introduction to the practice of historiography in historical Jesus studies. These chapters are methodologically robust and answer questions about what we can know about Jesus and how, exactly, we can know it. The reader is ably guided by McDonald’s expert familiarity with both the key developments in the field of Jesus studies (part one) and the primary sources with which scholars work to construct the historical Jesus (part two). McDonald deftly introduces the background, contents, and value of the diverse primary sources that shed light on the life of Jesus. Critical issues pertaining to the canonical Gospels and their literary relationships are carefully navigated and explained. Alongside the canonical Gospels, Jewish and Greco-Roman writings and other

Christian accounts are assiduously weighed as sources for the life of Jesus. Throughout these chapters McDonald displays strong knowledge of the relevant materials, evidence of a long and fruitful career of teaching and writing in this area.

In part three, McDonald surveys the events in the life of Jesus that can be established as historically plausible using the tools of historical-critical scholarship. He is at pains to stress that events that cannot be established using these tools are not therefore impossible or nonhistorical: “This does not necessarily mean that they did not happen, but only that historians *as historians* have no adequate way to assess them” (173, emphasis added). McDonald adopts a posture that is well-informed by the rigorous methodology of the critical historian but always open to the possibility of a God who intervenes in human history. Throughout the text, McDonald fruitfully works with both epistemologies, establishing what can be known about Jesus through the tools of historical-critical inquiry and what can be known through the experience of faith.

Throughout his survey of Jesus’ life, McDonald leans heavily on various “criteria of authenticity,” primarily the criterion of multiple attestation. Readers should be aware that all of the criteria, and the form-critical foundation upon which they stand, have come under fire in recent scholarship. Given the long lag-times between an author’s submission of a manuscript and its actual publication, it would be unfair to criticize McDonald for not interacting with work published just prior to his own. The debate over these issues is recent and ongoing and, if McDonald were to return to the subject, there is no reason to doubt that he would interact with the recent and pertinent scholarship regarding the criteria.

In all, McDonald is to be commended for this well-researched and carefully argued work. It will be a welcome addition to the bookshelf of any minister, undergraduate, or seminary student seriously interested in the study of the historical Jesus from a committed posture of Christian faith.

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M. Eugene BORING. *An Introduction to the New Testament: History, Literature, Theology.* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2012. 840 pp. \$40.00.

With this volume, readers benefit from Eugene Boring’s insights from a scholar’s lifetime of studying the NT. Boring’s 700+ page introduction begins with nearly 200 pages of background material including standard critical and methodological issues as well as historical cultural backgrounds (chs 3-9). He also frames the book with a discussion of the nature of the Bible, particularly embracing the terminology of the “New Testament” as “renewed covenant” (ch 1) and understanding the Bible as the church’s book (ch 2) which ultimately informs his understanding of the Bible as God’s Word in the sense of *ecclesial* revelation (ch 28). This work is set apart through its presentation of NT documents according to the bipartite genres of epistle/letter and Gospel. First, he looks at epistles/letters (chs 10-18), then the Gospels (chs 19-24), and finally a synthesis of both letters and Gospels with the Johannine literature (chs 25-27).

With this epistle/Gospel macrostructure in mind, Boring explores the works of the NT in the following order: Paul's letters are grouped as early mission (1 Thessalonians, Philippians, Philemon), Corinthian (1-2 Corinthians), and latter mission (Galatians, Romans). He then turns to the Deutero-Pauline literature (Colossians, Ephesians, 2 Thessalonians) and the Pastorals (Titus, 1-2 Timothy). Next, he discusses 1 Peter and Hebrews and Roman Christianity. Finally, James, Jude, and 2 Peter are seen as pseudepigraphal complements to Pauline traditions. He then backtracks to the Gospel genre by looking at Mark, Matthew, and Luke-Acts. Finally, Boring offers a treatment of a community that combined the epistle and Gospel genres by examining the Johannine literature (Revelation, 2-3 John, 1 John, Gospel of John).

Historical reconstructions of the NT are notoriously debatable, and anyone who has ever taught a survey knows that choices and compromises must be made. It should also be noted that Boring is not offering a strict chronological reconstruction moving from earliest (1 Thessalonians) to latest (2 Peter) document. Rather, the dominant structure is according to either epistle or Gospel genre and within those genres, works are presented chronologically.

Some scholars and students may find his neat classification of genre as problematic (even Boring notes Hebrews is not a letter) while others will have their own reasons to accept or reject Boring's chronological reconstruction. In the classroom, this may benefit an instructor as a dialogue partner or be a source of tension. Boring can be applauded for helping students to read the NT with fresh eyes through his alternative presentation to the canonical order of texts and to recognize the significance of Paul's writings as early. Those who see James or Jude as earlier voices of the Christian community will find this reconstruction less helpful.

For students or instructors seeking a comprehensive treatment of the NT and the development of the early church, Boring's book offers a plausible construction. Those seeking a treatment that relies less upon a scholar's reconstruction of early Christianity may want to look elsewhere. While there was a time when the selection of NT introductions was few and far between, we no longer live in that time. In the myriad of selection, Eugene Boring's voluminous work includes fundamental elements for a critical introduction but also rises above to distinguish itself.

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Joel B. GREEN and Lee Martin MCDONALD, eds. *The World of the New Testament: Cultural, Social and Historical Contexts*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013. 672 pp. \$49.99.

Green and McDonald have compiled an excellent resource which provides an introduction to the background of the NT. Encouraged by the Institute for Biblical Research, this book reflects the evangelical tradition of the community, as well as its commitment for excellence in scholarship. The work begins with two introductory chapters, outlining the editors' conviction for proper understanding of the various contexts of the NT and providing a chronology for some of the more established dates

related to the events of the NT. Following these introductory matters the book proceeds through five parts, each of which investigates a distinct area of context.

The first part examines the Jewish heritage of the NT, including the concept of exile in the consciousness of certain Jewish communities among the Second Temple period and the time of the NT. Other topics include a historical overview of the Hasmonean Era and Herodian dynasty, as well as discussions of the concepts of monotheism and Jewish scriptural interpretation. Perrin's chapter on exile and MacDonald's chapter on monotheism represent the strengths of this section, both offering an honest assessment of the religious worldview of the ancient Jewish communities.

The second part turns to look at the influence of Roman Hellenism on the NT. Chapters in this section address the topics of Greek religion and the imperial cult, Greco-Roman philosophy and civic associations, economy and slavery in the Roman Empire, as well as family dynamics and education. The gems of this section are Bartchy's chapter examining slavery in the Roman world and Cohick's chapter on women, children, and families. These chapters present a valuable reminder not to read contemporary perceptions (such as American experience with slavery and household codes) into biblical texts.

The third part builds further upon the first two, investigating Jewish life in light of Roman Hellenism. Comprising one of the longest sections of the book, this part contains chapters which survey facets of ancient Jewish writing, including the Dead Sea scrolls, apocalyptic literature, and noncanonical Jewish writings. It also includes chapters which examine various Jewish institutions and sects, such as the Temple, Samaritans, Pharisees, Zealots, and the Sanhedrin. Finally, some chapters describe various aspects of Jewish culture, including identity, beliefs, practices, education, and healthcare. Though this section covers numerous subjects of great value, the large number of chapters allows for repetition and some ideological inconsistency amongst the various contributors.

The book switches gears in the fourth part, as it turns to assess the literary context of early Christianity. Three initial chapters examine the subjects of reading and writing in the NT world, pseudonymous writings, and different literary forms within the NT. The section continues with several chapters which analyze ancient sources and their connection to the NT, including Homer, Josephus, Philo, rabbinic literature, and other noncanonical Christian writings. While some of these chapters provide valuable insight into biblical exposition, some (such as Phillips on Homer) admit that a direct connection between these ancient works and the NT texts is less likely.

In the final part of the book, the reader enjoys an expedition around the world of the NT. After a chapter that explores the benefits and challenges of archaeological research, several chapters take a turn showcasing a different geographical region, such as Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Asia, Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia, and Rome. The book concludes with brief aids related to money and measurements in the NT era, a glossary, and four exhaustive indexes. Each of these resources positively increases the accessibility of the work.

Each chapter, therefore, provides an introduction to a particular aspect of NT background, equipping the reader with essential information on that subject. Further-

more, the annotated bibliography that ends each chapter provides a valuable guide to additional resources, enabling those who wish to further build upon the foundation provided. By providing these resources to readers, the work makes up for some of the missed opportunities in discussing some topics, as well as a general lack of alternative viewpoints to the evangelical one which underscores the work. Unfortunately, the work does not provide a similar resource to help the reader build bridges between the ancient contexts discussed and the contemporary contexts in which we live today. Still, this work represents a valuable asset to an undergraduate or graduate classroom, where the text as a whole could be assigned as well as individual chapters depending on the topic of the course.

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Thomas R. HATINA. *New Testament Theology and Its Quest for Relevance.* New York: Bloomsbury, 2013. 277 pp. \$29.95.

What is NT theology and what should it do? Should its basis be the canon of the NT or should it include matters related to the wider development of earliest Christianity, like historical Jesus studies? Should a NT theology be structured by NT authors (Luke, John, Paul, and others), should it be structured chronologically, or is there another way? Should a NT theology be descriptive of the development of early Christian theological reflection or should it contain a prescriptive element, particularly for those who believe the texts are authoritative? These are just a few of the issues that Hatina addresses in this volume. Specifically, Hatina states that his aim for the book is “to serve as a methodological introduction to the field of New Testament theology aimed at a range of readers. . . . It is intended to be a guide which aims to help readers understand how the practitioners in this discipline have wrestled with the relationship between historical reconstruction (i.e., description) of the New Testament and its interpretation (i.e., normativity) in the modern world” (2).

Hatina proceeds in chapter one by introducing the key problems regarding NT theology: scholars do not agree on the parameters and purposes of the discipline. The author outlines two approaches to NT theology. First is the foundational approach, which Hatina defines as “a study of that theology which is exclusively *found in or limited to* the New Testament” (19). Second is the dialectical approach, “a study of that theology which is *based upon or rooted in or in accordance with* the New Testament” (19). The remainder of chapter one is a survey of the works of scholars who have written NT theology from one perspective or the other. An examination and critique of the foundational approach form the basis of chapters two through four. Chapter two discusses what Hatina perceives to be the flaws inherent in the foundationalist approach. The flaws stem from a dependence on historical-criticism to provide both objectivity and meaning. According to Hatina, objectivity is impossible and the findings of historical-critical exegesis cannot provide meaning. In chapter three the author takes a step back and situates the discipline of NT theology in the history of biblical interpretation. Hatina demonstrates that NT theology is a thoroughly modern exercise that arose as a way of bridging the gap between exegesis and dogmatics (115). Chapter

four examines the two ways that foundationalist NT theologians structure their writings. Kümmel and Jeremias are representative of the chronological approach, which Hatina finds problematic given the difficulties scholars have with dating the writings of the NT (and the resultant inability to trace development of thought between NT authors), the relationship between the historical reconstruction and canon formation (the place of Q in the theology), and the lack of consensus among historical Jesus scholars (125-128). Next, the NT theologies of Marshall and Caird are examined from an author-by-author approach. Hatina recognizes the value of such an approach to “organize well the accumulated data from the ancient writers” but also notes that “it usually does not adequately interpret the data in a coherent manner” (136). The end result of this approach, according to the author, is not a NT theology but theologies. For Hatina, when attempts to unify the theologies are made, a canon-within-the-canon inevitably arises as Paul and/or John provide the interpretive lenses for the entire enterprise.

By chapter five it is evident that Hatina prefers the dialectical structuring of NT theology. Before the author puts forth his own proposal, several dialectical approaches are also examined and evaluated. The salvation-history approach of Cullmann, Ladd, Goppelt, and Wright is critiqued for its circular reasoning and attempts to anchor theology in objective, uninterpreted history (149). The dogmatic or thematic approach undertaken by Schlatter, Richardson, and Schelkle is praised for the ability to provide unity to the various theological emphases of the NT, establishing “a complementary relationship between the two Testaments,” offering both a descriptive and prescriptive perspective, and recognizing the presuppositional faith commitment of inspiration at the outset (160). Hatina does offer critique of this approach as well, noting its failure to address the contemporary pluralism of Western culture and how Christians and the Church should interact with it (161). The final dialectical approach is Bultmann’s existentialism. Hatina recognizes Bultmann for the polarizing figure that he has become, noting that critiques of his demythologizing program have ranged from “too far” to “incomplete” (168). For Hatina, however, the largest problem that Bultmann exposed “was the need to develop an adequate hermeneutic which is faithful both to the historical (or descriptive) and to the normative components in the formation of a New Testament theology” (169).

Chapters six and seven are the author’s way forward. Here Hatina proposes “a much broader approach that is rooted in the nature and function of religion and/or myth as social capital,” answering how the NT can speak to the pressing issues of our time. Chapter six explores the differences between the study of religion and the study of theology and how both can aid the formation of NT theology. After briefly outlining the academic disciplines of religious studies and theology, Hatina urges contemporary NT theologians to come to their task with humility, recognizing the “plurality of religious voices” of our culture (207). Hatina writes that without humility “I do not see how New Testament theology can be welcomed, let alone respected” (207). In other words, NT theologians must understand not simply their own narrow theological climate, but the religious climate of Western culture if they are to gain a voice. Chapter seven is Hatina’s attempt at a methodology for NT theologies based on his prior survey of the discipline. Here, the author states that “the interpretive process is

determined by the current context of the reader, be it a community or an individual” (210). This is central to Hatina’s proposal since the primary aim of a dialectical NT theology is to demonstrate the relevance of the NT today. Such a theology will be rooted in the Church, which has always sought the meaning of its Scriptures for its own time. Hatina’s proposal also includes a critical exegesis informed by “ancillary disciplines, such as literary, social-scientific, rhetorical and linguistic study” (212). The connection between the Church’s contemporary situation and rigorous exegesis is neither right belief about what the NT teaches nor activism uninformed by exegesis, but rather a distinction between historical reconstruction and theological construction in order that the two may be in dialog with one another (215-216). Such dialog can result in myth-making in the present, which Hatina defines as persuading others concerning the faith and its practice in such a way that provides an identity that is connected to the past (228). Hatina’s conclusion offers his thoughts on the necessity of such a NT theology as well as further reflections on the humble posture of the NT theologian.

Contrary to Hatina’s intent, this book would not suit the undergraduate classroom and certainly not a general readership (2). This worthwhile volume should, however, serve as an entry point to scholars and seminary/graduate students interested in NT theology as Hatina has provided a succinct survey and evaluation of the discipline. Further, and more importantly, the method proposed by Hatina offers a way forward that draws on the best aspects of both past and current scholarship in many fields, seeks to engage contemporary culture and religious studies in a way that offers the NT theologian a voice in the public sphere, and finds its ultimate expression in the Church that is seeking justice in the world.

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David CRUMP. *Encountering Jesus, Encountering Scripture: Reading the Bible Critically in Faith.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013. 155 pp. \$20.00.

This volume is a challenging yet insightful blend of biblical theology and existential philosophy. Crump begins his work by recounting his own experience on a journey of doubt that many Christian academics seem to take. When he realized that the Gospel writers’ portrayals of Jesus were more nuanced than his youthful faith had imagined, Crump faced a crisis of belief—where could he find the true Jesus of history? Like a pastor who uses a deductive approach to preach a difficult truth, Crump acknowledges his resolution early: the only “true” picture of Jesus is the Jesus born of faith (1-4, 12).

Crump’s personal resolution of this crisis between academic learning and heartfelt faith begins with the unlikely person of Rudolph Bultmann. Known primarily for his insights into form criticism and his anti-supernatural bias to Scripture, Bultmann nevertheless emphasized that the true portrait of Jesus is found primarily through faith (“commitment precedes insight,” 7). However, Bultmann’s rejection of the supernatural proved too inconsistent for Crump, who chose instead to follow Søren

Kierkegaard’s insistence that the miracles of the Bible are necessary for an orthodox faith (11). Using Kierkegaard’s existential and experiential approach to faith as a guide (13-14), Crump devotes the bulk of the book to demonstrating how Jewish contemporaries of Jesus—NT authors and skeptics alike—were forced to take their own “leap of faith,” much like academics and lay Christians today (115-19).

Perhaps the greatest strength of this book is Crump’s ability to challenge common assumptions about how the NT writers used the OT. For example, most preachers and lay Christians are familiar with the idea that most of Jesus’ contemporaries did not recognize him as the Messiah (16). However, Crump argues forcefully that no one could have recognized Jesus as the Messiah based on OT prophecies *because the bridge from the Old Testament to the New Testament simply was not there* (20-26). Instead, Crump posits that the NT writers (specifically, the Synoptic authors, John, and Paul) as well as modern readers must make a leap of faith based on a personal experience with Jesus, a leap that would then allow both writers and readers to “look backward” to see evidence of Jesus in the OT (25-26). Crump demonstrates convincingly that Matthew (as well as the other Gospel writers) does indeed seem to “twist the Scriptures” (McCasland, 1961; 17-18, 25). He also notes that there is no evidence for a suffering Messiah in Second Temple literature (23). Crump follows these observations by noting that neither the rich young ruler of the Gospels nor Paul the Pharisee could be blamed for not “seeing” Jesus in the Scriptures. After all, both of these men lived faultless lives according to Torah (63, 81). Yet both men were “offended” by Jesus, after which the rich young ruler walked away from Jesus while Paul went on to become an apostle (53). In short, both of these men experienced the same shock of offense that believers and skeptics experience today, a shock that can only be resolved through a decision to believe (72).

I am not certain that Crump is correct in dismissing the work of evangelical scholars such as D. A. Carson, who use typology and *sensus plenior* to describe how the Gospel writers and Paul “found” Jesus in the OT. Adopting a slightly mocking tone, Crump seems to dismiss these arguments as easily as skeptics might dismiss Crump’s own arguments for faith.

Crump’s analysis of this matter of faith versus academic paralysis is both insightful and thought provoking. His balance of historical-critical findings with evangelical faith is refreshing.

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Chris KEITH. *Jesus against the Scribal Elite: The Origins of the Conflict.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014. 208 pp. \$22.99.

In this volume, Keith endeavors to explain the origins of the conflict between Jesus and the religious authorities who opposed him. He argues that “Jesus’s very status as a teacher was controversial” (6) and that the scribal elite opposed Jesus because they did not regard him as an authoritative teacher with direct access to Scripture.

The first four chapters address Jesus’ status as teacher. According to Keith, there

was a social distinction between “those who [could] access . . . the holy text themselves, and those who must have others access it for them” (20). The illiterate were dependent for religious instruction upon teachers with “scribal literacy,” defined as the “state of literacy held by those (comparatively) few literate-educated interpreters of the Hebrew Scriptures” (27). The Gospels identify Jesus as “teacher,” but the question of Jesus’ literacy remains.

In chapter two Keith uses the Rejection at Nazareth episode as a case study for examining Jesus’ literacy and status. In Mark and Matthew, the crowd expresses surprise at Jesus’ teaching because they know him as a carpenter (Mark 6:3) or carpenter’s son (Matt 13:55), thereby exposing their opinion that Jesus “[did] not belong in the role of teacher” (46). Laborers were not expected to have scribal literacy. By contrast, in Luke 4:16-30 the author omits the question regarding Jesus’ occupation and portrays Jesus performing literate tasks.

Keith seeks to reconcile these conflicting descriptions in chapters three and four. He introduces a method in Historical Jesus research called the “memory approach,” which holds that “no aspect of past reality survives into the present in an uninterpreted form” (81). Since writing and even remembering stories about Jesus involved interpretation, a text’s representation of the past must be evaluated on the basis of historical data. Applying this method Keith persuasively argues that Jesus was not scribally literate but was nevertheless perceived to be so by those who saw him teaching in synagogues and interpreting Scripture.

In chapters five and six Keith analyzes the controversy narratives as evidence for a conflict over Scripture and authority and offers a plausible scenario for its development. The conflict could have begun as an investigation by the scribal elite into the teaching and authority of an uneducated teacher from Galilee. These investigations evolved into tests intended to expose Jesus as “an imposter to the role of authoritative teacher” (129). As Jesus outwitted his opponents and shamed them publically, however, these rhetorical skirmishes escalated.

It is in the conclusion that Keith’s book exposes its only major weakness—he provides no explanation, and does not intend to, for the escalation of the conflict from rhetorical clashes into violent plots. He points out that his “is the first book to approach the controversy narratives in terms of how Jesus’ early career led to the emergence of the conflict rather than how the conflict, once in full bloom, led eventually to Jesus’ crucifixion” (155). This book is about the *origin* of the conflict, not the denouement. Unfortunately, beginnings require middles and ends. Keith himself, however, distances his convincing representation of the beginning of the conflict from its violent end when he writes, “we do not need to assume that the authorities first paid attention to Jesus for the same reasons that they eventually killed him,” and, “Jesus was not crucified because of confusion over scribal literacy and scribal authority” (156). It is regrettable that Keith has not extended his study by one chapter to offer a conceivable description of the next step in the evolution of the conflict. The reader is left on their own to fit Keith’s argument into the broader narrative of Jesus’ life.

This book is well-researched and persuasively argued. Keith writes with a casual, inviting tone that makes the material accessible to students and any interested reader. The book could be used effectively in an undergraduate course on the Gospels, and

chapter two would make an excellent stand-alone reading in a Gospels or NT course. His summary of the memory approach would make for a good introduction to contemporary strands of Historical Jesus research. Keith's contribution to our understanding of Jesus and early Christian representations of him is well worth reading and thinking with.

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Bart D. EHRMAN. *Forgery and Counterforgery: The Use of Literary Deceit in Early Christian Polemics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. 628 pp. \$39.95.

In Bart Ehrman's latest monograph, he attempts to redescribe a large, diverse collection of early Christian canonical and noncanonical writings under the categories of "forgery" and "counterforgery." He is largely successful in this attempt, surveying over fifty examples of forgery in nascent Christianity. Throughout the book, Ehrman gives readers good reason to consider particular texts under these categories, and provides insight as to how each text functioned as a forgery: who it was polemicizing and, as far as it is possible to reconstruct, why this polemic was deployed. Little has been written on the phenomenon of early Christian forgery, particularly in English, and Ehrman's book will no doubt be the "go-to" text on the subject for quite a while.

The scope of Ehrman's inquiry is restricted to texts "whose authors appear to make false authorial claims, for polemical purposes, within the Christian tradition of the first four centuries" (6). In Part I, Ehrman defines his terms and establishes Greco-Roman attitudes toward literary forgeries. "Forgery" is defined as a text containing a false authorial claim meant to deceive the audience into believing the text comes from a well-known or authoritative figure (1; cf. 30). The related term, "counterforgery," is defined as a forged text "designed to counter the ideas, doctrines, views, or perspectives found precisely in another forgery" (4). Ehrman carefully establishes his context and shows that a forged text, when discovered, was roundly condemned as a "lie" (*pseudos*), "bastard" (*nothos*), or "counterfeit" (*kibdēlos*) in Greco-Roman antiquity.

In Part II, Ehrman categorizes various Christian texts as forgeries and counterforgeries. Here emerges a great strength of the book, as the same forged texts are viewed through different lenses according to the texts' various theological aims. For example, the Pastoral Epistles are considered as forgeries dealing with eschatology (192ff), and then revisited much later as forgeries involving church leadership (367ff). Other texts are considered and reconsidered in later chapters according to the overlapping categories of forgeries related to teachings about eschatology, Paul and the Pauline tradition, Jew-Christian relations, church order and leadership, debates over "the flesh," later theological controversies, and early Christian apologetics.

In the concluding chapter, Ehrman considers why Christians would employ tactics of literary deceit in service of gospel truth. His answer is simple: the composers of Christian forgeries were willing to deceive because they did not believe lies to be harmful "if the intention of the liar was good" (545). In fact, Ehrman supplies good evi-

dence for early Christian belief in a kind of “medicinal” falsehood, a lie for the greater good (543ff). This would variously explain why a pseudo-Paul—or a pseudo-Peter, -Thomas, or -Clement—would write in the name of an authoritative figure: the deceiver understood his intent to promote a particular vision of Christian teaching as good reason to employ deceit. The ends justified the means.

Not all readers will be persuaded by all of Ehrman’s arguments, especially those in which particular canonical texts are understood as forgeries or counterforgeries. Although Ehrman ends up treating some of the NT documents as forgeries, he is fair in presenting both sides of the case. Ehrman reviews the arguments for and against apostolic authorship of each of the disputed texts and, if nothing else, shows that there are serious problems to be grappled with when it comes to the authorship of these documents. In all, scholars and upper-level graduate students will be well-served by this exhaustively-researched and incisively-argued survey of forged texts in the first four centuries of nascent Christianity.

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Rodney J. DECKER. *Reading Koine Greek: An Introduction and Integrated Workbook.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014. 672 pp. \$49.99.

The last few decades have seen significant and increasing linguistic engagement among scholars working with NT Greek. Little by little, this engagement has made its way into the literature that addresses matters related to the Greek language and the NT. However, grammar books, particularly introductory grammars, while acknowledging such work and its results, were until quite recently being written primarily from the perspective of traditional grammar. The situation changed with the publication of Porter, Reed and O’Donnell, *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010). Now, Greek teachers looking for a linguistically informed and engaged grammar have another option in the form of Rodney Decker’s latest volume.

Decker (1953–2014) has a strong background in linguistic theory (see for example his published work *Temporal deixis of the Greek Verb in the Gospel of Mark with Reference to Verbal Aspect*, among others). His depth of engagement is evident in every chapter, from his functional approach to the role of cases to verbal aspect. This is not to say that Decker ignores or has discarded traditional grammar. Rather, he has taken that which is good from traditional grammar and integrates the best that linguistics has to offer as well. For too long, Greek teachers who wished to incorporate linguistics into their instruction were forced to either supplement (or even correct) the grammars they employed or wait until an intermediate course to introduce linguistically formulated categories and concepts. With the publication of Decker’s textbook, they now have reliable options.

Pedagogically, the author shows sensitivity to the challenges of learning Greek, no doubt the result of his many years teaching beginning Greek students. Unlike older grammars, which for the most part began with verbs, Decker begins with nouns, pronouns, and cases. In this, he proceeds along similar lines as Mounce’s popular *Basics of*

Biblical Greek. However, Decker begins introducing simple verb concepts much earlier. This provides the student with the necessary tools to begin reading complete grammatically simple texts without assistance. One of the benefits of this approach is surely the sense of accomplishment and confidence it produces in the student, something that anyone who has taught beginning Greek knows is too often in short supply.

Achieving proficiency in reading is clearly Decker's central goal. As the title indicates, the textbook does not have an accompanying workbook. Rather, exercises are found at the end of each chapter. The readings, though primarily taken from the NT, are also drawn from the LXX, the Pseudepigrapha, and the Apostolic Fathers. In the earlier chapters, these exercises are made up of single clauses with glosses provided for unfamiliar words. However, after verbs are introduced, the exercises become, for the most part, single passages of several verses. This has the advantage of getting students accustomed to reading extended texts. Teachers have the opportunity, if they desire, to integrate discussion of discourse considerations above the level of word-group and clause. It should be noted that, in the reading exercises, there is no space for students to write out a translation or related notes. In this regard, one might debate whether or not the textbook lives up to its billing as an "integrated workbook."

One element that is notably absent from the exercises is parsing. For those accustomed to heavy parsing work as a part of the learning process, this will be quite startling. While the morphological features of the language are thoroughly covered, Decker's approach does not seem to place a high priority on directed reinforcement of the formal elements of the language. As stated above, his primary objective is apparently reading proficiency. Certainly, conversation about and reinforcement of forms will take place as students read. However, there are no exercises that focus on this exclusively.

The vocabulary sections of each chapter are characterized by a welcome advancement from previous grammars. In addition to the standard glosses, Decker provides a full descriptive definition of each word. This is particularly helpful for parts of speech such as conjunctions and other particles. In addition to the gloss, a description of the word's function is also provided. Electronic vocabulary cards are available for mobile devices, including audio to help with pronunciation. There is even a game in which the student is provided several Greek words and their corresponding glosses. Scoring is based on how quickly the student can match all the words to the glosses.

Beyond the grammar proper, the textbook has a substantive appendix section with many useful charts and a short lexicon of common words. In addition, additional resources are available for download via the Baker Academic website.

For some teachers, Decker's textbook may incorporate information that they consider too advanced for beginning students. However, the arrangement of the text allows the teacher to assign shorter readings that focus solely on the elements of the language he or she prefers to emphasize at each stage. It is often the case (far too often, in most cases) that the beginning Greek textbook becomes the "go to" resource for students as they continue to use the language for their biblical studies. While this textbook does, arguably, incorporate more of what some might consider advanced grammar, it also puts a resource in the students' hands that will serve them in a manner far superior to most of its predecessors. For those who are looking for a linguistically informed intro-

ductory textbook, and who have grown weary of saying “I know [author X] says this, but . . .” Decker’s contribution is a welcome and refreshing option.

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Ron D. PETERS. *The Greek Article: A Functional Study of the o- Items in the Greek New Testament with Special Emphasis on the Greek Article.* Linguistic Biblical Studies: 9. Ed. by Stanley E. Porter. Leiden: Brill, 2014. 288 pp. \$133.00.

Peters, Professor of NT at Great Lakes Christian College, has presented portions of his research on the Greek article at several *Stone-Campbell Journal* conferences. Many of his reviews of NT volumes have been published as well. The current volume appears in a series that contains several monographs that connect linguistic discussions to biblical studies. This volume is the first in the series to construct a grammar for a part-of-speech of the Greek language. This volume is the published version of his dissertation at McMaster Divinity College, and connects semantics, discourse function, systemic functional linguistics, and morphology through contextual analysis to determine the meaning and function of the Greek article.

This volume has eleven chapters, followed by a bibliography and three indices. The first chapter provides a literature review regarding how the Greek article is explained from the classic Greek authors to the present day. The second chapter explains the methodology along with a rationale for the selection of the texts within the volume. The third, fourth, and fifth chapters discuss relative pronouns and their clauses in their definitions, functions, and structures. The sixth chapter defines the function of the Greek article, and the seventh, eighth, and ninth chapters illustrate and discuss the Greek article in conjunction with several parts of speech, clauses and nouns. The tenth chapter examines the structural role of the article. Chapter eleven concludes the volume while providing pointers to biblical exegetes. The three indices provide the ancient and modern sources along with a scripture index following the bibliography.

This volume begins by challenging the connection of the Greek article to the demonstrative pronoun, which had been based partly on German and English usages of both the article and demonstrative pronoun (2). It next challenges the definition of the Greek article as a “substantivizer,” which was given to it by German and English scholars of Ancient and Hellenistic Greek (16). When surveying “rules” for the article in various grammars, this volume advises that one should have an understanding of the basis for the various uses of any part of speech before defining that part of speech. To do otherwise results in “rules” that conflict with each other (17). Conflicting “rules” for a part of speech may be seen as evidence that the “rules” are not based upon a proper understanding of that part of speech. This volume also positively points out that recent grammars are improved over older grammars in that they have rejected “definiteness” for the Greek article (38).

Throughout this volume, it is argued that the Greek article is primarily related to the relative pronoun and not the demonstrative pronoun. This is demonstrated in this

volume through morphology (9, 49, 69, 75, 150), grammar, and function (150). First, the *o*- items are grouped morphologically, and are compared and contrasted, resulting in the surprising connection of the Greek article with the relative pronoun (75, 181, 191). Then, this volume groups the *o*- items by function and compares and contrasts similarities in those functions to arrive at a result mirroring that of morphology. It also shows how relative clauses and clauses which contain the article-plus-participle perform similar functions (121). As a pointing device, the Greek article mirrors the relative pronoun in pointing outside the text rather than into the text like the English article does (123, 133). Once the decision is reached regarding “concreteness” for primary meaning of the Greek article, it is argued that the degree to which it is concrete is determined by cotextual elements (181). This appears to be done to highlight the possibility that a speaker might use the article to portray something as concrete even when in reality it may not be concrete. The subjective portrayal of a referent being concrete as opposed to abstract is the key to understanding the function of the Greek article, so one should not use the mere presence of the Greek article to assume automatically that its referent is in fact a real item.

This volume fills several gaps in literature. It is the first work that argues for the connection between the Greek article and the relative pronoun. In doing that, this volume also identifies positively what the Greek article *does* do—it characterizes its referent as concrete as opposed to abstract. This volume has helpfully analyzed texts containing arthrous and anarthrous nouns in close proximity to illustrate the concrete and abstract nouns in context next to each other (240, 241, 244). Future Greek grammarians will need to consult this grammar for the Greek article which is robustly argued in this volume and interact with its methods and conclusions before reaching a decision regarding the Greek article in their grammars. Biblical exegetes of all levels would do well to add the insights of this volume regarding the function of the Greek article to their practice of determining the meaning of the text.

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Gregory P. FEWSTER. *Creation Language in Romans 8: A Study in Monosemy.* *Linguistic Biblical Studies: 8.* Leiden: Brill, 2013. 220 pp. \$133.00.

Fewster is a PhD student at McMaster Divinity College, and an Associate Editor for the journal, *Biblical and Ancient Greek Linguistics*. He is also a coeditor with Stanley Porter for *Paul and Pseudepigraphy*, (*Pauline Studies 8*; Brill, 2013). The current volume appears in a series that contains several works that connect linguistic discussions to biblical studies. This volume is the first in the series to discuss lexis and word meaning at length. This volume is the published version of his thesis for his master’s degree, and connects corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, systemic functional linguistics, Hallidayan lexicogrammar, and monosemy to determine the meaning of κτίσις in Romans 8.

This volume has eight chapters, followed by several appendices and indices. The first chapter provides a literature review regarding how κτίσις is interpreted in Rom

8:18-23. The second, third, and fourth chapters explain various methodologies and frameworks upon which the remaining chapters depend. These include Systemic Functional Linguistics, monosemy, Corpus Linguistics, Lexicogrammar, and metaphor. The fifth chapter discusses findings related to the meaning of κρίσις in a defined corpus of Greek literature. The sixth chapter discusses the role of κρίσις in the structure of the text, and the seventh chapter discusses ideational function. The eighth chapter concludes and points to further research. The first three appendices provide the composition of the corpus, followed by collocation and concordance charts. Indices of ancient and modern sources follow the bibliography.

Fewster begins by challenging the methodology used to determine a word's meaning, bringing works by Barr, Silva, Louw and Nida into his critique (16). He makes a distinction between context and co-text, showing how he will shape his methodology to determine what elements near a word will determine its meaning in its setting (21). He next proceeds to dismantle the theoretical foundation for polysemy and presents a strong case for monosemy as the paradigm for determining a word's meaning (23, 24, 37, 38). As Fewster connects Corpus Linguistics to his paradigm, he is careful to define what genres and periods of Greek literature are appropriate for use as a corpus to establish word meanings (53).

In this volume, Fewster demonstrates an ability to connect several areas of linguistic research to bear on one problem, that of determining a word's meaning in a specific passage. He helpfully includes Hoey's rules for determining the sense of a word (69). The structure is laid out to enhance the reader in connecting the points made from one chapter to the other, and the thought flows smoothly from the beginning to the end. His vocabulary will challenge the typical biblical studies student at times. While those who prefer a cognitive approach to linguistics will be disappointed, since in almost every case, Fewster prefers the approach that is socially informed, those who favor a social determination of meaning will find this volume connecting various linguistic methodologies that support this understanding.

This volume crafts a series of linguistic strategies into a method for determining a word's meaning in the NT. This volume both challenges other strategies for determining a word's meaning and lays out a way forward in improving methodology used to decide the meaning for a word in its setting. Whether Fewster's approach is to be adopted or not, Fewster has shown future scholars the linguistic pieces with which they must wrestle if progress is to be made. This volume is well-fitted for its series, and provides the series with a robust handling of the linguistic issues surrounding word meaning.

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Michael F. BIRD. *The Gospel of the Lord: How the Early Church Wrote the Story of Jesus.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014. 394 pp. \$30.00.

In this volume, Michael Bird traces from the historical Jesus to the dominance of the fourfold Gospel collection in six chapters, each of which includes an excursus at its

end. Chapter One introduces the book briefly and its excursus argues that the early Christian usage of *euangelion* derived primarily from Isaiah and only possibly in dialogue with the Roman imperial cult. Chapter Two argues that the earliest Christians tended to “conserve” and “preserve” the Jesus tradition when transmitting it (66). The excursus that follows this chapter lays out Bird’s own methodological approach to historical criticism and the Gospels, which he terms “believing criticism” (68). Chapter Three addresses the development of the oral Jesus tradition and its relation to the historical Jesus. In addition to discussing various models of oral tradition, Bird appeals to recent developments in social memory theory in order to argue that the Church’s memory of Jesus was “reliable but also refracted” and that the historical Jesus “cannot be clinically separated from the devotion of his followers” (113). The excursus to this chapter is an extended critique of form criticism’s view of the development of the Jesus tradition. Chapter Four primarily addresses the Synoptic Problem and Johannine Question. With regard to the former, Bird argues for Markan Priority, Q (what he calls “Q-lite”—“written and oral sources [that] may have been jointly shared by Luke and Matthew,” 171), and Luke’s knowledge of Matthew. With regard to the latter, Bird argues that John knew the Synoptic tradition, but was not directly dependent upon it. The excursus for this chapter compiles for the reader patristic quotations on the order of the canonical Gospels. Chapter Five assesses the genre and goals of the Gospels, comparing them to other ancient literature and also discussing the various manners in which ancient authors described Jesus books as “sayings,” “memoirs,” or “gospels.” Bird argues that the Gospels were distinct adaptations of ancient biography, intended to supplement ancient Israel’s Scriptures with authoritative accounts of Jesus. The excursus then argues for how and why noncanonical gospels “lost out” (290) in early Christianity. In the sixth and final chapter, Bird covers the ascendancy of the fourfold Gospel collection, whose emergence he places at 110–140 CE, emphasizing that its eventual prominence was ultimately due to the popularity of the four canonical Gospels among proto-orthodox Christians. This chapter’s excursus then argues that the state of the Gospel manuscript tradition in the second century was more stable than is typically thought. Chapters Two and Three, as well as the excursus for Chapter Three, are revised versions of previously published articles.

This volume is an ambitious project, covering the entire formative period for the gospel tradition in early Christianity. Bird is at his best when introducing readers to the scholarly landscape, synthesizing a complicated nexus of evidence and ideas for his readers. He presents the important scholarly viewpoints, taking care to note their relation to each other and each position’s strengths and weaknesses. His overviews of the Synoptic Problem, Johannine Question, and designations for Jesus books in early Christianity could function very well as assigned reading for students and will also be beneficial to scholars.

The degree to which this book soars at the level of synthesis and presentation, however, is sometimes mirrored by an insufficiency at the levels of detail, argument, and method. As one example, Bird revives the argument that the disciples recorded teachings of Jesus in notebooks that eventually could have served as sources for the Gospel authors (45-48). He notes that “it was quite common among literary elites of the Greco-Roman world to take notes” of their teachers (46), which is correct. He also

notes that there are likely early Christian *testimonia* collections of OT passages by the time of Justin and Irenaeus in the second century and certainly by P.Ryl. 460 in the fourth century, which is also correct. On this basis, Bird states that Q “may” have started as a notebook and that some of Justin Martyr’s citations of sayings of Jesus “may” have been based on a notebook. He also states that Papias’s *Expositions of the Sayings of the Lord* was “typical of notebooks” and cites Stanton’s claim that early Christian addition to the codex format was possibly preceded by usage of notebooks (47). Bird thus concludes, “It is highly probable that notebooks were used *by Jesus’ own disciples*” (47–48, emphasis added). Bird, however, has not shown how the existence of OT *testimonia* and collections of sayings of Jesus in the second and fourth centuries prove the usage of the notebook format one- to three-hundred years earlier, and of course Q remains hypothetical. The problem here is not necessarily with the theory that early Christians used *testimonia* but rather with how Bird appeals to a hypothetical source and evidence from much later periods in order to carry an argument about reality in the late 20s or early 30s CE.

Furthermore, if Bird is correct in his later argument that the Gospels were widely circulated and cited already by the time period of Papias, to the extent that he dates the authoritative fourfold collection possibly as early as 110 CE, then Papias’s and Justin’s collections of sayings of Jesus are defensibly the same phenomenon as the OT *testimonia* in P.Ryl. 460 and earlier in the Qumran *testimonia*; that is, they are excerpted samples from an extant textual tradition, and thus not direct evidence for notebooks taken in a classroom setting at the feet of a teacher.

Similarly, Bird nowhere demonstrates that Jesus’ own disciples came from the same socio-economic class as the “literary elites of the Greco-Roman world” or educated early Christians such as Justin, Irenaeus, and Papias. The same issues arise with Bird’s claim that early Jesus-followers could have preserved Jesus’ teachings by way of their trained memories because “learning by memory was simply a part of ancient education” (90). This is a pressing question since NT traditions (John 7:15; Acts 4:13) and evidence from the patristic period (Origen, *Cels.* 1.29, 62) attest the common (though not ubiquitous) conviction that Jesus and his disciples were not from the educated class. I affirm with Bird that the Jesus tradition, at some level, has roots in the life of the historical Jesus. But his attribution of education to the disciples in order to buttress those claims is too quick and, in my opinion, unnecessary. In the very least, these positions require further argumentation.

A similar matter arises in Bird’s usage of social memory theory. As someone who is invested in the role of social memory theory in Gospels scholarship, I was pleased to see such a methodological grounding to Bird’s volume, but also left uneasy with the manner in which it was used. Bird is entirely correct that, at the level of tradition, one cannot separate the historical Jesus from his followers’ faith in him. He is also correct that social memory theory provides a helpful framework for conceptualizing the interaction of the past and the present in early Jesus tradition (99). Nevertheless, Bird enlists social memory theory as part of an overall argument for the historical reliability of the Gospels, describing the social transmission of memory as something that can “*regulate and correct* the factuality of any new recital” (96, emphasis added; see also 99). He also speaks consistently of memory being a mechanism by which the Gospels

“*preserved* a tradition about Jesus” (104, emphasis added) or by which “eyewitness testimony was *preserved*” (105, emphasis added; see also 108). He thus states, “The sociology of memory is one of the best factors to account for its *preservation* and integrity” (106, emphasis added). He further claims that scholars can, on the basis of social memory, “uncover a memory that is *reliable* but also refracted” (113, emphasis added). It is true that memory can reflect the actual past and that social memory theory shows us this reality. What needs to be said, however, especially in light of his earlier statement that he “doubt[s] that . . . willful distortion of the Jesus tradition in fact occurred” (81), is that social memory theory itself does not enable historians to distinguish between historically accurate and historically inaccurate memory. From the perspective of social memory theory, historically accurate memory is subject to precisely the same past/present interaction as historically inaccurate memory. This means that whether the Jesus tradition “preserved” the actual past (and was thus “reliable”) or creatively imagined a historically inaccurate past requires argumentation beyond simply identifying the tradition as social memory.

In a volume that covers this much terrain, however, it is inevitable that one will find such opportunities to disagree. In this light, Bird must be commended for his clarity of writing, as the reader is never left at a loss as to how and why he has arrived at his conclusions. Bird’s intended audience seems quite clearly to be evangelicals, in light of his affirmation of the inspiration and infallibility of Scripture (67) and his statements that “we . . . as a believing and confessing community . . . are obligated to study Jesus in his historical context” (72). This target audience is likely to be his most receptive audience.

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Ron CLARK. *Jesus Unleashed: Luke’s Gospel for Emerging Christians.* Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2013. 214 pp. \$25.00.

Clark, a minister of Agape Church of Christ, shares his insights on Luke in light of his ministries involving domestic violence and the sex trade industry in Portland. These unique experiences provide a distinct lens for Luke’s most familiar stories. Clark begins by surveying his perspective on the current state of affairs. He contends that Christians have neglected those on the margins of society; Christianity has become a safe religion that associates with the socially appropriate. This is problematic, Clark asserts, because Christianity’s founder lived on the margins and was killed by dignified religious officials. This parallel should make Christians uncomfortable; we may have more in common with the religious leaders Jesus criticized than with Jesus himself.

Clark utilizes Luke’s narrative structure of the journey to Jerusalem as the framework of his book. Major features include a plea to join Jesus on the margins, meditations on repentance and healing, and the conviction that taking risks is at the heart of Christianity. The final section deviates from the journey metaphor and switches to the idea of moving to a dilapidated, dangerous neighborhood. Jesus critiques the criminals; this leads to his “eviction” and death by those benefiting from the violence. His sacrifice inspires other neighbors to fight to take back their neighborhood. Clark calls

the Church to continue this type of work—restoring broken neighborhoods—even if it is uncomfortable and includes risks.

A great strength of this volume is the commentary based on Clark’s particular experiences. Clark addresses domestic abuse, sexual assault, and the sex trade industry. The latter focuses on the men who exploit women and fuel this lucrative business; even though men are the pushers and buyers, it is the women who suffer and end up in jail (92-93). Speaking out against the pandemic of female exploitation, Clark challenges the privileged to reexamine their views and treatment of women (158). The stories of the men and women that Agape Church of Christ has assisted is remarkable and a superlative example of ministering to people on the margins.

While much of Clark’s work is compelling and relevant, there are a few areas of concern. At times, there are perplexing application points that seem to trivialize serious topics. One example is his modern application regarding the hardship for ancient Jews living in an occupied state. He provides a befitting historical assessment of Roman occupied Israel; he emphasizes the violence and oppression that often accompanies one state forcing its will on another. He connects the ancient with the modern by declaring that America has the equivalent problems of Roman occupied Israel (16); the modern nation is similarly “colonized and exploited” (16). The examples he uses to support his claim is the emphasis we place on possessions (16), weight loss programs (17), budget cuts that remove physical education from schools (17), and the anxiety that surrounds socializing with people who have dietary restrictions (17). It is difficult to follow the premise that leads to the correlation of these minor issues with military occupation. Furthermore, it is a flippant comparison when one considers the countless people who are actually living in violently contested military zones around the globe.

This volume is a valuable resource for a wide variety of groups. His historical sections break down complex issues into simple ideas that are easy to grasp for new Christians or novice students. His application makes excellent preaching points as well as a challenge for churches to include more risks and an increased presence in the margins of society. Whether one is a newcomer to or a veteran of ministry, Clark provides several fresh viewpoints on Luke and the purpose of the church.

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J.B. LIGHTFOOT, edited by Ben Witherington, III and Todd D. Still. *The Acts of the Apostles: A Newly Discovered Commentary*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014. 407 pp. \$32.00.

Two years ago, in the spring of 2015, Ben Witherington III discovered in the Durham Cathedral Library the manuscript of an incomplete commentary on Acts handwritten by none other than the late-19th-century scholar J. B. Lightfoot, who even today remains a true giant in the field of biblical studies. After painstakingly transcribing Lightfoot’s notes, Witherington and Still compiled and only lightly edited the text so as to avoid blurring the author’s voice.

The full story of the thrill of discovery and the process of moving it from manu-

script to book is told in more detail in the editors' introduction, where they also provide a more detailed account of Lightfoot's life, accomplishments, and faith. Witherington and Still manage to imbue their stories with a sense of who Lightfoot was—far beyond a list of publications or lectures—and by the end of their introduction, one shares their respect and admiration for this brilliant, dedicated, and humble scholar who was so far ahead of his time.

The commentary proper follows the editors' introduction. As the editors remind us, the manuscripts were Lightfoot's handwritten notes and not a polished final product. As such, these notes do not provide traditional verse-by-verse exegesis but highlight intertextual connections, current debates, textual issues, historical matters, and hermeneutical challenges. Yet even in their incomplete form, the text bears witness to a scholar who was fully master of his content, able to move seamlessly between history, classical literature, Scripture, and multiple languages, weaving these together into a solid grounding for interpretation. Very few authors in the 19th century (and certainly even fewer in this past century) have demonstrated the depth and breadth of knowledge that Lightfoot applies to the biblical text. Seeing the scholar's mind at work in these notes is fascinating, humbling, and a first-class example of a well-grounded hermeneutic at work.

While retaining Lightfoot's original notation format gives the reader a glimpse into his hermeneutic process, the notes as such clearly fall short of a complete product. The reader occasionally requires advanced knowledge or brief research into a verse, topic, or issue in order to appreciate (or even fully understand) Lightfoot's cryptic reference, yet once provided with that additional information, the train of thought revealed is often innovative, surprising, and full of unexpected yet profound connections to literature, culture, and history.

For example, Lightfoot records offhand notes throughout his commentary on intertextual connections within Scripture that offer profound insights and suggest surprising convergences of thought within the book of Acts. In the same way, Lightfoot's knowledge of classical literature and the church fathers provides him with entire worlds of Hellenistic and postbiblical intertextuality that he draws on judiciously and apparently almost entirely from memory alone. One must note at this point that Lightfoot's mastery of these fields is not limited to their English translations; he himself was proficient in no less than seven languages. He expects his audience to be competent in at least five languages, for he frequently quotes not only the Greek text of the NT but also the Hebrew Scriptures, the Latin church fathers, and pertinent points from contemporary French and German scholars.

The commentary also highlights Lightfoot's continuing passion for the Greek text of the NT. For this reason he provides excellent discussion of the various textual matters found in the book of Acts, including an excellent treatment (and demonstration) of the rules of textual criticism as well as explanations regarding the divergences of Codex D.

Lightfoot consistently interacts with his contemporary scholars through his notes, as well, even fearlessly taking on the Tübingen school and F.C. Bauer when he feels their work presents a danger to a historically and grammatically appropriate interpretation of Scripture. In fact, his interactions with scholars from America to Germany are

flawless examples of true scholarly response and dialogue, opening a new, fresh vista on century-old debates.

In addition to the commentary notes themselves, Lightfoot also provides an excursus or several that more fully flesh out matters he considered particularly pertinent to contemporary scholarship. One such essay concerns preliminary matters of authorship, date, and translation; another the historicity of Stephen’s speech; while another provides a fuller discussion of the Greek text of the book of Acts. The editors also provide further appendices for the interested reader, including Lightfoot’s essay on Acts for Smith’s *Dictionary of the Bible*, an obituary published shortly after his death in 1893, and Lightfoot’s remarks on St. Paul’s life after the end of Acts.

Lightfoot’s strong grounding in history and literature is combined seamlessly with a linguistic expertise in a first-class example of the historical-grammatical method. This emphasis on understanding the Bible in its own times and on its own terms should feel quite familiar to a Stone-Campbell scholarship, as is Lightfoot’s example of drawing applications for today and today’s church out of the first-century text and the first-century church. His love for the church and concern that it follow first the example set for it in Scripture rings true in the Restoration legacy.

While the commentary may not specifically address a particular passage or issue, the volume is a worthwhile addition to any scholar or pastor’s Acts shelf simply because for those passages and topics Lightfoot does address, he provides not only well-reasoned, well-grounded arguments but also often offers unexpected intertextual connections that carry profound interpretive implications. The linguistic challenges he presents in his multilingual quotations should not dissuade the Acts scholar or academically minded pastor from pursuing this work. It would be a shame indeed to miss it, for reading Lightfoot’s notes is an unprecedented opportunity to watch one of the greatest academic minds of the last century at work on a text that has held special significance for members of the Stone-Campbell Movement. After all, the movement finds its origins in the 19th-century church seeking to understand and recapture the experience of the first-century church.

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Karen H. JOBES. *1, 2, and 3 John*. ZECNT. Ed. by Clinton E. Arnold. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014. 368 pp. \$34.99.

“What are you looking for in a commentary?” “This series might be for you if . . .” begins the series introduction. It is aimed at those who have taken Greek and would like a commentary that helps apply what you have learned; who value a concise statement of the main idea of each passage; who do not want to get bogged down in scholarly issues that “seem irrelevant to the church”; who would benefit from a graphical display of the flow of each passage; etc. Each volume in the series includes seven components: Literary Context; Main Idea; Translation and Graphical Layout; Structure; Exegetical Outline; Explanation of the Text; and Theology in Application. The headings throughout the application sections will be useful to church Bible study groups.

This volume admirably meets the series goals. The seven components introduced above move easily from one to the next. The discussion of the Greek text is not overly technical. In addition, this volume includes several “In Depth” excursuses on special topics ranging from the development of a Jewish pre-Christian use of “Messiah” to a post-resurrection (Gentile) Christian understanding of “Christ”; Johannine dualism; and special terms found in the corpus (“Truth,” “World,” “Love,” “Know,” Being “of God” [ek]). The list is rounded out by discussions of the “Johannine Comma,” Gaius, and Diotrephes.

Although this is not a critical commentary, Jobs (Wheaton) begins her treatment by addressing some unavoidable critical issues. She asserts that the three letters of John cannot be interpreted independently of the Fourth Gospel (13), an observation which then requires a (very) brief overview of interpretation of the Gospel of John in the twentieth century. The picture of that period is painted with a necessarily broad brush: Bultmann’s influence reigned during the first half of the century, and emphasis on composition history (Martyn, Kysar, Brown) dominated the second half. Although Culpepper’s literary approach brought new insights, the old critical theories were still predominant.

The twentieth-century denial of any historical value in John’s Gospel (spearheaded by the *Jesus Seminar*) has been countered by conservative evangelical scholars who defend the historical reliability of the Fourth Gospel (Carson, Morris, Blomberg, Köstenberger). Jobs wisely avoids an “either/or” argument about John’s historical value vs. its theological orientation, and opts for a third way. She notes correctly that “truth is not exhausted by historical facts alone,” and asserts that a literary interpretation of the “spiritual” Fourth Gospel puts to rest the apparent problems of John’s “dischronologized” events, redactional seams, and theological tensions (14).

In keeping with the series goals, the “flavor” of the commentary is decidedly evangelical. Jobs goes out of her way to include evangelical resources, and occasionally cites popular nonacademic sources such as Barnes’ *Notes* (291), and Josh McDowell (296). While she checks off on the main critical commentaries on the three letters (Bultmann, Strecker, Schnackenburg) and frequently cites R. Brown and J. Lieu, most of her other conversation partners are evangelicals. She also regularly draws on the older works of John Calvin, B. F. Westcott, and C. H. Dodd.

Jobs lays out this commentary’s four distinctives (14): 1) the author of the three Johannine epistles was either the same person who authored the Fourth Gospel, or a close associate of the author, whom she accepts as the apostle John with qualification (the “essentially complete” Fourth Gospel may have been given final form by a close associate of the apostle). 2) While the letters must be allowed their own voice, the three cannot be properly understood apart from John’s Gospel. 3) Though an associate of John may have redacted the Gospel, and (as she states later), “the elder” probably wrote all three epistles (29), she does not accept an extended compositional history for the Fourth Gospel. There is “no compelling reason to reject apostolic authorship of all three” letters (250), although “apostolic” is apparently interpreted broadly enough to include a “close associate” (cf. Eusebius’s categories). 4) As its point of view this commentary shares the “needed refocus” to a nonpolemical reading of the epistles vis-à-vis the intent of the letters, and away from attempts to reconstruct the specific “heresy” combatted in the letters (14).

The absence of the title “elder” in 1 John is a function of genre shift—2 and 3 John represent a shift away from the generically distinct 1 John. Second John was written as a cover letter to accompany 1 John (29; 248), a tractate sent out after the schism we hear about in 1 John. Jobes maintains that the major exhortation of 2 John—“don’t welcome false teachers”—would be intelligible even before the explanation of 1 John had been read. In this scenario, 3 John is seen as a response to the refusal of Diotrephes to accept the bearer of 1 and 2 John, a specific twist to the general theme of “hospitality.”

Throughout, the book tilts toward theological interpretation and (ostensibly) away from critical issues, but the study is never quite free of the critical questions (a reminder that, like it or not, scholarly issues are not all “irrelevant” to the church). For example, 1) while eschewing the twentieth century’s complicated theories of Johannine compositional history, Jobes’s acceptance of the redaction of John’s Gospel by a “close associate” and the authorship of all three epistles by “the elder” admits to a certain level of compositional history. 2) Despite the caveats in identifying the author(s) of the Fourth Gospel and the epistles, Jobes concludes that, in his interpretation of Papias in which he finds two men named John (the apostle and the elder), Eusebius erroneously “overlooked” the fact that Papias elsewhere refers to apostles as “elders.” 3) Even while noting some of the historical problems with the position, she asserts the identification of the Beloved Disciple with the apostle John, and faults “modern scholarship” for further complicating the issue (22). 4) John’s realized eschatology (“we have crossed over from death into life”) is not a problem for a theology of the NT, but merely a function of the conceptual dualism he uses to explain his theology (156-157). 5) Jobes’s decision to avoid the attempt to reconstruct the “heresy” combated in the letters of John (she uses the anachronistic term throughout) must be qualified with the concession that the schism within the community was “the immediate occasion of the letter”; the author was arguing against some serious misunderstanding and distortion of the gospel (25). The refocus to a nonpolemical reading allows for the emphasis on the pastoral concerns of the letters, and for the general notion that “the letters speak to a variety of false beliefs, many of which are still with us today” (14). However, that refocus seems more a matter of degree than kind, and Jobes ultimately has to deal with the apparent proto-gnostic ideas of the false teachers (cf. 81).

Although Jobes regularly offers her own (quite good) translation, a few places stick out. At 1 John 2:2 and 4:10 she opts for the NIV’s “atoning sacrifice” for *hilasmos* (79-81; 192). She thus sidesteps the debate over *propitiation* vs. *expiation*, dealing only briefly with atonement theory. The specter of Universalism in the passage is brushed aside. The translation at 1 John 2:20 seems anachronistic (“You have an anointing from the holy One, and you are all *in the know*” [italics mine]), as does the interpretation of the *chrisma*. These are presented in Reformation (noncharismatic) terms: “*both* the objective, external Word of God and the inward, effectual call of the Holy Spirit are needed for genuine spiritual rebirth” (author’s italics). The “Word of God” is the objective testimony to the truth (C. H. Dodd), and the “effectual calling” relates to the ongoing work of the Spirit *with respect to Scripture* (“illumination”; 127-128; italics mine). In 1 John 4:1, although the discussion is about false prophets, the

charismatic element is muted (“test the spirits” means “discerning sources of spiritual truth,” 176). One wonders if John would have recognized his own statements in such interpretations.

A couple of weaknesses deserve mention. The popular nature of the series is laudable, but it allows some questionable shortcuts. For example, the series sets out to elucidate the “meaning” of the text (11) without asking the hard questions of “whose meaning are we after?” and “how do we recover meaning?” In our post-Enlightenment era it is widely considered naïve to assume that “meaning” (solely) resides in the text. Another example: attributing to Jesus himself a Greek word found in the Gospel of John (157), while perhaps just a figure of speech, ignores the ongoing scholarly discussion—including within evangelicalism—of the composition history of the Gospels and the evangelists as interpreters and redactors of Jesus tradition. On another note, the chart of relationships of the Fourth Gospel and three epistles of John (25-27) may actually be construed to demonstrate not the interconnection of all four documents, but 1 John’s dependence upon the Gospel, the connection between 2 and 3 John, and the distance between those two groupings (cf. 247).

Despite some limitations, this is a handsome volume in a worthy series. It will make a fine addition to any pastor’s library, and will also be very helpful to students and lay persons. As with any commentary, it should be read together with a couple of others in order to highlight texts and issues where views differ, and—in this case—to supplement discussions of critical issues. This commentary will certainly take its place among this generation’s valued evangelical contributions to the understanding of the three Johannine epistles.

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Bruce CHILTON. *Visions of the Apocalypse: Reception of John’s Revelation in Western Imagination.* Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013. 170 pp. \$29.95.

Chilton offers a topical historiography of Revelation. He wants “to enable readers to engage with the Revelation of John” and finds it necessary “to be aware from an early stage of how the book has been understood, because those understandings have produced programs of interpretation that have influenced generations of readers whether or not they are aware of that influence” (2). Chilton guides the reader through the major eras of church history and outlines the major interpretive *tendency* that shaped the church’s understanding of eschatology in general and the millennium in particular.

Chapter one, “A Thousand Years of Joy” chronicles the fascination of the earliest church with the millennium. Interpreters like Papias, Irenaeus, and Hippolytus saw the millennium as a joyful, material reward given to faithful believers. Chapter two, “Transcendent Power,” shows the shift toward a more symbolic view of Revelation by the next generation of interpreters. Origen and Augustine are notable, both of whom saw apocalyptic as a literature outside of time and treated John’s work as a visionary

journey of the believer's ascent into heaven. The subsequent movement away from symbolic interpretations toward specific identification of current events as fulfillment of Revelation's prophecies occupies the attention of chapter three, "Oracles of Redemption." The work and thought of Joachim de Fiore (one of Revelation's most famous commentators) occupies the bulk of this chapter. In "War with the Antichrist" (ch 4) Chilton demonstrates how interpreters employed the rhetoric of the Apocalypse in smear campaigns against their opponents. Men like Gerardo di Borgo San Donnino and Martin Luther, and later Puritans like John Bale and Joseph Mede, saw in Revelation a description of the eschatological battle between God and his enemies. They drew the line of God's people at their own feet, aligning their opponents with the Dragon. The next generation hoped that the Gospel would (as it had in the Reformation) continually advance to the betterment of both church and culture. "The Progress of the Saints" (ch 5) chronicles the rise of post-millennialism in the work of Jonathan Edwards, William Blake, John Woolman, and Christina Rossetti—interpreters who typified an approach to Revelation born from their experience of the gospel's triumph in society. The War of 1812 and its subsequent financial crisis brought a sobering reality check, and the hope of a golden age of gospel millennium was put on hold for a more dire vision, one in which war was imminent. In "Hell on Earth" (ch 6) Chilton chronicles the rise of premillennialism, noting how it came just as much through corrective theology as it did through personal visions about the eschatological schema. William Miller, John Nelson Darby, Cyrus Scofield, and Amy Semple McPherson are the obvious icons here, and Chilton shows how their efforts paved the way for the likes of Hal Lindsay, Pat Robertson, and Tim LaHaye to enjoy success and notoriety in the modern church. Chilton concludes by providing a presentation of Revelation's structure in the hopes that the reader will better understand the whole of John's message rather than repeat the mistakes of the past.

After tracking all of this interpretive history, Chilton summarizes: "Vision is what binds together the thousand years of Papias, Augustine's celebration of transcendent power, the anticipation of Spirit by Joachim, the zeal practiced by Luther, the restraint of Isaac Newton, and John Nelson Darby's hope of the rapture. . . . Yet in each case, a tendency was clearly at work to claim an exclusive right to interpret the text, on the grounds of an interpretation that effectively added to what John of Patmos said, or subtracted from it. That is just what John did not want to happen" (128). The major categories are clearly in view.

This volume is quite adept at providing a topical historiography of Revelation through the major epochs of church history. Works of this type tend to focus on the major interpretive options surrounding the millennium and categorize interpreters accordingly. Chilton's approach here is deeper, simultaneously more fundamental and nuanced, and provides a lens that is quite helpful. His focus on the most influential interpreters (if not the most popular) helps in this endeavor and provides a richness to this work. The reader encounters commentators that span the entire church, not just the dozen or so favorite commentaries published in the last few decades.

Some of the more influential writers are more obscure, and while Chilton brings them to the foreground and shows how and why their understanding of Revelation has made its mark on the interpretive history of the Apocalypse, some of these interpreters

are not very well known. To compensate, Chilton must spend some time delineating their thought. One example is Joachim de Fiore, whose thought is not readily understood apart from his view of the *Status* of God. That discussion is complicated and not easily understood. Chilton spends a fair amount of time explaining this, and it becomes a bit of a distraction in the historiography that he's trying to present. However, this tendency toward obscurity is not very prominent, and apart from a couple of typos in the book (42, 91), constitutes the only minor drawback to this text.

This volume is best suited for seminary courses on the book of Revelation. The style and content are best suited for those who already have some familiarity with Revelation, its prolegomena, and the major interpretive approaches that surround it. For those who are highly interested and well-read in John's work and in his major interpreters, Chilton provides a delightful overview of the reception of Revelation's theology and message and how it has shaped generations of believers, their thought, and their world (both ecclesiastical and political) for the last two millennia.

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LIST OF BOOKS REVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE

- Peter Gardella, *American Civil Religion: What Americans Hold Sacred* (Joshua W. Jeffrey, Sr., Vanderbilt University)
- Everett Ferguson, *The Early Church and Today*, vol. 2. *Christian Life, Scripture, and Restoration* (Shaun C. Brown, Wycliffe College, University of Toronto)
- Marcia L. Colish, *Faith, Fiction & Force in Medieval Baptismal Debates* (Lee Blackburn, Milligan College)
- Nancy Koester, *Harriet Beecher Stowe: A Spiritual Life* (Loretta Long Hunnicutt, Pepperdine University)
- John S. Burns, John R. Shoup, and Donald C. Simmons, Jr., eds., *Organizational Leadership: Foundations and Practices for Christians* (Cody Christensen, Johnson University, Boise Bible College)
- James W. Skillen, *The Good of Politics: A Biblical, Historical, and Contemporary Introduction* (Jess O. Hale, Jr., Johnson University)
- Jeremy R. Treat, *The Crucified King: Atonement and Kingdom in Biblical and Systematic Theology* (K. C. Richardson, Hope International University)
- Jennifer R. Ayres, *Good Food: Grounded Practical Theology* (Robert J. Turner, Harding School of Theology)
- Curtis Freeman, *Contesting Catholicity: A Theology for Other Baptists* (Alden Lee Bass, St. Louis University)
- Moisés Silva, ed., *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis* (Jordan Kellicott, Portage, Michigan)
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