

BOOK REVIEWS

Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling: Heaven and Hell in American Revivalism, 1870-1920. By Jonathan M. Butler. Brooklyn: Carlson, 1991, 197 pp., \$50.00.

Revivalism has remained perhaps the most significant hallmark of American evangelical history. Popular media depictions range from the sinister Elmer Gantry to the bombastic buffoonery of televangelists. The image of the hellfire revivalist has always been most popular in media depiction. Yet such depictions, exaggerated though they are, illustrate themes that have pervaded the history of American revivalism.

The hellfire theme in American revivalism stems from J. Edwards' famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Terror filled the hearts and minds of his hearers, causing some to experience a sense of dread and damnation. Others begged Edwards to stop preaching. Alongside Edwards were the famous revivalists G. Whitefield and G. Tennant, who themselves utilized the images of hell for their audiences. Butler contends that the revivalists of the first and second great awakenings placed a significant emphasis on the theme of hell. From the Cane Ridge, Kentucky, revival of B. Stone to the upstate New York revivals of C. Finney, images of hell played on the fears of revival audiences. Images of heaven were not left out of the picture entirely during the first two awakenings. It was common for revivalists to hold heaven out as an alternative to the consuming fires of hell. Nevertheless hell still remained the primary tool for cajoling revival masses. Butler points out that the first two awakenings reflected a shift from "Calvinism or neo-Calvinism to Arminianism." The wrathful God of Calvinism, who held the rebellious sinner over the abyss, was a useful image from the time of Edwards to Finney. But as the kind and loving God of Arminianism became more popular among revival audiences, hellfire became a less effective theme.

By the time D. L. Moody (1837-1899) began his career as a revivalist preacher, the wrathful God of hellfire had become the kind and loving God who willed that none should perish, a God wooing the lost sinner to come home. The title of the book under review, which is also the title of a famous revivalist hymn, "Softly and Tenderly," reflects this theme. Sentimental gospel tunes such as "Tell Mother I'll Be There in Answer to Her Prayer," "Will You Answer a Mother's Prayer Tonight?" and "Your Mother's Heart Is Breaking" were used by revivalists to instill into the wandering, wayward child that now was the time to come home.

Butler's work is significant for our understanding of how the kingdom of God has been presented to our culture down through history. But he is a little too ambitious with his use of the term "fundamentalism" insofar as he tends to apply it to those in the pre-World-War-I era as well as to those who followed. Fundamentalism was not an official term for American evangelicals until 1920, though Butler often uses the term anachronistically.

His lack of comment on dispensationalism in his analysis of premillennialism is also puzzling. Dispensationalism has always had a more pessimistic outlook with regard to the future of American culture and the world at large, but Butler fails to even mention it. Dispensationalism was one of the major definitive features of

American evangelicalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is far too important to be left out of a major analysis of revivalism.

Works such as this are a benefit to our understanding of revivalism, and it is my hope that many more critical monographs will come forward shedding further light on who we are in the vast evangelical network.

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The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith Since World War II. By Robert Wuthnow. Princeton: Princeton University, 1988, xiv + 374 pp., \$25.00. *The Struggle for America's Soul: Evangelicals, Liberals, and Secularism.* By Robert Wuthnow. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989, xiv + 189 pp., \$14.95 paper.

Events of the past half-century have wrought in American Christianity a transformation of epic proportions. Where denominational distinctives were once paramount in defining the nation's religious mosaic, far more important today are overarching ideological conflicts whose battle lines cut across the denominations themselves. Where most individuals once spent their entire lives in the religious communion of their upbringing they now move quite freely across confessional boundaries, seeking not creedal but cultural affinity. The result has been the emergence of a sort of religious two-party system in which liberal Christians make common cause with fellow liberals, irrespective of denominational alignment, against conservative Christians who are likewise yoked with fellow conservatives of diverse theological pedigrees. Institutional manifestations of this ideological reorientation include organizations such as the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, the Christian Action Council, the Alliance for Faith and Renewal, and the Evangelical Theological Society itself. An indispensable road map for this brave new world and a fascinating analysis of the earthquakes that continue to rend its ecclesiastical landscape make up the heart of Wuthnow's landmark volumes.

Wuthnow's task here is to describe how we have come to our current straits, to speculate on what might lie ahead, and to offer his own entreaties to bridge-building between evangelicals and liberals in the face of looming secularism. *The Restructuring of American Religion* is a thoroughgoing sociological analysis of post-World-War-II religious realignment, buttressed by extensive use of survey results from the Gallup and Harris organizations as well as a number of other polling agencies. Wuthnow deploys his statistics to describe a world of denominational chauvinism that now lives only in memory, then sketches social forces making for change: increasing levels of education and cross-confessional intermarriage, the corrosive social disorders of the 1960s, the steadily expanding role of the modern welfare state, and especially the proliferation of parachurch agencies and special-purpose groups. He finds that "over the past quarter century . . . a noticeable move to the left has taken place in many sectors of American religion," coupled with the simultaneous "development of a strong conservative thrust" (pp. 172-173). Activists of both the left and the right, he notes, have pursued their agendas by means of special-interest groups that "function much like professional associations in other sectors of the society" (p. 110). The result is that "denominations have not ceased to exist but have become diverse federations of special purpose groups rather than monolithic, homogeneous structures." These continue to provide a measure of identity and coordination, but "much of the concrete action in which religious people are engaged takes

place in more specialized groups that may fall either within or across denominational lines" (p. 125).

The Struggle for America's Soul probes the significance of this typology for the nation's current religious morass and explores its implications for the future. Wuthnow considers religion's fate as a major component of the private sector that acts as a buffer between the state and the marketplace, assesses and finally rejects flat-footed assertions of contemporary Christian revival and collapse alike, and delivers some iconoclastic observations on religious television's role in the reinforcement of ongoing ideological cleavage. Most intriguing is a chapter that takes up the recent history of the Presbyterian Church (USA) as a test case. Wuthnow closes with the proposal that evangelicals and liberals make common cause against the growing threat of secular humanism, urging that each owes its own vitality in large measure to the other's stimulus: "The strength of American evangelicalism is partly attributable to the viable liberal theology in relation to which [it] can define itself. And religious liberalism might be even weaker were it not for the strength of American evangelicalism" (p. 182).

Not every page of Wuthnow's evaluation will bear the same degree of scrutiny. *Struggle*, for example, is hobbled with a singularly depressing chapter on the prospects for a Christian sociology. More troubling yet are the messy historical details that cannot readily be accommodated within Wuthnow's streamlined sociological schematization—matters such as the resurgent confessionalism within several main-line denominations. Moreover, Wuthnow's final, wistful appeal for a reinvigorated "middle-of-the-road position" that might offer "a distinct alternative to both the extreme right and the extreme left" (*Struggle*, p. 185) is rendered quixotic by his own analysis. Nevertheless, with his two volumes Wuthnow has redefined the terms of the debate on such matters, in the process establishing himself as the leading sociological interpreter of modern American religion.

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Why I Believe in a Personal God. The Credibility of Faith in a Doubting Culture. By George Carey. Wheaton: Harold Shaw, 1989, 145 pp., n.p. *I Believe.* By George Carey. Harrisburg: Morehouse, 1991, 207 pp., n.p.

In these two books the new Archbishop of Canterbury's thoughts on some fundamental issues and problems in Christianity are presented with a refreshingly level-headed clarity and common sense.

Why I Believe in a Personal God is a systematic discussion of the claims of Christianity and answers some of the commonest objections to it. Carey sets himself an enormous task, forced on him by his dismay that the great ideological questions are increasingly rarely asked. He believes the western worldview is hostile to questions about the supernatural. He discusses arguments against the existence of God, asks "Is the universe on our side?" and investigates whether life can have any meaning. His affirmative answers rest on a belief in the rationality embedded in the structure of the universe. He surveys past attempts to understand the nature of God, from Aquinas to W. Paley. He skillfully enlists the work of leading atheist cosmologist F. Hoyle by quoting him on the extraordinary improbability of the random appearance of humanity and of the necessary conditions for its survival.

The archbishop attacks materialism and in the final chapter of his book provides a remarkable synthesis of various views of God. He successfully uses (and explains clearly for the general reader) terms like apophatic, kataphatic, kenosis and process theology. He discusses the character of the gospel narratives. The result is a well-balanced review of our Christian story. Really to grapple with the issues that the book raises (and to attempt some of the formidable bibliography) would be an excellent introduction to or refreshment in understanding the Christian faith.

The second book is a collection of Carey's sermons and addresses prior to his appointment to Canterbury. He writes on the Christian faith, life and the cycle of the Church's year. The range of topics reflects both his strong evangelical background (i.e. addresses on justification by faith) and his interests in the Catholic and liberal wings of the Church of England. There is for example a sermon preached at the Anglican shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Walsingham in Norfolk. The book has interesting contributions on Carey's view of the daily work of an English bishop and on his hopes for the Church of the twenty-first century. It is an illuminating guide to many of his views on matters ecclesiastical.

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The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions. By Jürgen Moltmann. San Francisco: Harper, 1990, 388 pp., \$24.95.

The Way of Jesus Christ is the third installment in Moltmann's ongoing work in "messianic dogmatics," following upon *The Trinity and the Kingdom* (English trans. 1981) and *God in Creation* (1985). The title Moltmann has chosen for his work in Christology evinces the character of his portrayal of Christ: "This shows that I am trying to think of Christ no longer statically, as one person in two natures or as a historical personality. I am trying to grasp him dynamically, in the forward movement of God's history with the world" (p. xiii). Moltmann's Christology, "formulated as a promise" (p. xiv) and interpreted "in the light of his goal" (p. xv), "proceeds further along the path" taken in Moltmann's foundational works *Theology of Hope* (1967) and *The Crucified God* (1974), wherein he emphasized the eschatological and promissory nature of Christian faith. While those works focused on the dialectical relation of the cross and resurrection in an effort to ascertain who God and Christ are for us today, his work now reaches out beyond that dialectic "in order to set 'the eschatological history' of Jesus in a holistic christology" (p. 3) that proceeds from the Jewish-Christian dialogue and culminates in the cosmic significance of Christ.

The Jewish objection to Jesus as the Messiah rests on its inability to accept a redemption *pars pro toto*, an anticipation of any single part of the completed redemption of the world—e.g. the redemption of the soul. For Jews the concept of a redeemed soul in the midst of an unredeemed world is unacceptable, for redemption is one with the kingdom of God in its fulfilment. Moltmann believes this Jewish objection misconstrues Jesus, though it is well-founded in the internalized redemption arising from the Church's early departure from Jesus' eschatological message. "All 'fulfilment' enthusiasm must be banished from the christology of the church"; "the Christian 'yes' to Jesus Christ is therefore not in itself finished and complete. . . . It is an eschatologically *anticipatory and provisional* 'yes'" (pp. 32–33). Salvation must be of the whole to be God's salvation. Moltmann sees a special eschatological place ahead for Israel that may be realized through the cosmic dimensions of the coming Christ.

In his effort to recover the eschatological understanding of Jesus as the Christ, Moltmann avoids the "impasses of two-nature christology" (pp. 51–54), asserting that "we have to look at Jesus' humanity in order to know his divinity, and we have to contemplate his divinity so as to know his humanity" (p. 69). After stressing the "true and real [not virgin] birth of Christ" (p. 85) Moltmann sets forth an adoptionist "pneumatological christology," speaking of "a *kenosis of the Holy Spirit*, which emptied itself and descended from the eternity of God, taking up its dwelling in this vulnerable and mortal human being Jesus" (p. 93). The eschatological Spirit, proceeding from the coming God and descending on Jesus at baptism, is representative of the Spirit that comes on all humanity as it identifies in suffering love with the poor and oppressed after the example of Jesus. "To discover in one's own pain the pain of God means finding fellowship with God in one's own sufferings and understanding one's own suffering as participation in 'the sufferings of Christ'" (p. 180). Hence "the apocalyptic Christ" may be said to have been murdered at Auschwitz just as on Golgotha, since he "suffers in the victims of sin and violence" and "suffers and sighs too in the tormented creation sighing under the violent acts of our modern human civilization" (pp. 210–211).

Presupposing (and in no way superseding) what he said in *Theology of Hope* and *The Crucified God* regarding the dialectic of cross and resurrection (p. 370 n.), he nonetheless accents the liberating power of the resurrection as an eschatological event. "In talking about Christ's resurrection, we have therefore to talk about a *process of resurrection*. This process has its foundation in Christ, its dynamic in the Spirit, and its future in the bodily new creation of all things. Resurrection means not a *factum* but a *feri*—not what was once done, but what is in the making: the transition from death to life" (p. 241). "The hope of resurrection is not related to a different life. It is this mortal life that is going to be different" (p. 242); "hope for the resurrection of the body . . . is directed, not towards a life 'after' death, but towards the raising of this life" (p. 267). Interestingly, this comment is made in the context of a defense of the unborn: "Every devaluation of the foetus, the embryo and the fertilized ovum compared with life that is already born and adult is the beginning of a rejection and a dehumanization of human beings" (p. 268). "It is the community between human beings that will be raised and transfigured in the light of God, not the isolated and private individual soul" (p. 268). Moltmann concludes with a "cosmic christology [that] talks about a reconciled, Christ-pervaded cosmos" (p. 278) since "he is present not only in the human victims of world history but in victimized nature too" (p. 279; cf. his "ecological christology" [p. 247]). Christ in his becoming must be *Christus evolutor*, "evolution's redeemer" (p. 297), till the new creation of reconciled humanity and nature attain community in the eschatological arrival of God at the *parousia: Christus redemptor*.

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The Study of Theology: From Biblical Interpretation to Contemporary Formulation.
By Richard A. Muller. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 237 pp., \$12.95.

Muller is best known for his interpretation of Calvin and of post-Reformation Reformed scholasticism. He is currently completing a three-volume series on post-Reformation Reformed dogmatics. The volume here under review is thus a marked departure from Muller's other books because it focuses more on the theological field as a whole rather than on a specific period of doctrinal development.

The work is important particularly for seminary students and faculty members who have long been wrestling with the problem of integrating the practical and theoretical disciplines into a coherent whole within the context of the seminary curriculum. Muller believes strongly in an educated ministry and derides those who distinguish the real work of the ministry from the ivory-tower study of exegesis and historical theology. In addition Muller argues for the essential unity of the fourfold theology curriculum: Biblical, historical, systematic, practical. His major argument is that the "modified fourfold encyclopedia of theology is a useful model not only for the study and general understanding but also for the formulation of theology in the present day" (p. 171). Each of the fields is essential for what Muller calls the hermeneutical circle, in which the process of interpretation goes far beyond mere comprehension of the intent of the Biblical author. Muller advocates the use of "the various disciplines that show the path of the text and its meaning into the present, to contemporary formulation" (p. xi). One example is the importance of the Nicene Creed for understanding the Biblical doctrine of the Trinity. Although the creed contains non-Biblical language, the doctrine of the Trinity "has stood for so long because its fundamental intention is profoundly biblical and profoundly monotheistic; and in this sense it remains a guide to our exegesis" (p. 136). In other words one should interpret trinitarian passages in light of the Nicene Creed. Historical theology thereby plays a vital role in exegesis.

Muller goes on to interact with the methodologies of E. Farley, W. Pannenberg and G. Ebeling, with whom Muller agrees concerning the general disunity among the various subdisciplines in the field of theology since the time of the Reformation as well as with the need to bring them into a unified whole. Each discipline plays an important role in the hermeneutical circle. For example, the study of Church history "identifies for the individual Christian his or her place in relation to the life and teaching of the church in the present" (p. 107). Furthermore one should not discard either the more theoretical or the more practical subjects because the division between systematic and practical disciplines is really a distinction between faith and obedience. Both are necessary for proper Christian living and ministry. The pastor and theologian, therefore, should be well-versed in both areas.

The book is by no means light reading. Part of the problem is the long, complicated sentence structure that at times makes it difficult to follow the author's point. The volume is worth working through, however, for those interested in theological education and in the need for integration. It would serve as an excellent textbook for a course in systematic theology.

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The Genesis of Doctrine: A Study in the Foundations of Doctrinal Criticism. By Alister E. McGrath. Oxford: Blackwell, 1990, iv + 266 pp., n.p.

The book under review is a valuable contribution to current theological scholarship by virtue of its quality and subject matter. The latter, the nature and development of doctrine, has been given little sustained attention by Protestant scholars in the twentieth century.

Following a brief description of "doctrine" vis-à-vis "dogma" and "theology," McGrath devotes two chapters to the nature of doctrine. He also describes and offers

a "preliminary" but substantial assessment of G. A. Lindbeck's widely discussed *The Nature of Doctrine* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984).

Finding Lindbeck's work significantly deficient, McGrath sets forth his own theses concerning the nature of doctrine. Christian doctrine (1) "functions as a social demarcator," (2) "is generated by, and subsequently interprets the Christian narrative," (3) "interprets experience," and (4) "makes truth claims" (p. 37). The four theses clearly reflect a dialectic implicit within the book between the historical and the theological in that McGrath's intent is not to describe the nature of doctrine only theoretically (i.e. as one thinks it ought to be) but also phenomenologically (i.e. as it has been understood to be) (p. 37).

Chapter 4 consists of a rudimentary yet critical and balanced discussion of historicism, relativism, and the sociology of knowledge as it pertains to theology. He emphatically affirms that all human thought—including doctrinal formulations—must be examined in its historical context not only so that it is properly understood but also so that it is properly evaluated.

The longest chapter of the book deals with "The Authority of the Past in Modern Christian Thought." McGrath surveys views of history, and of the history of Christian doctrine in particular, from C. Salutati in the fourteenth century to A. von Harnack in the twentieth. He analyzes and assesses the views as illustrating the fact that "ideological factors are a major consideration in shaping a theologian's attitude to the past" (p. 152). McGrath does not condemn the views because of ideological influence, for "neutrality or absence of commitment" is "an impossibility" (p. 152). What he does criticize is "the *covert* influence of ideology" (p. 152, italics mine). He cautions both conservatives and liberals (though particularly the latter) by insisting that doctrinal beliefs and formulations inherently "reflect the needs and interests of a group or class at a particular time in history" (p. 163; cf. p. 103) while at the same time strongly arguing that doctrinal beliefs and formulations cannot be regarded solely as expressions of such needs and interests.

The chapter concludes with an all too brief presentation of his proposal for a theoretical model for addressing the theological past. His model is based on that articulated by W. Benjamin in an essay entitled "Theses on the Concept of History." For McGrath the genius of Benjamin's theory consists in its capacity to accommodate the historical reality that ideas generally do not "evolve in a linear progression" (p. 165). Thus "the present moment (*Jetztzeit*) involves the intermingling of the past and present" (p. 168). The implication for the development of doctrine is that doctrinal reflection in the present must of necessity take into account the doctrinal tradition of the past.

In his final chapter McGrath argues that theological reflection and doctrinal formulations "do not . . . begin *de novo*, but from a received tradition" (p. 177). One of the prominent theses of the book is that "it is through the critical evaluation and reappropriation of the doctrinal heritage of the Christian tradition that the process of theological reconstruction may proceed" (p. 198). Of particular importance for the process is the believing community (pp. 177–178, 188–193).

A solidly Christocentric perspective is brought to bear throughout the book. In a surprising but congruent and compelling conclusion McGrath identifies evangelism as the key to future respect for and constructive development of Christian doctrine. The book is well researched, and McGrath covers an admirable range of rather complex material in 200 pages.

There are some lacunae that one might wish could be filled. For example there is little sustained interaction with specific examples of the doctrinal reductionism for which McGrath criticizes (and rightly so) Enlightenment thought and its heritage.

Furthermore his treatment of modern views of the authority of the past is truncated in a number of respects. (1) It is largely limited to Protestant thought. In matters related to tradition and the development of doctrine, matters often neglected altogether by Protestants, Roman Catholic and Orthodox thought must be more thoroughly considered. (2) He concludes his discussion of the history of doctrine with the work of Harnack. Surely there are twentieth-century formulations worthy of attention (e.g. J. Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, 5 vols. [University of Chicago, 1971-89]). (3) Little attention is given to some of the more creative yet thoughtful contributions made outside the European continent (e.g. J. L. Gonzalez' three-volume *A History of Christian Thought* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1988, rev. ed.]).

These limitations aside, the volume is a fine scholarly treatment of a strategic area of theological thought all too often neglected by Protestants. It is good that someone with McGrath's abilities and perspective is venturing into this domain. He more than once indicates that the book intends to lay the foundations for "a more substantial subsequent engagement with" the discipline of doctrinal criticism (p. vii). Given the solid foundations laid here, one can eagerly anticipate his future work.

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Metaphysics and the Idea of God. By Wolfhart Pannenberg. Translated by Philip Clayton. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988, xiv + 170 pp., \$21.95.

Readers of Pannenberg will appreciate this work. In it he critiques the widespread belief of modern philosophy that metaphysics has no valid role in theological inquiry. Pannenberg believes that theology and philosophy must regenerate a strong dialogue because "Christian theology is dependent upon the conversation with philosophy" (p. xiii) for clarifying its discourse about God and for its study of the relationship between God and created reality.

Pannenberg defends his thesis in two parts consisting of eight essays. A definite strength of the book is that, unlike many anthologies that are derived from an author's lectures and earlier papers, each essay clearly builds on the one that precedes it, which gives the book continuity. In each essay Pannenberg offers a dialogue between theology and philosophy on the topic at hand. He surveys the thought of transitional thinkers and critiques them, crafting his own position on the issue.

In the first part of the book Pannenberg denies that the "age of metaphysics" has come to an end (p. 3). On the contrary, he writes, various respectable scholars, such as Rahner and Barth, have been calling for a renewal of metaphysics or the engagement of dialogue between theology and philosophy. In the second essay Pannenberg attacks the Kantian and Cartesian assertion that metaphysics is possible without the idea of the unity of reality. In keeping with his customary reliance on Hegel, Pannenberg proposes that Hegel's treatment of the finite/Infinite relationship was his greatest contribution. Hegel failed, however, to progress to the concept of an existing being "that possesses infinity, absolute perfection, and necessary existence" (p. 37). For Pannenberg, God is experienced as a will, manifesting itself in history as personal and holy.

Pannenberg next critiques the Kantian viewpoint that the human ego is not only the subject of our actions but also the foundation for the unity of human experience. Against the belief that unity is subjective he argues that the consciousness of objects is independent from self-consciousness. The crux of his argument is of course the role of the ego in its own history. The third essay is Pannenberg's analysis of Hei-

degger's philosophy (although Heidegger is considered in virtually every other essay). Of particular interest is Pannenberg's evaluation of Plotinian and Augustinian conceptions of time with respect to Heidegger. From Augustine Pannenberg derives a concept of time that emphasizes duration. Although Pannenberg believes that Plotinus' perspective was superior to Augustine's, a viewpoint that is not adequately defended, he employs Augustine's perspective of the duration of time to comprehend the being of finite things in history.

In the fifth essay Pannenberg asserts that Augustine moved western thought into the idea of anticipation. He argues that anticipation (of completion) should replace concept and reflection, "the quest for logical necessity" (p. 91), as the primary paradigm for metaphysics. The reader is impressed with Pannenberg's desire to develop a paradigm that is consistent with his theological agenda—stressing prolepsis and *Universalgeschichte*—but he falls prey to the temptation to allow his preconceived proleptic perspective to shape his paradigm while claiming that the opposite is true. Of interest, however, is Pannenberg's claim that anticipation must have criteria. He writes that "the form of the anticipation must correspond to the peculiar character of whatever it is that we claim is grasped anticipatorily" (p. 104).

The second part of the book opens with Pannenberg's critique of Whiteheadian process philosophy. Pannenberg is particularly concerned to show that atomism cannot be the final metaphysical truth. It fails in its inability to treat wholeness and individual discreteness as metaphysical principles of equal importance. Here is the only place in the book where Pannenberg appeals specifically to the Biblical view of God, arguing that it is more valid than Whitehead's view.

The final essays examine themes common to philosophy and summarize aspects of Pannenberg's thought that he more adequately develops in previous works.

Many elements of the book deserve favorable comment. Coupled with valuable critiques of important thinkers, Pannenberg's essays further his familiar arguments for the historical reliability of the Christian events and the intellectual integrity of the Christian faith. As always, however, Pannenberg remains closely tied to a Hegelian rationalism, often omitting thinkers who would help balance his study. For instance no discussion of Kierkegaard's thought is presented. In fact the Dane is mentioned only one time in the text (p. 92), in the discussion on concept and anticipation, and his absence is especially evident in the chapter on self-consciousness and subjectivity.

The volume richly enhances the Pannenberg corpus. If the reader can justify the inexplicably high price, it is a welcome contribution to the dialogue between philosophy and theology.

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Toward a Recovery of Christian Belief. By Carl F. H. Henry. Wheaton: Crossway, 1990, 119 pp., n.p. paper.

The book represents and reveals the author at his tireless and relentless best. Henry continues to expound and expand his lifelong contribution to the Christian faith, as he seeks not only to defend the faith but also to recover it in a world hopelessly lost in relativism, subjectivity and pluralism.

Building from a double foundation that "the basic ontological axiom [of the Christian religion] is *the living God*; the basic epistemological axiom is *divine revelation*" (p. 68), he goes on to tout the inherent rationality of the faith and to taunt Christians and non-Christians alike who ignore the indispensable *Logos* in Christian life

and thought. Nonetheless he is not a mere rationalist who has permitted the apotheosis of human reason to limit the action of God in history and in the human heart. Those who have criticized him for being too rational in his thought will be astonished—and disabled—by his claim that “the Christian faith offers not mathematical or speculative certainty, but rather spiritual assurance. . . . The Spirit uses truth as an instrument of persuasion, truth attested by Scripture and testable for logical consistency” (p. 59). And he insists that “Christianity therefore fears nothing from public reason; it is neither fideistic nor empiricistic nor rationalistic” (p. 59).

But Henry does not require that Christians develop “evidences” for the revealing God who acts, for “the so-called theistic proofs . . . provide no conclusive demonstration of the existence of the self-revealing God of the Bible” (p. 40). Because everyone has presuppositions, Christians should forthrightly acknowledge their faith: “If *presuppositionalism* implies that anyone who thinks has presuppositions, then I am unapologetically an evangelical presuppositionalist. . . . Experimentation and observation get nowhere apart from tacit presuppositions” (pp. 42–43). He also disowns fideism, however: “I find fideism, moreover, no more inviting or consoling than empiricism” (p. 42). He argues that “if we profess to know shareable knowledge, that belief involves us in further relationships to the laws of thought, notably the laws of identity, of non-contradiction, and of excluded middle. Christianity does not disdain the canons of rationality. It offers a comprehensive logical network of beliefs” (p. 80).

What we have in this excellent restatement of his views is a remarkable theology that rejects the poles of extreme empiricism and radical fideism in the name of faith that on the one hand admits that “by sense observation it is impossible to prove that God created the universe *ex nihilo*. . . . Such doctrines are not empirically derivable; they are confirmed by the inspired Scriptural teaching” (p. 55) and on the other hand insists that “by the use of axioms and theorems, the Holy Spirit prods and persuades the mind to understand the nature of things and bends the will to believe the propositions that divine agency has enabled us to understand” (pp. 92–93). Rightly he declares: “The issue here at stake involves a choice between so-called fideists, evidentialists, and rational presuppositionalists” (p. 101). Combining frankness with fact he has provided seminary students with an introduction to, busy pastors with a bracing reminder of, and open laypersons with a challenging stimulant for our faith.

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Faith and Wealth: A History of Early Christian Ideas on the Origin, Significance, and Use of Money. By Justo Gonzalez. San Francisco: Harper, 1990, 240 pp., \$19.95 paper.

In *Circus of Ambition* (Warner, 1989) J. Taylor documents how the decade of the 1980s was a period of unabashed greed, power and ambition. Add to this the human misery index that even by conservative estimates indicates that five hundred million people are starving, that one billion live in absolute poverty, and that two billion have no regular, dependable water supply. Why have Christians been so slow to see the inseparability of theology and economy? In the present volume Gonzalez seeks to redress this neglect and to explore “what Christians thought and taught regarding the rights and responsibilities of both rich and poor” (p. xiii). In the process he shows how, from the early Church onward, economic issues were seen as decidedly theological and central to Christian confession, “that issues of faith and wealth cannot be separated” (p. xv).

Part 1 supplies background material such as the Greek tradition of the abolition of private property (affirmed by Plato, rejected by Aristotle), Roman law's staunch justification of the absolute right to and use of private property, and the Jewish tradition of the care of the poor (Jubilee, etc.). Another chapter surveys the Roman economy, its industry, trade, taxation and final collapse in the fifth century.

In parts 2-3 Gonzalez surveys Christian attitudes toward wealth, beginning with the hostility toward wealth in the gospels and the *koinonia* of Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35 and ending with Augustine. Along the way several key themes find repeated emphasis. First is the question of riches as an impediment to salvation and how the wealthy can be saved. Not the possession of wealth, which possession benevolent giving assumes, but its stewardship becomes key. Eventually giving of material resources is tied closely to the hope of salvation, so that benevolence becomes a sort of ransom for sins.

How can the poor be helped? Although the sharing of possessions and the commonality of property has a well-defined history in the first four centuries, such sharing was always voluntary and never compulsory. Eventually it found expression in almsgiving (p. 127), Beyond ascetic renunciation or communal ideals, we help the poor for several reasons. We could speak of the spiritual good that accrues to the giver, the need of the poor (Chrysostom: "We give to the poor not because they are virtuous but because they are needy," p. 211), our common humanity with all people, or giving to the poor to imitate the character of God himself (2 Cor 8:9). Another common theme is that the materially poor enrich the wealthy in a spiritual way, while the materially rich help the poor in an economic way. Especially challenging was the universal and consistent condemnation of usury (and even interest-bearing loans) and the distinction between what is necessary and what is superfluous. According to Augustine, "not to give to the needy what is superfluous is akin to fraud" (p. 216). Throughout these chapters Gonzalez charts the changing social composition of the Church to include the wealthy (pp. 133, 141), the deleterious effects of Constantine's legalization of Christianity (tax exemption of clergy, land donations, basilicas, plundering of pagans), the bitter Donatist controversy, and the rise of monastic ideals.

A concluding retrospect identifies common themes that continued throughout the four centuries, key developments, and further questions for reflection. In the end, says Gonzalez, we face urgent and fundamental issues today about wealth and poverty, and we ignore the witness of early Christians at our peril: "They lived in a world in which contrasts between the rich and the poor were staggering; we live in a world populated by a few who have millions and millions who have nothing. For them, these issues were indissolubly connected with the meaning of salvation. Has the world changed so much that what they had to say is no longer relevant? I believe not. Has our commitment waned to such an extent that we can no longer take seriously the questions they pose to our use of the world's resources? I hope not" (p. 233).

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How Long, O Lord? Reflections on Suffering and Evil. By D. A. Carson. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990, 275 pp., \$13.95 paper.

The best compliment I can pay to Carson's book is that I have used it in a college seminar on the problem of evil and that I would do so again. My students seemed

especially to benefit from it. Carson covers many if not most Biblical themes related to the topic, and therein lies the secret to appreciating his book. It is a book for people already in the household of faith and already committed to a high view of the Scriptures and to "certain givens as non-negotiable" (p. 239). If one is committed to Christian theism on other grounds or for other reasons and is attempting to think through a Biblical theology of evil and suffering, here is a wonderfully helpful book. But for the person for whom evil blocks the way to confession and commitment other resources will be needed. The book is not a theodicy that tackles philosophical and apologetic questions but a thorough study of what Biblical revelation has to say on the themes of evil and suffering.

Most Christians should benefit enormously from the volume, though, and heed Carson's wise insight that it best serves as preventive medicine. Too often we do not think about the subject until we are suffering, and by that time poor theology, false expectations, and the crisis of the moment compound our grief.

After some introductory remarks about "first steps" and "false steps" Carson divides his book into two parts. First, he reviews Biblical themes for suffering people: the fall, types of evil (social, natural, etc.), curses, holy war, hell, eschatology, a fine chapter on Job, and the doctrine of divine suffering. The last section of the book assumes a more inclusive perspective on the larger issues of providence and mystery, where Carson defends a view of compatibilism, supplemented by a brief chapter on pastoral reflections and an appendix on AIDS. Each chapter ends with simple study questions.

A repeated theme throughout the book is that suffering sometimes, if not often, is simply a mystery surrounding the doctrine of God and his ways, to which the proper response is one of faith (pp. 178–179). That, along with Carson's occasional disparagements of philosophical treatments and theodicies, might evoke protests of fideism. Others might sense that the "Biblical" view of these matters is not as neatly separated from "philosophical" questions as Carson would imply. For example, in response to the hard questions about war, holy wars, and hell Carson repeatedly observes that these might well be problems for us but they are not for God. Still others might be surprised that the "Biblical" view of matters is so closely linked with Carson's Calvinism that it makes little room for Wesleyan claims. In fairness Carson allows that readers will have to judge whether he exegetes the Bible accurately.

The book will be accessible to most Christians. Scholar though he is, Carson writes a book without a single Greek word, very few footnotes, full of real-life examples (including personal ones from his own life), and whose layout is crystal clear. It is truly a fine model of excellent scholarship used in the service of the Church.

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Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work. By Miroslav Volf. New York: Oxford, 1991, 252 pp., \$32.50.

Work is a central feature of nearly everyone's life. Until recently, however, few had articulated a definite theology of work. Volf seeks to fill this void. He defines work as "honest, purposeful and methodologically specified social activity whose primary goal is the creation of products or states of affairs that can satisfy the needs of working individuals or their co-creatures, or (if primarily an end in itself) activity

that is necessary in order for acting individuals to satisfy their needs apart from the need for the activity itself" (pp. 10–11). He further suggests that economic systems have three functions: to guard individual dignity, to satisfy basic human needs, and to preserve the integrity of nature.

Unfortunately world economic systems are not meeting these criteria, and Volf sees a worldwide crisis manifesting itself in negative attitudes toward work. On the one hand technology has transformed people from crafters to machine workers to machine overseers. The progression obviously has certain economic benefits. On the other hand no society, regardless of its relative industrial progress, has completely solved such problems as child labor, unemployment, discrimination and pollution. Moreover market forces and corporate decisions beyond the control of rank-and-file laborers alienate them from their jobs and from each other.

To counteract the prevailing negativism Volf suggests that work, much like Christian faith, should be interpreted eschatologically. His theology of work, therefore, is based on Christian soteriology. But Volf links it neither with sanctification nor one's vocational calling. Instead he maintains that one's vocation should correspond with the gifts received from God. Moreover he argues that work should not be understood as mere labor but the actualization of a new creation. To fulfill God's will one must use one's gifts for God's glory. Only by using them in service to others, however, can people experience the peace of God and the genuine fulfillment that transform work from drudgery to delight.

Volf's points are well taken, and his global perspective is highly admirable. Unfortunately the book has several flaws. First, though Volf challenges Christians to lead the world to a new understanding of work he fails to explain how it should be done. Even if he proposed a plan it is doubtful that Moslems and Buddhists would readily embrace it. Volf anticipates this point, but his suggestion that others may glean insights even from premises with which they do not agree is unsatisfying. Second, while Volf clearly associates work with soteriology, his conceptualization of the new creation is vague. Is the new creation a millennialist expectation? If so, is the context premillennial or postmillennial? Moreover if Volf understands work in connection with soteriology he might have strengthened his argument by exploring the specific relationship between work and Christian stewardship. Finally, though the book has an author and Scripture index it has no general index.

Such criticisms notwithstanding, the book ambitiously addresses a neglected area of theological inquiry. It is certain to stimulate further reflection.

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Politics, Poetics and Hermeneutics in Milton's Prose. Edited by David Loewenstein and James Grantham Turner. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1990, 282 pp., n.p.

It would be unprofitable in a short review to summarize or even mention every essay in the collection, so in what follows I stick to some highs and lows and pay special attention to the essay on Milton's theology.

Two of the best contributions concern the divorce tracts. S. Fallon argues for the inchoate, nascent metaphysical monism of the tracts, providing a useful corrective to editor Turner's cruder observations in *One Flesh* (Oxford, 1987). Though generally convincing, Fallon's essay attributes to philosophical immaturity inconsistencies that actually seem to reflect the personal trauma of Milton's troubled marriage.

A. Patterson's complementary analysis ignores Milton's metaphysical hedging and examines instead his deployment of proto-novelistic narrative strategies that disguise as well as convey a biographically grounded sense of the misery of a failed marriage. These excellent essays thus tend to compensate for each other's shortcomings.

J. Mueller contributes an insightful analysis of *Of Reformation*. Like Fallon and Patterson she deepens our growing awareness of Milton's early and developing impulse to incarnate the spiritual and spiritualize the carnal. Also enlightening, though along different lines, is S. Woods' assessment of Milton's "elective poetics," which in its careful articulation of how Milton makes his audience aware of freedom of choice is a refreshing change from the rigid didact presented by S. Fish's still influential *Surprised by Sin*.

One of Milton's most significant writings for readers of *JETS* is no doubt his systematic theology. Regarding it, R. Schwartz' theoretically sophisticated essay stresses that textual authority, rather than "dated controversies" or literary relevance, is the "urgent question" (p. 228). Her argument apparently locates significant moments of contradiction in Milton's claims of Scriptural authority for his systematic doctrines. Undoubtedly a theologian like Milton, who makes rational analysis of Scripture the test of acceptable doctrine, must tread carefully to avoid inconsistency. Yet I think it quite a distance from this commonplace to Schwartz' position: that Milton exploited Scripture to subvert all but his own authority, including that of Scripture and of Christ in Scripture.

How does her essay justify such a position? Consider the unexplained departure from J. Carey's translation (volume 6 of the Yale edition of Milton's prose) in the analysis of a key Miltonic passage concerning Christian liberty. The Columbia translation (16.113) inserts temporal markers to divide Moses' obscure revelation of the new dispensation ("first") from Christ's clear revelation of it ("afterwards") and finally from its inscription in the hearts of believers ("since"). What is the implicit contradiction, according to Schwartz? "The *clearest* terms . . . are those of Christ . . . but the most recent . . . inscription . . . is written by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers" (p. 236). For Schwartz, Christ's dispensation in the gospels is thus rendered chronologically prior to—and therefore, by the criterion of last-shall-be-first, inferior to—the Holy Spirit's inscription. When one goes on to read the rest of chap. 27, however, no chronological progression from Christ's words to the inscription of the Holy Spirit is even contemplated by Milton. This is the case regardless of whether one is reading the Columbia translation, the Yale translation, or the original Latin. Milton characterizes the Spirit as the means by which Christ's "clearest" terms are intimately received by believers. For Milton, Christ and the spiritually awakened believer are partners in a single communicative moment. It is not a chronological process, and there is no ground here for privileging the Spirit or the individual believer over Christ. Hence Carey's abandoned translation quite properly presents the statement quoted by Schwartz according to the sense of the chapter, legitimately translating a possible chronological distinction (*inde*) as an analytical one and indicating it with punctuation (a period) rather than by a chronological subordinating conjunction ("since"). On other occasions Schwartz readily discusses niceties of translation (e.g. pp. 228–230), and the volume generally is one where Latin phrases get printed at the drop of a bracket.

In resorting to the Columbia edition's misleading translation, Schwartz momentarily and without saying why deserts the Yale volume edited by M. Kelley. I repeat this because, although her essay generally uses the Yale volume and cites as evidence Kelley's authoritative introduction to it, his name appears in her notes only as the author of *This Great Argument* (Princeton, 1941). Moreover his landmark study

in Milton criticism is cited only as the prime example of "relegation" of Milton's theology to a literary context, a trend that would have "disheartened" Milton, we are told (as relegation to "urgent" theoretical contexts would not?) (p. 228). Relegation, however, inadequately conveys the profundity of Kelley's engagement with Milton's theology. In fact in his foreword to *This Great Argument* Kelley writes almost apologetically (the times were different; complication in explication was not automatically a sign of virtuosity in a reader) about the multifarious complexity of the "intimate" relations he has discovered linking the theological treatise to *Paradise Lost*. Moreover half of his book is devoted to confirming the date of the treatise's composition and to identifying from manuscript evidence its various revisions and their theological significance. Depending on Kelley, Schwartz accurately describes the lengthy effort that went into composing *De Doctrina* but fails to acknowledge that her comprehension of this fact depends on Kelley's groundbreaking work. Is it legitimate to ignore Kelley's scholarly achievement or to lump it together with "dated controversy" and "relegation" to literary context? C. Hill in *Milton and the English Revolution* justly places Kelley, with a very few others, alongside Masson, Tillyard and Hanford in his pantheon of "the great Miltonists" (p. 8). Though contemporary Milton criticism has been reluctant to own up to it, the truth is that no one can talk about *De Doctrina* accurately or with any authority without indebtedness, acknowledged or not, to Kelley. It thus strikes me as no small irony that, in a volume generally marred by reluctance to admit preceding authorities, Schwartz' essay points a finger at Milton himself for maneuvering to pretend he stands alone.

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The Technological Bluff. By Jacques Ellul. Translated by Geoffrey Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990, xvi + 418 pp., \$24.95.

The volume under review completes Ellul's trilogy on the subject of technique, begun in 1954 with *The Technological Society* and continued in 1977 with *The Technological System*. Ellul has clearly stated time and again that he is not against technique but fully realizes that superficial readings of his work in this domain have led to it being labeled as scandalous, exaggerated, audacious and hopelessly pessimistic. In fact his apocalypticism is due in large part to the rigor of his analysis. Still his basic analysis remains unchanged: Unless things change we face a catastrophic nightmare of technological terror. Every appearance indicates that the game is already lost, that we are in a closed situation, that there is no way out. Thanks to the technological bluff we "march like obedient automatons," seduced by an absolute belief in unlimited progress and integrated into the technical system. Our backs are to the wall, and "the only way to find a narrow passage in this enormous world of deceptions . . . is to have enough awareness and self-criticism to see that for a century we have been descending step by step the ladder of absolute necessity, of destiny, of fate" (p. 411). By "bluff" Ellul does not mean that technicians do not deliver on their promises. Far from it.

In the volume Ellul turns his study away from the study of technique itself (the subject of his previous two volumes) to the discourse(s) and studies about technique, "the gigantic bluff in which discourse on techniques envelops us, making us believe anything, and, far worse, changing our whole attitude on techniques. . . . The bluff

consists essentially of rearranging everything in terms of technical progress. . . . Discourse on technique is not a justification of techniques (which is not necessary) but a demonstration of the prodigious power, diversity, success, universal application, and impeccability of techniques. . . . There is bluff here because the effective possibilities are multiplied a hundredfold in such discussions and the negative aspects are radically concealed" (pp. xv-xvi).

In part 1 Ellul addresses the uncertainty of technique. Despite soothing reassurances that technique aims at human welfare and fulfillment "we are moving ahead very rapidly and are unable to say exactly what the goal is or through what stages we shall pass" (p. 33). This is because of the ambivalence of technique. Technique is unpredictable and issues forth in unanticipated consequences. It allows no negative feedback that might regulate it and is wrought with internal contradictions that make it very fragile indeed.

Part 2 analyzes the basic elements of technological discourse. Discussions and discourses about technique purport to have as their primary theme genuine human fulfillment. But in reality we experience the exact opposite: "The darker the reality, the brighter the speech" (p. 130). For example, technical discourse assures us that we have full mastery over technique, but that is wishful thinking for actually we have "the multiplication of risks that are beyond our control" (p. 149).

We now face the triumph of the absurd in this the most rational of all enterprises (part 3). The desire to normalize absolutely everything, our obsession with change (even when it is not needed), the growth-at-all costs mentality, the imperative of speed, and the impossibility of any external critiques of the technical system all attest to this world of unreason. In two of the book's more entertaining and enlightening chapters Ellul examines "the world of gadgets" (pp. 257-286)—that is, electrical and mechanical objects that are amusing and entertaining but that do not correspond to any genuine need of ours (quartz watches, compact discs, microwave ovens, video recorders, CB radios, all-terrain vehicles, electronic bathrooms and—gadget of gadgets—the automobile)—and waste (pp. 287-301), both private (food, oil, pleasure craft, heating, etc.) and collective (monumental and idiotic projects that waste billions of dollars).

In part 4 Ellul takes up the theme of fascination. "Fascination means exclusive fixation on an object, passionate interest, the impossibility of turning away, a hypnotic obedience, a total lack of awareness" (p. 323). In short we are mesmerized by technique, and here Ellul turns to the examples of television, telematics, advertising, societal diversions (games, sports, the automobile, mechanistic art), and "the ultimate idiocies" of EuroDisneyland in Paris and Michael Jackson (pp. 381-383). The point of it all is that we now face "terrorism in the velvet glove of technology" (his final chapter). "My point is that the discourse on technique which we encounter everywhere and which is never subjected to criticism is a terrorism which completes the fascination of people in the West" (p. 384). Intellectuals and churches bear much of the responsibility for such terrorism.

Although a polymath by any standard, the genius of Ellul is his ability to assume and write from the posture of the ordinary person. He articulates what many people experience from day to day. Hundreds of concrete examples document his every point: computers, genetic engineering, the laser, atomic research, nuclear technology, music, overpopulation, and on and on. No matter how violently one might disagree with him, surely the depth and breadth of his effort to understand and engage society in the most concrete sense should challenge Christians who tend to spiritualize much of reality and thinking. As in 1954 Ellul writes to warn us, to awaken us from deadly slumber before it is too late. In a sense he has always written with the hope that events would prove him wrong. Being right only testified to our human failure to har-

ness technique as a useful means to greater ends rather than submit to it as an end in itself. "It is by being able to criticize that we show our freedom. This is the only freedom that we still have if we have at least the courage to grasp it" (p. 411).

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Come, Let Us Reason: An Introduction to Logical Thinking. By Norman L. Geisler and Ronald M. Brooks. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990, 232 pp., \$12.95 paper. *Return to Reason: A Critique of Enlightenment Evidentialism and a Defense of Reason and Belief in God.* By Kelly James Clark. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990, 158 pp., \$10.95 paper.

Geisler and Brooks have written an excellent book. I recommend it to any and all who wish to learn or to teach logic.

Citing such references as 1 Pet 3:15; Matt 22:37; Phil 4:8, Geisler avows in the preface that "thinking is not an option for the Christian; it is an imperative" (p. 7). Because one must think, it only follows that one should reason in a proper manner—that is, logically. The reason for another textbook on logic is that this one is written for Christians, and "none [of the others] use theological and apologetic illustrations throughout" (p. 8).

The subject matter is presented so as to be relatively easy to understand, even for the uninitiated. Each chapter builds on what has been taught in preceding ones. Helpful illustrations are provided, as are excellent practice exercises at the end of each chapter. The latter include additional problems for the advanced student. There is an appendix containing truth tables, items that are more fully understandable as one studies the text. Answer keys to exercises are included, as are a short bibliography and two indices to subjects and Scripture. Another addition that I found to be extremely helpful was the glossary, which incorporated such terms as *ad baculum*, *ad misericordiam*, *modus ponens*, *subcontrariety* and others.

Clark's book contains no bibliography or indices and, in my opinion, a very weak argument. "It is the thesis of this book that the evidentialist objection is doubly flawed. I will argue that there is evidence for belief in God, although not in the sense that would be acceptable either to the evidentialist objector or to the evangelical apologist. And more fundamentally, I will argue that the evidentialist objector is simply wrong when he claims that one needs evidence and arguments in order to rationally maintain belief in God" (pp. 8–9).

Clark attempts to substantiate his beliefs in the following four chapters. In chap. 1 he explains the cosmological argument, the argument from design, "the interestingly new probabilistic approach" (p. 15) and what he terms "an evangelical evidentialist perspective." Each argument is shown to be not only not compelling but severely deficient.

In chap. 2 Clark moves to the topic of evil and the questions it can pose concerning the possibility of the existence of God in the face of personal and worldwide evil and destruction. Clark questions whether a theodicy or a defense is necessary. He opts for A. Plantinga's free-will defense, although it is found that "free will alone is not a plausible theodicy" (p. 90). In chap. 3 Clark attempts to show, through the use of arguments from W. K. Clifford, W. James, C. S. Lewis and Plantinga, that evidentialism is not relevant concerning the question of God's existence and the rationality of human belief in him. Chap. 4 argues that evidentialism is not only not relevant but that it is also not rational.

Clark uses a method of argument that Geisler and Brooks label "stacking the deck." He presents and uses only the evidence that supports his thesis, a thesis that I believe is flawed from the start. He does not define the term "classical proof" but uses it to mean "that which is evident to and therefore must be accepted as fact by all rational beings." Nor does he define what "sufficient evidence" consists of, though it seems to be in the category of the proofs he labels "person-relative." Not everyone agrees on everything, but most Christians realize and would admit that truth is not relative. Truth is truth no matter who believes or disbelieves it. Furthermore in his treatment of the evangelical evidentialist perspective Clark lumps all evangelicals together and by association implies that all are evidentialists (not true). He then employs highly inadequate examples drawn from but one book to "prove" his point.

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Ethics in the Nuclear Age. Edited by Todd Whitmore. Dallas: Southern Methodist University, 1989, 240 pp., \$24.95/\$12.95. *The Divine Good.* By Franklin I. Gamwell. San Francisco: Harper, 1990, 223 pp., \$30.00.

The purpose of Whitmore's book is to "continue the dialogue" between political analysts and religious ethicists. To that end he has assembled various authors to address the ethical issues concerning nuclear weapons. The book focuses on the American bishops' *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*.

A definite slant becomes obvious when one examines both the vocations and the ethical/religious starting points of the various authors. The book is moderate to heavy on ethics and theology, light on discussion of specific ordnance or tactics (one exception is J. T. Johnson's essay). All the writers are professors of either ethics or religion, and the book therefore tends to sound more like a monologue than a dialogue. Likewise, the authors clearly represent only a small slice of academic thought. In the main, any notions of a just war in the nuclear age are considered hopelessly obscurantist. A few examples will serve to illustrate the point.

R. Miller argues strongly against any sort of nuclear deterrence, accepting the impossibility of any nuclear war being kept within the limits prescribed by just-war criteria. Here he fails to mention the refinement of nuclear weaponry in the past forty years. No longer must nuclear weapons be measured only in megatonnage. At the same time, Miller also accepts cultural relativism. He sees those who hold to any possibility of a just nuclear war as "ascribing final or supreme value to human community" and thus stepping outside the bounds of Christian ethics. Put simply, all communities are shades of the same color, and the survival of any society is not worth entertaining the notion of a nuclear war. But what Miller does not say, and what he seems unable to say, is that one can make various ethical judgments about competing societies/cultures without ascribing ultimacy to them. Such judgments may well be worth defending.

J. H. Yoder is even more emphatic in his rejection of nuclear deterrence. Such deterrence is immoral due to what lies behind the threat: The use of nuclear weapons "would overreach necessarily the barriers of discrimination, proportionality, and/or noncombatant immunity" (p. 80). Because such use is ethically impermissible and because the only other alternative is a bluff the just-war theorists, according to Yoder, are caught in an impossible bind. They must opt for either a bluff or revenge, neither option acceptable to Christians. Yoder, like Miller, does not address the evolution of either modern weaponry or tactics.

Yoder is also not above elitism. For him the just-war tradition was suitable only for "autocratic governments." Why? In democratic governments it is all too easy for a "fickle electorate" to taint decisions with "national jingoism." Thus the popularity of Reagan and Thatcher after Granada and the Falklands is seen as mere jingoistic national interest. As Yoder says, "Democracy does not therefore increase the potential for wise decisions" (p. 89). One suspects that he would be decidedly more friendly to democratic decisions that agreed with his own political agenda.

T. Whitmore's essay examines two ethical models utilized by religious institutions. The older model, the "deductive-official," utilizes revealed theological truths and immutable principles. Whitmore's proposed replacement, the "responsive-magisterial," utilizes the subjective criteria of plausibility and coherence to evaluate decisions. The former model must be discarded because people simply will not endure any church pronouncing authoritatively on specific issues. The result is a "cafeteria catholic" who picks and chooses church decisions according to private preference. The ultimate result is a loss of authority for the church and a resultant loss in church membership. Sociologically it is interesting to note that this is contrary to a great deal of evidence connecting church growth with just such authoritative and strict pronouncements (cf. D. Kelley's *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing*).

Whitmore's solution, which borrows heavily from H. Richard Niebuhr's *The Responsible Self*, adopts what Whitmore calls a "non-radical" relativism, which "must remain open-ended and resist being hardened into immutable principles" (p. 211). Without dwelling on the question of whether Whitmore is absolute on his insistence of his new paradigm, it is clear that the resultant model sounds very much like that of R. Rorty or J. Stout. This sort of soft relativism is mainly concerned with whether things hang together when evaluating truth claims. Any religious institution that claims God has spoken absolutely, infallibly and propositionally will fare quite badly indeed.

The book fails in its stated purpose to present a dialogue between religion and military strategy. Because the authors come from such a narrow slice of academia the book has a definite tendency to repeat itself. One breath of fresh air is Johnson's essay, in which he details the evolution of the just-war thesis and how such a thesis might join with both the proposed Strategic Defense Initiative and today's "smart" weapons in fulfilling the criteria for a just war.

Gamwell's book does not lack for ambitious claims. He seeks to show "that the validity of moral claims presupposes the existence of God" (p. xii). Like finding a rundown shack at the end of a promising road, however, his work is disappointing. This can best be illustrated by following the same route taken by the author.

Despite Gamwell's claim that he is "going against the current philosophical consensus" (p. 1) he deliberately retains the "modern way of thinking," meaning that there can be no appeal to divine revelation (p. 12). Instead he accepts what I see as the determining epistemological principle: Man must evaluate truth claims solely on the basis of autonomy ("human experience and reason," p. 4). Our route is already looking less promising.

Following C. Hartshorne and S. Ogden he dismisses classical metaphysics and theology as being "thoroughly incoherent" (p. 17) and adopts their "neo-classical theism." Armed with this hermeneutical tool he finds both Aristotle (representative of the teleological school) and Kant (head of the deontological camp) wanting. The reasoning (if not his argument) seems simple: Both camps make rationally arbitrary claims and have no transcendent referent to which to appeal. Thus, argued negatively, moral claims need metaphysics (p. 157).

Can Gamwell's neo-classical God do the job? Frankly, after all the concessions to modernity, after all the qualifications of his transcendent postulate, his theism is too weak and vaporous to be of any use. Gamwell has little use for a God who is

unchanging. Hence we must do away with any thought of finding literal and immutable laws in Scripture. Although Gamwell never spells this out, to be consistent he must exclude the love commandments as well as those against, say, homosexuality. After reading Gamwell's book the theist (or Christian for that matter) is still left pondering: "What am I to do?"

When Gamwell finally gets down to specifics his ideas sound suspiciously like secular socialism. His "reformed political liberalism" holds public freedom above private (p. 203) and attempts a middle course between what he sees as the only possible alternatives: libertarianism and welfare liberalism. He admits that the public freedom might at times have to be enforced by nondemocratic means (p. 200). He also admits that such a ranking of freedoms has resulted in "ideological abuse" in the past (the people of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe will be glad to hear that). One positive note in Gamwell's political plan: He gives religion a place (as a member of "public-regarding associations") in the public square in order to maximize our common humanity (p. 207). Like Gamwell's God, however, religion must learn its place. Its "distinctive" task is to "pursue humanistic discussion" by appealing to common "human experience and reason" (p. 208). Thus we are back to autonomy.

Gamwell's book hardly fulfills the bright promise with which it started. With all the work that went into the volume it really offers nothing for the theist. The Christian may expect no guidance whatever, and the philosopher is not likely to object to any of Gamwell's conclusions. After all, they are hardly different from his own.

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Christians in the Age of AIDS: How We Can Be Good Samaritans Responding to the AIDS Crisis. By Shepherd and Anita Moreland Smith. Wheaton: Victor, 1990, 197 pp., \$9.95 paper. *The AIDS Epidemic: Balancing Compassion and Justice.* By Glenn G. Wood and John E. Dietrich. Portland: Multnomah, 1990, 435 pp., \$9.95 paper. *AIDS: Ministry in the Midst of an Epidemic.* By Wendell W. Hoffman and Stanley J. Grenz. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990, 304 pp., \$12.95 paper.

Test your AIDS IQ. Which of the following statements are true?

- (1) Conservative estimates indicate that 1–1.5 million people in the United States are infected with the HIV, while 170,000 are official AIDS patients.
- (2) 5–10 million people worldwide are infected with the HIV, although widespread underreporting is taken for granted. Thus the figure is likely much higher.
- (3) Unless things change, in the twenty-first century AIDS will be the leading cause of death in the United States, surpassing heart disease and cancer.
- (4) AIDS will kill 1–2 million people by the end of this century.
- (5) The United States officially reports over 170,000 cases of AIDS and leads the world in terms of nations reporting to the World Health Organization (WHO) in both the total number of AIDS cases reported and the rate of cases per unit population.
- (6) Of the 177 nations reporting to the WHO, over 80% have diagnosed cases of AIDS within their borders, while the United States accounts for almost half of the AIDS cases worldwide.
- (7) The insurance industry estimates it will receive fifty billion dollars in AIDS claims in the 1990s.
- (8) HIV-infected people often show no symptoms for up to ten years, during which period they can pass the virus on to other people.

(9) Pregnant women who are HIV-positive will transmit the virus to their newborn children 50% of the time, and almost all of these children will contract AIDS by the time they are six years old.

(10) As of late 1989, 55 different companies were developing and testing 67 different medicines and vaccines to treat HIV infection and AIDS.

Unfortunately, as you have probably guessed, all ten of the above statements are true. On June 5, 1981, the Center for Disease Control reported its first case of AIDS. Since then the world has staggered at the ramifications, real and potential, social, moral, and economic, that the epidemic has had and will continue to have for all of us. What is an appropriate Christian response to AIDS?

All three books under review suggest that, until recently, Christian responses by the evangelical community have been ill-conceived and negligible. But all three exemplify a more excellent way, the way of scientific realism, theological precision, unconditional compassion toward people who need it most, and concrete deeds of ministry. "Are we capable of feeling the pain of people suffering from AIDS? We need to be, if we are to be true to God's calling" (Smith/Smith 141). "We are called to move beyond whatever apathy and judgmental spirit may haunt the hidden recesses of our hearts" (Hoffman/Grenz 29). "Choose the way of the world and yell 'Leprosy! Unclean!' at another person created in God's image, or choose the way of Christ and the cross and identify with those who suffer and with their loss of dignity" (Wood/Dietrich 128).

All three books cover much the same material. They give a history of the disease, recite almost endless facts and figures, reject the idea of AIDS as a special divine judgment, and appeal to the Biblical paradigms of the leper and Good Samaritan. All three are united on the "safe sex" debate. That is, our optimal message is one of sexual fidelity within marriage and refraining from substance abuse. This insures the "safest" sex. To call sex with condoms "safe" is a misnomer at best and at worst quite misleading. Nevertheless for those who reject "safest" sex, using condoms is "safer" than nothing. All three books concur that contracting the HIV by casual contact is theoretically possible but statistically almost impossible. A few words about each volume are in order.

The Smiths are a husband-and-wife team who in 1987 formed a citizens' organization called ASAP (Americans for a Sound AIDS/HIV Policy). The goals of ASAP include conquering fear, discrimination and prejudice; informing public policy; limiting the spread of AIDS through promoting responsible behavior; and promoting compassion for those impacted by the disease (p. 13). Their book is divided into four parts: AIDS and the world, AIDS and the Church, AIDS and the family, and AIDS and the individual. Especially helpful were chap. 6, which covers the ten most-asked questions about AIDS ministry, and the extensive leader study guide for each chapter (includes Scripture, prayer focus, discussion questions, discussion/application, and addresses of resources pertinent to the chapter), a glossary of terms, and a state-by-state list of AIDS-related ministries. Many people will find the book a great help. It would be a fine resource for a church to use in a group-study format.

Wood and Dietrich are physicians who have worked with AIDS patients. At 400 pages of text I found the book somewhat long, especially when the authors engaged in writing western intellectual history in an effort to place the AIDS problem in its historical-cultural context. After their introduction (pp. 15-109) they treat AIDS from a medical viewpoint (pp. 113-208), including excellent chapters on the spread, course, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of AIDS. Part 3 moves to AIDS and the Church, while the final section addresses AIDS and society at large, including issues of civil rights, education, economics, and the like. Copious endnotes follow each

chapter. The end of the book includes a glossary, an annotated bibliography of two dozen books, and Scripture and subject indices.

Hoffman and Grenz form a physician-theologian team to write about AIDS. Hoffman authors part 1 (Medical Perspectives and Context). Successive chapters treat the history, cause, epidemiology, clinical manifestations, treatment, prevention and control of AIDS. The primary theme of Grenz' part 2 (Theological Perspectives and Context) is that we must overcome barriers in order to be effective ministers to people with AIDS: the mistaken idea that AIDS is a "sinner's disease," its link to human sexuality, and its terminal nature. Having overcome these barriers through the compassion of the Holy Spirit we need to minister to those who have AIDS, to their family and friends who suffer, to society at large, and to the whole world through prevention and containment.

If the Smiths are correct (p. 80), within a few years almost everyone will know at least one person with AIDS. I do—or I should say I did, for my acquaintance has already died of the disease. These three books are all excellent and comprehensive introductions to a matter that concerns us all. They propel us beyond apathy, ignorance, hypocrisy and judgmentalism to incarnational compassion that demonstrates that the true Christian community is a community characterized by love that knows no limits and grace that knows no boundaries.

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Matters of Life and Death. By John B. Cobb, Jr. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991, 122 pp., \$9.95 paper. *The Life and Death Debate.* By J. P. Moreland and Norman L. Geisler. New York: Praeger, 1990, 174 pp., \$42.95/\$13.95.

Two books with similar titles and topics are symptomatic of the great debate over ethics at the edges of life in American society. That debate is in turn symptomatic of the conflict between the Biblical worldview and the many varieties of inhuman secularism. One of the crucial foci in this subviolent war is the definition of human nature: Are human beings created in the image of God and therefore the bearers of God-given dignity, or are they the result of impersonal nature plus time plus chance?

Theologian Cobb represents himself as a responsible Christian and includes a modest amount of Biblical exegesis in his book, some of it very perceptive. But his process metaphysic leads to a definition of human nature scarcely distinguishable from that of secular naturalism. Once he tells us that some animals have a right to life similar to the human right to life, we are not surprised that he is open to active euthanasia, abortion, premarital sex, and homosexuality. Ironically, evangelical philosophers Moreland and Geisler hardly mention God, present no Biblical exegesis except in one aside, and try hard to address a wide range of readers. But they consistently represent a Biblical view of human nature. Once they tell us they are opposed to abortion on demand, it is no surprise that they oppose infanticide, active euthanasia and suicide while supporting capital punishment and just-war theory.

Cobb's way of thinking is nicely illustrated by his discussion of "The Right to Kill," the title for his analysis of how humans should relate to animals. He argues that Genesis 1 has been used to support a dualism of human rulers over nonhuman ruled creatures. This has joined with philosophical dualism coming from Descartes

and Kant so that animals are viewed solely as means to human ends. Against this Cobb suggests that Genesis 1 sees the whole created order as good, meaning that animals too have intrinsic value. And the inclusion of unclean animals, which had no human use, in Noah's ark suggests the inherent value of species independent of human use.

Further, the human right to life is based on the *imago Dei*, which is absent in animals. But we must specify what feature of humanity is designated by the image. And whether we pick reason or the ability to communicate, some nonhuman animals participate in the *imago Dei* more than some humans.

Cobb also argues that the killing of humans is ordinarily prohibited for three reasons: Killing ends a unique set of experiences, fear of being killed takes the joy out of life, and a death disrupts the lives of others. These reasons also apply to some higher animals, such as whales and chimpanzees. Therefore some animals have a moral right to life, which means that killing them would truly be murder.

In response to Cobb we can grant that animals have inherent value independent of human use and that some current treatment of animals is unethical. But we must strongly object to his distortion of the *imago Dei*. Cobb identifies the image with an actual capacity or ability of a person, whereas the Bible seems to connect the image with how God sees the person, regardless of that person's abilities or capacities. Cobb's distortion of the image is a result of confusing the Creator/creature distinction, typical of process metaphysics. He writes: "God suffers with all creatures in their suffering. To inflict suffering on a calf is to inflict suffering on God as well" (pp. 38–39). God is no longer a personal being, independent of creation. God is seen as the sum of all experiences. Consequently Cobb's ethics sound much like other forms of secular, dehumanizing naturalism.

The perspective of Moreland and Geisler is nicely illustrated by the topic of infanticide. After reviewing some of the medical problems that occasion the question, they explain and evaluate five positions on the issue: (1) We may withhold treatment in light of harm to a third party. (2) We may withhold treatment in light of quality-of-life judgments. (3) We may withhold treatment not in the child's best interest (which is only a variant of [2]). (4) We may withhold treatment for defective human nonpersons. (5) We must treat all nondying infants (their view). Their evaluations of the other positions include such problems as ambiguity and vagueness, but repeatedly they point out that the other positions do not do justice to the inherent or intrinsic value of human life. Their chief reason for advocating (5) is that it recognizes human dignity. Theirs is a well-stated application of central Christian beliefs.

The most interesting part of the book comes in its last few pages, where it becomes clear that they make only limited reference to God and the Bible because they are working on a natural-law basis. They claim that moral values are known in three ways: intuitively, by our reaction to how people treat us, and by the world's great writings. Evidently they hope to gain a hearing outside Christian circles and have a positive influence on the basis of God's law known through general revelation. I laud their intentions and agree that we should try to use natural law today. But the turning point in many of their arguments is human dignity, precisely the point denied by Cobb and many non-Christian ethicists. In contemporary ethics we must vigorously defend the dignity of each human being as valued by God, which seems to require that we have recourse to Scripture. Moreland and Geisler are more dependent on special revelation than they acknowledge.

Also, there are sides to natural-law theory that they could profitably include. Some are the Aristotelian consideration that some virtues (and, I suppose, corresponding norms) are proper to all human roles, Lockean natural-rights theory, and the Lutheran

analysis of the role of God-given social institutions in ethical formation and decision. I hope Geisler and Moreland will continue to develop their project.

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What in the World Is God Doing? The Essentials of Global Missions: An Introductory Guide. By C. Gordon Olson. Cedar Knolls: Global Gospel, 1989, 310 pp., \$9.95.

Olson's undergraduate textbook is well organized into five parts. Each focuses on a specific dimension of missions: Biblical, historical, contextual, regional, functional. The book's usefulness as a textbook is heightened by the inclusion of helpful study questions following five of the six chapters devoted to the Biblical dimension. Maps, graphs, charts, diagrams, statistical tables, and even a few well-chosen cartoons are sprinkled appropriately throughout the book. The inclusion of a selected bibliography (four pages) and a topical index strengthens the book even more.

Olson builds his book on the solid foundation laid by such evangelical stalwarts as J. H. Kane, G. W. Peters, R. H. Glover, R. B. Winter, P. Johnstone, and R. A. Tucker. He both summarizes and quotes extensively from their works.

Nevertheless Olson, though not particularly creative, makes significant contributions of his own. His treatment of the Biblical dimension reflects an inductive and diachronic rather than a deductive and systematic approach. He acknowledges the transition in missions emphasis from the OT to the NT but maintains that "the essential of cross cultural witness is found in both" (p. 28). Furthermore the author places a greater emphasis on geography and world religions than most books of this kind in order to compensate for students who "come to college with a poor background in geography and even less concept of the world religions so essential to the study of missions" (p. ii).

Olson stresses the priority of evangelism. He does not dodge tough issues, such as the eternal lostness of humankind apart from Christ's salvation and the uniqueness of Christ. The concluding chapters contain a plethora of helpful suggestions related to the machinery of the missionary enterprise.

The quality both of the content and the writing style is uneven. Some parts of the book, including the statistical information, are quite current, while other parts appear dated. Olson is at his best when expounding themes related to Biblical foundations, historical development, Asia, and Islam. But his treatments of Roman Catholicism, the ecumenical movement, and historic Protestantism are often stereotypical. His treatment of liberation theology tends to be overstated and simplistic. Considering the size of the book, Olson says relatively little about such significant recent developments as the burgeoning emergence of two-thirds-world mission societies, the proliferation of tentmakers, the increase of short-term missionaries, the church-growth movement, the impact of international terrorism and the AIDS crisis on missions closure strategies, the worldwide explosion of pentecostal growth, the urbanization of missions, and the Lausanne movement. Also his discussion of contextualization is limited and fails to address central issues. A chapter on mission strategy would enhance the book.

Nevertheless it is unrealistic to expect perfection in an introductory volume that seeks to cover comprehensively so vast a field of knowledge. This book does cover the basics well. In fact, in my opinion the book deserves a place on the shelf of every evangelical missions professor. If supplemented by pertinent readings in current pe-

radicals it would be a good choice for a textbook in a Bible-college setting. Sections of it make useful supplementary reading for seminary courses. It contains a wealth of information for the pastor seeking to develop sermons and lessons aimed at enhancing the global vision and commitment of his congregation. And the price is right.

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The New Age Cult. By Walter R. Martin (with the research staff of CRI, Elliot Miller, Ron Rhodes, Dan Schlesinger). Minneapolis: Bethany, 1989, 140 pp., \$5.95 paper. *A Crash Course on the New Age Movements.* By Elliot Miller. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989, 260 pp., \$10.95 paper. *New Age or Old Lie?* By Kerry D. McRoberts. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1989, 137 pp., \$7.95 paper.

The legacy of the late W. R. Martin (1928–1989), the grandfather of the contemporary evangelical counter-cult movement and founder of Christian Research Institute (CRI), will undoubtedly live on through the writings of his disciples, as these three books, published around the time of Martin's death, seem clearly to demonstrate.

The New Age Cult, Martin's last book, is a brief introduction to the New Age Movement (NAM). It is not meant to be a *magnum opus* like his encyclopedic *Kingdom of the Cults*. The book is divided into nine brief chapters in addition to a glossary of new-age terms as well as a new-age bibliography. The first two chapters explain the origin of new-age thought and ten key doctrines of NAM. Chapter 3 provides Biblical answers to NAM objections to Christianity.

The dangers of NAM are presented in chaps. 4–5. Some of Martin's arguments in these chapters, however, are logically fallacious. For example, he writes that "any serious analysis of the dangers of the New Age movement must take into consideration the tragic lesson of Jonestown, where 915 followers of Jones and a concerned senator investigating the cult became the victims of a fanatic influenced by New Age teachings" (p. 47). The argument is *ad hominem* since the truth or falsity of new-age thought is independent of those who claim to be its practitioners. After all, the same argument can be used against Christianity in light of the fact that Jones started out as a Disciple of Christ clergyman. In any event I find such arguments against cult theology unproductive and beside the point. They produce more heat than light.

Chapter 6 provides a brief overview of NAM's political agenda including the movement's intent to influence educational, political and religious institutions in the United States, Europe and Canada. Martin makes the important point that there are those who are considered evangelical or Catholic who have accepted elements of new-age thinking and have implicitly called into question traditional orthodoxy.

Chapter 7 is a Biblical critique of reincarnation. Chapter 8 provides excellent common-sense advice for Christians who confront new agers. In chap. 9 Martin briefly presents a number of ways to identify new-age thinking, although he does warn Christians from drawing hasty conclusions about a group's alleged new-age connections from too little evidence. He concludes the chapter with a list of leading new-age spokespersons, organizations and books. Overall his little book is an excellent introduction for anyone who knows little or nothing about NAM.

E. Miller, convert to Christianity from NAM, is arguably the leading evangelical scholar on NAM. His *Crash Course* volume is the result of nearly fifteen years of research and study as well as dialogue with leaders in the movement. Although Miller

had authored a number of articles and had delivered scores of lectures on NAM over the past decade, this work is his first book-length treatment. Unlike Martin's book, Miller's is not introductory. It is a scholarly tome, but because of Miller's clear writing style it can easily be appreciated by layman and scholar alike.

Miller's book is divided into nine chapters and four appendices. In chap. 1 he takes on the difficult task of defining NAM. Pointing out that NAM has no creedal statements, Miller yet can identify certain earmarks of NAM that clearly distinguish it from other movements or religions. He also makes the important point that simply because NAM's metaphysic is Hindu in origin does not mean that every religious movement with Hindu influence and/or similar beliefs is new-age.

According to Miller, some of NAM's fundamental beliefs include the belief that all is one: "Everything that exists consists of one and the same essence or reality. A second assumption is that this Ultimate Reality is neither dead matter nor unconscious energy. It is Being, Awareness, and Bliss (which is to say, a Hindu conception of God as an impersonal, infinite consciousness and force)" (p. 17). New agers also believe that man is separated from God only insofar as man is ignorant of the fact that he is really part of God. This ignorance is an illusion that must be "healed" by altering one's state of consciousness through such means as meditation, chanting, ecstatic dancing, etc. "Thus, salvation for the New Ager is equated with *gnosis* (experimental knowledge). It is *self-realization* or the realization that one's *true Self* is God" (p. 17). Consequently NAM places little value in objective knowledge. Many though not all new agers accept belief in reincarnation and karma. For the new ager, acceptance of all these beliefs by the masses will usher in a new age of peace and tranquility.

In chap. 2 Miller summarizes the influence of NAM's mysticism on objectivity and science. Chapters 3–4 provide a thorough outline and critique of new-age ideology. Chapters 5–7 present an overview of NAM activism and evangelism, concluding with some strategy on how Christians ought to respond to the influx of new-age thought. Those who are cult-watchers will no doubt come to the conclusion that these three chapters in particular clearly distinguish Miller from other Christian critics of NAM such as C. Cumbey, D. Hunt and T. Marrs, who sometimes prefer sound bites to sound reasoning. Miller takes NAM seriously, but he is no alarmist. He sees a new-age threat but not a conspiracy. He tries to understand and identify new agers, not simply label them. He critiques NAM with intellectual integrity but is more than willing to take the gloves off. Just as one can despise both communism and Senator McCarthy, Miller has shown us that it is intellectually respectable for a Christian theologian to critique NAM without approving of the reasoning of Cumbey, Hunt or Marrs.

Miller's last two chapters concern the new-age practice of channeling, which is similar to what allegedly occurs at a spiritist seance: A medium is "taken over" by the disembodied spirit of a dead person. Miller's presentation and critique of channeling is well done, emphasizing that from a Christian perspective channeling, if it is a way to truly contact the spirit realm, puts the participants in contact with malevolent spirits and not the departed souls of mortals.

Crash Course ends with four helpful appendices. Appendix A answers eight common questions asked about NAM. Cumbey's new-age conspiracy theory is critiqued in appendix B. The third appendix, which the reader will find especially helpful, is a brief refutation of the new-age appeal to moral and epistemological relativism. Appendix D is Miller's personal testimony: "From New Age 'Christ' to Born-Again Christian."

McRoberts' volume can best be described as a work on NAM that lies somewhere between Martin's and Miller's. McRoberts, however, provides his own unique contri-

bution to new-age evangelism. Instead of merely critiquing NAM he presents a positive defense of Christian theism in chaps. 2 and 6, the former employing a Francis Schaeffer type of apologetic and the latter arguing from the historicity of Christ's resurrection. Although his work in chap. 2 has merit, some assertions will make scholars wince. For example: "Neo-orthodoxy does not place faith in an objective personal God but rather it encourages an individual to have faith in one's faith" (p. 34). In another place McRoberts writes: "In his work, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Immanuel Kant was most concerned with the issue of man's ability to discover knowledge of reality in the estranged world of metaphysics. Metaphysics was considered alien because of the prevailing world view of deism" (p. 24). This is a strange claim, since most deists held that the existence of an infinite God could be proven through rational argument (the most favorite being the design argument), and Kant disputed that such arguments for metaphysical entities could work. Although there is much to be learned in chap. 2, such broad-brush assertions (as well as a few other historical and philosophical misinterpretations) could damage McRoberts' case with a more scholarly audience.

Overall McRoberts does a fine job of presenting an accurate picture of new-age thinking (chaps. 1, 3, 4, 7). His critique is well thought out (chap. 5). It is evident that the author is conversant in the literature of NAM as well as in contemporary Christian apologetics.

McRoberts concludes his work with a helpful chapter that includes answers to common questions asked by new agers and other non-Christians as well as suggestions concerning how one can properly share one's faith with a new ager.

Although I recommend all three books, those who are totally uninformed about NAM and/or new to theology should begin with Martin's work and then move on to McRoberts' and Miller's.

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Cults, World Religions and the Occult. By Kenneth Boa. Wheaton: Victor, 1990, 280 pp., \$9.95 paper.

Boa's survey of religious movements aims at giving Christians "a clear understanding of the movements in a *minimum* number of pages." In covering 24 major topics in the space of only 280 pages he succeeds remarkably well.

Boa divides his work into four sections. Part 1 covers "Major Non-Christian Religions of the East": Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, Islam and Judaism. Part 2 covers the "Major Pseudo-Christian Religions of the West": Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Science, Seventh-Day Adventism (though he does not classify it as a cult), Unity and theosophy. Part 3 focuses on "Occult Religions and Systems": witchcraft and Satanism, astrology, spiritualism, the Kabbalah, the I Ching and the Tarot. Part 4 analyzes "New Religions and Cults": transcendental meditation, the Unification Church, the Hare Krishna movement, the Way International, and the new-age movement. The chapter on the new-age movement is written by W. H. McDowell, and a concluding chart, contrasting the various religions and movements with Biblical teaching, is the work of B. Wallace.

Boa generally allots four to ten pages to each topic. More extensive treatment (13 pages each) is offered on astrology, transcendental meditation, the Unification

Church, and the Hare Krishna movement. The new-age movement gets the lengthiest treatment of all (17 pages). At the end of each chapter Boa offers a concluding commentary in the form of a brief but helpful Biblical evaluation followed by an equally brief "Things to Keep in Mind" section.

The general reader who wishes a short, basic, no-frills introduction to the various subjects covered will appreciate the book. It would serve admirably as a text for a Sunday-school class. The scholar or general reader who requires specific help in knowing where to go for additional information, however, will be greatly disappointed. Boa provides no footnotes, and his bibliography cites only general secondary works on the same order as his own (e.g. W. R. Martin's *The Kingdom of the Cults* and J. H. Gerstner's *The Theology of the Major Sects*). Boa would have added immeasurably to the usefulness of his book if he had provided annotated helps and guidance for further reading at the end of each chapter. Pity, for example, the Christian who encounters a Mormon but who knows nothing of the extraordinarily valuable *Mormonism: Shadow or Reality* by J. and S. Tanner. And much the same could be said of similarly important materials on other cults.

No attempt is made here to update his surveys (a version of the work appeared in 1977) with mention of recent embarrassing incidents to cults such as the Hofmann forgeries in the case of Mormonism (cf. e.g. *A Gathering of Saints* by R. Lindsey) or the murders and alleged child molestations associated with the Hare Krishna movement in West Virginia (*Monkey on a Stick* by J. Hubner and L. Gruson). Boa is not to be faulted for not mentioning these in the text (he covers an enormous amount of ground as it is), but such would make useful bibliographical entries for readers who wish to stay current.

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The Best of the Manion Forum. Edited by Michael Bauman. San Francisco: MRUP, 1990, 585 pp., \$59.95. *Man and Marxism: Religion and the Communist Retreat*. Edited by Michael Bauman. Hillsdale: Hillsdale College, 1991, 178 pp., \$9.95.

In two recent collections by Bauman the public is treated to diverse analyses of the inevitable collapse of communism. The first release is an abridgement of excerpts from radio programs spanning 1954 to 1979 and hosted by Clarence Manion. In this fine work excerpts from his rather unique and conservative broadcasts are collected. Bauman has arranged them alphabetically around topics such as abortion, affirmative action, capitalism, Declaration of Independence, economics, Equal Rights Amendment, liberalism, media, Supreme Court, totalitarianism, and welfare state. Of particular interest to theologians will be statements on Church and state, ecumenism, Jesus Christ, liberation theology, religion and morality, and World Council of Churches.

The result is a spicy compendium of conservative Catholic thought. Eric Von Kuehnelt-Leddihn's critique of ecumenism is a case in point: "It takes an enormous effort, prayer, intelligence, and work to build bridges from mountaintop to mountaintop. But there exists a false ecumenism, which tries to make the whole bridge-building endeavor easier by destroying the mountains in order to bring them down until they are very flat. Then it's very easy to build a little bridge between the two" (pp. 172-173).

The second work by Bauman is a nonsecular explanation of the fall of socialism. The collection of essays provides a theological explanation for the collapse of commu-

nism in our time. From G. Roche's foreword to a later essay by E. M. Jones the book advances religious reasons for the demise of Marxism, reasons rooted in its faulty anthropology and theology. Roche excoriates the "word-wielders" (media-brokers) for their blindness to this simple explanation, while all the while they substitute political, sociological, or economic explanations. Instead, the heart of the book is to suggest that it is the renascent faith, especially the orthodox Christian faith, that is responsible for the overthrow of an enduring misanthropy.

The articles, most of which were originally given in recent symposia sponsored by Hillsdale College, are written by various scholars, policy analysts, theologians and journalists. The interdisciplinary approach adds weight to the thesis. Grouped into three main sections, most of the essays are easily readable and will be helpful to a variety of audiences. The first part gives a theological analysis, the second part offers historical details, and the final part suggests that even more may come of this counter-revolution than some of the best prognostications.

The first section is perhaps superior. In a fine article by editor Bauman we are given not only the report of the retreat of communism but five systemic reasons for its inevitable fall. Bauman affirms that Marxism entails a faulty view of (1) human nature, (2) cause and effect, (3) justice (reducing such to absolute equality), (4) human property, and (5) the nature of wealth. Commencing his essay with the observation that "reality is resilient" and observing that "no religion, no political system and no means of production can prosper if it is not firmly rooted in things as they are rather than things as we would like them to be," Bauman asserts that "precisely here Marxism fails" (p. 8). He locates the failure of Marxism as the human heart. He observes that Marxism "depends upon altruism where little or none exists" (p. 9). In place of Marxism's faulty assumption, Bauman provides an argument for democratic capitalism, in that we are "an incurably selfish lot" (p. 7). He also critiques secular libertarianism for its ideological failings. It is illuminating (as well as timely) to hear him observe that "abortion . . . not only despoils the rights of the one growing within [the mother's] womb, it is a trespass against the property rights of God. So also is suicide" (p. 17).

The second excellent essay is a brief one by R. H. Nash, "Toward a New Liberation Theology." Drawing on the earlier work of M. Novak, Nash severely and justifiably criticizes the older liberation theology. He points out its theological error as well as its economic heresies. Nash argues that liberation theology is incapable of supplying political, economic, or spiritual liberation, the real tests of a legitimate liberation theology.

"Part II: Historical Description" is interesting and practical. It includes outstanding essays by D. Funderburk, E. Plowman, E. M. Jones, and D. Smith (whose article needs editorial correction). In this section various experts, each with their specialized knowledge, all support the original hypothesis. Plowman's article, "From China to El Salvador to Romania: How Religion is Faring Around the World," is a fine survey of religious freedoms, aided by two informative charts. D. Feder also contributes from a Jewish perspective. Perhaps the finest article in part 2 is Jones' "The Untold Story: Religion's Role in Liberating Eastern Europe," which updates us on the re-emergence of faith as a force behind the Iron Curtain. His convincing essay should disqualify future solely naturalistic interpretations (which was part of Marxism's conundrum all along) of this retreat. Smith also provides insightful information on the sustenance provided by underground religious movements and explains, in distinctively religious categories, that the blood of the martyrs, prayers of the saints, and preaching of the Word have been of inestimable value in tumbling the giant. R. Carlson also contributes a fine essay on the role of Voice of America in the electronically-aided coups.

The final part of the volume features two premier foreign-policy experts. J. Kirkpatrick's remarks on the exit of communism are insightful, as we have come to expect. And L. Uzzell's "Word and Deed: Russia's Religious Reform" is a fine update on real religious freedom in the Soviet world as well as a sage warning about future prospects—most of which have come true, subsequent to his essay. Prescient advice lends all the more credibility to the essayists.

I offer but two criticisms: First, at times, as in the debate with professed liberation theologians, still too much deference is given to Marxism. If it is really a corrupt theory, which it is, then an article extolling even its partial virtue could be slightly confusing, even though the obvious intent is certainly to document the recantations of erstwhile liberationists. Second, the book is already dated due to the further constriction of communism. Several of the contributors are correct in warning of impending disasters, and that statisticians can be depended on to be statisticians, which has been proven in the 1991 coup attempt. This is not so much a criticism as a call for an update. Offering analysis that few others have given, the book's predictions have now been substantiated. It was on the cutting edge to do so. From such we wish to hear more.

Nor ought we to overlook that the key to such insight is precisely (not incidentally) in the theological matrix used for analysis. The key to the strength of the book is its unapologetically theological frame of reference. Perhaps this was needed long ago. Finally, here is a book for which Christians have been waiting. It claims victory for the Judeo-Christian values that shaped our own society. Would it not be ironic if now the east returned to these and the west continued to cherish a statism of sorts? Regardless, this is a book that is inexpensive and deserves a wide readership. Indeed, both books merit wide attention.

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The Hollow Men: Politics and Corruption in Higher Education. By Charles J. Sykes. Washington: Regnery Gateway, 1990, 314 pp., n.p.

This well-documented and carefully argued text—one of many that have appeared in reaction to the excesses of the contemporary *Zeitgeist* on many (some would say most) college campuses—concludes that campus radicals enthused about special interests and quadrangle zealots corrupted by unreason are doomed because they "are themselves the creatures of a passing moment" (p. 314).

If this were indeed the case, then Sykes' own book would be unnecessary or merely alarmist. But he also declares that a quaternity rules the quad—gender, race, social class, sexuality—and by exhaustively documenting the history of Dartmouth College he causes shivers rather than shrugs from any students, parents, or academics who are interested in a truly liberal arts—or liberating—education.

Long ago F. Bacon, in his powerful aphoristic manner, declared: "Reading maketh a full man; conference, a ready man; and writing an exact man." Sykes has dismantled the dismantlers of western culture by showing that hollow men—not "full" men—result from reading lists, syllabi, and curricula that are gutted by specious and special interests; that without the fullness of the western tradition, students and faculty are "ready" only to seize offices, throw paint, chant insults, and heckle visiting speakers and local faculty who wish to "confer" with them; that accuracy or "exactness" are ignored by faculty who speak propaganda instead of giving lectures

and who require of students nothing more than rap sessions, personal journaling, and smug expressionism. Fullness, readiness, and exactness nowadays mean, more often than not, being filled with trendy isms, being ready to disown the very traditions without which its critics would not exist, and being exact only in the willingness to exact from proponents of free and open debate a servility or silence that produces the pedagogical illness that is killing modern higher education.

Because Sykes believes that "the history of Dartmouth and its decline is largely the history of American higher education itself" (p. 72), he devotes over three-fourths of his book to an "exact" history of the school and thereby gives flesh to his conviction that "what the students are confronted with is an extraordinarily ambitious attempt to dismantle Western culture and rewrite the theory of knowledge" (p. 8). My main doubt about his otherwise fair and convincing depiction of the current crisis is only that he seems to assume that the "clash of ideas" (p. 17) is the *summum bonum* or *raison d'être* of higher education and will of itself generate social and moral improvement. Perhaps. Such an idea is itself "hollow" and ignores the fact that institutions such as Dartmouth were founded to change society through a proper—that is, a liberal—education. Sykes scores a contemporary critic for declaring that "the idea, after all, is not to describe the world but to change it" (p. 38). Yet an education that merely describes the world (which is as difficult as it is essential) falls far short of genuine education. What if the armies that "clash by night" are "ignorant" and on a "darkling plain," as M. Arnold lamented? Sykes has masterfully described what has gone wrong. But if he were to examine again the manifestos, catalogues, and syllabi of the seventeen traditional and excellent schools he lists at the end of his impressive book (p. 313) he would discover that the clash of ideas is not enough. It is descriptive, dialectic and didactic, but not redemptive. Armies close and clash with each other for causes. The clash of ideas becomes the mere exchange of rhetoric or the combat of political and partisan prejudices, without the pursuit of, or (God forbid!) the achievement of, truth.

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Joel, Amos, Obadiah. By Thomas J. Findley. Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary. Chicago: Moody, 1990, xxiii + 417 pp., \$24.95.

General editor K. L. Barker's introduction indicates that the series was designed to be an exegetical tool that focuses on the unfolding of the contextual meaning of each book using the original languages (pp. xiii–xiv). Commentators were encouraged to discuss grammatical and syntactical points, the meaning of key words, and to develop the argument and central themes of each Biblical book.

The general guidelines are well executed in Findley's careful study of Joel, Amos and Obadiah. He begins with a brief bibliography and an introductory discussion of issues related to the historical and literary context of each book. This is followed by his translation of each section of the text, an exposition of the meaning of the pericope, and additional detailed textual and grammatical notes. From time to time an excursus is added to give a more in-depth treatment of major interpretive or theological questions.

In the introduction to Joel, Findley presents the alternative possibilities for dating the book and concludes that it should be placed around 500 BC based on similar concerns within Zechariah and the historical allusion to the fall of Jerusalem in 586

(3:1–6 [MT 4:1–6]). The book is structurally divided into two parts: 1:1–2:27, which deals with present events in the land of Judah, and 2:28–3:21 (MT 3:1–4:21), which describes God's plan for the whole earth in the eschatological future (pp. 10–11).

In his exegetical commentary on Joel, Findley structures the first half of the book around a series of introductory commands to lament and repent and the second half around a series of introductory phrases such as "It will come about in that day" (3:18 [4:18]). A smooth-flowing translation of the text appears with frequent reference to the meaning of Hebrew words, grammatical and syntactical structures, and a few textual notes. Findley believes that the locust plague in chap. 1 is a literal plague, while chap. 2 is a comparison of the plague with the invasion of the army of the Lord, using images of the Babylonian invasion. Joel is warning the nation to repent to avoid the judgment on the Day of the Lord. Since God responds positively beginning in 2:18 (a past event according to Findley, not a reference to the future as many would see it), Findley implies that the nation did repent and thus avoided God's judgment at that time. The second half of the book is about God's eschatological gift of his Spirit, his destruction of Israel's enemies, and his wonderful blessing of his people.

A few questions might be raised about Findley's interpretation of 2:18–27. Can one accept his implied repentance of the nation just before the section? Why does Joel not refer to it, and why is there no reference to it in other prophets? How do the blessings of 2:18–27 fit into the time of Joel (which he puts at 500 BC), which is around the time of Haggai, Zechariah, or a few years before Ezra? How can 2:18–27 refer to Joel's time, since Israel's history after 500 BC seems to include many examples of Israel being reproached, contrary to the promises in 2:19, 26–27?

Findley's treatment of Amos interacts with many of the different interpretations of current commentators (unfortunately several of the recent works on Amos came out after or about the time Findley finished his work). He rejects the redactional approach to Amos (p. 110 n. 19—but for some strange reason he calls this "form criticism" in the text). Thus he maintains the authenticity of the oracle against Judah in 2:4–6, the hymnic doxologies (pp. 329–333) and the final positive salvation oracle at the end of the book. His structural understanding of the organization of Amos is traditional, although his decision not to put the final vision in 9:1–4 together with the other visions and his inclusion of 9:7–10 with the salvation oracle in 9:11–15 are unconvincing. Findley handles most key problem texts with careful attention to the Hebrew text and alternative suggestions but inadequate attention to the form-critical background to most chapters. His rendering of *kzb* in 2:4 as walking after "idols" rather than following the "lies" of the false prophets and leaders is questionable, his translation of *mskl* in 5:13 as "prudent" rather than the "prosperous" who are condemned in the context seems out of place, and his view that the cities mentioned in 6:2 were already destroyed seems unhistorical if Amos wrote the section in 760 BC. A defense of the authenticity of 9:11–15 would have been helpful in light of the widely-held opinion that Amos did not write the section. At times the commentary is so exegetically oriented that it misses opportunities to drive home significant theological issues that are the heart of what Amos is trying to communicate.

Findley dates Obadiah to a period shortly after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC and interprets the verbs in vv. 12–14 as rhetorical imperatives, thus portraying the past event as if the prophet is at the scene demanding that the Edomites stop their wicked behavior toward the people in Jerusalem (pp. 340, 366). His translation and exposition are fairly traditional (although he translates the verb in v. 2 as a past rather than a future), but his periodic references to the millennium in eschatological passages (in all three books, pp. 84, 100, 324, 372) seem to read in NT inferences that were not a part of the original author's intention.

In spite of such problems, however, Findley's commentary is solidly evangelical in its approach, an excellent example of what commentaries should be about. It will be a rich source of profitable information for years to come and is highly recommended.

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Stewardship and the Kingdom of God. By Dennis J. Ireland. Leiden: Brill, 1992, 233 pp., \$34.00.

The subtitle of the book better explains its content: *An Historical, Exegetical, and Contextual Study of the Parable of the Unjust Steward in Luke 16:1-13.*

The book is divided into five parts: (1) an introduction, which includes a fine history of the interpretation of the parable of the unjust steward; (2) exegesis of Luke 16:1-13; (3) literary context; (4) theological context; (5) conclusions.

All good commentaries on Luke's gospel contain extensive discussions of the parable of the unjust steward. The reason is obvious: It is a very difficult parable. Ireland's volume goes beyond the commentaries. It is by far the most thorough treatment of Luke 16:1-13 I have ever read. It is not only thorough but could also well serve as a model to show how exegetical and theological expertise can be used in arriving at the meaning of a Biblical text. And although it is only a slightly abbreviated version of the author's doctoral dissertation it is written in clear, easy-to-understand English. He certainly is to be commended for that.

I highly recommend the book to anyone who wants to study seriously the parable of the unjust steward.

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Expository Hermeneutics: An Introduction. By Elliot E. Johnson. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990, 330 pp., n.p.

Elliot Johnson has written this work as a textbook for Bible college and seminary students desiring to study dispensationalist hermeneutics. He begins from the perspective of an average Christian layperson who wishes to interpret and apply the Bible for himself, using the inductive method refined by H. Hendricks. Rather than allowing each person subjectively to say, "This is what the verse means to me," Johnson seeks to provide rules of interpretation and tests for the validity of one's interpretation and application. The publisher billed the book as breaking new ground in developing principles and strategies for the historico-grammatical method of interpretation, but I failed to discover what new ground was broken, though I found the volume to be a most comprehensive and systematic presentation of hermeneutics from that school of thought.

Johnson defines the goal of Biblical interpretation as understanding the divine Author/human author's intended meaning as it is expressed (implicitly or explicitly) in the text or context. He agrees with I. H. Marshall that the aim is to discover what the text meant in the mind of the original author for his intended audience. Johnson advocates a four-stage hermeneutical spiraling process of preunderstanding, recognition, exegesis and application. The interpreter must first realize what he brings to the text in the form of preunderstanding, including both positive skills

and knowledge as well as possible prejudices. He then uses an inductive method of recognizing the essential meaning of the text as a whole in order to form the larger context from which to develop an interpretation. Next he uses tools of exegesis to analyze the full range of meaning and implication necessarily intended. Then he relates the message of the text to situations and people of our day according to God's working in the present. Finally he uses principles of validation to test critically the probable accuracy of his proposed interpretation.

A strength of the work is its excellent interaction with the scholarly literature in the field of hermeneutics as it relates to the promotion of his own view. Its value as a textbook, however, suffers from its overly pedantic tone. Professors want the textbooks they assign to be organized and self-explanatory, but Johnson's work gives us too much of a good thing. He needs to express himself more succinctly and eliminate extraneous detail. In spite of this liability, professors wishing to teach hermeneutics from the perspective common to dispensationalists will find Johnson's book to be the most helpful text available.

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The Hermeneutical Spiral. By Grant Osborne. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1991, 499 pp., \$24.99.

"The major premise of this book," writes the author, "is that biblical interpretation entails a 'spiral' from text to context, from its original meaning to its contextualization or significance for the church today." In using the spiral as his image for interpreting texts, Osborne consciously sets himself over against the notion of a "hermeneutical circle," which merely goes round and round without ever arriving at the meaning of a text. Rather, Osborne describes himself as "spiralling nearer and nearer to the text's intended meaning as I refine my hypotheses [as to the author's intended meaning] and allow the text to continue to challenge and correct those alternative interpretations." The task of hermeneutics does not stop when the spiraling interpreter has zeroed in on the meaning of a text, however. In addition to ascertaining what Osborne calls "meaning," the interpreter must articulate the "significance" of that meaning to the modern reader, to use the terminology of E. D. Hirsch (p. 6).

Such an all-encompassing view of the hermeneutical task carries Osborne from exegesis (chaps. 1–12) through Biblical, historical and systematic theology (chaps. 13 and 14) to homiletics (chap. 15) and the final goal of interpretation: the sermon (chap. 16). Yet despite the complexity and sheer quantity of the issues confronting the interpreter, Osborne never loses sight of what he perceives to be the *sine qua non* of an evangelical hermeneutic—namely, the original author's intended meaning. He is fully aware, of course, that much modern hermeneutical theory is opposed in principle to the notion of a text having a determinate meaning. For this reason he concludes his otherwise highly-practical volume with two theoretical appendices dealing with the complex relationship between author, text and reader.

Osborne's is one of those rare books that actually lives up to its subtitle: *A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. He deals with virtually all of the important issues and trends in modern hermeneutics in a manner that gives insight to the nonspecialist while at the same time providing scholars and aspiring doctoral students with plenty of material from which to venture forth into further research. Yet while Osborne's own scholarship is second to none, he writes with a clear and engaging style that is easy to follow (something that cannot be said for some of the

recent books on hermeneutics that I have read). He never loses sight of his goals: to equip his reader with information and insights necessary to help aspiring preachers and teachers determine what the Biblical writers intended to convey by means of language, and how to relate that message to present-day audiences.

Even a volume as masterful as this contains a few points meriting mild critique. The first appendix, for example, places R. Bultmann on the same side of the hermeneutical divide with K. Barth over against the Schleiermacher-Dilthey tradition, whereas Barth himself placed Bultmann within that tradition. And Osborne's discussion of Gadamer is one of the few places where he does not make his basic point clearly—namely, that Gadamer viewed interpretation as revolving not around the author's intended meaning (which is in any event inaccessible for Gadamer) but rather around the subject matter (*Sache*) of which the author speaks. In this regard Gadamer is not unlike Barth in certain respects, as Gadamer himself acknowledged in his *Truth and Method*. Finally, the first appendix lacks the clear definition of certain technical terms that so characterizes the rest of the book.

Another minor point: Osborne begins his book by endorsing Hirsch's distinction between "meaning" and "significance," and then later on (p. 268) he speaks of what a text "meant" to the original audience and what it "means" to us today. This sort of terminology (presumably borrowed from Stendahl) tends to be confusing, in that it uses the verb "to mean" in two different senses (what the original writer intended to communicate *versus* how that original message relates to other people or situations). Why not simply retain Hirsch's terminology?

Finally, at least three editorial changes are needed for the next printing of the book. On p. 35 Osborne's diagram (fig. 1.8) shows how to depict visually the relationships between the propositions of Eph 1:5–7 via D. Fuller's method of "arc-ing." Yet the arcs drawn here do not conform to Fuller's methodology. If they did, Osborne would not have to say, "There is no easy way to arc a passage like v. 5." It can be done. On pp. 235–236 we read of "Nathan's parable of the ewe lamb, which dramatically demonstrated his own injustice to Uriah." And on p. 273 a typo appears ("parallemomaia" instead of "parallelomania").

The Hermeneutical Spiral is the best introduction to the practice of Biblical interpretation to come along in years, perhaps ever. If you have been wondering which one of a plethora of recent books on hermeneutics to add to your bookshelf, make it Osborne's.

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Biblical Narrative in the Thought of Paul Ricoeur: A Study in Hermeneutics and Theology. By Kevin J. Vanhoozer. New York: Cambridge, 1990, \$49.95.

Paul Ricoeur has exercised much influence upon theology and philosophical hermeneutics for the last generation, but the potential positive impact of his thought upon evangelicalism, particularly his hermeneutics and his recognition of texts for the understanding of human existence, has not been given significant attention. The reason may well be the use made of his philosophy by what Vanhoozer calls "left-wing interpreters." But Vanhoozer has found and shown here that Ricoeur's general hermeneutical theory, especially in relation to the gospel narratives, has much potential for Christology if some significant correctives are brought to bear upon it.

Vanhoozer's book is a much-revised form of his doctoral dissertation at Cambridge University. It carefully builds and narrows its focus from the Kantian,

Heideggerian bases into Ricoeur's own original, fruitful thought about language, especially texts, as these are shown to open new possibilities for modes of being. While Kantian and Heideggerian influences can be seen herein, Ricoeur transcends them, says Vanhoozer, for he is a "believing" philosopher—that is, one who believes that texts and language can make a positive difference and open ways of being in contrast to the masters of suspicion (e.g. Marx and Sartre).

From the beginning Vanhoozer establishes the goal and ground of Ricoeur's hermeneutical theory, which is more basic than Sartre's "dread" and Heidegger's "being toward death." Ricoeur recognizes in human existence and its existential dilemma an overabundance of meaning. Literary texts not only express this but also recall that which has been "forgotten" by humanity. To such a perspective Vanhoozer rightly gives limited agreement. The nature of Vanhoozer's "yes and no," especially the potentialities arising from a proper, critical "yes" to Ricoeur, make up the direction of the work in relation to Biblical narratives.

By means of comparison and contrast with Bultmann, Frei, Tracy and, to a lesser extent, Barth, Tillich, Pannenberg, Moltmann and others, Vanhoozer methodologically spirals around and back on critical contemporary concerns regarding the propriety and usability of Ricoeurian thought for orthodox theological expression.

While he grants Ricoeur qualified approval, Vanhoozer's affirmation goes far beyond the fact that Ricoeur has put existential theological thinking on much more firm—that is, literal/textual—footing. In numerous ways Ricoeur's "secular" hermeneutics is said to approximate the Christian faith. He speaks of and uses concepts like revelation, resurrection, creation, call, justification, etc., as these are said to be "given" to the reader from beyond the reader via poetic, metaphoric or narrative texts. But finally Ricoeur's hermeneutic philosophy lacks an approximation for Christian teaching on the role of the Holy Spirit, a role taken by what Ricoeur calls the "creative imagination" or by imaginative appropriation. Ultimately, then, Ricoeur misses the very point of the gospels, which emphasize that it is "only thanks to a divine initiative of deed and word that the power of the possibility of resurrection freedom becomes ours." In his rightful concern for texts and for the mediation of oppositions, Ricoeur loses his balance, says Vanhoozer, who then puts the question in words Ricoeur himself has used in response to K. Jaspers: If all human experience is a "cipher" of transcendence, then what, if anything, is *unique* about the story/history of Jesus and the subsequent history of the Church?

Vanhoozer believes Ricoeur has opened up the world of the text and its role in the transformation of the reader's world or mode of being. For Ricoeur the Biblical narratives of Jesus are of preeminent importance for such transformation. Ricoeur has restored to the text its ability "to speak" and to the modern reader the ability "to hear" the text as text. The possibilities for Biblical exegesis and for a theology that avoids the error of immediate conceptual categorization are many. He has shown that hope, that "passion for the possible," is more basic to human existence than Sartrean dread and that this points to the whence of human dependence. We are not autonomous.

But as Vanhoozer carefully explains, Ricoeur's thought is in need of "correction," only after which can the full positive effects of his insights be made usable for orthodox, evangelical thought. Is this then to say that Ricoeur is at cross purposes with himself, incoherent finally? No, says Vanhoozer. Ricoeur's lapses are better dealt with, and the coherence of his larger program more readily recognized, by means of his ongoing desire to mediate opposites—in this case the particular and historical Jesus to his general universal significance.

While somewhat expensive, Vanhoozer's volume is a most helpful analysis of Ricoeur, a philosopher whose literary theory is yet too little known by evangelicals,

especially exegetes. Though I agree with Vanhoozer's positive assessment regarding the possibilities here, I would not be quite so affirmative as he is. Vanhoozer deepens our understanding not only of Ricoeur's rich thought but also of the role of text in the theological enterprise. He deserves much thanks for so effectively undertaking such an immense task.

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Creation and the History of Science. By Christopher B. Kaiser. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991, 316 pp., \$17.95 paper.

In this third volume of the History of Christian Theology series Eerdmans has produced a fine, well-focused study of the idea of creation in the historical development of the physical sciences. Five lengthy chapters treat separate periods from the early Church through the emergence of post-Newtonian mechanics.

In the exposition of each of the periods Kaiser assesses the interaction of important figures with four distinct ideas in the creation tradition: (1) the comprehensibility of the world; (2) the unity of heaven and earth; (3) the relative autonomy of nature; (4) the ministry of healing and restoration. He traces the roots of these concepts to early Babylonian religion in which Marduk, king of the gods, ordained laws for the stars and for the forces of nature, which were identified with lesser deities. Thus Yahweh's sovereignty over all of creation is assumed to be an extension of earlier Mesopotamian concepts. This seems questionable since even an early text such as Genesis 1 appears to be a polemic against pagan mythology rather than a development of it. The Biblical and patristic data covered under the heading of the early Church, however, are normally helpful and suggestive.

The late medieval period was a time of transition in which Aristotelian physics challenged and then was wed to traditional creation concepts. The marriage introduced a bifurcation into the creation tradition. The image of God as the First Mover made nature seem more autonomous. This tendency provoked a conservative reaction that stressed the absolute power of God to contravene the ordinary workings of nature. Whereas many histories of science see Aristotelianism and medieval theology as stultifying influences, Kaiser points out the fruitfulness of their interaction for the progress of science.

Kaiser's treatment of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is equally perceptive. His assessment of the relative contributions of Protestants and Catholics to the scientific revolution strikes a better balance than have some more polemical studies. Newton, the brightest star of that era, is placed in his proper philosophical context, and his theological views (including his Arianism) are shown to have a bearing on his scientific presuppositions. Although Newton was concerned to leave room for God in the working of the cosmos, his discoveries encouraged others to adopt the more mechanistic view of the world that had begun to develop during the late middle ages.

In the century following Newton there was no consensus on the relationship between matter and spirit. Kaiser discusses the full range of opinions. Some followed Newton by imposing supernatural principles (such as gravity) on passive matter. Others attributed energy, life, and even thought to matter. At the opposite extreme were the antimaterialists, including Berkeley and Edwards. The view that triumphed at the end of the century is epitomized by the nebular hypothesis of Laplace.

At last the universe and its workings seemed capable of explanation apart from divine intervention.

In the nineteenth century J. C. Maxwell brought the mechanistic explanation of the world to its most complete expression. His work also prepared for the two great revolutions of twentieth-century physics: quantum mechanics and the theory of relativity. At this point Kaiser offers a cursory evaluation of how remnants of the creation tradition affected N. Bohr and A. Einstein. In some ways this was the most disappointing section of the book. As the author notes, however, a complete treatment of modern physics would require another volume of equal length. May he be encouraged to undertake that most needful labor!

I conclude with a few general observations. First, the author supports his points with a great wealth of detail, but there is never any danger of the reader's losing the thread of the argument. Kaiser's clear outlines and succinct summaries carry the reader easily along. Second, the volume reflects an awareness of current research and of the issues still in debate. Unfortunately there are no footnotes, so that scholars cannot easily trace Kaiser's sources. There are, however, excellent bibliographies at the end of each chapter. Finally, I commend Kaiser for his labors, and I expect that this will be a valued textbook in upper-division courses on science, religion and philosophy. I anticipate requiring it in mine.

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Seen and Unseen: A Biologist Views the Universe. By Edward McCrady. Sewanee: University of the South, 1990, 351 pp., n.p.

The book under review is most unusual, written over a thirty-year period from the late 1940s to 1979. Its author died in the summer of 1981 without publishing the work. As described in the afterword written by a former student and colleague, he left the manuscript with his colleague in England and returned to Sewanee, Tennessee, where he died shortly thereafter. The manuscript later found its way to his grandson, E. McCrady III, who edited and published it.

As McCrady III states in the preface, he did more than edit the manuscript. He made substantial changes. The elder McCrady wrote the foreword in January 1980 in which he expressed some of his views. The original manuscript was a final expression of his observations and conclusions on science, philosophy and religion. In the preface McCrady was cited as concluding that "an objective consideration of scientific information compelled belief in God" and that it was improbable that proteins accidentally formed as definite linkages of several hundred amino acids. McCrady III replaced that statement with "modern science could not deny the belief in a Supreme Being but that allows for it without absolutely requiring it." He justifies these changes by citing modern developments in biology since McCrady's day. I find this style of editorializing regrettable. I would very much like to read McCrady's own musings and conclusions at the end of his long, fruitful life. McCrady's views obviously stand in stark contrast to those of his grandson.

From what I can tell from the book, which consists of selected modified portions of the original manuscript, McCrady III revised the manuscript to express his own new-age views. The fall of Adam and Eve is described as the result of learning to distinguish between right and wrong. The physical part of life controlled by "chemogenes" is controlled by the "psychogenes" of the mind, which are inherited from our

ancestors through the fertilization of the egg by the sperm. Many of the mutations thought to drive the process of evolution are caused by the psychogenes that ultimately control matter. He described the incarnation of Christ as caused by the psychogenes from the Holy Spirit. The soul is the "integrated fusion of myriads of psychogenes, each incarnate in its own chemogene." The foundation of both science and religion is experience, not reason or revelation.

As McCrady III states, these views are major departures from the original manuscript. They should have been expressed in an entirely separate book, not as a "correction" of his grandfather's work. As a biology professor myself I feel a certain affinity for the spirit with which the elder McCrady lived his life and feel that it would be very worthwhile to retrieve the original manuscript and restore its integrity.

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An Introduction to Systematic Theology. By Wolfhart Pannenberg. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991, 69 pp., n.p. paper.

In this compact introduction to his forthcoming three-volume *Systematic Theology* Pannenberg sets forth his well-known conviction that theology must not only restate Christian doctrine in orderly fashion but also confront the question of the truth of Christianity. Such a confrontation must be done on common ground with categories of general knowledge, insists Pannenberg. "The plausibility of assuming the reality of God cannot be established by simply calling on some particular experience." Rather, the only way such plausibility can be established "is to present a coherent model of the world as God's creation" (p. 10). This is because "coherence provides the final criterion of truth" for any discipline (p. 6). In this way Pannenberg continues his career-long opposition to K. Barth's notion that personal encounter with the Word of God is the basis for theology and that such a theology of the Word is a science not subject to the categories of other sciences (see Barth, *Church Dogmatics* I/1.1-10).

The fact that Christian theology must subject itself to examination by other disciplines leads Pannenberg to consider with utmost seriousness what he labels "problems of a Christian doctrine of God" (chap. 2). For example, he cites philosophical objections to the notions of God's transcendence and infinity found in the western theological tradition (pp. 25 ff.). While he sees some merit in Tillich's "ground of being" concept of God and Whitehead's process philosophy of God as over against more traditional concepts, Pannenberg views these as falling short of the "biblical creator God" (p. 29). Such non-Biblical concepts of God must not simply be rejected out of hand, however, but rather ought to lead Christians to examine those deficiencies in the western theological tradition that have opened the door to such critiques. In this case Pannenberg sees the culprit as Aristotle's concept of God as "intellect," which became part of the western tradition via the medieval synthesis (p. 33). In place of this Greek notion of God as intellect Pannenberg would return to the Biblical concept of God as *pneuma*, "spirit" (p. 35).

Another major problem in Christian theology is that of "relating the Christian concept of God to the world of nature and history, or more precisely: to conceive of this world as dependent on God." Pannenberg attributes the problem to "the world view of modern science," which substituted the notion of a mechanical universe for the Biblical view of a world dependent on its Creator not only for its existence but

also for its continuing activity (p. 37). One reason for the divorce between the Creator God and his creation, says Pannenberg, is the tendency of western theology to ignore the Biblical tradition of the eternal Son as cooperating in the creation of the world. A Biblical trinitarian model is able to bridge the gap between God and creation by affirming that the eternal self-differentiation of the Son from the Father can in turn become the basis for thinking of the Son as “a generative principle of otherness, from which ever new creatures would come forth” (p. 42). Furthermore the notion of God as sustainer of creation can be related to a proper articulation of the work of the Spirit of God, who “can be understood as the supreme field of power that pervades all of creation” (p. 46), to use the language of modern field theory.

In his final chapter Pannenberg attempts to build upon his well-known “Christology from below” by placing NT Christology within the larger framework of systematic theology. In this endeavor he finds himself in agreement at one point with K. Barth—namely, that “within the framework of a systematic theology . . . the approach must be trinitarian” (p. 67). Within a trinitarian framework the “key concept” is “the traditional category of eternal Sonship” (p. 65). As in the previous chapter Pannenberg refuses to limit the eternal Son either to his *ad intra* relation to the Father or his incarnation in Jesus of Nazareth. Rather, the Son “is conceived at the same time as being at work in the whole creation and especially in the life of human beings created in the image of God” (p. 65). In this way Pannenberg relates the work of the triune God to “the entire economy of God’s action in creating, reconciling, and uniting the world of creatures to himself” (p. 68). Thus the divine economy takes on a “systematic coherence,” which in Pannenberg’s view is especially urgent in modern secular culture (p. 69) because coherence is the hallmark of truth (p. 6).

Pannenberg’s volume should be read with careful and critical deliberation by all who take seriously the task of relating the gospel of Christ to an increasingly secularized and pluralistic world. Whatever reservations evangelicals may have with Pannenberg’s rather broad acceptance of modern higher-critical theories of the Bible, his openness to (though not acceptance of) universalism and his apparent failure to make necessary distinctions between redemptive history and history in general as well as his concern to lay the truth-claims of the gospel before the bar of critical cross-examination and to relate them to all intellectual disciplines deserve the support of the entire Christian community. Otherwise we shall end up speaking only to ourselves, thereby further marginalizing the Church while a needy world careens toward the Abyss.

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Integrative Theology. By Gordon R. Lewis and Bruce A. Demarest. Volume 2. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990, 574 pp., \$19.95.

“Integrative theology” refers to the authors’ method of integrating or combining various types of theology: historical, Biblical, systematic, apologetic, practical. Perhaps a sample of the method as consistently carried out in one chapter will be the best description of it.

Volume 2 deals with sin and redemption, each receiving four chapters of study. To illustrate, chap. 5 discusses the incarnation. The problem is stated. Various interpretations are reviewed including kenotic, gradual incarnationist, liberal, existentialist, process, modern Roman Catholic, and evangelical. Biblical teaching is re-

viewed, with appropriate emphasis on Paul and John. A systematic formulation of the doctrine follows with attention to the virgin birth and the significance of the incarnation. The doctrine is defended against diverse objections, from the Jews to the Greeks, from Bultmann to Hinduism. A very creative section follows that gives the relevance of the doctrine of the incarnation for life and ministry. Finally, review questions and ministry projects conclude the chapter.

Integrative Theology is clearly written and is based on in-depth research. It contains an excellent Scripture index and general index. The only impractical aspect of the work is the use of endnotes. The work is evangelical and Reformed in its outlook. It should prove highly useful as a seminary textbook. The practical portions of each chapter are eminently preachable.

At his funeral it was said of Jeremy Taylor (1613–1667) that he “had devotion enough for a cloister and learning enough for a university.” Similarly, *Integrative Theology* is practical enough for the pulpit and scholarly enough for a graduate textbook. I recommend it highly.

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History Through the Eyes of Faith. By Ronald A. Wells. San Francisco: Harper, 1989, 262 pp., \$9.95 paper.

Under the auspices of the Christian College Coalition, Wells has written a masterful companion textbook for the western civilization curriculum from a distinctly evangelical perspective. The author does not intend the work to criticize or supplant the primary western civilization survey text but to raise certain issues for further discussion.

Wells highlights the importance of crisis as an interpretative principle in historical analysis. A crisis tests ideologies and leads one to question and ultimately to change the status quo. The principle is well applied to the shift from medieval to modern society. Wells argues that the transition encompassed three stages. The first stage was renaissance humanism, which advocated the methodology of questioning authority. The second stage was the Protestant Reformation, which challenged people to question established beliefs and institutions, possibly leading to skepticism because one might argue that universal truth does not exist at all. Lastly, the rationalism of the Enlightenment placed man in a material, scientific universe and provided secular hope for the ultimate perfection of human society. Hope for positive development served as an important motive for societal change.

Wells argues that modern society is the direct by-product of the Enlightenment, a movement that advocated the doctrine of progress toward human perfection and the idea that problems of the human condition are caused by one's environment. Such concepts are in firm opposition to the Protestant notion of human depravity.

The secular hope of the Enlightenment was dashed by the devastation and carnage of the twentieth-century wars. The result was the decline in popular support for the idea of the inevitable progress of mankind reflected in contemporary art and music, which give “popular voice to the essential incoherence of life, and, often-times, the desire for personal gratification because that is all there is” (p. 216). The Christian faith provides an important alternative for true hope in such a context of potential despair.

The author concludes by providing several vignettes of historical personages who have set an example of how to integrate faith and society. They have stood for social justice within the mainstream of society. The figures include F. Asbury, W. Wilberforce, Mother Teresa and A. Kuyper. Promoting social justice is an important element of Reformed thought and is highlighted in the final section of the book. It is interesting, however, that the author includes a short segment on D. Willems (d. 1569), a Mennonite who advocated nonparticipation in the magistracy. Willems was executed by the state after having saved the life of one of his pursuers. Willems realized that the value of saving life was more important than suffering a fiery death at the hands of the state. A little-known Mennonite, he serves as an example of a faithful witness who placed obedience to God above personal gain.

In summary, I highly recommend Wells' book not only for use as a supplementary text in the western civilization sequence but also for its encouragement to the believer to learn practical lessons from history. The volume maintains a high degree of integrity to the discipline while integrating a Christian worldview into historical analysis.

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The Way You Believe: Thoughts on the Nature of Faith. By Lauren A. King. Newman: Barclay, 1991, 82 pp., \$9.95 paper.

To be sure, the recent lordship-salvation controversy has enunciated the need for a more precise definition of the nature of saving faith. King does not write his book with evangelical debates on salvation as a backdrop. Instead he attempts to describe the dynamic that exists between the mind and the will in the exercise of everyday faith. His central thesis is that there are three kinds of faith: (1) belief in "a single proposition about someone or something"; (2) "a whole system of beliefs shared by Christians"—that is, "the Christian faith" (p. 8); (3) "the faith of decision and choice, of will, of commitment, dependence, trust, and reliance. This is faith that results in action" (p. 71). The thesis is introduced in the opening chapter, and the remainder of the book examines the nature and significance of the three kinds of faith.

There is much to commend in King's treatment of his subject. For example, he regards faith and reason as allies rather than enemies. He distinguishes between certainty and probability in statements of faith. He alerts readers to the need for examining the underlying beliefs of their respective worldviews. He demonstrates, despite claims to the contrary by secular scientists, that science itself is a belief system. Perhaps the most compelling insight that King provides is that throughout one's life different objects of faith compete for one's allegiance.

These salutary points notwithstanding, there are some appreciable deficiencies in King's argument. First, the distinction between "faith about" and "faith in" is artificial. NT scholarship has borne out the fact that *pisteuō hoti* ("believe that") and *pisteuō eis* ("believe in") constructions are used interchangeably in the gospel of John (cf. e.g. J. E. Botha, "The Meanings of *Pisteuo* in the Greek New Testament: A Semantic-Lexicographical Study," *Neot* 21 [1987] 225–240). Contra King, the difference between "faith about" and "faith in" something is determined by the significance of propositions believed, not the nature of belief. Second, the "head-heart" dichotomy made by King is not one that Scripture makes. The same can be said when emotion is claimed as a quality of the third kind of faith. Along these lines

King's work needs to be tempered by greater sensitivity to NT lexical studies related to the constituent elements of human nature ("soul," "heart," "mind"). Finally, the author concludes that the third kind of faith is "an act of the will to commit oneself to something (like a ladder) or someone (like a surgeon). Faiths One and Two don't require action" (p. 74). It appears, however, that King inadvertently mixes kinds of faith with aspects of faith—that is, the third kind of faith is more concerned with what faith does than with what faith is. The ambiguity of this sort of language is intensified whenever saving faith is described as "stepping out on" or "acting on" something.

There is a shared consensus among evangelical theologians that the faith that justifies and the faith that sanctifies are essentially the same. But how so? How are they distinct? Unfortunately these important queries are overlooked in *The Way You Believe*. Consequently the knotty task of distinguishing saving faith and sanctifying faith will require further scholarly inquiry. Nevertheless this popular-level book will serve as a useful stimulus for future discussions of the general nature of Christian faith.

Gary Nebeker
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The Promise of Dawn: The Eschatology of Lewis Sperry Chafer. By Jeffrey J. Richards. New York: University Press of America, 1991, 208 pp., \$27.50.

Richards does not tell us why he wrote a book about Chafer's eschatology. He has no argument to make or thesis to put forward, and he makes precious few statements about the significance of Chafer's eschatology outside of vaguely suggesting that it somehow is important. The author seems to have no real point to make. Nowhere does he assume a critical stance toward Chafer or his thought. Richards is neither an apologist nor a polemicist. He simply does not enter into dialogue with Chafer, either in approval or disapproval. But this is not to say that he has no perspective and no agenda. A thin veil of objective reportage (the book is largely composed of "Chafer said . . ." and "Chafer believed . . .") does not hide the fact that Richards is plainly a Chafer devotee. When he speaks of Chafer's life, professional career, and abilities, Richards borders on hagiography.

The main drawback of the book is that it says nothing and goes nowhere. It merely mimics, chronicles and summarizes. Richards has done some research, but he fails to do anything with it. He does not analyze Chafer's eschatology; he merely repeats it. Whenever he attempts to defend Chafer against his critics, Richards ends up shooting himself in the foot. He characterizes D. Fuller's depiction of Chafer's theological roots as being within the Darby-Brooks-Scofield tradition as wrongheaded (p. 56), and yet his own account of Chafer's theological pedigree places him squarely within that very tradition. Similarly he judges J. Boles' conclusion that Chafer was essentially a rationalist in his theological method a "dubious" contention (p. 83). But within the next several pages Richards supplies more than enough information about Chafer for the reader to conclude that he worked with a rationalist methodology.

There are several other disquieting things about the book. Like Chafer himself, Richards does not define dispensationalism. At times he suggests that it is a particular approach to hermeneutics. He even parrots the classical dispensationalist

contention that it is only the dispensationalist who is truly faithful to grammatico-historical hermeneutics (pp. 3, 140). He compounds the error by wrongly associating literal interpretation with authorial intent (p. 85). At other times Richards seems to limit his definition of dispensationalism to a particular approach to eschatology. He even goes so far as to refer to Chafer as a "Reformed" theologian who had a somewhat different view of last things (pp. 3, 43, 88, 91). Richards fully misses the fact that classical dispensationalism had its own particular and peculiar worldview, a worldview that is completely at odds with Reformed thought.

Related to the entire issue of definition has been the problem of classical dispensationalism's ideological roots. Richards obscures dispensationalism's connection to J. N. Darby. He even goes so far as to cite approvingly A. D. Ehlert's thoroughly untenable and fanciful attempt to create a pre-nineteenth-century parentage for dispensationalist theology (p. 3). Richards contends that Chafer "never mentions Darby" outside of his *Systematic Theology* and that his casual references to Darby do not relate to eschatology but to soteriology (pp. 82–83). Aside from pointing out the abstract and rationalist distinction he draws between eschatology and soteriology, I direct his attention to Chafer's *Major Bible Themes* (p. 204), *The Kingdom in History and Prophecy* (pp. 10–11), and *Systematic Theology* (4.36–37, 249 ff.) where Chafer speaks of Darby as the central figure in the development of the dispensationalist understanding of the Church. Since Richards himself repeatedly and correctly notes that dispensationalism's understanding of the Church-Israel distinction sets it apart from other theologies and is the primary notion that shapes its eschatology, it seems that Chafer himself gives Darby greater pride of place in the history of dispensationalism than Richards wants to.

What is at stake here is more than a quibbling over theological precursors. What lurks in the classical dispensationalist shadows is Chafer's (and apparently Richards') understanding of theology. Chafer was a doctrinalist. He believed that the Bible is a textbook on theology. Richards' assumption throughout is that Chafer was a completely independent thinker who, by the enlightenment of the Spirit, turned his Bible over, shook it, and watched dispensationalism fall out. All Chafer needed to do was arrange the various "facts" into a rationally organized format. He did not want to admit that theology is something we do. Rather, it is something encoded within the very text of Scripture, something that is transparent to all who are "objective" when they approach the text.

Throughout the book Richards asks leading questions that elicit nothing but convenient answers. He does not ask hard questions of Chafer's eschatology. Those questions have been asked, but Richards ignores them. A problem that has always plagued dispensationalist eschatology is relevance. For many dispensationalists eschatology is merely a matter of getting one's endtime chart straight, without consideration of the purpose of eschatological statements. "How should we then live?" is a question Richards fails to ask. When prophecy is defined as prediction of future events, what are we to make of the character of history? The problem of determinism is one that was never taken seriously by classical dispensationalists. Richards mentions G. Marsden in passing but does not take up his analysis of the historical and sociological importance of dispensationalism. Marsden's work is far too important to ignore. Richards does not even mention D. Frank and his treatment of the Keswick movement, a movement that was an important correlate of dispensationalist eschatology. All told, Richards' work seems content to swim in a dispensationalist, doctrinalist fishbowl without caring about or considering questions of relevance or relationship.

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Credo: Meditations on the Apostles' Creed. By Hans Urs von Balthasar. New York: Crossroad, 1990, 105 pp., \$11.95.

In his introduction to this posthumously published work M. Kehl characterizes it as a "little 'summa'" of Balthasar's theology. Maybe it is, but I am unconvinced. The work was not meant to be even an analysis of the creed, but rather a meditation on it, albeit a reading of the creed saturated with mystical Barthianism.

The entire book lives its life within the mystery of the "inner-trinitarian essence," never quite touching down, never really engaging human beings in their earthliness and their historicity. Romantic trinitarian speculation is joined to Roman Catholic divinization when Balthasar speaks of redemption as an introduction into the "inward life of divine love" (p. 41).

The Barthian suspicion of all things historical fully demonstrates itself when Balthasar denies real historicity to the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus Christ. These are events "in the history of God alone," yet they somehow "affect our human history" (p. 57). Again, the Barthian theological vision makes the creed speak against its own nature. The one great thing that the Apostles' Creed proclaims, it seems to me, is the historicity of the mighty acts of God in Jesus Christ. The essence of the Christian religion, that God was in Christ, in the flesh, in the same space-time continuum in which you and I raise our kids and pay our bills, is lost, even denied.

In every way this is a thin book. Actually it is more pamphlet than book. The introduction takes up over one-fourth of the volume, leaving only forty-eight real pages of text after dead pages and chapter-title pages are factored out. Crossroad shamefully padded the book. \$11.95 is a lot of this-worldly money to pay for 13,000 words of ethereal fluff.

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Heresy and Orthodoxy in the Early Church. By Henry Chadwick. Brookfield: Variorum/Gower, 1991, xii + 322 pp., \$87.95.

This set of collected essays by the premier British Church historian of our century assembles articles and writings of Chadwick from 1955 to 1989. They derive from various publications, most of which are reprints from other journals. In fact one of the slight criticisms I have is that the publisher could have made all the print-faces uniform, enhancing the value of the book.

Most of the essays discuss important features of the Christian Church in the first six centuries. Chadwick is superior in discussing Augustine, Origen, Constantine, Boethius and Chalcedon. Those who ply the Church history trade should not do so without an awareness of these essays. They are essential reading, the law of supply and demand giving rise to the exorbitant price.

In the essays Chadwick's expertise on Augustine is most notable. The volume contains articles on Augustine on culture, Platonism, and some recently discovered letters of Augustine. The major strength of the book is its explication of features of Augustine's life and thought. Chadwick's article on "The Role of the Christian Bishop in Ancient Society" is especially recommended, as is "Conversion in Constantine the Great." Also recommended are "The Ascetic Ideal in the History of the

Church," Chadwick's essay on "The Chalcedonian Definition," and his two brief pieces on the scarcely-examined Boethius.

This is Church history at its finest, if not at its most expensive. If the volume is available at a library it should definitely be digested. The only other disappointment is that the title led me to suspect a systematic study of heresy and orthodoxy in the early centuries. While that is still needed, Chadwick's book is assuredly not a disappointment even if its chapters are not new and original.

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