

BOOK REVIEWS

Reformation Thought: An Introduction. By Alister E. McGrath. Oxford: Blackwell, 1988, 212 pp., £8.50 paper.

Not all who study the Reformation are trained theologians. McGrath's book is for those who are not. Its purpose is threefold: to introduce, to explain, to contextualize. As the author himself indicates, this text "aims to *introduce* the leading ideas of the European Reformation"; it "aims to *explain* these ideas"; it "aims to *contextualize*, by setting these ideas in their proper intellectual, social and political context." In so doing it "assumes that the reader knows nothing about the Christian faith underlying the Reformation, and explains exactly what terms such as 'justification by faith' mean" (p. xi). This is, in other words, a gentle book, one that places as few hurdles as possible in the path of the student who is new to the religious ideas, passions and events of the sixteenth century. That is what makes this slim volume a success.

McGrath carefully delineates the various theological and geographical characteristics of the Reformation mosaic, carefully explaining the German academic roots of Lutheranism, the Swiss theological and ecclesiastical nature of much of the Reformed church, and the English political origin and flavor of Anglicanism, among others. Unlike some modern histories of the Reformation, this book does not overlook the theological and ecclesiastical roots of that momentous movement. It examines the decline of papal power and prestige, it notes the flourishing of both late-medieval popular piety and of doctrinal pluralism, and it exposes the crisis of theological authority the Church was undergoing at that time. As indicative of the cultural and theological background of the Reformation, McGrath's chapters on renaissance humanism and on scholasticism are quite good. In the former he properly contends that of the many tributaries flowing into the Reformation, renaissance humanism was "by far the most important" (p. 27). In contrast to many earlier writers, McGrath also properly upholds P. O. Kristeller's view that the renaissance was far more a rhetorical and philological movement within theology than it was a metaphysical one. Concerning scholasticism, McGrath's treatment is less useful and less readable, primarily because it is a somewhat tendentious rehearsal of arguments he has made earlier elsewhere in books far more sophisticated than any introduction to Reformation thought ever could or should be. Thus some parts of his treatment of scholasticism seem self-serving and too difficult. They do not belong in this text—which is not to say they are incorrect. If anything in this excellent little book is incorrect (and very little is) I am inclined to think it is the sharp distinction, even outright opposition, McGrath draws between German and Swiss Reformation theology. Given McGrath's radicalized distinctions, one is hard-pressed to explain the great extent to which the Lutherans and Zwinglians were able to agree at Marburg.

Among the most praiseworthy aspects of McGrath's excellent book are its several helpful appendices, which are specifically designed to aid the beginning student of the Reformation. For example, appendix 1 is a glossary of theological and historical terms, one that ranges from "adiaphora" to "Zwinglianism." Other appendices include English translations of major primary works, standard abbreviations of major

journals and sources, advice on how to refer to various primary sources and how to understand the puzzling ways in which sixteenth-century writers referred to the Psalms. McGrath's book includes a brief but useful chronological table, ample and careful documentation, and an annotated bibliography.

This book is what it claims to be: an introduction to Reformation thought. It is a very good one, one that includes many helpful features not found elsewhere, and one that I myself will use as a future textbook.

Michael Bauman
Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, MI

Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements. Edited by Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee, with Patrick H. Alexander. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988, xiii + 914 pp., \$29.95.

This new book richly deserves the recognition it will likely receive by default. It stands alone as a comprehensive overview of the pentecostal and charismatic movements, filling a huge lacuna in contemporary Church history, the pioneering achievements of Hollenweger and others notwithstanding. One could scarcely ask for a better reference work at this juncture. It is balanced and authoritative, broad in conception and scope, yet succinct in presentation and exact in detail. Hundreds of shorter articles offer reliable summary introductions and thousands of useful facts. Monographic articles up to 30 pages in length cover crucial issues of exegesis, theology, historiography and sociology, often making original, insightful contributions to scholarship. The work marks a new era for understanding and appreciating the fastest growing segment of Christendom (see "Statistics, Global," by D. B. Barrett). Consider the following claim: "In one city alone, São Paulo, Brazil, the Assemblies of God report no fewer than 2,400 congregations. These are more churches than entire U.S. denominations such as Baptist General Conference, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Reformed Church in America, Mennonite Church, or Salvation Army report" (from "Church Growth" by C. P. Wagner).

The dictionary still has major limitations. The focus is deliberately biased toward Europe and North America. Even then one should not expect the impossible. If the work, which surveys movements encompassing many millions of adherents in numerous traditions, were to approach the microscopic detail and analysis of, say, the Mennonite or Brethren encyclopedias, whose respective memberships are in the thousands, then the result would probably fill a whole library.

This dictionary boasts several helpful features, some of which carry risks. The dictionary provides numerous current biographies on relatively young leaders, including a fair percentage of the 66 contributors. Articles are dangerously up to date, covering newsworthy events through 1988. Some future events are even described in the past tense (see dates in "Society for Pentecostal Studies" by R. P. Spittler). But there is an amazing sense of currentness for a reference tool. The numerous photographs and occasional illustrations capture the ambience, the diversity, the aggressive vitality of the movements. The book may also be the most ecumenical volume ever published by an evangelical press, reflecting the far reaches of the movements themselves. Where else would one look for a sympathetic account of the Marian apparitions at Medjugorje?

The dictionary certainly does not shrink from the bizarre or the scandalous, nor from searching self-criticism (for the latter, see "Bible Institutes, Colleges, Univer-

sities" by L. F. Wilson). Any number of biographical entries note marital problems (or worse), though some living subjects are treated more gently than others. Articles covering the Bakkers, Dowie, Melodyland, ORU, Swaggart, and the like trace institutional patterns of rise, expansion, overreaching, and retrenchment or collapse. But at the heart of the enterprise is a series of very substantial studies of key topics. Among the most noteworthy are: "Azusa Street Revival" by C. M. Robeck, Jr., "Bibliography and Historiography of Pentecostalism (U.S.)" by G. Wacker, "Black Holiness-Pentecostalism" by L. Lovett, "Charismatic Movement" by P. D. Hocken, "Christian Perfection" by C. W. Conn, "Hermeneutics, Historical Perspectives on Pentecostal and Charismatic" by F. L. Arrington, "Hispanic Pentecostalism" by E. A. Wilson, three successive entries on the Holy Spirit (the first by S. M. Horton, the latter two by S. M. Burgess), "Luke-Acts" by J. R. Michaels, "Pauline Literature" by G. D. Fee, and "Prophecy, Gift of" by C. M. Robeck, Jr. My own personal favorites are "Healing Movements" by P. G. Chappell and "Oneness Pentecostalism" by D. A. Reed, two extraordinarily thoughtful and sympathetic pieces on rather controversial subjects. If not every essay shows the same level of acumen, the general standard is still very high.

The persistent reader will repeatedly come across fascinating information, though not all the implications are drawn out within the dictionary itself. For example, early pentecostal commitments to pacifism generally disappeared within a generation or so (one thinks of repeated nineteenth-century parallels among the Campbellites, various holiness bodies, the Plymouth Brethren, the heirs of D. L. Moody, and others). Or again, while pentecostals were among the strongest champions of unfettered roles for women in ministry, the actual percentage of female church leaders has steadily declined over the years (cf. *No Time for Silence* by J. Hassey). Then there was the unfortunate change in the Assemblies of God statement on Scripture, a 1961 reformulation of a 1916 document, a shift calculated to please evangelicals but that somehow resulted in the deletion of the wonderful phrase "superior to conscience and reason, but not contrary to reason." Whatever the motives for striking the phrase, ETS members would presumably be disheartened by the perception that its abandonment somehow renders one "more Evangelical."

Criticisms of the dictionary are relatively picayune. Because it lacks an index, cross-references become crucial. Instead they are inadequate. For example, there is a cross-reference from the article on "Messianic Judaism" to the entry on the "Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations" (both by D. C. Juster), but not vice versa. If one looks up Jews or Judaism, the terms do not even appear as cross-references. Alternate forms or popular names are too rarely cross-referenced, so one will locate "Marjoe" only if one knows the surname Gortner. Persons, institutions, or issues mentioned in one place may be treated more exhaustively elsewhere, but one is not always so advised. Some cross-references are wildly out of place. "Tongues, Gift of" and "Tongues, Speaking in," which direct one to "Glossolalia" (by R. P. Spittler), appear immediately before the entry "Glossolalia."

Given the extent to which the project surveys previously unmapped territory, a much fuller editorial preface would have been welcome. Considering the number of entries on celebrities, separate pieces might have been given to C. ten Boom and J. E. Tada, though at least they are mentioned. In light of the widespread use of *Understanding God* as a catechetical tool, one would expect more than the passing reference to P. D. Gruit in a paragraph about her mother, M. D. Beall. C. S. Lewis is named, but I saw no reference to two of his most pertinent essays, "Transposition" and "The Efficacy of Prayer." The phenomena of glossolalia and xenolalia in non-Christian religions are barely mentioned.

The dictionary remains invaluable not simply for the study of pentecostalism and the charismatics but for understanding those evangelicals who remain outside the movements as well. For until one begins to realize how many of the same currents feed into and flow back and forth between the various traditions, one is not likely to understand evangelicals as a whole very well at all.

While reading through this magnificent work I kept puzzling over one basic question. Why was something comparable not compiled long ago on the Wesleyan and Keswickian holiness movements?

Timothy Paul Erdel

Caribbean Graduate School of Theology/Jamaica Theological Seminary
Kingston, Jamaica

Calvinism, Federalism, and Scholasticism: A Study of the Reformed Doctrine of Covenant. By Stephen A. Strehle. Bern/Frankfurt/New York: Peter Lang, 1988, 418 pp., \$53.60.

In this timely and scholarly work Strehle sets forth an "etymology" of the concept of covenant/*pactum*, both in its origins in Franciscan speculations on divine freedom and especially in its central role in the systems of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Reformed orthodoxy. The critical relationship between the scholastic (nominalistic) views of God and covenant and those of Calvinism (particularly from Beze onward) involves an emphasis on divine voluntarism beneath which both the nature and attributes of God and, significantly, the work of Christ are subsumed.

As Strehle points out, this is not a study of the history of covenant theology, which would include a chronological and biographical "who got what from whom" agenda. Nor does it claim to be in any way complete (how could it be?). It is rather a presentation of the statements of representative theologians from the high scholastic tradition (Aquinas, Bonaventura, Scotus, Ockham) through the first-generation Reformers to the high Protestant scholasticism of the seventeenth century (Cocceius, Witsius, Turretin) in the context of their overall systematic program, a program in which they identified the notion of covenant as the central idea of theology. The central concern, then, is the relationship and formative theological influence between Calvinistic judgments upon the covenant and those of scholasticism upon the same issue.

Within this overall scheme, rising from a conceptual relation to the freedom of God, Strehle reflects on several subsequent features of federal theology. From its early formation at Zurich the unity of the covenant is a prominent feature, especially with its capacity to unify all of the dealings of God with men in both Testaments. Though there were challenges to this absolute, nonhistorical and often anachronistic oneness of covenant (especially from the dispensational distinctives of Cocceius and his followers, among others), orthodoxy was normally rigid in its desire for the one in spite of testimony for the many in the historical outworking of God's purposes. Another feature of vital significance in the late developing features of covenant theology, in light of its basis in divine freedom, is the late-sixteenth-century emergence of the "covenant of works" (for Adam) and the seventeenth-century emergence of the "eternal covenant" (*foedus operum* and *pactum pacis*). The first spoke of a way to God apart from Christ, the second an odd, even improper, inner "dealing" of an anthropomorphically portrayed Trinity. Both described divine voluntarism arising from speculative reflection on God (or what lies behind the

word and works of God apart from Christ). A further feature of interest within the developing federal theology was its bilateral nature. Man and God were seen as reciprocally related. Even though attempts were made to lessen the force of such a view, still God is seen to depend on certain conditions wrought within man. Yet, for Strehle's argument, probably the most important feature of the scholastic (nominalistic) disposition of Calvinism and its view of covenant is to be seen in its view of the relation and means of relation between God and man. Union is *ex pacto* to the discounting of any intrinsic connection in Christ. As seen in forensic justification, limited atonement and supralapsarianism, as well as in federal headship, God via voluntaristic *imputatio* asserts something to be what it is not. As "free" he can do and does what he pleases.

The result, says Strehle, of doctrines molded in a construct drawn largely from a nominalistic view of absolute divine freedom (though its extremities are often modified) and philosophical phantasms is to "presume that God has no essential rationale and sapience or especially that such freedom can preempt the divine exigency for righteousness and justice." Where covenant, seen as a divine, voluntary condescension, is employed to offset the lack of parity between God and man (a Franciscan grace-works framework), all finally becomes a divine fabrication or divine fantasy relating together two things that in fact are unrelated. Justification in Christ, as an apt example of such divine voluntarism, becomes a divinely willed *imputatio* or fiction. Justification is external to the believer. Justification becomes separated from the reality of regeneration. Ultimately Christ and Christ's work become unnecessary to what God in his freedom pronounces simply in justification. The resulting alien righteousness, as a contrivance of the Father, has lost touch with the definitive revelation of God in Christ *pro nobis* and *in nobis*. Strehle points to Luther's critical soteriological insights, and the need to think of God as God is revealed. In other words, *theologia crucis* avoids the impieties of *theologia gloriae*, which seeks to unveil the divine counsels.

This is a work of immense importance, not only in laying bare the formative roots of the theology of many of us in Protestant evangelicalism today but also as a further step in the mutual recognition and understanding between the varieties of covenant and dispensational theologians (cf. Strehle's careful analysis of the rise of both, side by side, within the historical development of Reformed orthodoxy). This work is a veritable library of the development of Reformed thought in its relation to scholasticism. The footnotes are both extensive and helpful and given in the original Latin, German, French and English, taking the willing reader directly to the relevant context for each theologian. All in all the work is quite readable, which, with its erudition and depth, is most remarkable.

John D. Morrison
Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

Two Hundred Years of Theology: Report of a Personal Journey. By Hendrikus Berkhof. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989, 316 pp., \$24.95.

During an interview I conducted with him at his home in Leiden in 1989, I asked Berkhof to identify both the Christian gospel and the best way to present it and defend it in the modern world. He replied that because the gospel was so rich and multifaceted, and because the shape and content of modernity was always changing, no once-for-all and unambiguous answer could be given to that question.

I did not know at the time that Berkhof had for many years been researching that very question, especially as regards the way it had been answered by the most prominent theologians of the last 200 years. Berkhof's significant research on this issue has resulted in the very readable, very remarkable book here under review.

In examining the historical relationship between the gospel and modern thought, at least as it has been perceived and shaped by Christian thinkers since Kant, Berkhof has discovered that the agenda of most was to struggle manfully "to build a bridge between the gospel and their [own] secularized cultural environment" (p. xiii). That much is plain; that this theological enterprise was successfully negotiated, however, is not. Failed or no, their attempts have been instructive. Among the lessons that Berkhof himself has learned is that "the newness of the newest theology is not all as new as we previously thought" (p. xv). To read about the past, even the recent past as Berkhof traces it, therefore, is more fully to understand the present.

Evangelical theologians will be quick to notice that much more space is devoted to a discussion of liberal theology than to conservative. "But this emphasis," Berkhof explains, "does not imply a value judgment. It only means . . . that liberal theologians, in virtue of their liberalism, have done much more with the theme which occupies me [that of relating the gospel to modern thought] than their orthodox colleagues, who aimed more at the exposition of the given content of Scripture or the treasures of tradition" (p. xiv). In other words the conservatives are absent from this book by their own choice, not Berkhof's.

At many points Berkhof is unquestionably a revisionist historian of theological ideas. For example, while perhaps most of Kant's Christian readers think of him as the destroyer of religion and of rational theology, Berkhof insists that "Kant's purpose [was] to save religion as well as the Enlightenment: in this double objective . . . lay his deepest passion as a thinker" (p. 5). To support this thesis Berkhof makes use of what he calls "the positive passages" in Kant, those that consciously make room for belief but that do so at the expense of metaphysics, which, "instead of supporting the basic truths of religion with its pseudo-proofs, rather effected the opposite [result] and paved the way for atheism" (p. 5).

But here I must do what I rarely do: dissent from Berkhof. When Kant abolished knowledge (or at least tried to abolish it) he abolished theology along with it. The abolition of Christian theology is the abolition of Christian belief itself. Though these two are not identical, their health and survival are mutually dependent. Kant is the mortal enemy of both, though he means to kill only one. That he has failed, and how he has failed, has been graphically delineated by A. Rand (herself no friend to faith) in such essays as "Kant versus Sullivan," which pits the Kantian method against that of Annie Sullivan, Helen Keller's teacher, and demonstrates that, had Keller the great misfortune to have had Kant as her tutor, she would have been buried alive under a perpetually inescapable subjectivism. Knowledge—all knowledge—would have been banished from her forever.

Before tracing the rise, flowering and effects of German romanticism and idealism in three carefully articulated chapters, Berkhof turns his attention to Fichte and to Fichte's peculiar hybrid of Kantian anti-objectivism and romantic pantheism, which (amazingly) Fichte believed to be "the original intent of the gospel" (p. 27).

Nothing more need be said of Berkhof's treatment of Schleiermacher than that it is one of the finest, most persuasive, short exercises in historical theology yet written. In but 20 pages Berkhof (1) overturns 200 years of persistent misunderstanding by Schleiermacher's readers, (2) traces the content and intent of the *Speeches* and of *The Christian Faith* (by means of reference to Schleiermacher's letters to Lücke), and (3) compares him to Kant and Fichte on the one hand and to

K. Barth on the other. If ever there were a proper and appropriate preface to Schleiermacher, this chapter is it.

The great strength of this book lies in the fact that unlike those of some historians of theology, Berkhof's own convictions do not prevent him from nurturing a wide range of theological sympathies. Nowhere does this seem more evident than it does in his treatment of the nineteenth-century "theology of mediation" school (chap. 5), of which Rothe and Dorner were perhaps the finest representatives. One even senses that perhaps Berkhof himself traces his own efforts at theological bridge-building to such thinkers, as well as to the tradition of conservative thinkers like M. Kähler. To both traditions this book is not an unworthy addition. In that light, surely two of the finest passages in the entire volume are Berkhof's comparison between Kähler and Ritschl and between Kähler and Bultmann (pp. 133, 141).

If anything is surprising about this book it is the meager attention given to E. Brunner, to H. Thielicke, and to Berkhof's fellow Dutchman G. C. Berkouwer, all of whom receive only passing mention. Furthermore the entire course of American theology is handled in only 30 pages, if one excludes P. Tillich. This sketch of American theology is not only brief but also occasionally misleading, as it is regarding J. Edwards. This is in other words a distinctly European book, which, while not a fault, ought to be made plain in the volume's title. Though conditions ought to be otherwise, this book is proof of the cultural insularity of theologians—especially continental theologians—who are pleased rather than alarmed by the fact that Europe is, on balance, a net exporter of theology and not an importer. That provincialism has not yet proved an embarrassment to European thinkers, though perhaps it should. Alas, however, it is an embarrassment that we American evangelicals ought to feel as well, for on the one hand we ourselves are often inadequately informed about the doings outside our own camp and on the other hand we often fail to write what would merit anyone else's attention but our own, though not so often as European insularity might lead one to believe.

Though thinkers like Brunner do not, Barth gets full and fair coverage. Berkhof honestly and carefully traces the (changing) shape of Barth's thought and its expanding influence and, when appropriate, registers his own approbation or dissent. One of the chief virtues of Berkhof's treatment of Barth is the extensive use it makes of several difficult-to-obtain works by Barth, especially those dating from his student days and from his early pastorates in Switzerland.

Berkhof does not avoid asking and answering perhaps the most important question raised by this attempt to wed the gospel compellingly to modernity: Did this impressive theological enterprise succeed, this valiant attempt that was a full two centuries in the making? No, says Berkhof, it did not. "Liberal theologians allowed themselves to a high degree to be instructed by contemporary philosophers. Conversely, however, these philosophers did not let themselves be taught, let alone converted, by the theologians. They took little notice of their efforts" (p. 308).

I have mentioned above that G. C. Berkouwer received very slight attention. Another Dutch theologian has inexplicably been passed over in this book as well: Berkhof himself. We have been deprived of the illuminating (and perhaps poignant and inspiring) sight of an excellent theologian bringing his own lifelong contribution to Christian thought under public scrutiny. That sight, I believe, would have been eminently instructive. I would rather hear Berkhof evaluated by Berkhof than by anyone else.

Michael Bauman
Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, MI

Faith Born in the Struggle for Life. Edited by Dow Kirkpatrick. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988, 328 pp., \$14.95 paper.

The subtitle of this book, "A Rereading of Protestant Faith in Latin America Today," indicates that the collection is united by geography. The 24 articles (11 Methodist, 4 Presbyterian, 3 Baptist, 3 Catholic, 2 Lutheran, 1 pentecostal) were all written by theologians living in Central or South America. These articles are also unified by an ideology. Each is a defense of some aspect of liberation theology (feminism and black theology are present but minor themes). The claim made on the jacket is that the book is a "unique resource." If so, it is because the essays within represent, for the most part, Protestant contributions to liberation theology. Yet the essays reflect a similar ethos and echo the same themes as their Catholic counterparts. Most are marked by an irritation toward traditional Protestant doctrine and anger at North American capitalism.

The book is divided into three parts. Part 1 argues that the existence of endemic poverty in Latin America demands a new approach to life and doctrine by Protestantism. Part 2 argues that classical Protestant approaches to doing theology are distorted when applied to Latin America because they do not take into account the poor and oppressed. Part 3 argues that a Protestantism should emerge that focuses on the liberation of the oppressed rather than on the salvation of the individual.

The demands of liberation theology are by now well known. The Protestant essays in this collection deviate little from what has become liberation orthodoxy. Several themes common to this orthodoxy come through clearly. First, traditional Protestant theology is "elitist" (p. xiii) because it ignores the poor. To remedy this, Protestant theology should direct its efforts toward the "struggle for life"; it should express its "solidarity with the poor"; it should demand the "liberation of the oppressed." When this is done, then praxis will come in line with doctrine and the true Christian faith will be restored. Second, a great deal of anger is directed toward the United States. The blame for the material (and spiritual) conditions of Latin America is laid completely at our feet. North America and its capitalist system has "been stripping Third World countries of their wealth" (Guerra, p. 245) and is the cause of "one of the greatest projects of domination in the whole sweep of history" (Santa Ana, p. 257).

This book is of interest to those who are following the new orthodoxy of our southern neighbors. Most of the themes are highly disturbing and at sharp odds with evangelical thought. Traditional doctrines are reconceived in terms of economic and political issues. Ethical method is turned upside down. Instead of Biblical faith informing Christian action in the world, praxis (read: concern for the poor) becomes the determination of doctrine. Capitalism replaces the devil as the enemy of mankind and of the soul.

Alan Pieratt
Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society, Marion, IA

Surprised by Suffering. By R. C. Sproul. Wheaton: Tyndale, 1989, 214 pp., \$12.95.

This is not a scholarly book. It has no bibliography, no name or subject index, not a single footnote. Most of its paragraphs are very short. It is not even a textbook that I would use for a college course. But it is a good book written by a fine scholar and will help many people. It is first of all Biblically oriented. Biblical references

are usually fully quoted and followed by Sproul's able exposition. For example, in one chapter Sproul expounds the meaning of 1 Corinthians 15 in nine points. It is also delightfully practical and filled with down-to-earth illustrations: a hospital waiting room, a dying father's last words, a dying uncle's deathbed conversion, a daughter's surgery, Sproul's membership in Weight Watchers, his recollections of a college best friend, and so on.

In part 1 Sproul explores the theme of suffering and death by expounding basic Biblical truths that younger Christians need to learn and from which all Christians can benefit by way of reminder. Death is an enemy but also a vocation to which we all are called. Jesus Christ is the empathetic suffering servant, and following him means that God sometimes calls us to suffer even though we pray for release. Suffering is not always the result of sin, nor is our suffering meted out in proportion to the presence or absence of sin in our lives. The reality of the final judgment comes to us as both a warning and an encouragement that ultimate justice will be served. Suffering can be a crucible that refines our faith.

In part 2, "Life After Death," Sproul addresses two major themes: Is there really a heaven? What will it be like? Appendix A responds to 8 practical issues in a question-answer format: How should we counsel terminally-ill or aged Christians who wish to die and be with the Lord? What about those who commit suicide? How should we respond to the reports of out-of-body experiences of those who have supposedly died? How does general suffering compare and relate to specifically Christian suffering? What happens to animals when they die? Is it wrong to try to avoid suffering? Do babies who die or are aborted go to heaven? How does free will relate to suffering? In appendix B, "Contacting the Dead," Sproul responds to spiritualism, the occult, and related matters.

Although this is not a scholarly book, it is a book about which pastors and scholars should be aware. In addition to ourselves, we all have friends and loved ones who need the practical and judicious Biblical wisdom Sproul offers. Put this one on the list of popular-level books written about important subjects by a fine Christian scholar.

Daniel B. Clendenin

William Tyndale College, Farmington Hills, MI

The Christological Foundation for Contemporary Theological Education. Edited by Joseph D. Ban. Macon: Mercer, 1988, 233 pp., n.p.

This "explication of Christology as the basis of integration for theological education" succeeds better at setting forth the different historical Christologies than it does at showing how these provide a rationale for theological education.

As J. McWilliam finds, Augustine sought "to cling in eternal contemplation to unchanging truth" (p. 9). But T. R. Hobbs discards the use of the Biblical text "as a mine of propositional statements on dogma" (p. 29) and says that "universal meanings cannot be inferred" from Biblical metaphors (p. 30). Because Hobbs asserts that "the Second Person of the Trinity is absent from the Old Testament" (p. 36) I could find no affirmative relevance of this chapter to the purpose of the book, and none was attempted at the end of the chapter.

M. R. Hillmer's "Jesus in the Four Gospels" sees a variety of theological outlooks in the gospels. This fact makes more acceptable a diversity in contemporary Christological thought. But Hillmer also finds a basic unity of purpose in the person of Jesus Christ and wisely concludes: "There are . . . limits to the diversity if theology

is to be Christian thought; Christologically, we must stand with the Gospels of the New Testament. Their theology is focused on the gospel of Jesus Christ, on the Word become flesh, whose life and ministry demonstrate this messiahship. Most clearly in his crucifixion and resurrection, he is to be seen as the Messiah, the Son of God, and this assertion lies at the heart of our theology, our confession of faith and our worship" (p. 65).

P. T. R. Gray thinks that the theological enterprise is genuine and healthy only when it grows organically out of experience" (p. 67). In other words Christology springs organically from soteriology and is apprehended differently at different stages in life (p. 79). Most divinity students face both a learning crisis and a personal faith crisis in their experience of humanization and divinization (p. 79). The conclusion: "We can learn from the past, not so much for its formulations (which are so often alien to us) as for what it attempted to do. But let us do it for ourselves, as they did" (p. 81). Such reductive appeals to experience naively fail to realize that in a fallen world there are counterproductive experiences as well as beneficial ones.

McWilliam concludes from her study of Augustine that "to teach Christ is not to parrot truths but to put forward with intellectual integrity the Figure one knows, and to do so in such a manner that the Figure can be appropriated by one's hearers" (p. 99). Those who recognize with Augustine that God breathed out information from our spiritual guidance, however, find the teaching of those truths the Spirit's instrument for discernment and renewal.

From the middle ages J.-M. Laporte learned the value of a common vision and communality in which differences became a fruitful source of dialogue rather than a frustrating impasse (p. 117). He thinks he can substitute for the metaphysical language of Christology the categories of persons-in-relations. The challenge of world religions must be met with "an attitude of critical openness" (pp. 118-119). But without changeless criteria from God we have no criteria for distinguishing counterfeit Christs.

C. Pinnock thinks that the anabaptists had every right to go back to the Bible afresh and to think of the Christ in terms that such study supplied and controlled. This challenged the followers of Luther, Calvin and others to do the same. Pinnock thinks that a fresh investigation into "the filial consciousness of Jesus, coupled with the divine glory of Christ's postexistent reign and the strong hints about his preexistent glory, does carry tremendous weight and gives support to the old orthodox consensus in its major outlines" (p. 134). But he considers it "possible to go back to the Bible and to come up with a doctrinal model more suitable to our time and more scriptural in substance" (p. 136). Granting the theoretical possibility, with the radically different worldviews of secularists and pantheists and theists in our pluralistic times, the question is: "Suitable to whom in our times?"

I. G. Nicol's exposition of the Christologies of Schleiermacher and Ritschl, as Pinnock observed, fails to consider any objections to their views and misunderstands them as trying to complement rather than to replace the received Christological thinking.

R. F. Aldwinckle's chapter on "Christology after Darwin" asserts that classical Christology, which spoke of "the Word made flesh" and of God becoming man, had a vested interest in arriving at an understanding of what it means to be human and what it is to be God. Concepts of both humanness and divineness changed after Darwin. God became incarnate in everything and everyone; nature and history became self-explanatory and nonteleological. The fall became unhistorical. Humans can fulfill themselves; specific acts of God are not needed. Is personality transcendent to process? Are there personal causes as well as impersonal ones? The crucial question

in Christology, according to Aldwinckle, remains as to whether God can freely choose to do a specific action "such as 'becoming man for us men and our salvation'" (p. 191). Indeed Christology, like any other doctrine, must be discussed in terms of our entire view of God, humans and the world and the shaping of the whole person for the work of the ministry (p. 193).

P. R. Dekar's "Christ in the Light of Contemporary Jewish-Christian Relations" explores present-day relationships of Christians and Jews, underlining the need for a deep sense of mutual respect and trust in discussions of Christology with non-Christians.

J. A. T. Robinson's "What Future for a Unique Christ?" concludes the volume with the conviction that Jesus is unique because he alone of all those of whom we have any external evidence or internal experience was truly normal (p. 218). "I am still persuaded, or I would not call myself a Christian," writes Robinson, "that this particular model of the Christ incorporates the shadow, enables the antinomies of experience to cohere and hang together more creatively than any other" (p. 223). "Thus in its central and distinctive mystery of the cross and the Resurrection, Christianity integrates and transfigures the light and dark sides, I believe, more profoundly than in the coexistence, for instance, within Hinduism of Krishna and Kali, the figures of dalliance and destruction; it deals with the problems of suffering and above all of sin, more radically and dynamically than the impassive serenity of the Buddha" (p. 223).

Gordon R. Lewis
Denver Seminary, Denver, CO

An Evolutionary Approach to Jesus of Nazareth. By Juan Luis Segundo. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1988, 148 pp., \$16.95 paper.

When Segundo began his Jesus of Nazareth Yesterday and Today series it was expected to become a major accomplishment of the 1980s. The publication of the fifth and final volume allows readers to assess his contribution to Christology. Those familiar with Teilhard de Chardin's work or interested in the philosophy of science will find it intriguing. But some readers will be put off by the complexity of Segundo's prose.

Unlike some liberation theologians, Segundo has criticized both capitalist and Marxist ideologies. This volume's purpose, however, is to interpret the significance of Jesus apart from current ideologies. Given the assumptions made about the gospels and the dilemmas of humanity, the task is not easy.

On one hand, the gospels are said to reflect several Christologies that mix "historical data and theological interpretations" derived from faith. Therefore "fixist" interpretations with God as their starting point should be rejected in favor of Christologies "from below" with anthropological starting points (pp. 4, 7-9). Developing them requires the application of Gadamer's hermeneutical circle. An interpretive scheme chosen from present experience is retrojected into the available historical data. A Jesus is then reconstructed whose faith speaks significantly to our times. The impact compels us to revise our ideologies. Segundo describes this never-ending process as a "hermeneutical wager" (p. 8) because he cannot tell in advance where it will lead him. But the alternative is an obsolete Christianity. Though he claims there are ways to overcome the subjectivity inherent in such an approach (p. 10), they are not delivered—a serious omission.

On the other hand, any new Christology for today is confronted by problems of catastrophic proportions. The means exist to annihilate all earthly life either in a nuclear holocaust or by a rapid depletion of natural resources. In addition, developed and underdeveloped nations have grown increasingly interdependent. The nations form one complex network in which politics affects ecology and vice versa. In the face of these developments the simple, universal ideologies of an earlier era no longer are sufficient.

How then can Jesus be made truly significant today? The answer offered here is to interpret him in evolutionary categories, "the only language that can do justice to the universal dimensions of Jesus' meaningfulness without sacrificing his history" (p. 19). Despite the Church's resistance to evolutionary theory, Segundo believes it must pursue this direction in order to address the modern world with hope. What follows is a sophisticated integration of the progress of evolution with Jesus' "kingdom-project."

The entry point is epistemology. Employing Teilhard's nautical imagery, Segundo asserts that humanity now stands at the bridge of its own evolutionary ship. But while we control the helm we lack the methodology to determine a safe course. To acquire it we are directed to G. Bateson's concept of analogical thinking (in *Ecology of the Mind*). In short, analogical or "loose" thinking explains evolutionary progress by observing functional similarities in nature. For example, human agriculture provides an analogical basis for understanding photosynthesis and animal feeding patterns. Though in principle scientists reject this method of discovery in favor of "strict" research methods, data cannot be interpreted without resorting to anthropomorphic analogies. Because the human mind reasons analogically, Segundo claims science should legitimize this method of investigation.

Armed with the new epistemology to which evolution has led him, he finds it a short step to the underlying principle of the book, drawn from Teilhard: Anything new that bursts forth in the evolutionary process existed in some form (for Segundo, analogically) in the primordial past. But Teilhard inconsistently applied his own principle to Jesus because his logic was still too linear, too Lamarckian. He was naively confident that Jesus' values and the "omega point" of evolution would converge in the near future.

Analogical reasoning by contrast opens up an alternative heuristically superior to both natural selection and linear theology. Specifically it is to view the universe as an enormous circuit. Progress occurs sporadically through the successive bursts and dissipations of energy within the circuit. Segundo observes that the second law of thermodynamics has been overcome, to a degree, by a strong negentropic force in nature. The upward journey from the primordial to the present cannot be explained apart from an original purposive negentropy which took charge of chance. Though not constituting proof of a personal God's existence, this points to the operation of some "teleonomic" intelligence.

What bearing does Jesus have on the circuit? Far from being a mere pinpoint in the past, "the historical Jesus [is] linked up and related with all that has been and will be occurring in the circuit" (p. 41). Segundo finds discreet warrant for a supra-historical Christology in the Vatican II document *Gaudium et spes*, but he develops the concept via the circuit analogy. Jesus is linked to both negentropy and entropy within the circuit.

His kingdom-project proposed in the sermon on the mount and summarized in the formula "God is love" is the "absolute value" to which all the universe ultimately "bows and submits in a personal way" (p. 66). While one wagers this true by faith, it makes better sense than a chance explanation of evolutionary progress. Sharp criticism is directed toward scientific orthodoxy for inconsistently denying a primordial teleonomy while virtually attributing purposive qualities to "chance" (pp. 54-55).

But love does not win a quick linear victory. Sin and suffering constitute a debilitating force in the circuit that does not easily yield. Even the historical Jesus was not free from its effects. Segundo depicts him as a desperate nationalist who provoked a final, fatal conflict with his enemies because of personal entropic tendencies, leading to an untimely death (pp. 84–91). For those whose Christology is informed “from above” that is a most unsatisfactory interpretation of the data. More helpful is Segundo’s call for the Church to identify with its Head in sacrifice, especially for the disadvantaged.

On what ground can one be reasonably certain love (negentropy) will triumph? The answer is to wager, Segundo’s term for faith, that ultimately death will be defeated by resurrection—not the bodily resurrection to eternal bliss of Biblical Christology, but the “victory of love over egotism” on the individual and sociopolitical levels (p. 119). Segundo admits that resurrection is a transcendent datum, but he argues it has been operating in the circuit from the very start of evolution.

By embracing the eschatological negentropy embodied in Jesus’ faith, unlocked through analogical reasoning, humanity can chart its own evolutionary progress. Ironically, the Church is often allied with entropic ideologies and the status quo, which opposes progress. Segundo challenges the Jesus community to turn from rigidity to a more flexible posture, risky though that is, if it wants his faith to lead humanity to what Paul envisioned: “the world of negentropy freed from entropy forever” (pp. 107, 120).

This volume may disappoint those expecting a breakthrough in Christology. It places too little normative value on the gospels and too much on evolutionary theory to be convincing. Perhaps its most important contribution is to encourage dialogue among theologians, philosophers and scientists on a universal teleonomy.

Segundo’s modest claims for his conclusions seem to invite further refinements. Therefore this suggestion is offered: to consider Jesus as the ultimate “circuit breaker” of human moral and spiritual entropy, thus reflecting more accurately the historical data and offering real hope to humanity.

Donald A. Wiggins
St. Paul Bible College, St. Bonifacius, MN

The True Image. By Philip Edgcumbe Hughes. Grand Rapids/Leicester: Eerdmans/Inter-Varsity, 1989, ix + 430 pp., \$19.95 paper.

The central issue of this work is the necessary interrelationship between anthropology and Christology. Hughes locates the basis for the intimate connection in the concept of the image of God. The book has a threefold division: “Creation in the Image of God: Integration,” “The Image Rejected: Disintegration,” and “The Image Restored: Reintegration.”

Part 1 introduces the reader to Hughes’ understanding of the image of God. Christ is the image, and man is created in the image. For man the imprint of the image means having the attributes of “personality, spirituality, rationality, morality, authority, and creativity” (p. 51). Although a bearer of the image by creation, the first man still lacked complete Christiformity. He had perfection but needed to consolidate it. Adam should have progressed toward further glory through obedience. The consequence of the fall, however, is a corrupt though still present image.

Part 2 involves treatment of issues pertaining to the image-bearer in his state of sin. The origin of evil, contrary to various aberrant theories, is found in “the creature’s

abuse or deprivation of his own good nature" (p. 77). This evil resulted in the loss of man's initial perfection and his innate potential Christomorphic destiny (p. 113).

Imputation of sin is not to be understood in terms of federal headship, the principle of influence, or procreative, genetic transmission. Instead, because Adam was the original human with the totality of human nature concentrated in him, "all human nature was vitiated by the first sin because the whole of humanity was present and took part in its commission" (p. 132). Human nature is a single, indivisible, intangible, existential reality, not a material substance, quantity, or dimension. Though always one, it has a progressive history. Any defect in the original nature will be maintained throughout its development. Therefore humans subsequent to the first human are also identified with the original defect.

Part 3 addresses matters relevant to man's consummative renewal to Christlikeness in the age to come. Hughes tirelessly leads the reader through the traditional Christological problems of the early Church, finally bringing him to the hypostatic union of Chalcedon. "As divine, Christ is the Image of God; as human, he is in the image" (p. 279). The Image takes the imprint of the image so that he might conform it to full glory.

Christ was peccable and faced temptation in our human nature but, unlike Adam, allowed no defect to enter the image he had assumed. He fulfilled the requirements for the second Adam. "The starting point was the same for both" (p. 330), yet only Christ achieved the good potential. Those identified with him reach man's originally intended end of glory.

Hughes understands the end of the wicked to be annihilation and views the kingdom of God as the final destiny of the redeemed and as the reestablishment of God's original goal for mankind and creation.

Because the concept of Adam's innate potency and expectation to progress to glory is basic to Hughes' continuity, it would have been helpful to his case to give further development and substantiation. He appreciates the idea in Irenaeus (p. 9) and mentions Heb 2:7, which he understands to refer to this temporary lack of consolidated perfection at creation (pp. 27, 381-382, 411). This is based on the possible temporal force of *brachy ti* ("a little while"), which Hughes fills out with his meaning.

Augustinians and federalists will hold that he too easily dismisses their views of the imputation of sin. Some readers will wish him to reconsider, as I do, his conclusions regarding the peccability of Christ (did not Jesus face temptation as the God-man?) and the final state of the wicked.

Hughes continuously interacts with Scripture as well as with classical and contemporary theologians. His emphases on the image of God and the union of Christology with anthropology are to be applauded. Also beneficial is his notion that true anthropology is to be understood in terms of eschatology in addition to creation. Hughes again proves himself a fine, synthetic thinker. The book is highly recommended.

D. Jeffrey Bingham
The Community Church, Kermit, TX

So Great Salvation. By Charles C. Ryrie. Wheaton: Victor, 1989, 166 pp., \$12.95.

The debate concerning Lordship salvation is one of the hottest in evangelical Christianity at the moment. In reaction to J. F. MacArthur's *The Gospel According to Jesus*, both Z. C. Hodges and C. C. Ryrie have responded from the opposite side. Hodges' *Absolutely Free!* is more extreme and Ryrie's *So Great Salvation* is more

moderate, though closer to Hodges than MacArthur. Because Ryrie wrote his book in response to MacArthur it must be interpreted in that light.

Ryrie describes the nature of the gospel that saves as belief that Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead. He sees this as the complete gospel, so that nothing else is needed for forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life. In contrast, MacArthur views the gospel that Jesus proclaimed as a call to discipleship under the Lordship of Christ, demanding total dedication with nothing knowingly or deliberately held back.

Ryrie believes that it is wrong to include the issues of carnality, spirituality, fruit-bearing and backsliding in with the gospel message. Those issues belong to Christian living. In contrast, MacArthur views salvation by what it produces, not by what one does to get it. God's saving work cannot be defective, and he will produce repentance, faith, sanctification, yieldedness, obedience, and ultimately glorification in every believer. In part, their disagreement is due to the difference between the Reformed view of sanctification and the view of L. S. Chafer.

MacArthur accuses his opponents of teaching that conversion to Christ involves no spiritual commitment whatever. He accuses them of teaching that anyone who simply believes the facts about Christ and claims eternal life can be saved. He complains that they do not teach the need to turn from sin and have at least a willingness to yield to Christ's Lordship. In response, Hodges has written that the truth that Jesus is the Christ and the giver of eternal life to every believer is saving truth, which produces immediate and permanent new birth without exception. To Hodges there is nothing wrong with believing facts in order to be saved, if those facts are indeed saving truth. Ryrie responds that MacArthur's argument is an attack on a straw man. Ryrie argues that it is not easy to believe because one is trusting his eternal destiny to the reliability of those historical facts. Ryrie separates himself from Hodges by accepting the historical definition of faith involving all three elements of intellect (*notitia*), emotions (*assensus*) and volition (*fiducia*). But he also separates himself from MacArthur by rejecting any necessity of commitment to Christ's Lordship in order to be saved. He writes: "If surrender is something I must do as a part of believing, then it is a work, and grace has been diluted to the extent to which I actually surrender" (p. 18). "Saved people need to be dedicated, but dedication is not a requirement for being saved. Neither is willingness to be dedicated an issue in salvation" (p. 74).

Ryrie defines repentance fundamentally as "to change one's mind," but he does not stop there. He adds that Biblical repentance involves changing one's mind in a way that effects some change in oneself. He continues by declaring that the only kind of repentance that saves is a change of mind about Christ. Sorrow may or may not be a part of repentance. This view distinguishes Ryrie from both MacArthur and a number of advocates of a "clear gospel." MacArthur links repentance to the recognition of one's utter sinfulness with a turning from self and sin to God, resulting in a complete change of heart, attitude, interest and direction. And on the other side, many "clear gospel" advocates hold that repentance is nothing more than the change of mind involved in moving from an attitude of unbelief to one of faith in Christ, making repentance a near synonym for faith.

Ryrie agrees with MacArthur that every Christian will bear spiritual fruit, but he qualifies this by allowing for lengthy periods of carnality and the possibility that all of a believer's fruit may be invisible to everyone except God. This view seems to contradict his own strong statements concerning James 2 that an unproductive faith is a spurious faith and that what we are in Christ will be seen in what we are before men (p. 132).

Concerning assurance, Ryrie asks the hardest of questions of his opponent MacArthur. "How do I quantify the amount of fruit necessary to be sure I truly 'believed'?"

in the lordship/mastery sense of the term? Or how do I quantify the amount of defection that can be tolerated without wondering if I have saving faith or if I in fact lost what I formerly had?" (p. 47).

The book is required reading for anyone interested in the Lordship salvation debate. It presents a necessary moderating view. It is well written and will appeal to lay people searching for an answer to this debate. Much of the material is excellent. But I was disappointed in the brief treatments Ryrie gives to crucial questions in the debate. Concerning the relationship of justification to sanctification Ryrie merely points out that he agrees with Reformed writers and leaves it at that (p. 151). He apparently does not see this as the crucial line of demarcation between the various views. Concerning the question of whether a true believer can ever renounce his faith, Ryrie merely quotes Ellicott and hedges his own answer (p. 141). I wished Ryrie would have taken clearer and bolder stands on the natures of faith, repentance and fruit. Often Ryrie feels that he has answered the question when he has merely muddied the waters. Consider his response to the question of whether a believer must bear fruit: "So likely it can truly be said that every believer will bear fruit somewhere (in earth and/or heaven), sometime (regularly and/or irregularly during life), somehow (publicly and/or privately). Fruit, then, furnishes evidence of saving faith. The evidence may be strong or weak, erratic or regular, visible or not. But a saving, living faith works" (pp. 46-47). With that kind of response Ryrie can agree with everyone and no one at the same time.

Neither do his frequently trite responses to his opponent's charges aid in settling the debate. In response to the charge that he does not take Christ's Lordship seriously he retorts: "Of course Jesus is Lord. He is Lord because of who He is" (p. 70). In answer to the charge of "easy-believism" he responds: "It's not easy to believe. The more that is at stake, the harder it is to believe" (pp. 115, 117). And in reaction to the slogan "cheap grace" he counters: "To use the word 'cheap' in the same breath with the grace of God in salvation seems almost blasphemous" (p. 17). All of these statements are true, but they do not adequately address the issues at hand.

In spite of these criticisms, Ryrie's book is still helpful and remains the best expression of a mediating position.

Kenneth A. Daughters
Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, TX

Unapologetic Theology: A Christian Voice in a Pluralistic Conversation. By William C. Placher. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1989, 178 pp., \$13.95 paper.

This volume turned out to be a very pleasant surprise. The back-cover fanfare, centering around the usual buzzwords "dialogue," "post-liberal," "revisionist," etc., immediately triggered my evangelical antialogue, antiliberal (post-, pre- or mid-) and antirevisionist reflex. The cover claimed that Placher charts a middle course, but I was sure it was not going to be my middle.

I was wrong. To be honest, by the time I finished reading this book, I was truly excited by it. Not that the book is particularly evangelically oriented; it certainly is not. In fact, I am puzzled how someone with Placher's background in historical theology can lose contact with historic Christianity as thoroughly as he does in a discussion of present Christian faith. But my point is that Placher's methodological recommendations are sound and are applicable across confessional orientations.

The impasse beyond which Placher wants to lead us is engendered by the notorious difficulty of establishing common ground for the sake of dialogue among differ-

ent traditions. There are two broad options in modern thought. First, there is the theory of universal common ground. With its roots in Cartesian rationalism, this option maintains that all human beings share certain fundamental notions. To promote dialogue we need to dig out this universal core. Unfortunately in the process, Placher points out, the integrity of the various particular traditions is violated in order to cram them into these preconceived patterns. Placher discusses J. Habermas and J. Rawls as advocates of this idea. He gives J. Hick some well-deserved black marks for his ideological imperialism couched in pluralistic language.

The other option is the more recent (in liberal circles) idea that each tradition is self-contained and should be allowed to maintain its own beliefs without censure from outside. Of course there can be no dialogue across boundaries because it would be impossible to determine any sort of common ground. This approach could be traced back to a radical understanding of Wittgenstein's language games. It is advocated by M. Foucault and R. Rorty. Placher includes H. Frei and G. Lindbeck among theologians who have made use of this approach. The problem with it is that it simply does not take sufficient cognizance of our enduring propensity to transcend our traditions and of the ensuing possibility of dialogue, which also does not seem to want to go away.

Placher proposes an approach without reductionism. He admittedly comes down harder on the revisionists because that is where he sees the greater danger in academic circles. But he does not think that Christians must remain secluded inside their own intellectual ghetto. Dialogue is possible—not because all human beings share universal common ground, but because any two traditions can have something in common.

I was able to resurface some of my evangelical vanity interacting with Placher's argument on truth, though even here we are more kindred than strangers. His basic point is that the Christian is entitled to claim truth—in the good old-fashioned sense of excluding falsehood—for his beliefs. But Placher is not F. Schaeffer; his truth is not based on propositional revelation from a God who is there. He suggests a parallel: Just as an anecdote may remind us of a friend's character without having to be true in all of its details, so a Biblical story may teach us about God without having to be factually true in all aspects. But this analogy does not get off the ground, for the only way we know about God is through his revelation. There is nothing to which we can compare it. Hence if the facts are dubious, beliefs about God are highly questionable.

Similarly, evangelicals need to keep in mind that "dialogue" for Placher means exactly that: a mutually enriching conversation. He certainly gives no indication in the direction of evangelism or apologetics, though the parallels present themselves. Nonetheless Placher's defense of genuine truth felt like a breath of fresh air.

Placher's book is heartening. It deserves a wide audience; its excellent writing style ought to contribute to that end.

The dedication of the volume includes H. W. Frei, whose passing I also mourn.

Winfried Corduan
Taylor University, Upland, IN

The Southern Baptists: A Subculture in Transition. By Ellen M. Rosenberg. Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 1989, 240 pp., \$24.50.

Amongst the plethora of publications on American evangelicalism there has emerged an insightful work regarding the social history of the Southern Baptists. With ethnographic precision Rosenberg takes us into a religious world that has evolved

within the context of a biased, culturally conditioned social structure. According to Rosenberg the Southern Baptist Convention has "consistently refused" the notion of ever changing its name: "Every time SBs have made this decision they have said something very important about who they want to be as well as who they are" (p. 2).

This proves to be a key point throughout the work, as Rosenberg clearly demonstrates that the social history of the Southern Baptists has developed in a way that directly reflects their need for identity as a chosen people of God. The issue of slavery and their initial break with their Baptist cousins from the north drove the Southern Baptists into a defensive posture that, as time passed, resulted in a form of southern nationalistic pride. Thus Southern Baptist theology developed within a social context of "white solidarity" (pp. 13-14) driven by the concern to preserve what seemed to be an endangered way of life. This sense of danger did not last long. Rosenberg points out that a new breed of Southern Baptists came forth uninhibited by the perceived constraints of the Baptists from the north (i.e. leadership and financial control). With their defensive posture and newfound confidence Southern Baptists began to view southern culture as particularly Christian, which in essence allowed many to hold a theology that could "overlook the social evil of slavery." As southern culture was criticized for this there was a tendency to interpret those criticisms "as threats against the last remaining stronghold of Christian civilization" (p. 32).

The section on Southern Baptist polity gives the reader a first-hand description of what goes on inside the Southern Baptist superstructure. From its financial structure down to the traditional procedures at the annual convention Rosenberg elucidates, often with sarcasm and wit, many of the cultural idiosyncrasies peculiar to this denomination. One such example, although not uniquely Southern Baptist, is a description of how a convention begins. "The session starts with prayer. There are two formal sermons by the president and a selected superstar preacher, and frequent congregational hymns that serve exactly the purpose of the seventh-inning stretch. Baptists usually stand to pray, which also helps the circulation and is the only way to achieve quiet; they will not talk during prayer, although they may continue to ambulate, tiptoeing with bowed heads and slitted eyes" (p. 62).

Most of the battles raging within the Southern Baptist Convention have germinated from their institutions of higher learning, specifically the seminaries. In Rosenberg's analysis the fundamentalists have gained a great deal of leverage in the seminaries. "The fundamentalists are now requiring adherence to specific tenets of inerrancy, or biblical literalism, as well as loyalty to themselves" (p. 81). This is one of the many ways in which the new religious right has attempted to recapture lost ground and once again gain control of an ever-changing culture. As the fundamentalists continue to gain more and more control in the Southern Baptist Convention the seminaries will be subject to increased theological and cultural scrutiny, which in turn could have a dramatic impact on the quality of theological scholarship. In chap. 2, "A Social History of the Southern Baptists," much emphasis is placed on the fact that racial discrimination has existed at the core of southern culture from the nineteenth century to the present. This theme is picked up again in chap. 4, where Rosenberg handles the issue of a "new rationale" for keeping the races separate. There are examples of racial integration in the Southern Baptist Convention, but according to Rosenberg this amounts only to a mere "token integration" (p. 115). Other themes in this chapter cover a more personal side to the Southern Baptists, such as "The Pastor as Role Model and Rule-Maker," "Family Ministry and Church Discipline," and the institution of the family.

The remainder of the work takes us into Southern Baptist ideology in its theological and social emphases. This chapter is also an exposé of the agenda of the new

religious right. There is a cutting criticism by Rosenberg with regard to the notion of Biblical inerrancy: For some Southern Baptists the Bible "has become a talisman" (p. 134). Questions pertaining to the creation/evolution debate are taken into consideration, as is the issue of the role of women in the ministry. In terms of social involvement there has been some progress in the Southern Baptist Convention in areas such as hunger, AIDS, war and peace. But Rosenberg concludes that the new religious right would still like to gain full control in these issues in order to further their conservative agenda.

For the most part this work is a precise analysis of the social structure and development of the Southern Baptist subculture. Rosenberg demonstrates her keen perception in her description of Southern Baptist practices and culture. One may find her wanting, however, in terms of her understanding of theology and in her lack of understanding of why many Southern Baptists often behave the way they do. For instance, while addressing the issue of immersion baptism she argues that because there have been "folk beliefs" surrounding the practice it may be that for some the idea of being immersed "added the sort of thrill that handling snakes or walking on live coals may give today" (p. 21). This particular notion is not documented and thus fails to make an objective point.

The fact that the author is an anthropologist and not a theologian must be kept in mind. But it would be intellectually dishonest to dismiss her out of hand for such a reason. There is much insight to be gained from this work in terms of just how much our cultural biases play a role in the development of many of our theological opinions. Those interested in the future of evangelicalism in America will especially appreciate this latest addition to the many other insightful works in this area of study.

David L. Russell

William Tyndale College, Farmington Hills, MI

The Devotional Experience in the Poetry of John Milton. By Michael Ernest Travers. Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1988, 163 pp., n.p.

John Milton, Protestant and Puritan, poet of the greatness of God and one of the greatest poets ever to write in English, was a man who could be reckoned from numerous sides. His desire, though, was to bring forth from his inward promptings the raising of his mother dialect for the glory of God. Travers, therefore, attempts to study Milton's poetical concerns in devotional experience in a way in keeping with the heart of Milton.

This work, originally a doctoral dissertation, seeks to understand Milton's own view of what in fact is true devotion to God. It does so primarily by means of careful analyses of the poet's development of his characters in their relation to God. The work also follows a kind of chronology whereby we see Milton's own developing thought from the young poet of "Nativity Ode" and "Lycidas" (where the devotional consideration is established) to the aged Milton of *Samson Agonistes*. Very important throughout, as Travers effectively shows, is Milton's Protestant perception of devotion as truly active. This perception provides a consistent linkage to Milton's *The Christian Doctrine* (his own systematic theology). For Milton, says Travers, "devotion is an individual's inner attitude toward God which he expresses in the 'cultivation' or active development of certain 'devout affections' for Him" (p. 7). This prose proposition is developed and exemplified in different circumstances by Milton's characters, especially in the late epic poems.

While Travers carefully uncovers how Milton was able in his earlier poems to establish a way to devotional expression, he shows that it is Adam and Eve in *Paradise Lost*, Jesus Christ the Son of God in *Paradise Regained*, and very importantly Milton's "every man," Samson in *Samson Agonistes*, who best disclose the life of devotion to God. Travers points out that in Milton's characterization of Adam and Eve the purity of their prelapsarian devotion ought to be contrasted with their postlapsarian devotion, which because of sin has enlarged their view of God and matured their piety. In Jesus Christ, Milton finds one who must be both Savior and Son of God and yet true exemplar for all true devotion. (The question of Milton's "Arianism" will be mentioned below.) Therefore, says Travers, Milton focuses his attention on the real humanity of Christ and on the deep reality of his testings. It is in a special way with Samson, however, that Milton can develop the entire movement of devotion from despair to doubt, to hope, and finally to the active piety that carries out God's purposes. In Samson most concretely Milton's reader finds himself. He thus learns the wisdom of what Milton said in *The Christian Doctrine*: "Acquiesce in the promises of God, through a confident reliance on his divine providence, power and goodness, and bear inevitable evils with equanimity, as the dispensation of the Father, and sent for good." The slow arrival of Samson's "patience" is found in his active, conscious undertaking of God's glory and cause.

In reading Travers' effective analysis of Milton's poetic disclosure of true devotional experience, particularly in his character development, I slowly discovered his own "movement": from analysis to self-knowledge in the knowledge of God. Thus Travers' scholarly and readable interpretation of Milton actually is an aid toward that which Milton himself desired to progress. Further, while Travers broaches the question of Milton's Arianism (cf. *The Christian Doctrine*, book 1, chap. 5, on the Son of God as creature) he consciously sets that aside as a somewhat extraneous issue for the purposes of this book. Travers' decision to do so was initially a problem for me. But the methodological purpose became clearer later, especially in light of *Paradise Regained* and Milton's emphasis on Christ's humanity. Milton's problem Christology is surely an issue (however consistent Milton is on this point) but not, apparently, for the focus of this book.

As has already been mentioned, Travers' writing is clear and his use of the texts of the particular poems is helpful. The argumentation on the points and emphases of Milton is convincing.

John D. Morrison
Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

T. S. Eliot: The Philosopher Poet. By Alzina Stone Dale. Wheaton: Harold Shaw, 1988, 209 pp., n.p.

For more than two generations evangelical students have looked to T. S. Eliot and C. S. Lewis as proofs that it is possible to be both intelligent (indeed, intellectual) and Christian at the same time. Of the two giants, Eliot has been less read, less admired, less emulated. The fact that his writing is more obscure than Lewis' and the fact that, unlike Lewis, he had attained to literary fame before his conversion have combined to make him something of an enigma to Christians and non-Christians alike. Believers cannot get over the standard view of Eliot as the supreme prophet of modern lostness and despair, while nonbelievers have equal difficulty assimilating his conversion, feeling compelled either to explain it away or condemn it

as a retreat into escapism. Dale's purpose is to rescue Eliot from both tendencies, to describe him as a whole poet who forms a bridge between the two worlds: a guide to our times for Christians, a guide to faith for others. Her thesis is that "he does not deserve to be summed up as the one who described the modern waste land, and then relapsed into childishness to escape it. His work should be read in the context of mature Christian belief" (p. 7).

That such a study has been long needed is undeniable, and this book is to be praised for taking the first halting steps toward providing it. As an overview of Eliot's life and work, one that takes his conversion seriously, it performs a useful service. Unfortunately three flaws—two minor and one major—keep the book from being an entirely satisfying treatment.

First, the subtitle is not entirely accurate. The book contains no detailed exposition of the system of philosophy that finds expression in Eliot's writing (though there are many allusions to it), and the influence of philosophy on his poetry is only one of many themes discussed. Rather, the book is a survey of Eliot's life in which his works are summarized as they appeared. Second, in that survey the attempt to draw parallels and comparisons between Eliot and the Inklings (Lewis, Tolkien, C. Williams, etc.) and similar Christian writers (D. Sayers, G. K. Chesterton) is overdone, with the results being frequently gratuitous or intrusive. The effect is to make the book seem almost tendentious at times, which is unfortunate, for its central thesis is certainly sound.

By far the greatest weakness, however, is the author's tendency to depend on argument by assertion. Too many sentences begin with phrases such as "contrary to the opinion of many critics" and then proceed to offer an alternative without argumentation. No exegesis (or, as literary critics prefer to call it, "close reading") of Eliot's writing is offered to buttress the interpretation proposed. It is true that to have provided that would have made for a very different and (except in the hands of a great critic) less readable book. But one of Dale's avowed aims is to overturn what has amounted to a consensus among many secular critics concerning how to read and evaluate Eliot's later, explicitly Christian work. And this aim simply cannot be achieved by what will look to such critics like mere pontification.

Not that the book is without merit: It forms an excellent introduction to Eliot's life and work for evangelical students in need of such an overview, and it approaches the religious commitment of the "later Eliot" from a refreshingly sympathetic point of view. If in the process it also throws stones at certain castles that it lacks the artillery (or time) to topple, it raises the hope that others will come along whose firepower will be more adequate for the job.

Donald T. Williams
Toccoa Falls College, Toccoa Falls, GA

Women in the Earliest Churches. By Ben Witherington, III. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1988, xiii + 300 pp., \$44.50.

In his previous monograph, *Women in the Ministry of Jesus* (Cambridge, 1984), the author of the present volume concentrated on material that may well go back to the *Sitz im Leben Jesu*. Witherington concluded that while Jesus did not advocate rejection of the traditional structure of the family, and while he appeared to wish to reform rather than repudiate the patriarchal framework of society, he nevertheless taught that the claims of the family of faith had priority, and he supported a woman's

right to have religious training and to be a religious leader's disciple. He concluded with the promise that this volume was "the first part of a larger effort I am undertaking to understand the whole of the New Testament's teaching on women and their roles" (p. 131). Four years later we now have the promised installment and its proposal to examine the texts that give us clues about women and their roles in the earliest post-Easter communities. Witherington's conclusion is familiar: "The New Testament authors . . . argue for, or support by implication, the new freedom and roles women may assume in Christ. At the same time the evidence indicates an attempt at *reformation*, not repudiation, of the universal patriarchal structure of family and society in the first century. *Reformation in community*, not renunciation in society, is the order of the day" (p. 211, italics his).

In light of the present growth industry in research on women in the NT and early Christianity one might reasonably ask: "Why another tome?" Witherington's *raison d'être* proceed from a dual dissatisfaction with the feminist/chauvinist categorization of the Biblical material and the exegetical selectivity that so often characterizes the research.

Witherington's chronological plan of attack is conventional. The general patriarchal orientation of the prevailing Greco-Roman culture is surveyed in the first chapter. He carefully notes that a woman's status and roles varied from one subculture to another. Chapters 2 and 3 examine the Pauline material by focusing on the physical family and the community of faith respectively. The discussions are clear, and those familiar with the research will find no surprises. The strength of the volume lies in these chapters. Witherington leads us through the various texts with a careful eye on the sociological insights provided by Theissen, Meeks, Scroggs and others. He has corrected a heavy dependence on scholarship prior to the late 1970s that characterized and thus dated his first volume. The discussion of 1 Corinthians 7; 11:2-16; 14:33b-36 (Pauline and in its proper context) and the *Haustafeln* (Col 3:18-4:1; Eph 5:21-33) are particularly thorough. The exegesis is concise but formidable, and the reader would have been better served by footnotes instead of endnotes (65 pages). The discussion of 1 Corinthians 7 would have been greatly enhanced by interaction with the important study of V. Wimbush, *Paul, the Worldly Ascetic* (Mercer, 1987), a volume that apparently appeared after Witherington's research was completed. He completes the discussion of the Pauline material with the unstartling conclusion that the author of 1 Tim 2:8-15 (the matter of authorship is left open) corrects a specific protognostic abuse at Ephesus. "There is no universal and unqualified prohibition of women teaching and preaching in this text" (p. 122).

The chronological study continues into the last quarter of the first century with an examination of the tension between new freedom for women and traditional roles in Luke-Acts (chap. 4) and the churches of Matthew, Mark and John (chap. 5). Witherington traces the themes of Lukan male-female parallelism and role reversal in the gospel redactional material and summaries in Acts. This chapter is somewhat disappointing in that it fails to take advantage of the more recent research on the social and literary dimensions of the third gospel by P. Esler, J. T. Carroll and R. L. Brawley. Mark "has only a moderate interest in women and their roles" (p. 158), and while the (incomplete) resurrection narrative affirms the worth of women witnessing to the male leaders of the community their subordinate positions are reaffirmed. Likewise Matthew's interest is less concerned with the role of women in the community than an informed and reformed male leadership in keeping with its character as the most Jewish and traditional of all the gospels. The fourth evangelist "places special stress on various women as models of the process by which one comes to a fully formed faith" (p. 182). All three evangelists to a greater (John) or

lesser (Matthew) degree maintain the tension between the affirmation of new freedom and roles women may assume in Christ and the reaffirmation and reformation of male leadership. The reader is left with the peculiar feeling that each evangelist would have liked to have allowed more freedom for women but that the pervasive and resistant patriarchy made the agenda impossible.

In the final chapter Witherington examines "Trajectories Beyond the New Testament Era" by surveying the relevant data in A.D. 80–325. The chapter is too brief to be other than an introduction to the issues, and the author admits heavy reliance upon the research of Fiorenza, Ruether, Pagels, Gryson and others. Asceticism and views of human sexuality, gnosticism, prophecy and Montanism, church order and typology are the topics of discussion. Despite an emphasis on the variety of trends that developed, Witherington concludes that the data suggest "a regression toward greater conformity with the patterns of the dominant secular culture" (p. 210).

Does Witherington offer anything new in this volume? Not really. He has corrected at least three glaring errors of his first volume: a tendency to view first-century Judaism as monolithic, an uncritical acceptance of the rabbinic sources as indicative of the view of Jews in the first century, and a reliance on and interaction with dated research on women in the first century. But there is much more to be said about the complexity and diversity of the Greco-Roman period. Witherington is attentive to the sociological context of the Pauline communities, but he is less so of the communities represented by the evangelists. This is a very complex question, but it needs a more thorough assessment than what the author offers. The omission of indices (Biblical, ancient author, modern author or subject) seriously limits the volume's usability. This is particularly egregious in light of the breadth of the research and the price. There is a helpful bibliography keyed to the issues of each chapter.

These caveats aside, this is a helpful volume. One might wish that Witherington had addressed all the NT material with as much thoroughness as he does the Pauline corpus. Although he promises no third volume dealing with the post-NT era, the survey in his final chapter warrants the undertaking. In light of Witherington's considerable skills we can only hope that he will take up the task.

James L. Jaquette
Boston University

Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation. By Tremper D. Longman, III. Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation series 3. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987, xii + 164 pp., \$12.95 paper.

Longman is well versed in historical studies and has also read widely in literary criticism. He is convinced that traditional author-oriented exegetes can learn a great deal from contemporary literary criticism without jettisoning either the historic element of the Bible or its normative authority. Thus it is Longman's thesis that attention to aesthetics should enhance rather than weaken evangelical use of Scripture. In this volume he surveys the historical background of literary criticism and lays out an eclectic literary-critical strategy that should prove valuable to those wishing to get involved in understanding and practicing this discipline.

After the introduction, the book is divided into two parts: theory and application. The theory section contains three chapters providing an historical survey, an evaluation of strengths and weaknesses, and a summary of basic principles. The somewhat lengthier application section contains four chapters, providing analysis and examples

of prose and poetry respectively. The book concludes with a brief epilogue, an annotated bibliography, and three indices. Among the literary critics discussed by Longman, special prominence is given to R. Alter, A. Berlin, N. Frye, J. Kugel and L. Ryken.

Throughout the presentation one notes three recurring themes. First, Longman stresses that no one literary approach is adequate. Rather, valid insights must be culled from the works of all the various literary schools in order to avoid idiosyncrasies. Second, balance is sought between historical and literary analysis, which are presented as complementary tools for Biblical studies. Literary criticism does not amount to a paradigm shift (p. 151). Third, and probably most emphatically, Longman repeatedly argues that the historicity of the Bible is not necessarily threatened by literary approaches. Granting that many literary theorists do not accept or at least do not stress the historicity of Biblical narratives, he nonetheless points out good reasons why the literary qualities of Scripture do not militate against its historicity (pp. vii, 3-4, 9, 54-58, 68-69, 81, 152, 154). It is interesting, however, that Longman is more interested in literary typology than in historical harmonization in explaining the variation in Matthew and Luke on the setting of the sermon on the mount (pp. 94-95). I find it difficult to resort primarily to literary artifice here due to Matthew's explicit narrative framework for the sermon (Matt 5:1-2; 7:28-29).

The theological perspective that informs Longman's evaluation of literary-critical theories is evidently the Reformed doctrine of common grace (p. 48). I would have appreciated a more detailed explanation of how this doctrine influenced the appraisal of theories that Longman questionably labels as "secular" (pp. 47, 49, 53). A more explicit statement of the theological perspective that informed his appraisal would have strengthened the case that there is a great deal of helpful material in literary-critical theory if it is carefully examined. A more complete theological basis for the suggested interdisciplinary methodology is needed.

Another area calling for comment is the limited focus of the work on narrative and poetry. What promise does literary criticism hold for epistolary and apocalyptic literature? Granted, literary criticism has not delved as deeply into these genres, but Longman might have offered some suggestions beyond the one brief footnote he does include (p. 111).

All in all, Longman does an admirable job of introducing readers to the history, the process, and the potential of literary criticism. His refusal to grant messianic status to this approach in general or to any one literary critic in particular is commendable. The somewhat understated manner in which the discipline is advocated should win more adherents in the long run than an impassioned appeal for one and all to jump on the latest bandwagon. My own appreciation for the discipline and desire to continue its use was increased by this volume. An error is found on p. 158, where Daniel Patte is mistakenly referred to as David Patte.

David L. Turner
Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary, Grand Rapids, MI

The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature. By Sidney Greidanus. Grand Rapids/Leicester: Eerdmans/Inter-Varsity, 1988, 364 pp., \$19.95 paper.

Greidanus is best known for his groundbreaking 1970 doctoral dissertation, *Sola Scriptura: Problems and Principles in Preaching Historical Texts*. In this new work he continues to bridge the disciplines of Biblical hermeneutics and homiletics.

Meanwhile, a paradigm shift has occurred in Biblical studies and in homiletics: Scholarly interest today is centered not so much on historical studies as on genres of Biblical literature and in homiletics on forms of sermons. These are the factors that have prompted Greidanus to set forth a new contemporary and holistic method of Biblical interpretation and preaching.

There are so many positive things that need to be said about Greidanus' work. It sets a new standard of excellence for our profession. He correctly champions expository preaching as the essence of setting forth a Biblical message on the basis of a Biblical text. My own approach adds just this: An expository sermon is that method of preaching that has as its source at least one paragraph (or strophe) of Biblical text and receives both the shape (its major points) and content of its message from that Biblical text itself. The paragraph (or in poetry the strophe) is the smallest unit of thought, and hence we cannot become any more atomistic than that and still claim an expository stance. Also, the text must supply not only the content of the message but also its shape or outline.

Greidanus has performed another real service by warning that too many sermons make the "genre mistake"—i.e. treating one literary type of Scripture, such as apocalypse or wisdom, as if it were the prose of the epistles. Excellent discussions on preaching from narratives (Greidanus' specialty), prophetic materials, gospels or epistles are nicely laid out for the aspiring preacher and interpreter of these texts. But Greidanus fails to give any extended discussions or examples of preaching from the genres of wisdom, apocalypse or psalms. Neither are the forms of preaching from the law, parable or funeral dirge illustrated.

Greidanus' critique of the historical-critical method incorporates some of the finest evangelical thinking I have seen on this topic. His treatments of Troeltsch and Pannenberg should be required reading for all Biblical scholars.

When Greidanus sets forth his general hermeneutical stance, he correctly asserts with G. Fee and D. Stuart that "the only proper control for hermeneutics is to be found in the original intent of the biblical text." To this Greidanus rightly adds: Language also involves the presence of a listener, but the original intention safeguards reading subjective opinions into the text.

Greidanus does not adequately protect himself from the charge of eisegesis in the areas of *sensus plenior* ("fuller sense") or Christocentric interpretation of the OT from the fullness of NT revelation. The fuller sense, though admittedly not present in the text, can be established, Greidanus alarmingly assures us, as an extension of the original sense and solely on the basis of subsequent Biblical revelation. If this is not (by definition) reading a meaning "into" a text, what is it? To also take the NT's fullness and progression of revelation on topics treated in the OT as the "new understandings" of the OT again sounds like, looks like, and probably is eisegesis. My recommendation would be to use the analogy of antecedent Scripture for theological exegesis but reserve the analogy of faith for theological construction in systematic or dogmatic theology. Greidanus' actual practice and repeated statements (e.g. pp. 16, 81, 108–109, *et al.*) overcome the caveats of this complaint: He relies almost totally on authorial intentionality.

The whole Church will remain in Greidanus' debt for many years to come. Pastors, homileticians and Biblical scholars all will find profit in studying the approaches suggested in this volume, which should enjoy an enormous success and will probably be one of our major texts in the area of hermeneutics and homiletics for the foreseeable future.

Walter C. Kaiser, Jr.
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

Israel's Apostasy and Restoration: Essays in Honor of Roland K. Harrison. Edited by Avraham Gileadi. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988, xiii + 325 pp., n.p.

Kind words of appreciation for Harrison by P. C. Craigie (written a few months before Craigie's death) open this volume. Unlike many a *Festschrift*, this work has a unifying theme: Israel's apostasy and restoration in the light of prophetic thought. The approaches employed by the 24 contributors are mainly historical, literary and theological. In what follows I will discuss these essays by topic.

In the first essay, "From Egypt to Canaan: A Heroic Narrative" (pp. 1-8), F. E. Greenspahn revises J. Campbell's concept of "monomyth" as applied to the exodus. Greenspahn would see the oppression in Egypt as beginning the cycle, the wilderness journey as the main ordeal, and the Sinai experience as the apotheosis. Is the exodus, however, merely a "threshold into adventure" (p. 5)? Moreover, is Israel really the hero in this cycle, even "a strange kind of hero" (p. 6)?

Two essays treat Israelite and Canaanite religion. J. N. Oswalt's "Golden Calves and the 'Bull of Jacob': The Impact of Israel on Its Religious Environment" (pp. 9-18) follows in the tradition of G. E. Wright, who staunchly defended the uniqueness of Israelite religion by calling attention to its monotheism, iconoclasm, and rejection of magic and nature myths. Oswalt argues that the determining factor in the early emergence of these notions was the transcendence of God. In "YHWH's Refutation of the Baal Myth through the Actions of Elijah and Elisha" (pp. 19-37) J. R. Battenfield argues that Elijah's actions manifest the primacy of YHWH as the God of life, weather and health over against Baal (whom Battenfield associates with Baal Melqart).

Two essays deal with the deterioration of Israelite religion: D. I. Block's "The Period of the Judges: Religious Disintegration under Tribal Rule" (pp. 39-57) and W. S. LaSor's "The Prophets during the Monarchy: Turning Points in Israel's Decline" (pp. 59-70). While Block argues that the chief concern of Judges is to document Israel's spiritual devolution, LaSor sees the ultimate function of the prophets likewise to be markers of Israel's decline, due to the failure of both king and people to heed their warnings.

Israel's relations with its neighbors are the subject of several articles. J. K. Hoffmeier, in "Egypt as an Arm of Flesh: A Prophetic Response" (pp. 79-97), provides an illuminating survey of how prophets assessed Judah's various appeals for help to Egypt. In "Israel's Apostasy: Catalyst of Assyrian World Conquest" (pp. 99-113), P. R. Gilchrist compares faithful Israel's destiny as "head of the nations" (Deut 28:1) with unfaithful Israel's destiny as vanquished by the nations (28:25). Although Gilchrist tries to draw a direct correlation between Assyria's fluctuating rise to world domination and Israel's apostasy, does Assyria's ascendancy over virtually all the Near East follow ineluctably from Israel's regression? The treatment of idols in Isaiah 41-47, Jeremiah 50-51, and Daniel 3 is discussed by J. D. W. Watts in "Babylonian Idolatry in the Prophets as a False Socio-Economic System" (pp. 115-122). (There seems to be a gap in this essay, because p. 120 does not resume p. 119.) Watts contends that in prophetic perspective the entire structure of the Babylonian empire, as represented by its idols, was destined to collapse because it was a human creation.

The subject of covenant continues to fascinate many OT scholars, although attempts to define "covenant" elicit great debate. Is covenant essentially a pact or a bilateral agreement between two parties (e.g. Mendenhall, Cross) or is it an obligation or oath from one party to another (e.g. Kutsch, Perlitt, Weinfeld)? Accepting the categorizations of Weinfeld (a treaty constitutes an obligation of a vassal to a suzerain, whereas a grant constitutes an obligation of a suzerain toward a vassal),

B. K. Waltke explores "The Phenomenon of Conditionality within Unconditional Covenants" (pp. 123-139). According to Waltke, treaty (i.e. the Mosaic covenant) and grant (i.e. the Noahic, Abrahamic and Davidic covenants) function as complements to one another in defining true Israel. W. J. Dumbrell, in "The Prospect of Unconditionality in the Sinaitic Covenant," charts continuity in God's establishment of a people in the Abrahamic, Mosaic and "remnant" covenants (pp. 141-155). For Dumbrell the mediatorial role of Moses in Exodus 19-34, which persists despite episodes of national apostasy, is indicative of divine intent that the ideal worshipping community would stand.

In "The Davidic Covenant: A Theological Basis for Corporate Protection?" (pp. 157-163) Gileadi points out that under the provisions of this covenant "the fate and welfare of the people hinged upon the king's loyalty to YHWH" (p. 159). While this corporate dimension does exist (e.g. 2 Sam 7:10, 23-24), the function of the Davidic covenant, as cited in Kings, is to explain precisely why divine retribution is tempered or not forthcoming at all when southern kings sin (1 Kgs 11:12, 13, 32, 34, 36; 15:4; 2 Kgs 8:19; 19:34; 20:6). Tackling a rather formidable subject, "Temple, Covenant, and Law in the Ancient Near East and in the Old Testament" (pp. 293-305), J. M. Lundquist claims: "The temple founds (legitimizes) the state; covenant binds the foundation; law underlies the covenant" (p. 293).

In keeping with the theme of this volume, a number of essays treat prophetic tropes and hopes. G. V. Smith, in his essay on "Alienation and Restoration: A Jacob-Esau Typology," explores the prophetic analogy between themes in the relationship of Jacob and Esau and themes in the relationship between Israel and the nations (pp. 165-174). In the longest article in this volume, "Historical Selectivity: Prophetic Prerogative or Typological Imperative?" (pp. 175-212), A. E. Krause, using the Song of Moses as a starting point, examines how Biblical writers deliberately use the past to understand the present, and the past and the present to project the future. Recognition that prophets employed inherited historical and eschatological perspectives to shape their messages obviates the need, according to Krause, to view certain prophecies as late. R. Youngblood's "A Holistic Typology of Prophecy and Apocalyptic" (pp. 213-221) points out parallels to prophetic and apocalyptic themes in Isaiah 24-27. He sees these shared motifs as proof that prophecy and apocalyptic are basically similar. In "Theophanies Cultic and Cosmic: 'Prepare to Meet Thy God!'" (pp. 307-317) V. H. Matthews traces the relationship between changing sites of theophanies and shifts in their depiction, observing that there is a clear progression from individual encounters of limited duration to a more universal manifestation within an eschatological framework.

Prophetic expectations of Israel's renewal are addressed by several essays. J. E. Coleson explicates the metaphor of the feminine life cycle for Jerusalem in Ezekiel 16 in "Israel's Life Cycle from Birth to Resurrection" (pp. 237-250). In "A New Israel: The Righteous from among All Nations" (pp. 251-259), D. L. Christensen seeks to demonstrate that the roots of universalism in Hebrew prophetic tradition are deeper than some scholars have allowed. References to four of "the nations"—Egypt, Assyria, Edom, Moab—in prophetic writings reveal that universalism need not have national roots, but ultimately universalism becomes national because all who swear allegiance to YHWH are Israel. In another valuable essay, "The Prophetic Literality of Tribal Reconstruction" (pp. 273-281), S. D. Ricks isolates a basic pattern in prophetic expectations of reconfigured Israel consisting of (1) the reunification of northern and southern tribes, (2) a Davidic king as ruler, (3) the renewal of the land with a temple at its center, and (4) a new and everlasting covenant. E. H. Merrill's fascinating essay "Pilgrimage and Procession: Motifs of Israel's Return" (pp. 261-272)

shows that not only are the motifs of exodus and redemption present in prophetic hopes for restoration but also those of pilgrimage and worship. Merrill believes that Zephaniah, Ezekiel and especially Isaiah appropriate vocabulary and motifs from cultic literature to describe this pilgrimage and procession to Zion.

The trend of the last two decades of questioning older negative perspectives on the postexilic period is evident in a number of essays in this volume. W. O. McCready, in "The 'Day of Small Things' vs. the Latter Days: Historical Fulfillment or Eschatological Hope?" (pp. 223-236), argues that postexilic Judaism represents a vibrant stage in its development toward becoming a world religion. The continuity of YHWH's presence, as represented by the construction of the temple, is the first installment of better things to come. C. H. Bullock, "The Priestly Era in the Light of Prophetic Thought" (pp. 71-78), traces postexilic adaptations of Ezekiel's vision of temple (primary) and kingship (secondary). Whereas in Zechariah and Haggai the priesthood plays a dominant role and the prophets play a supportive role, the monarchy plays a minor role, if any at all. Yet the postexilic writers envision the monarchy returning in the *eschaton*.

In "The Prophetic Ideal of Government in the Restoration Era" (pp. 283-292) D. K. Stuart argues, unlike Bullock, that those prophets who address the structure of restoration government (e.g. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel) are "consistent in limiting true governmental power and authority to the divinely appointed king" (p. 291). Priests and judges will derive their power from the king, who will himself be subject to divine authority. The final essay, "The Transcendent Nature of Covenant Curse Reversals" by H. M. Wolf, shows that prophecies of Israel's future portray more than a restoration of the past: Israel's final state will be more glorious than ever (pp. 319-325).

Surprisingly for a *Festschrift*, there is no bibliography of Harrison's publications. Because of the specialized nature of most of its essays, this volume will be of most interest to OT teachers and scholars.

Gary N. Knoppers

The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA

Het Archimedisch Punt van de Pentateuchkritiek: Een Historisch en Exegetisch Onderzoek Naar de Verhouding van Deuteronomium en de Reformatie van Konig Josia (2 Kon 22-23). [The Archimedian Point of Pentateuchal Criticism: A Historical and Exegetical Research into the Relation between Deuteronomy and the Reformation of King Josiah (2 Kings 22-23)]. By Maarten Jan Paul. Gravenhage, 1988, 392 pp., 55 guilders paper.

Archimedes of Syracuse (287-212 B.C.) declared: "Give me a place to stand, and I move the earth." Archimedes never found such a place, but W. M. L. DeWette in 1806 and 1807 (*Contributions to the Introduction of the Old Testament*) thought he had found the point in Israelite national and literary history that would enable scholars to reconstruct the true origin of OT literature and the correct history. That Archimedian point is the reported discovery of a book of Mosaic law in the course of temple renovations in the reign of Josiah about 621 B.C. According to DeWette's disciples the discovery may have been faked by Hilkiah, but it brought ancient (Moses') authority to bear on unification of worship at Jerusalem and enabled the Josianic revival to succeed for a while.

Why did this obscure event reported in 2 Kings 22-23 seem so important to DeWette and succeeding critics? Because (1) Exod 20:24-26 seems to prescribe the construction of altars of uncut stone for lawful local worship throughout the land of Israel, and (2) Deut 12:5-14 seems to forbid such local worship and to prescribe

that there should be only one altar of sacrifice, the bronze altar before the tabernacle and later temple at Jerusalem.

Add to this that in addition to numerous OT references to pagan-like sacrifices at high places throughout the land by backslidden Israelites there was a general custom of offering apparently lawful sacrifices in various localities. There are several examples of this in 1 Samuel (7:5-9; 9:11-14; 13:7-14; 16:1-5 *et al.*). Elijah's sacrifice on Mount Carmel is notable (1 Kgs 18:30-39). Samuel (if not Saul) and Elijah are hardly apostates, and it is difficult to regard their actions as exceptional.

Yet the great revivals of Mosaic religion under the leadership of the kings of Judah invariably involve extirpation of some kind of local sacrificial slaughter of animals and full support of priestly sacrifice only at Jerusalem.

Employing enlightenment ideas and rationalist exegesis, DeWette proposed that the worship never was centralized until Josiah's time. Hence the book of Deuteronomy was not read, or perhaps did not even exist until then. The legislation of Leviticus—the "Priestly Code"—therefore did not exist either, for in its rules of sacrifice the central sanctuary is presupposed (see especially Leviticus 1-17).

If there were no central sanctuary before Josiah's time, then the critic has all sorts of possibilities for reconstruction of Israel's national history and history of worship. He is free to follow wherever his philosophical assumptions lead. In the century of Hegel and Darwin that had to be evolutionary. The various theories led ultimately to classic expression in a sort of canon of critical orthodoxy in J. Wellhausen's *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*. Our author writes: "DeWette himself regarded Deuteronomy as one of the newest parts [of the Pentateuch]. After him, K. H. Graf, A. Kuenen, and J. Wellhausen have put the four major sources of the Pentateuch in the order that has been acceptable to most theologians up to the present: Jahwist (J), Elohist (E), Deuteronomist (D), and Priestly Code (P). The date of D in 622/21 is the pivot of this reconstruction" (p. 362).

The first seven chapters of Paul's thesis report the growth of studies and theories (terminating on Wellhausen's classical statement). Chapters 8-10 trace reactions to and criticisms of the critical synthesis from Wellhausen's time to the present. Further study showed (what careful readers of the Bible knew anyway) that, taking Scripture at face value, there were always a central sanctuary with Mosaic ritual and local private altars as well. Even Deuteronomy (16:21; 27:5-6; 33:19) deals favorably with altars independent of the tabernacle.

Chapters 11-15 trace the weakening of the foundations of the house begun by DeWette and finished by Wellhausen. Their thesis has been weakened in many ways. I select a few pointed out by the author.

(1) Their analysis was almost wholly literary with little awareness of the high cultural level of Near Eastern nations in the second millennium. Hence their ideas of the evolution of culture essential to their thesis have become less acceptable to informed readers and scholars.

(2) It may be questioned "whether their conclusions were produced by exegetical and historical evidence or by their theological and philosophical views." Their ideas of development tended to control their exegesis and interpretation.

(3) Critics (Voltaire, DeWette, Wellhausen) denied the existence of the tabernacle. Yet archeology has since their time shown that such a construction was quite possible in the second millennium. This renders historically possible the coexistence of a central sanctuary with primeval local, private altars.

(4) Critics simply did not look at all at the evidence within Exodus and Deuteronomy. The latter is fully aware of local sacrifice along with a central sanctuary. What really existed was lawful worship on two levels.

(5) The rule of Leviticus 17 relates "to the desert period," an "intermezzo" between Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 12. "The hypothetical evolution in the cult, from a great number of places of worship to a central sanctuary," is "not borne out by the facts at our disposal."

(6) The reforms of Judah's best kings toward eliminating local altars are clearly aimed at wiping out pagan intrusions, perversions and abuses.

(7) Historical researches show that Deuteronomy fits into the pattern of what are called suzerainty treaties, which fit precisely the part of the second millennium in which the Pentateuch itself claims Deuteronomy was written.

This book is valuable especially for its 27 pages of bibliography, which includes over 900 entries in the various languages of Europe. The arguments summarized above are not new. Most of them will be found in articles in English, such as L. L. Walker's "Deuteronomy" in the *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopaedia of the Bible*. Scholars interested in Pentateuchal criticism will find this work rewarding if they can read the Dutch. Sadly, I was reduced to the rather lengthy English summary furnished and had to puzzle guesses at the main text.

Robert Duncan Culver

To Pluck Up, To Tear Down: A Commentary on the Book of Jeremiah 1-25. By Walter Brueggemann. International Theological Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988, x + 222 pp., \$10.95 paper.

According to the editor's preface, the goal of the International Theological Commentary series is "the Old Testament alive in the Church," and the series "moves beyond the usual critical-historical approach to the Bible and offers a *theological* interpretation of the Hebrew text" (p. vii). Brueggemann's work on Jeremiah 1-25 succeeds to a large extent in meeting these objectives.

In his introductory chapter, Brueggemann sees Jerusalem's destruction in 587 B.C. as "the dominant and shaping event of the entire Old Testament" (p. 1). The author identifies three elements that shape the book of Jeremiah's perspective. First, Israel's covenant with Yahweh, rooted in the memories and mandates of the Sinai tradition, forms the governing paradigm for the tradition of Jeremiah, and the judgments of 587 are to be understood in light of covenant claims. Second, the pathos of Yahweh is pivotal as he seeks a continuing relationship with Israel despite her rebelliousness. Third, the book is a prophetic attack against the "royal temple ideology" of Jerusalem, an ideology articulated by the Jerusalem establishment that suggested Yahweh had made certain irrevocable promises concerning Jerusalem and the temple, promises that guaranteed the perpetual existence of the Jewish state.

Brueggemann's introduction also admirably summarizes the critical issues of the book of Jeremiah, although the author leaves open the main critical questions after surveying the current sides of the debate. He simply concludes: "Beyond the general conclusion that the book contains *material from Jeremiah* and *subsequent editorial activity*, there is no discernible agreement among scholars" (p. 7; italics his).

In his exposition of Jeremiah the author generally subordinates textual and historical concerns to literary concerns, focusing more on the final meaning of the text than on the creation of the text or the historicity of the events that underlie it. Jeremiah's call, for example, "is an editorial construction, according to literary convention, to give authorization to the text that follows this chapter" (p. 23), and "it is this shift away from the personal to the canonical that permits the speech of Jeremiah to

have continuing interest and power for us" (p. 24). The call narrative is a clue to the person of the prophet, but "our exposition cannot easily sort out the distinctions of prophetic person, editing community, and interpreting community" (p. 30).

Brueggemann states that several passages in Jeremiah reflect a later time, such as 3:15-18, "which is thought by most scholars to be . . . echoing motifs from Ezekiel" (p. 44), and 24:1-10, of which the author suggests: "There is no doubt that this text comes out of and reflects the community of Babylonian exiles" (p. 211). Another example appears in the discussion of chap. 25, where Brueggemann argues that "the tension between 'forever' and seventy years suggests redactional activity" (p. 214). Although the author generally defends his assertions, they are not always convincing to those desiring textual evidence. Also somewhat disappointing is his treatment of the righteous Branch motif in chap. 23. Brueggemann mentions that the early Christian community interpreted the text in the light of Jesus but does little else with it.

Methodological differences aside, however, Brueggemann's book contains many positive features. His introduction surveys the critical issues and also lays a solid foundation for his exposition section, where his insights exhibit a thorough knowledge of the theology of the text. His exegesis typically displays a good blending of analysis of content and literary style and reinforces his three-main-element understanding of the framework of the book (see above). Brueggemann also consistently attempts to hear the text speak to today's community of the faithful, thus bearing in mind the goals of the series of which his commentary is a part. Examples of the author's fine work include his exposition of chap. 2 (pp. 31-38) and 3:1-4:4 (pp. 39-48). In the latter section Brueggemann's literary and theological comparison of the text of Jeremiah with Deut 24:1-4 is commendable. Another impressive section is the discussion of Jer 10:1-16, a prophetic polemic against false gods (pp. 97-101), where the author examines the powerful force in the verbs used to describe Yahweh's omnipotence in contrast to the other gods' impotence. Brueggemann's bibliography is also a strength, adequately equipping the reader interested in further research in Jeremiah studies. Readers who may not share the author's views on the development of the text will nevertheless benefit from interacting with his insights on the theological and literary aspects of the book of Jeremiah.

Bryan E. Beyer
Columbia Bible College, Columbia, SC

The Minor Prophets: An Expositional Commentary. Volume 2: Micah—Malachi. By James Montgomery Boice. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986, 281 pp., n. p.

Those who enjoy and appreciate the minor prophets often wait years to hear a sermon on one of them. These prophecies may be neglected even more by preachers than by research scholars. Indeed, solid preaching material on any Scripture text seems rare these days. Boice's volume is therefore a welcome addition to the expository genre in general and to minor prophets' studies in particular. This book has solid content, a consistent hermeneutic, and a clear format.

Four basic theological notions are consistently stressed, three of which are mentioned in the preface (p. 9). First, Boice notes the prophets' constant references to God's sovereignty. This attribute emerges most clearly when he comments on books like Nahum that present God as Lord of nations. Second, the author emphasizes God's holiness. A particularly strong example of Boice's treatment of this concept is

his explanation of Zechariah 14 (p. 225). Third, Boice notes the love of God, which dominates all these prophecies. Finally, God's expectation of everyday obedience receives extensive treatment. His discussion of the halfhearted worship of Malachi's time illustrates Boice's concern for this practical issue (pp. 232-233).

Almost always the author demonstrates excellent historical-grammatical skills. He begins each book study with a lucid and capable, if not comprehensive, introduction to the book's historical setting. His best application of historical data occurs in the Nahum section, where he offers interesting information about Assyria (cf. p. 68). After the historical situation has been examined, Boice comments on major segments of the books. At times the verse divisions may serve the sermon without necessarily accurately reflecting the prophecy's content. For instance, he separates Hab 3:1-2 from the rest of chap. 3 to preach on prayer (pp. 98-111). But this is a pardonable sin. When he utilizes linguistic information it normally enhances his explanations (cf. p. 264).

Boice struggles to find the correct historical reference for the prophets' predictions. When he believes oracles have been fulfilled in history, as in the case of Hag 2:6 (pp. 148-149), he says so. Yet he sticks to a futuristic interpretation when he deems it appropriate, even when he admits it is difficult to do so (cf. p. 221). Many of these predictions are hard to interpret, and Boice's effort to be fair to the text without imposing any one system on it aids the reader's own interpretative process.

The volume's format may be its best contribution to preachers. Boice presents his text, gives a brief introduction to how he applies the passage, and then chooses three or four topics of discussion from the Scripture passage. He illustrates the text well (note particularly pp. 118, 188) and often concludes with an evangelistic appeal (cf. p. 72 on Nah 3:1-19). The evangelistic emphasis might not only lead to an unbelieving reader's conversion but also show ministers how to give an appeal for personal decision from the minor prophets. Thus the minister who wants to preach on the minor prophets receives clues concerning how to proceed.

Perhaps Boice's greatest contribution comes in his work on lesser-known books like Nahum and Haggai. Few of the minor prophets are famous, but these two books are definitely neglected. In the Nahum section Boice applies the sins of Assyria to contemporary American life. The Haggai comments show how this prophecy can chasten and encourage churches today. Through Boice's studies other expositors will hopefully begin to see the value of preaching from little-used OT books.

Despite the volume's strengths it does have some faults. First, it needed better editing. Though typographical errors are not plentiful, some do exist (pp. 164, 169, 170, 179). Also, Naamah is not both Solomon's wife and mother (p. 125). Boice deserved better help at this point. Second, Boice may depend on particular sources too much. For instance he quotes W. Maier extensively on Nahum and D. Baron and C. Feinberg on Zechariah. Happily some material on the minor prophets has appeared since Boice did his work, so preachers now have more useful sources than in the past. Finally, despite his creative comments on most books, at times the author neglects the power of certain books. Boice's interpretation of Zephaniah almost solely "as a summary of the prophets who have preceded him" (p. 116) illustrates this tendency.

Preachers and scholars can benefit from Boice's efforts. Perhaps this volume will prod ministers toward quality preaching on the whole Bible and encourage research scholars to apply Scripture to daily life.

Paul R. House
Taylor University, Upland, IN

Interpreting the New Testament: An Introduction to the Principles and Methods of New Testament Exegesis. By Hans Conzelmann and Andreas Lindemann. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988, xix + 389 pp., \$19.95.

This marvelously concise work covers more ground than one would expect in an introductory text for NT students. The book is divided into five sections: (1) The section on methodology focuses on exegesis, including a discussion on textual criticism, literary genre, redaction and form criticism, and the synoptic problem. (2) A terse but helpful description of the hellenistic and Jewish environment follows. (3) The longest part of the volume is devoted to an examination of each book in the NT (a short appendix on the apostolic fathers is included). Here the usual introductory questions are examined. (4) A provocative study of what can be established with certainty regarding the historical Jesus is the burden of this section. (5) The book closes with an analysis of the history of early Christianity. A helpful feature throughout is the suggestion of specific exercises and assignments to give students first-hand experience in the areas discussed.

This book is an ideal text for students who desire to familiarize themselves with German scholarship on the NT. A wealth of information is contained in these pages, and careful reading will yield a rich harvest. But it is doubtful that the book should be the first or only text for English students, particularly evangelicals. The bibliographies are understandably weighted in favor of German scholarship, and even with the English additions by the translator the paucity of English works mentioned is striking. Thus the usual college and seminary student will not profit greatly from the bibliographies, although doctoral students and teachers should find them quite helpful.

The most controversial aspect of the book for evangelicals will undoubtedly be the critical stance adopted in the book, although the tone is respectful and even considerate of more conservative opinions. But it is plain that the more conservative views of German scholarship represented by P. Stuhlmacher and M. Hengel are rejected, and thus evangelicals will find many points of disagreement with the positions expressed. The radical cast of the book is most evident in the section on the historical Jesus, where again and again the authors contend that the events or sayings described derive from the post-Easter community and not from Jesus himself. For instance, they reject the idea (pp. 321-327) that any of the messianic titles stem from the Jesus of history. The historical credibility of Acts is also severely called into question, and the common view that Paul's letters are to be preferred for the history of the Pauline mission is advocated.

In the discussion of particular NT books the student should read D. Guthrie's *New Testament Introduction* for another perspective, but the sections in the work by Conzelmann and Lindemann on the various NT books are so brief that one wonders if it would be better to read W. G. Kümmel's *Introduction to the New Testament* where the issues are treated in more detail. In any case, supplementary reading from this text would be helpful for students.

A final comment should be made on the title of the volume. The book is helpful in introductory, historical and critical matters, but for actual exegesis other books are needed. *New Testament Exegesis* by G. Fee and *Interpreting the Synoptic Gospels* by S. McKnight come to mind as examples. This book provides some helpful background information for the doing of exegesis, but more specific and practical help is needed than the work provides.

Thomas R. Schreiner
Bethel Theological Seminary, St. Paul, MN

Matthew 8-15. By John MacArthur, Jr. MacArthur New Testament Commentary series. Chicago: Moody, 1987, 497 pp., \$16.95.

This is the second volume of a four-part expositional commentary on Matthew. It is based not only on MacArthur's preaching through Matthew but also on his own experience of fellowshiping with God in his Word. MacArthur's comments include explanation and application of the text. He includes many helpful quotations and excerpts from other commentaries.

The pericopes are printed from the text of the NASB and are followed by comments. Not much is done here by way of an extended outline or analysis of the gospel as a whole, although MacArthur does discuss its main themes, especially kingship and kingdom. The extended comments include typical sermonic material. In fact, one possible criticism is that it could have stood stricter editing. The final length apparently will run to 2000 pages.

Theologically, MacArthur stands in the mainstream of evangelicalism. Those familiar with the debate over Lordship salvation will take note of his emphasis on personal discipleship. Like other dispensationalists, he believes that the visible kingdom was postponed but that the kingdom is invisibly present in the preaching of the gospel. Surprisingly he identifies the Church with the kingdom of heaven. MacArthur perceptively interprets the parables of the kingdom in Matthew 13 as Jesus' explanation of the role of the kingdom in the Church age.

Another highlight of the commentary is MacArthur's propensity to explain in detail the theological concepts. For example, his discussion on the meaning of the miracles of nature (pp. 29-32) is helpful and crystal clear. He spells out phrases that may seem self-evident to the theologian, but not to the laity: Note his brief notes on "battered reed" and "smoldering wick" (p. 300). The preacher will find much that is usable in the sections on the Sabbath, the apostles, the order of the synagogue service, the kinds of healings Jesus performed, and the symptoms of leprosy.

The word at the outset is that MacArthur did not intend to produce a linguistic commentary. Having granted his intention, we must still evaluate the places where he does do word or grammatical studies. If MacArthur has an Achilles' heel it is in his handling of the original languages. He frequently appeals to the "root meaning" or "basic meaning" of Greek words, often granting them highly specific meanings that are not lexically or contextually warranted. His neglect of semantics is misleading, particularly when the lay audience is already apt to regard Greek as a special language, full of technical precision. As an antidote one would do well to consult D. Carson's *Exegetical Fallacies* or even better J. P. Louw's *Semantics of New Testament Greek* (pp. 39-42). It should be said that MacArthur does produce some fine word studies when he focuses his attention on the meaning of the word in its context (e.g. *daimonizomai*, pp. 41-42).

In comparison with Hendrickson's commentary on Matthew, MacArthur's work is geared more to the preacher than to the exegete. Thus they can be used together with profit.

Gary Steven Shogren
Penacook, NH

Reflections on the Gospel of John. By Leon Morris. 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986, 750 pp., \$8.95 per volume (paper).

Morris has provided a valuable contribution to studies in the gospel of John with this recent four-volume paperback work, the final volume having been released in

1988. After reading the first volume soon after its publication I looked forward to the subsequent releases. The four volumes treat respectively *The Word Was Made Flesh* (John 1–5), *The Bread of Life* (John 6–10), *The True Vine* (John 11–16), *Crucified and Risen* (John 17–21). He provides his own translation of a few verses at a time and then gives a commentary on those verses.

The work maintains a delicate balance for the study of John's gospel. It yields enough scholarship in the way of historical background and grammatical study to satisfy the serious student. It is not so weighty in these areas, however, as to lose the man or woman approaching John for devotional purposes. Indeed, Morris states at the outset that "the tone is devotional." These readable volumes are nonetheless replete with excellent discussion and commentary on the essentials of the gospel, the obvious result of Morris' own long and careful study. Many readers will be familiar with other books by this author, including those that deal with John's gospel.

There are many invaluable aspects of *Reflections*, three of which will be noted here. First, some of the background material and word studies, while perhaps familiar to the seasoned scholar, are certainly helpful for the conscientious student. Second, I found Morris' insights into the various people whom we encounter in the gospel to be intriguing. One sees Thomas or Peter or Pilate in a different light—or a more complete light—after reading Morris. Third, the author was faithful throughout the book in drawing out the devotional nature of the gospel. Morris' application of the teachings of John to the twentieth-century Christian is perhaps the greatest strength of this work. For that reason I believe it will be of benefit to pastors and teachers in the churches as well as to college and seminary professors and students.

The proof of a work like this is often in its effectiveness in the classroom. I have used these volumes recently in a course on Johannine literature and found that the students were engaged both intellectually and spiritually. This came as no surprise to one who has used other works of Morris in various courses and found them equally well received.

Roger J. Green
Gordon College, Wenham, MA

An Exegetical Bibliography of the New Testament. Edited by Gunter Wagner. Macon: Mercer, 1987, 350 pp., \$50.00.

This is the third volume of this series and deals with material on the gospel of John and the Johannine letters. The author, who began teaching in 1958, writes in the preface that he devised also in that year "a detailed system for the collection of bibliographical information relevant to New Testament studies, ranging from the Old Testament background to the theology of the Early Church" (p. v). The exegetical material from that collection pertaining to Johannine literature is presented in this book.

The student of the gospel or epistles who has not yet discovered the volumes in this series will find it an extremely helpful source. Entries are given for entire chapters or sections or verses, so that the material listed will be beneficial regardless of how broad or focused the research being done. Because the entries are taken from voluminous sources they are given in many languages. Due to the many invaluable sources provided, however, the student who may be limited to English or to English and only one other language need not fear.

There are two helpful, practical matters about the book that I appreciated. First, in each entry the author's last name is given in capital letters so that an author's name is quickly identified if one happens to be looking to see what Brown's or Metzger's contribution is to a particular verse or section of the gospel or epistles. Second, the entries for each section are given not in alphabetical order by authors' last names but in chronological order, so that one can see at a glance the building through the twentieth century of the books and articles germane to a verse or a section of Johannine literature.

It is impossible to imagine the work that has gone into this and other volumes of this series, and it is hard work that sometimes goes unappreciated. Nevertheless, access to this bibliographic resource is invaluable and continues to fulfill the original purpose: "to enable the student as quickly as possible to get down to research without wasting days, even weeks, on the search for the literature" (p. v.). One anticipates the author's forthcoming fourth volume on major Pauline epistles. This is, however, intended only as a beginning for the student, and the good student will want to follow this course by continuing his or her own bibliographic reference file in order to keep up with the material published since the publication of this very useful work.

Roger J. Green
Gordon College, Wenham, MA